



# The Sunday after Epiphany

## Class Structure

- 1: Lords Prayer English & Greek
- 2: Apolytikion 1<sup>st</sup> for Epiphany Jan 6th
- 3: Gospel Reading, discussion and explanation
- 4: Info on the Ecumenical Council of the week
- 5: Answer Questions in Class
- 6: Practice the Creed until learned by memory Greek & English
- 7: Interactive board work

## 2: Epiphany of our Lord ( January 6<sup>th</sup> ) *Sing with the Class*

### **Apolytikion. First Tone.**

When You were baptized in the Jordan, O Lord, the worship of the Trinity was revealed. For the voice of the Father bore witness to You, calling You His beloved Son. And the Spirit in the form of a dove confirmed the certainty of His word. O Christ our God, who has appeared and enlightened the world, glory be to You.

### **Ἀπολυτίκιον Ἦχος α'**

Ἐν Ἰορδάνῃ βαπτιζομένου σου Κύριε, ἡ τῆς Τριάδος ἐφανερώθη προσκύνησις· τοῦ γὰρ Γεννήτορος ἡ φωνὴ προσεμαρτύρει σοι, ἀγαπητὸν σε Υἱὸν ὀνομάζουσα, καὶ τὸ Πνεῦμα ἐν εἵδει περιστερᾶς, ἐβεβαίου τοῦ λόγου τὸ ἀσφαλές. Ὁ ἐπιφανεῖς Χριστὲ ὁ Θεός, καὶ τὸν κόσμον φωτίσας δόξα σοι.

### 3: Gospel Reading, discussion and explanation

#### *The Gospel for 01-08-2023*

*(Get a Student to Read) Ask who wants to read the Gospel*

## **Matthew 4:12-17** *(New King James Version)*

### **Jesus Begins His Galilean Ministry**

**12** Now when Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, He departed to Galilee.

He left because he knew it was his time to preach and teach the world. He specifically went to Galilee because it was a community with many Gentiles. Non-Jews, People that did not know God or anything, were lost.

**13** And leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali,

**14** that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying:

**15** *“The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, By the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles:*

**16** *The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, And upon those who sat in the region and shadow of death Light has dawned.”*

Isaiah prophesied metaphorically that Christ would come into this area and be a light to the people in darkness (*Gentiles*). **Who are the gentiles that are darkened or separated from God?** They are us, our family, our friends, and people in the world. As Christ came to be the light to the world, so should we be the light to our family, friends, and the world. **What separates us from God? Sin What is sin?** Sin is anything that separates us from God. **Can anyone tell me some examples of sin?** (*Wait for the class's response and talk to them briefly.*) **Where do we look for God?** We must first look inside ourselves in quietness because that's where God is.

**(Exodus 33:20-23)** God said, **20 “You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live.” 21 And the LORD said, “Here is a place by Me, and you shall stand on the rock. 22 So it shall be, while My glory passes by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock, and will cover you with My hand while I pass by. 23 Then I will take away My hand, and you shall see My back; but My face shall not be seen.”**

From the scriptures in the Old Testament, you can see that God is in still and quiet places. When the hesychest see the light of Christ or have been enlightened, it is while they are in prayer with God in stillness and quiet. When we focus on prayer and find the quietness of our hearts, we don't always see the things we want to see. Sometimes we see sin, the things that cloud our heart and keep it from being pure and loving. We clear the sin out to be closer to God through repentance.

**17** From that time **Jesus began to preach** and to say, **“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”**

**What does repentance mean?** Repentance expresses sincere regret or remorse about one's wrongdoing or sin. When we repent, we must ask for forgiveness, turn from sin, and do not do it anymore. **What does this mean when Jesus says the kingdom of heaven is at hand?** It means that heaven is where God is, and **Where is God?** God is everywhere at all times and in all places. We are in heaven now, but we can't feel or observe it because of our sins. Christ came and died to pay the price for our sins. It's up to us, except for his gift, to repent and turn from our sins to experience heaven now and forever. **How do we do this? What guidance do we have to make progress and do it correctly?** The hesychest use the Jesus prayer and other technics to try and see God or Christ, but ultimately it is only by the grace of God, as we saw with Moses, God intervened with his grace to allow Moses to see the back of God. Jesus tells us in **Mark 12:30-31**, <sup>30</sup> **“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. <sup>31</sup> The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these.”** To accomplish it is not easy; this is why we need help. **Prayer, fasting,** reading the **bible** daily, and having a **good spiritual father** are good places to begin. Let's discuss the four topics above.

**4 Ask questions about Gospel then explain it to the students**

## 5: Info on the Ecumenical Council of the week

### Intro to the Ecumenical Councils

In the history of Christianity, the **first seven ecumenical councils** include the following:

1	the <b>First Council of Nicaea in 325</b>
2	the <b>First Council of Constantinople in 381</b>
3	the <b>Council of Ephesus in 431</b>
4	the <b>Council of Chalcedon in 451</b>
5	the <b>Second Council of Constantinople in 553</b>
6	the <b>Third Council of Constantinople from 680–681</b>
	<b>Quinisext Council of Trullo held in 692</b> ( <i>not new but a continuation of 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup></i> )
7	the <b>Second Council of Nicaea in 787</b>

All of the seven councils were convened in Constantinople. (*modern-day Turkey*)

These seven events represented an attempt by **Church leaders** to reach an orthodox consensus, **restore peace and develop a unified Christendom**

### The Second Council of Nicaea in 787

1	<b>The Second Council of Nicaea</b> is recognized as the last of the first seven ecumenical councils by the Eastern Orthodox Church
2	It met in <b>AD 787 in Nicaea</b> ( <i>site of the First Council of Nicaea; present-day İznik, Bursa, in Turkey</i> ) to <b>restore the use and veneration of icons</b> which had been suppressed by imperial edict inside the Byzantine Empire during <b>the reign of Leo III (717–741)</b> .
3	His son, <b>Constantine V (741–775)</b> , had held <b>the Council of Hieria</b> to make the suppression official.
4	The council assembled on <b>September 24, 787</b> at the church of <b>Hagia Sophia</b> .
5	It numbered about 350 members; <b>308 bishops or their representatives signed</b> . Tarasius presided, and seven sessions were held in Nicaea.

6: *Practice the Creed until learned by memory Greek & English*

7: *Interactive board work using the Cross of Christ until bell rings*