



“And when Jesus was baptized, he went up immediately from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and alighting on him; and lo, a voice from heaven, saying, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.”

The feast of Theophany overwhelms us with beauty every year. Beauty and Truth, gladness and freedom. God truly reveals Himself to us within the feast of lights that rekindle in us the desire to fall in love with life and with God, to fall in love again with the poor with whom Christ resembles so strikingly in the icon we venerate. To fall in love with a new life, desired, washed and sanctified, renewed by the grace of the Son who enters the waters. The lights are incomprehensible to the invisible darkness that controls the life of man in the form of an ultimate fatality. Incomprehensible, because the lights touch us all, those who entered into the darkness and those who are about to do so. We entered being illuminated. The truth of Christ’s humility is revealed not alone but together with His obedience that is mirrored by the love of the Father, who is pleased with His Son. Together with the Holy Spirit who shares the perfect freedom, being everywhere present, He is revealed today at Theophany being aligned with the Son. This is the perfect freedom, to choose to be close to the one who loves from a lowest place.

The Jordan flows now with mercy. As much as it symbolizes the darkness in which Christ enters willingly, it cannot but flow with mercy, touching the longing desire of man for communion and unity as *“myrrh upon the head that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron’s beard that went down to the skirts of his garments.”* (Ps 133:2). Everything that is touched by the grace of the Son, by His infinity mercy, is transformed and transfigured. The bread turns into His body, water into wine, the wine into His blood, the cross, from a shameful tool of oppression into the seat of mercy, the tomb, from prison of death into a spring of life, and the heart that betrays into a heart that loves:

“You know Lord that I love you ...” (Jn 21:15).

God reveals Himself today for the sake of man. For the sake of the one who lost his value. Who lost his dignity. Who lost his life. Christ entered into this loss in which humanity was captive, by sanctifying it. What moved people collectively to the pit is changed today into a flow towards life. Being brought low by life, reaching the rock bottom, the soul becomes in that place obedient to the voice that loves you personally and infinitely, the voice of the Father. In the low

place where alienation harms the soul, the voice of the Father is magnified within the heart. Because in Christ, His voice is universally heard. Out of this place the soul is moved with freedom like a dove desiring communion with all those who are broken at heart. The Christ chooses the lowest place in the Jordan so the lowest of men can hear within his heart the voice of the Father and experience the communion of the Holy Spirit.

“The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with all of you.”

Theophany mirrors the broken community of men by healing it. If the perfect unity and communion of persons are revealed at Theophany, through the humility of the Son, the love of the Father and the communion of the Holy Spirit, the broken humanity endures the opposite: the sons of men are *“as mule whose jaws must hold with bit and bridle”* (Ps 32:9). Prodigal sons waste their inheritance through loose living (Luke 15:11-32). The kings are killing their own children (Mt 2:13) while, instead of freedom that leads to unity and blessing of life, the path that surges through the sea leads to cursing and death (Job 2:9). If the unity of communion is revealed today, the broken humanity suffers from betrayal. But what is revealed today heals the broken nature of man willingly, just as St John the Baptist is willingly touching Jesus’s head.



The beauty of God, the grace of Christ, the love of the Father and the communion of the Holy Spirit, in Christ, are revealed daily within the community by those who are heart broken. What we see revealed today within the light of the feast, we witness and testify daily within the life of the people who have lost much in their lives. Because it is Christ who entered within this loss. As broken as it may be, our community reveals within itself the signs of a healing of humanity, because God has revealed Himself to it. Theophany has been universally manifested within the broken humanity, encompassing both the past and the future. So much so, Theophany is revealed today directly and personally within our own broken community.

We are all witnesses of the humility of Christ revealed in the life of Laura. Obedience and faithfulness in the life of Joshua. Freedom in the lives of Peter and Gordon, who despite their limited mobility, choose to come every morning when the church opens. Even now, when Peter is dying, he is in the hearts and minds of all those who work and volunteer in the morning. The love of Papa for the poor, although he is young, he knows that his life is blessed because he washed the dishes where the poor man had eaten.

The community is carrying within its life the brokenness of the time we live in, becoming a daily witness of Theophany through the signs of healing it lives and experiences. A sign of the presence of God within the lives of the poor who are willingly touched and transfigured by His mercy who move together towards communion with God and with each other.

This week we were only open for a few days, and we could see that those who pursue goodness and follow the freedom of the spirit are becoming weary and tired. Healing is not conventional, and it does not replace the loss. But it moves us towards the full encounter with Christ.

At Theophany, the waters are sanctified and the grace we received through Christ is renewed. So we can rediscover and pursue within the heart mercy, even beyond life itself. We approach Theophany today with this expectation of a joy that touches all and our loss that is becoming deeper every day. We enter with the expectation of renewal of life.

	<p>St Silouan Chapel at St John's Mission 155 Broadview Ave. Toronto, ON M4M 2E9 T: 416-466-1357 E: info@stjohnsmission.org W: stjohnsmission.org</p> <p>St Zoticos Orthodox Church at Good Neighbours Mission 193 Markham Rd Scarborough, ON M1J 3C3 T: 647-358-4105</p> <p>We are an apostolate of the ecumenical patriarchate "Mother Church of Christ's poor" under the Omophorion of Metropolitan Gregory of Nyssa</p>	
--	---	---

St. Silouan Chapel, January 5, 2025

3 of 3

©2025 St. John the Compassionate Mission

www.stjohnsmission.org