

What wondrous gifts our God has given us!

The Holy Theophany of Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ

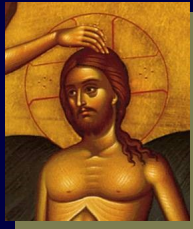
January 6

The Holy Trinity is made manifest on earth for our salvation.

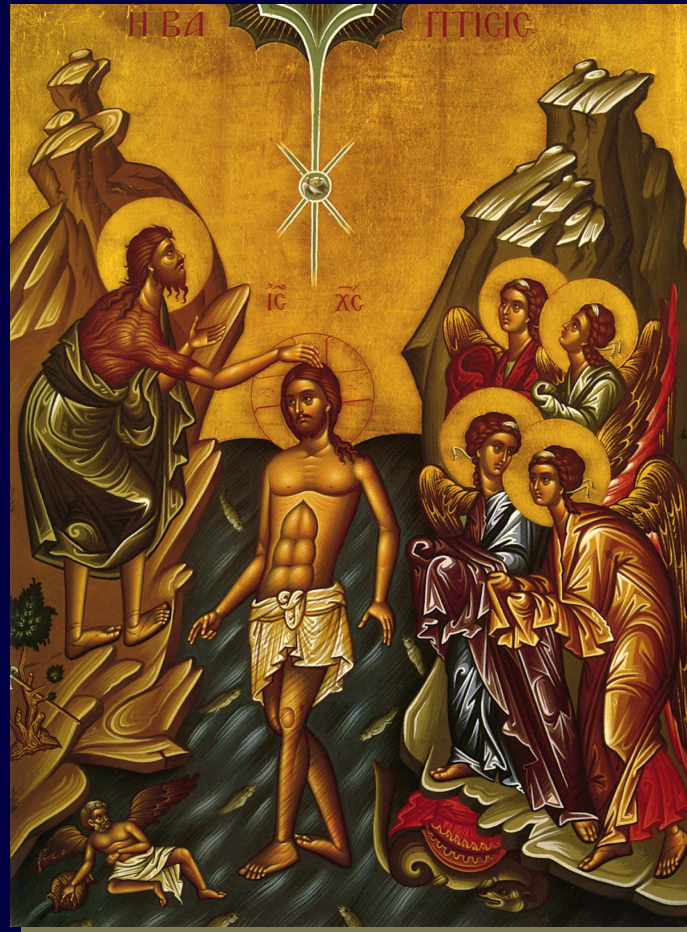
- + St. John the Baptist touches Christ's head, indicating His humanity.
- + He also gestures toward heaven with his left hand, indicating Christ's divinity.
- + It is not the Baptist who blesses Christ, but Christ who blesses St. John when he puts his hand upon His head.



- + Christ is baptized, not because He needs purification, but "to identify Himself with our purification," says St. John of Damaskos.
- + Humbly, Christ identifies with mankind, in all our brokenness.
- + His has come to earth to redeem us from our sins!



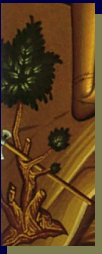
- + The voice of the Father and the Spirit, in the form of a dove, reveal Christ as one of the Holy Trinity.
- + A dove reminds us of Noah's flood. The moment of Christ's baptism indicates our release from the flood of sin.



- + Angels are shown attending to and glorifying the Lord.
- + Covered hands and bowed heads show submission to the God-made-man.
- + Their response to Our Lord and Savior is what ours is supposed to be, as well.



- + A tree bearing no good fruit is shown with an axe, ready to be cut down.
- + St. John the Baptist warns us not to be fruitless, saying, "The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire" (Matthew 3:10).
- + What a contrast to Christ's ministry, which produces every good fruit!



- + By Christ's baptism, water itself was blessed, becoming water of renewal.
- + Fish swim both down and upstream. Why? To show the Jordan River and the seas are turned back, as was foretold in Psalm 113.
- + The Jordan is represented as a man fleeing and the seas are symbolized by a sea dragon.



What can we give back?

