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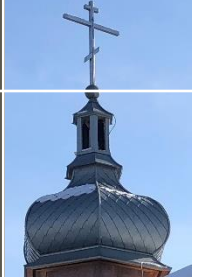
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Kootenay Spotlight

Cranbrook's Situation Table

BC Situation Tables are strategic groups of front-line workers from a broad range of organizations and services. Cranbrook held its first official Situation Table meeting in December 2023, and will continue to meet every Tuesday in 2024.

Participants of the situation table range from police officers, health services, housing, mental health support, addiction services, community supports, diverse abilities, education, women's services, community corrections, Indigenous services, faith-based organizations, public services, and more.

Situation Tables help front line staff to identify vulnerable people and collaboratively and rapidly connect them to services before they experience a negative or traumatic event (for example, victimization, overdose, eviction, etc.). Situation Tables empower agencies to reduce a broad range of risks that can impact a person's well-being and safety with immediate, appropriate, and coordinated responses to reduce or eliminate risk in a timely manner.



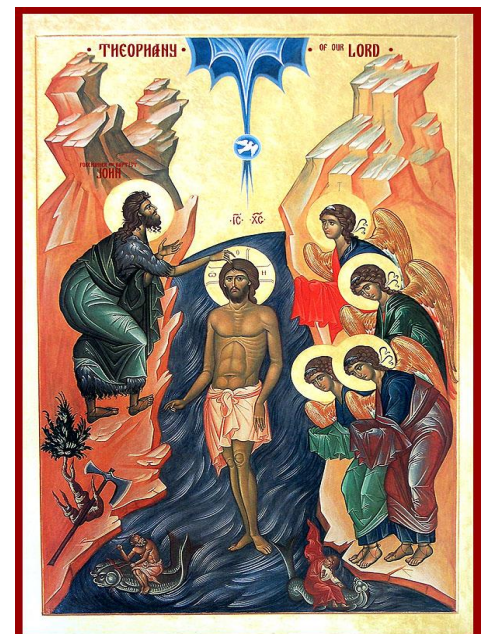
Father's Desk: The Feast of Theophany

With the feast! Theophany is one of the most ancient feasts celebrated by the Church. The Creator and king of all comes to us, not being revealed in a great coronation ceremony or royal coming out event, but quietly coming to His forerunner John, to be baptized with the crowds. He, the only sinless one, who had no need to be baptized, willingly goes into the waters and in entering the water, renews all waters and all of creation, trampling on the heads of the serpents, those who hate and seek to destroy us.

We come out of the baptismal waters completely cleansed and clothed in a robe of light, our garment of salvation, which remains with us. All is renewed! However, it is inevitable that our wonderful robe of light, shining with the glory of Christ Himself, will start to collect some stains as we travel through life. All of us, to varying degrees, through our carelessness and foolishness and lack of understanding, have fallen short of the glory of God and stained our most precious treasure, the robe of salvation.

Each of these stains block a little of the ineffable light radiating from our baptismal robe. If we allow these stains to accumulate, and never stop to have them washed off – through the cleansing action of our tears of repentance and confession, and the grace of God's forgiveness – it can almost seem as if the gentle glowing illumination of our baptismal gown has

been extinguished by the layers of stains we have allowed to accumulate. I have good news! The robe is still in place, glowing with the indistinguishable light of Christ. But we need to come to Christ, who clothed us at our baptism, and allow Him to wash away the stains. Then once again the wonderful splendour and light from our garment of salvation, will begin to noticeably shine forth. This is an ongoing process, and as we start to be more careful about not adding more stains, the pure light of our Lord can quickly cleanse and renew our baptismal gowns. This is Theosis, uniting with Christ!



Forerunner John



In the Orthodox Church it is customary, on the day following the Great Feasts of the Lord and the Mother of God, to remember those saints who participated directly in the sacred event. So, on the day following the Theophany of the Lord, the Church honors the one who participated directly in the Baptism of Christ, placing his own hand upon the head of the Savior.

Saint John, the holy Forerunner and Baptist of the Lord, whom the Lord called the greatest of the prophets, concludes the history of the Old Testament and opens the era of the New Testament. The holy Prophet John bore witness to the Only-Begotten Son of God, incarnate in the flesh. Saint John was accounted worthy to baptize Him in the waters of the Jordan, and he was a witness of the Theophany of the Most Holy Trinity on the day of the Savior's Baptism.



Perogy Making Nights

Date and Time to be announced.

We are having our second perogy making session in our new Church kitchen this month. We will be having one per month in order to make enough perogies for the dinners and to sell frozen in bags.

Please let Joanna or Fr Andrew know if you are planning on coming, and if you could bring any of the following:

- A mixer
- flat pans
- rolling pins

Upcoming Events >>>

January 2024

Fri, January 5: 6pm – Great Vespers with Great Blessing of the Water

Sat, January 6: 9am – Divine Liturgy of the Holy Theophany

: 10:30am – Blessing of Joseph Creek

: 4pm – Family Vespers

Sun, January 7: 10:30am - Divine Liturgy, Forerunner John

Fri, January 12: 6:30pm – Perogy Making Night

Sat, January 13: 6:30pm - Readers Vespers

Sun, January 14: 10:30am – Divine Liturgy, Leavetaking of Theophany

January 20: 6pm – Great Vespers

January 21: 10:30am – Divine Liturgy

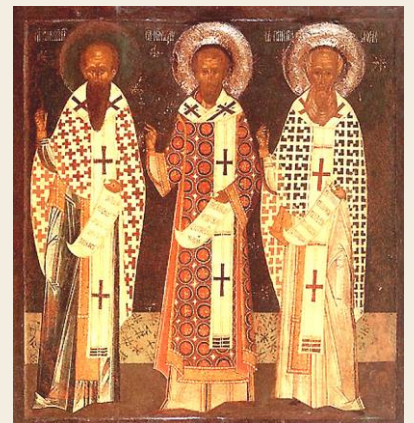
January 27: 6pm - Great Vespers

January 28: 10:30am - Divine Liturgy

: 1:30pm – AGM

Tues, January 30: 9am – Divine Liturgy, the Three Hierarchs

Wed, January 31: 7pm - Book Study



Church School

The center of worship for a family is often the home, perhaps the holiest place there is. The home is where you gather with family to eat, to raise a family, to read the word of God. After Theophany, the home also becomes a center of celebration during the annual house blessings. This service is not only a time for a family to gather and renew the home as a holy site; it can also become an opportunity for the parish community to rejoice in the Lord together, with communal house blessings.



Families in close geographic proximity can join together, with one central family organizing the evening and the logistics, and then give Fr. Andrew the itinerary, since it is difficult to organize this type of event one person at a time. On a designated schedule, Fr. Andrew blesses the first houses and then all of the families gather at the final destination. There, a large group is present for the house blessing and also for the potluck dinner immediately following.

This can be a very successful opportunity for networking and meeting new families. This also provides an opportunity to sit down together at the table in homes we may never have visited before, and is a wonderful time to learn more about each other. Certainly, relationships are strengthened and new friendships forged.

Grouping the blessings allows Fr. Andrew to bless up to four houses in one night and still have dinner! It is wise to group two to four families in one evening, and to organize by geographic areas, to alleviate Fr. Andrew's driving time in winter conditions. It is also important to communicate that this is not mandatory, but an opportunity for fellowship.

oca.org

Questions Answered >>>

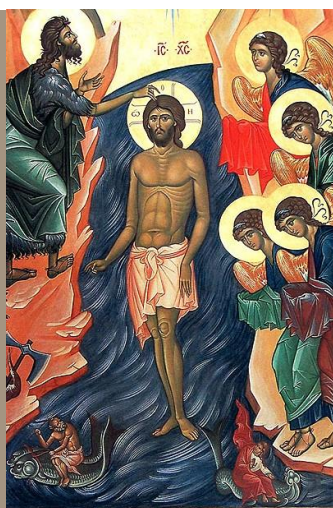
Q: *Why are there people riding fish on the Theophany icon?*

These figures represent the Jordan River and the Sea, both fleeing at the sight of something much bigger and greater than themselves entering the water.

A:

As the Psalms say:

- **Psalm 113:3** – *The sea beheld and fled, [the River] Jordan turned back.*



Church Youth

Adventures in Holy Water

Three important messages are contained in this essay on ancientfaith.com:

1 During the Blessing of Water, a leak occurs, and Fr. R says “It’s maybe not such a bad thing for the water to leak out. We are always trying to contain God in our little boxes. The whole point of Theophany is celebrating that God enters into our earthly existence in ways that are unexpected. He’s always pushing out of the boxes we try to put Him in, so that He can bless, save and show love to more and more of His creatures. So let the water go, and let it bless whomever it comes across. At least it will remind us that God doesn’t live in a box—or a font.”

2 Do I believe holy water cures the common cold? Or cancer? It strikes me that the “perfect cure” for all ailments is not necessarily the essence of sacredness. Miracles do happen sometimes, but I wonder if true holiness is not the ability to *rid* life of sorrow, but rather the gift of learning to endure it with grace, to see behind the veil of earthly struggle the reality of God’s goodness and eternity.

3 Theophany—and the blessing of the waters—teaches me to be more mindful of water. This is no small feat, considering that in our western world we have the “luxury” of interacting with water in a completely mindless way if we want to. We don’t have to labor our way down to the nearest cistern when we want a drink. We are told that God distinguished water from land in the beginning, that He blessed all the corners of creation and called this world “good.” We do not pollute something we believe is precious. On some level, then, we have lost the belief that our world is good or worth taking care of. Read the full essay [here](#).

Outreach Ministry Updates ...

Family Vespers

January 6 at 4pm!

Everyone is welcome to join us at Family Vespers, always the first Saturday of each month.

On Saturday, Jan. 6th, we will have the Theophany Divine Liturgy service at 9am, and then will be Blessing Joseph Creek at 10:30am.



After Great Vespers at 4pm, we will be eating pizza together, and doing puzzles/activities.

Please invite friends and family to come with you to Family Vespers!

Orthodox Faith Study

January 31, 7pm to 8:30pm

Join us on Wednesday evenings, beginning Jan. 31st

Held at the Church in the form of a public lecture and then a Q and A session. Open to all. Invite your friends!

House Blessings

Please give Fr. Andrew a call to arrange a time for a house blessing. (Read the Church School article on pg. 3 for a house blessing idea)

Annual General Meeting

January 28, 1pm – 3pm

Please plan to attend as we need most of our parish present in order to hold the meeting. Member Forms will be sent home ahead of time for you to fill out. (Forms will also be available at the meeting).

On the agenda this year are items such as fundraising and the second annual summer camp.



coming soon >>>

In The Next Issue

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Theophany and the Blessing of Waters

Youth Group Update

Church School Update

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Social Media Links

Website: saintaidan.ca

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