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Great feast day of the Theophany today



The Church today commemorates the great feast day of the Theophany of Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. The Theophany is also known as the Epiphany.

According to the Gospels, about the beginning of our Lord’s 30th year, John the Forerunner, who had lived in the wilderness since childhood, received a command from God and came into the parts of the Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance unto the remission of sins.

Then our Savior came from Galilee to the Jordan, and sought and received baptism – though He was the Master and John was but a servant. Whereupon, there came to pass those marvelous deeds, great and beyond nature: the Heavens were opened, the Spirit descended in the form of a dove upon Him, and the voice was heard from the Heavens hearing witness that this was the beloved Son of God, now baptized as a man.

This great feast day in Greece, Cyprus and wherever the Greek Orthodox faithful reside around the world is commemorated in a splendorous manner with the

Sanctification of the Waters ceremony, in seas, lakes, rivers and reservoirs.

Sanctification of the Waters services throughout Hellenic world

The millennia-old commemoration of the great feast of the Holy Epiphany was again conducted at the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, Orthodoxy's Mother Church, with the Ecumenical Patriarch, His All Holiness Bartholomew I, first officiating at a Synodal Divine Liturgy at the Patriarchal cathedral of St. George in the Phanar district.

At the end of the Doxology service, the Ecumenical Patriarch performed the great sanctification and the Blessing of the Waters, by reverently casting the True Cross into the water at the nearby seafront.
Back in Greece, the Archbishop of Athens and All Greece, His Beatitude Ieronymos, expressed a wish that the recently ushered-in new year marks the last in which Theophany is celebrated amid pandemic restrictions.

His Beatitude spoke after officiating at the Blessing of the Waters ceremony at the Athens Metropolitan Cathedral.

The festal Divine Liturgy was officiated by the Church of Greece's Bishop of Oreoi, His Grace Filotheos, the First Secretary of the Holy Synod of the Autocephalous Orthodox Church of Greece.

In another corner of the country, and specifically from the extreme southeastern Aegean Island of Kastellorizo, a beacon of Hellenism that continues to illuminate the opposite coast of southwest Asia Minor, the annual Sanctification of the Waters service attracted young men from the border region of Evros, who dove into the chilly waters to retrieve the True Cross clutching the Greek flag.

The country's top political leadership also attended the splendorous Epiphany services on remote islands, with Greek President of the Republic visiting the isle of Gavdos, which lies south of Crete, and with Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis arriving on the central Aegean island of Aghios Efstratios.

Pemptousia features

In a related development, the online platform Pemptousia today live-streamed the Orthros, the Service of the Great Compline and the festal Divine Liturgy of the Theophany from the Holy Cathedral of St. George, in the Papagos district of east Athens.

The Greek Byzantine Choir, under the direction of Georgios Konstantinou, sung the services' psaltic chants.

Pemptousia has also posted several features and documentaries today on the occasion of the great feast day, including a past report by the Orthodoxia news agency to Alexandria – before the advent of the pandemic – that covered the Epiphany celebrations at the Patriarchate of Alexandria and All Africa.