

To the Reverend Clergy, Monastics & Deacons,
Parish Council Members, Philoptochos Members &
Archons, our beloved youth, and all the faithful of
the Metropolis of Atlanta:

My beloved in the Lord,

I greet you with love and joy in the Name of our Lord
and Savior Jesus Christ! We are blessed to
commemorate Theophany, or Epiphany: our Lord's
Baptism by St. John the Forerunner in the Jordan
River, when all three Persons of the Holy Trinity—
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—made themselves
known to mankind; the manifestation of the Triune
God.

When our Lord consented to be baptized, it was the
fulfillment of Isaiah's Messianic prophecy
concerning both the purification and the ultimate
redemption of this world: *"Then the eyes of the blind
shall be opened and the ears of the deaf shall be
unstopped. Then the lame shall leap like a deer and the tongue of the dumb sing. For
waters shall burst forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert. And the ransomed
of the Lord shall return... They shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing
shall flee away."* (Isaiah 35:5-6, 10)

When we perform the Great Blessing of the Waters, we understand that Christ's
purification of creation is an active event, happening today, and every day. The miracle
of Theophany is a reality for all who open their hearts and receive the power of God into
their lives, glorifying the Holy Trinity who revealed themselves in the Jordan. We are
indeed blessed to be given this Feast Day to renew and strengthen our faith & devotion
to our Lord and His Holy Church.

As we receive the Holy Water, I pray that the grace and spirit of this beautiful Feast will
inspire us to serve the Lord with joy and gladness throughout the New Year 2021 and
always! I remain,

With paternal blessings and with much love in our Lord,

+ ALEXIOS
Metropolitan of Atlanta

