

January 4

B. Forefeast of the Theophany

From the church hymns for this day: "The feast of light is accomplished before all in the Theophany of Christ", "come to the Jordan, let us assemble to be cleansed and to sing the Forefeast". "Leave Bethlehem for the country of Jordan, you who delight in wonders, and there you will see deeds mysteriously accomplished": "Jesus the King of all the earth", "Son of Father without Beginning", "as a man in essence, not in fantasy", "coming humbly to the son of Zechariah", "requesting baptism". "Receive in a manner fitting a slave, O Prophet John, the Deliverer of the world, and baptize the Creator for the rebirth of mortals". "Let the mountains leap for joy, let the hills vest themselves in joy, let the corrupted be prepared for divine cleansing". "Awaken O Soul, to be cleansed of passions, blossoming through offering good deeds".

Synaxis of the Seventy Holy Apostles

Besides the 12 Apostles the Lord Jesus Christ during His life had the good will to select 70 more and sent them among the cities to preach the Kingdom of God in all of them (Luke 10:1). These 70 Apostles, after the Descent of the Holy Spirit, preached Christ in different countries; one independently, the others were associates of the Twelve Apostles. Celebrating many of the seventy from the choir of the apostles separately, the Orthodox Church, for the purpose of honoring each of the seventy equally and for the protection of believers from disagreement in honoring them, today glorifies all of them together, calling this day "the Synaxis of the Holy Seventy Apostles".

In the church hymns they are glorified, as "all wise" and "all praised" "disciples of Christ", "pillars of the unshakeable Church, the foundation of piety", "the candlesticks of divine visions", enlightened "all the world with the radiance of piety" and dispersed "the darkness of atheism", "O wise Apostles, leaders of the way for the stray", caught "by words" and lifted up "out of the depths of atheism by many diversified languages, signs and wonders" confirmed "their wisdom".

The names of the 70 Apostles according to the Menology (Chetji - meniei): **James**, the brother of the Lord (Oct. 23), **Mark** the Evangelist (Apr. 25), **Luke** the Evangelist (Oct. 18), **Cleophas**, the brother of Joseph the Betrothed, **Simeon**, the son of Cleophas (Apr. 27), **Barnabas** (June 11), **Joses** or **Joseph** nicknamed **Barsabas** or **Justus** (Oct. 30), **Thaddeus** (Aug. 21), **Ananias** (Oct. 1), **Stephen** the Archdeacon (Dec. 27), **Philip** of the seven deacons (Oct. 11), **Prochorus** of the seven deacons (July 28), **Nicanorus** of the seven deacons (July 28 and Dec. 28), **Timon** of the seven deacons (July 28 and Dec. 30), **Parmenas** of the seven deacons (June 28), **Timothy** (Jan. 22), **Titus** (Aug. 25), **Philemon** (Nov. 22 and Feb. 19), **Onesimus** (Feb. 15), **Epaphras**, **Archippus** (Nov. 22 and Feb. 19),

Silas, Silvanus, Crescens or Criscus (July 30), Crispus, Epenetus (July 30), Andronicus (May 17 and July 30), Stachys, Amplius, Urban, Narcissus, Apelles or Apel (Oct. 31), Aristobulus (Oct. 31 and Mar. 16), Agabus, Rufus, Asyncritus, Phlegon (Apr. 8), Hermes (Nov. 5 and May 31), Patrobus (Nov. 5), Hermas (Apr. 8), Linus, Gaius, Philologus (Nov. 5), Lucius (Sept. 10), Jason (Apr. 28), Sosipater (Apr. 28 and Nov. 10), Olympas (Nov. 10), Tertius (Oct. 30 and Nov. 10), Erastus, Quartus or Quart (Nov. 10), Euodius (Sept. 7), Onesiphorus (Sept. 7 and Dec. 8), Clement (Nov. 25), Sosthenes (Dec. 8), Apollos (Sept. 10 and Dec. 8), Tychicus, Epaphroditus (Dec. 8), Carpus (May 26), Quadratus (Sept. 21), Mark, called John, Zenas (Sept. 7), Aristarchus (Apr. 15 and Sept. 27), Pudens, Trophimus (Apr. 15), Mark, the nephew of Barnabas, Artemas (Oct. 30), Aquila (July 14), Fortunatus, and Achaicus. For making up 72¹ 1) add to these: **Dionysius the Areopagite (Oct. 3), **Simeon**, nicknamed **Niger** (Acts 13, 1).**

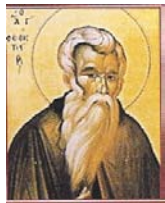
Kontakion, tone 4

**O Faithful, let us praise the choir of the Seventy Disciples of Christ,
And let us hymn them in songs.
For they all taught us to consider the Trinity undivided, //
And are the divine shining lights of our Faith**

Epistle: Rom. 8: 2-13; sel. 96. **Gospel:** Luke 10: 1-15; sel. 50.

If January 4 falls: 1) on a Saturday, at the liturgy the Epistle and Gospel are for the Saturday before Theophany; 2) on a Sunday, the Epistle and Gospel are for the Sunday before Theophany (Typikon (Ustav) for Dec. 26).

Our Venerable Father Theoctistus, abbot at Cucomo, Sicily



The Venerable Theoctistus, the founder of the Monastery of St. Nicholas near Cucomo, "having destroyed subtlety by carnal abstinence", having extinguished "burning passions" with "streaming tears", having cleansed the soul "with diligent prayers and firm petitions", seems to all, "like an angel living in a body". As the "lamp" "of monastic brilliance, a known paradigm and trainer, and an unshakeable pillar", he "with a shield of words" "in the Lenten pasture" brought up his flock with his words and directed it "to a heavenly corral". "Meekness and goodness is revealed", "adorned with good deeds", Venerable Theoctistus died in peace on January 4, 800 "in venerable old age".

*Martyrs Zosimus the Hermit and Athanasius the Commentariusius,
Anchorites of Cilicia*

St. Zosimus lived in the Cilicia desert (in Minor Asia). During the terrible persecution during the reign of Diocletian, God wonderfully protected them. Athanasius was a Commentarius (that is, the Superintendent of Prisoners, keeping their records), and having seen Zosimus unharmed after terrible tortures, he accepted Christ and followed Zosimus into the desert. There among prayerful asceticism in a cleft of a rock both have peacefully turned their souls over to the Lord.

The Venerable Euthymius the New near the Monastery of St. Mocius

The Russian pilgrim Anthony says: "Not far from this monastery (that is, of St. Mocius), Father Euthymius the New, who walked about in iron chains" lies.

The Martyrs Chrysanthus and Euthymius, near the Monastery of St. Acacius

The Venerable Euthymius, Hegumen of the Vatoped and with him twelve holy monks of Vatopedi, martyred at Vatopedi in the XIII Century for accusing the Emperor Michael Palaeologus and the Patriarch John Beccus (advocate of union with the Latins) of heresy. The Igumen was drowned in the sea, and the monks were hanged.

Martyr Onuphrius

He was born in village of Gabrovo, in the Trnovo Diocese in Bulgaria of wealthy Christian parents, who named him Matthew. He was tonsured a monk in the Hilandar Monastery on Mount Athos. For his firm confession of faith in Christ and the censure of the Mohammedan religion, he was tortured and beheaded in the year 1818 on the island of Chios. His body was thrown into the sea.

St. Eustathius, the first Serbian Archbishop.

He was born in the XIII century in the Budim Province, Serbia, and accepted monasticism in the Zeta Monastery where he was the Hegumen. Here he was raised to the rank of Archbishop of Serbia. He died in peace about the year 1285. His relics today repose in a hidden place in the cathedral temple of the Archdiocese of Pec.

*S. V. Bulgakov, Handbook for Church Servers, 2nd ed., 1274 pp., (Kharkov, 1900), pp. 0009-0010
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¹ According to the explanation of some commentators the full number of the apostles was 72 and in many ancient lists and translations of the Gospel of Luke there are 72 apostles. In the service for January 4: **Caesar**, according to one, Bishop of Dyrrhachium, **Cephas** (see Gal. 2:9 about him) and **Matthias** (see Acts 1:23 about him), according to another, Bishop of Coronea (in Boeotia), are mentioned but not included in the list transmitted to us. The Holy Apostles: **Simeon**, **Timothy**, **Onesimus**, **Epaphras** and **Archippus** are not mentioned in the service.