



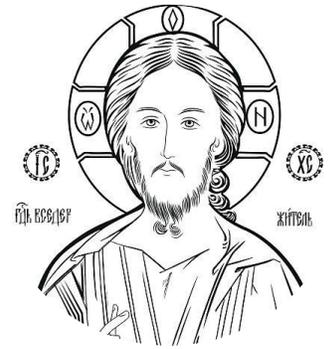
# The Forerunner

Weekly Parish Bulletin

Sunday, January 2, 2022

**SUNDAY BEFORE THE THEOPHANY**

*St. Seraphim of Sarov*



## RESURRECTIONAL APOLYTIKION

(Tone 3)

Let the heavens rejoice and the earth be glad, for the Lord has done a mighty act with His own arm. He has trampled down death by death, and became the firstborn from the dead. He has delivered us from the depths of Hades, granting the world Great Mercy!

## APOLYTIKION OF THE FOREFEAST OF THEOPHANY

(Tone 4)

Be thou ready, Zabulon; prepare thyself, O Nephthalim. \* River Jordan, stay thy course and skip for gladness to receive \* the Sovereign Master, Who cometh now to be baptized. \* O Adam, be thou glad with our first mother, Eve; \* hide not as ye did of old in Paradise. \* Seeing you naked, He hath appeared now \* to clothe you in the first robe again. \* Christ hath appeared, for He truly willeth to renew all creation.

## APOLYTIKION OF THE HOLY NATIVITY OF CHRIST

(Tone 4)

Your Nativity, O Christ our God, has shone to the world the Light of wisdom; for by it those who worshipped the stars were taught by a star to adore You, the Sun of Righteousness, and to know you the Orient from on high. O Lord, glory to You.



## KONTAKION OF THE FOREFEAST OF THEOPHANY

(Tone 4)

In the running waters of \* the Jordan River, \* on this day the Lord of all \* cried to John: Be not afraid \* and hesitate not to baptize Me, \* for I am come to save Adam, the first-formed man.

## PROKEIMENON

*“O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance. Unto Thee will I cry, O Lord my God.”*

## THE READING FROM THE SECOND EPISTLE OF ST. PAUL TO ST. TIMOTHY

(2Tim. 4:5-8)

Timothy, my son, always be steady, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry. For I am already on the point of being sacrificed; the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, and I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved His appearing



## THE READING FROM THE HOLY GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MARK

(Mt. 1:1-8)

The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As it is written in Isaiah the prophet, “Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, who shall prepare thy way; the voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.” John the Baptizer appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And there went out to him all the country of Judea, and all the people of Jerusalem; and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, and had a leather girdle around his waist, and ate locusts and wild honey. And he preached, saying, “After me comes He Who is mightier than I, the strap of Whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I have baptized you with water; but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit”.

### A MESSAGE FROM THE PRIEST

*By: Fr. Michael Gillis*

In 1993 Bill Murray starred in *Ground Hog Day*, a movie about a completely selfish weather broadcaster who spends a year trapped in the same day—*Ground Hog Day*. After repeating the same day several times, Phil (Murray) figures out that he can use the new knowledge he learns each day (names, personal information, and predictable actions) to manipulate people in the small town where Phil is trapped in order to indulge his selfish lusts. However, not everyone can be

corrupted. After several weeks of repeated days spent gathering information in an attempt to deceive and seduce his beautiful and innocent weather show producer, Rita, and each evening ending with a cold slap in the face, Phil begins to look at his life more seriously. In the end, he learns that the only happiness in life is found in loving and giving to others. By repeating the same day over and over again, Phil finally learns the lesson that Jesus and even the Old Testament Law teaches: in loving our neighbor, we love ourselves.

When you think about it, Phil’s story is not very much different from everyone’s story. We are all trapped in a series of days. Although each day is not the same day, each day is pretty much the same. Each day begins by waking up, each day ends by falling asleep. We eat, we go to work, we talk to the same people almost every day. Cycles repeat. Summer, autumn, winter, spring; Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday.... As long as we are alive, we are all pretty much like Phil trapped in *Ground Hog Day*. We learn something new almost every day (about people, about things, about ourselves), but the question for us is the same as it is for Phil in the movie: “Are we learning our lesson?”

As we begin a new year it is time to examine ourselves. Are we going to take what we have learned from the past and use it for our selfish advantage, or are we going to use what we have, what we know, and what we have gained to bless and encourage others? Are we going to learn from experience, repeated so many times in our past, that selfish desires lead us to frustration and we end up hurting the ones we love most? Now is a good time to change; and if you don’t think you can change on your own, now is a good time to

get help to change. One thing is certain—and life experience has taught us this—if we continue to walk down that same dead end we have walked down so many times before, we will only end up with the same regrets and frustrations.

Christianity is the faith of new beginnings. Like Phil in Ground Hog Day, every day is a new chance, a chance to try again. Yesterday's failures are nothing but lessons learnt, if I want to learn the lesson, if I am willing to grow and change. The Church has a name for this daily growth and change. It is called repentance. When we begin our days with morning prayers, we ask God for the strength to live the new day free from the sins and mistakes of the past. We ask God to help us live that day without sin—and we always live just one day at a time. For Christians, the dawning of a new day or the ringing in of a new year is another opportunity, as it says in the Liturgy, to commit ourselves, each other and our whole lives to Christ our God.

### PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS

If you wish to announce something on The Forerunner, please e-mail Elias Neto at [neto.elias@aol.com](mailto:neto.elias@aol.com) by Thursday

- On January 5, Wednesday next week, we will celebrate the fore-feast of the Theophany. The Royal Hours of Theophany will be celebrated at 7 am for those who can

make it before work. The Vespereal Liturgy of Basil the Great and the Great Indoor Blessing of the Waters will be offered Wednesday evening beginning at 6 pm. This is the Theophany eve liturgy, just as we celebrate a Christmas eve liturgy.

- On Theophany itself, Thursday, January 6, we will offer Matins beginning at 7 am followed by the Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom.
- As we have most years, we will offer the Outdoor Blessing of The Waters at Derby Reach Park, on Sunday afternoon, January 9th, after the Liturgy (a little after 1 pm).
- Youth Nights resume this Thursday, January 6. Talk with Chris if you wish to attend or volunteer. Masks are mandatory.
- Please put your name on the **Sunday** and services you plan to attend.
- We ask everyone who is able to wear a mask to do so while inside the Church and to use the on-line signup sheet to sign up for Sunday and Feast Day services. We will only be allowed 50% capacity (45 people). **We will not be asking for proof of vaccination.**

For pastoral care, please contact:

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This Bulletin is a publication of:

HOLY NATIVITY ORTHODOX CHURCH

4828 216A Street, Langley, BC V3A 2N5

*Thank you for your presence today!*

## PRAYERS FOR THE DEPARTED

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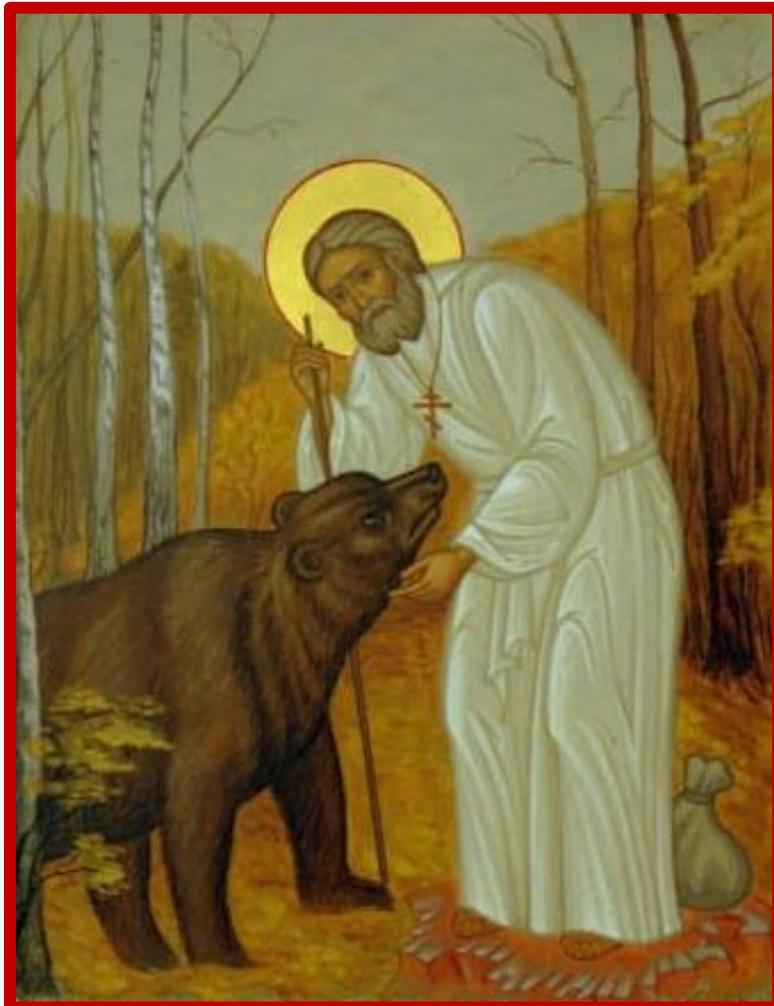
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## PRAYERS FOR THE LIVING

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Icon: St. Seraphim of Sarov

**Readings for the Week:** **Mon.** 1Tim. 3:13-16; 4:1-5. Mt. 3:1-6; **Tue.** 1Cor. 4:9-16. Jhn. 1:18-28; **Wed.** 1Cor. 9:19-27. Luk. 3:1-18; **Thu.** Tit. 2:11-14; 3:4-7. Mt. 3:13-17; **Fri.** Act. 19:1-8. Jhn. 1:29-34; **Sat.** Eph. 6:10-17. Mt. 4:1-11.