

**Holy Assumption Orthodox Church**  
*Celebrating 125 years witnessing to the Apostolic Faith*



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Marblehead, OH 43440

Rev. Fr. Peter Tomas, Rector

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*Holy Assumption Orthodox Church is a parish of the Orthodox Church in America,  
Diocese of the Midwest*

JANUARY 7, 2024

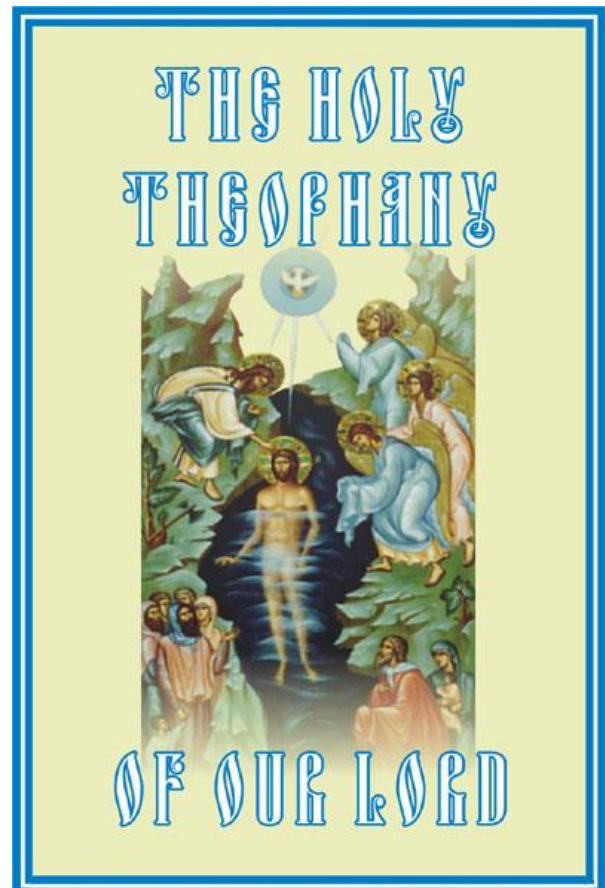
THIRTY FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST  
*SUNDAY AFTER THEOPHANY*

**EPISTLE: Galatians 4:7-13**

Brethren: To each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore, He says: "When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men." (Now this, "He ascended" – what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.) And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

**EPISTLE: Acts 19:1-8**

Brethren: It happened, while Apollos was at Corinth, that Paul, having passed through the upper regions, came to Ephesus. And finding some disciples he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" So, they said to him, "We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit." And he said to them, "Into what then were you baptized?" So they said, "Into John's baptism." Then Paul said, "John indeed baptized with a baptism



of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on Him who would come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.” When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied. Now the men were about twelve in all. And he went into the synagogue and spoke boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading concerning the things of the kingdom of God.

**GOSPEL: Matthew 4:12-17**

At that time Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, He departed to Galilee. And leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: “The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, by the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles: The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and upon those who sat in the region and shadow of death Light has dawned.” From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

**GOSPEL: John 1:29-34**

At that time John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! This is He of whom I said, ‘After me comes a Man who is preferred before me, for He was before me.’ I did not know Him; but that He should be revealed to Israel, therefore I came baptizing with water.” And John bore witness, saying, “I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him. I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’ And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God.”



**LITURGICAL SCHEDULE**

<b>MON. Jan 8</b>	Afterfeast of the Theophany; Venerable George the Chozebite, Abbot
<b>TUE. Jan 9</b>	Afterfeast of the Theophany; Martyr Polyeuktos of Melitene in Armenia
<b>WED. Jan 10</b>	Afterfeast of the Theophany; St. Gregory, Bishop of Nyssa
<b>THU. Jan 11</b>	Afterfeast of the Theophany; Ven. Theodosius the Great, the Cenobiarch
<b>FRI. Jan 12</b>	Afterfeast of the Theophany; Martyr Tatiana of Rome
<b>SAT. Jan 13</b>	Afterfeast of the Theophany; Martyrs Hermylus and Stratonicus of Belgrade
<b>4:00 PM</b>	<b>VESPERS</b>
<b>SUN. Jan 14</b>	<b>32nd SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST</b> <b>Sunday after Theophany</b> <b>Leavetaking of the Theophany</b>
<b>9:10 AM</b>	<b>HOURS</b>
<b>9:30 AM</b>	<b>DIVINE LITURGY</b> Followed by Coffee Hour





## FOR YOUR PRAYERS

Tony Monastra, 2119 Willow Cove Marblehead, OH 43440; Patti Owens, 311 Woodbridge Road, Vermilion, OH 44089; Basil Glovinsky, 1007 Glendale Drive, Port Clinton, OH 43452; Subdeacon Roger Pinta, P.O. Box 39, Middle Bass, OH 43446; Diane Tryon, 109 Joslyn Street, Arcadia, OH 44804; Ed & Irene Vangeloff, 454 Strouse Lane, Sandusky, OH 44870



## JANUARY CANDLE SPONSORS

**Altar Candles:** Fr. Peter & Mat. Michelle, For Health and God's Blessings for Barbara Wroblewski, Matushka's mother (**\$50**); **Chandelier:** Fr. Peter & Mat. Michelle, For Health and God's Blessings for Michal Tomáš, Father's father (**\$50**); **Eternal Light & Icon Screen:** Available (**\$25**); **Candles at the Cross:** Laura Kovach, Birthday blessings to Jim and Sarah (**\$20**); **Candles at St. Sophia Icon:** For Safety and Health of Nicholas, Tikhon, Gleice, & Chloe (**\$20**)



## JANUARY REPOSED

Andrew Matway (1906) No date provided; William Gratson (1908) No date provided; Eva Hritsko (1908) No date provided; Sara Rose (2005) No date provided; **3-** Mat. Marilyn Federoff (2019); **3-** Larry Naiser (2019); **3-** Elinor Williams (2021); **4-** Margaret Reavley (1965); **4-** Baby Clyde Madison (2020); **5-** Russell (2019) Heidi's relative; **5-** Donald (2019) Waynes Relative; **5-** Maria Semionow (1981); **11-** Anna Tomko (1960); **15-** Archpriest Pavel Soucek (2009) Former Pastor; **21-** Daniel Kowal (2006); **21-** Philip Kobb (2018); **23-** Helen Beadle (1988); **23-** Deborah Pribanic (2020); **25-** Jane (2019) Ron's Aunt; **25-** William "Bill" Alber (2021); **28-** Michael Tarasavage (2021); **29-** Anna Kravetz (1973); **29-** Marjorie Kowal (2003); **29-** Ernest Gresh (2020); **29-** Rick Schlotterer (2020); **30-** Anna Schofield (2021)



## VIGILS FOR DECEMBER 31

**Susan Guzy 1** Safe travel for Jim and Laura, Health & healing to Gary, Ruth, Dan & Tony

**Laura Kovach 3** Birthday blessings and many years to Jim.

Safe travel for family and friends.

For health and/or healing of James W., Patti O., Tony M., Hannah S., Barbara D., Pauline O., George K., Joe H., Margi H., Betty K., Ben F., Mark M., Dana M., Bodhi C., Sharon D., John D., Karen D., Carol & Greg, and Carol & Jim.

**Sandy Martin 2** Special intentions

**Darlene & Gabe Mazurik 1** Special intentions

**Natalie Twarek 8** First birthday blessings to Brexly, Safe travel for Laura and Jim, Birthday blessing to Jim, For the health of Ruth, For health and recovery of Rita Mumea, Health and healing for Father's dad Michal and Matushka's mom Barbara, For the health and recovery of Basil, Diane, Tony, Jim & Rick, For the health of Bev, Roger, Ed, Irene, Father David, Marilyn, Pauline, Judy, Mimi, Tina, Ron, Carole, Gary, Sharon, Kurt, Leslie, Amber, Zach, Dottie, Jamie, Helen Lis and Tina's dad, Earl, Tom, Sonya, Margi & Joe, Betty, Jackie, MaryAnn & Bob, Chuck, Bodhi, Stella, Jake, Pat



## PRAYER LIST

**Parishioners & Family:** Patti Owens / Tony Monastra / Barbara Wroblewski / Michal Tomáš / Ruth / Basil Glovinsky / Dale / Sophie / Jeanne Smith / Carol / David Martin / Fred Soski / Chris Hannon /

Subdeacon Roger Pinta / Ed Vangeloff / Irene Vangeloff / Diane Tryon / Sonja Rose / Ron Royhab / James Bargdill / John Beadle / Carole Conaway / Gary Conaway / Sharon Dietrich / Michael Glovinsky / Shirley Gresh / Joseph Habegger / Elaine Hileman / Betty Kovach / Helen Lis / Child Stella Miller / William Pipenur / Earl Rindfleisch / Helen Jean Rofkar / George Royhab / Marianne Royhab / Stephanie Royhab / Kathy Jacob / the child Bodhi Cassell / Gleice, her unborn baby & Chloe / Gabrielle and her newborn Josey / Carol / Debbie & Marco / Nora. **Other Requests:** Rita Mumea / Charles Schlett / Kathy Debevits / Maxwell Chaney / Sidharth Bijilani – friend of Subdeacon Roger and Debbie Pinta / Anthony / Archpriest David Lis / Bishop Matthias / Archpriest Emilian & Matushka Laryssa Hutnyan / Kurt Franck / Ben Franklin / Donald Gresh / Mark Ludvik / Robert Piznar / Mark Masica / Valerie Ritzenthaler / William / Rick Rowe / Chuck Wiedenhoft / Chris. **Military:** Craig Cassell / Jake Ellithorpe / Jordon Fulton / Justin Issler / Tikhon / Nicholas / & All Military

## ATTENDANCE



12/30 Vespers, 9 attending; 12/31 Divine Liturgy, 25 attending (4 Guests); 12/31 Vespers, 7 attending; 01/01 Divine Liturgy 13 attending

## READERS LIST



Sunday Jan 7 – Natalie  
 Sunday Jan 14 – Jake  
 Sunday Jan 21 – Tim  
 Sunday Jan 28 – Ron

## SUNDAY OFFERING



### Sunday, December 31, 2023

Tithe	\$ 845.00
Candles	\$ 37.00
Vigils	\$ 60.00
Donations	\$ 50.00
Chandelier	\$ 50.00
Altar Candles	\$ 50.00
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$1,092.00</b>

*May the Lord reward you for your financial and spiritual support!*

## JANUARY BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES



7 – Susan Guzy; 13 – Mary Blackford; 13 – Roger & Debby Pinta Anniversary; 16 – Matushka Michelle Tomas

## CHARITY OF THE MONTH



“OCMC Support a Priest” is the charity we donate to for the month of January.

## UP-COMING EVENTS IN OUR PARISH – MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

**Jan. 28<sup>th</sup>** Potluck followed by Annual Parish Meeting

**Feb. 2<sup>nd</sup>** MEETING OF OUR LORD IN THE TEMPLE (Friday)



**Mar. 18<sup>th</sup>** Beginning of the Great Fast (*Monday*)

- Consider sponsoring a Sunday coffee hour following the Divine Liturgy



## **ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

The Annual Parish Meeting of our parish will be held on **Sunday, January 28<sup>th</sup>**, following the Divine Liturgy. All voting members in good standing are encouraged not only to attend this vitally important meeting, but also to constructively participate. Please mark this on your calendars, and prepare for the meeting by prayer, fasting, and receiving Holy Confession and Holy Communion. This is the second announcement.

### ***To Be a Voting Member in Good Standing***

The Parish Bylaws of the Diocese of the Midwest, Orthodox Church in America, defines a "voting member in good standing:"

- a) is a Baptized and Chrismated Orthodox Christian;
- b) is at least 18 years of age;
- c) partakes of the Sacraments of Private Confession and Communion in one's home parish at least once a year;
- d) has been a member of the Parish for a prior consecutive six (6) month period; and
- e) regularly fulfills such financial obligation as established by the All-American Councils, Diocesan Assemblies, and the Parish, which obligations may be adjusted or waived by the Rector in consultation with the Parish Council. (*Article II, Section 2*)

If there is any question regarding your status as a "voting member in good standing," please contact Ron Royhab and Fr. Peter at your earliest convenience.

We kindly ask that the following reports be prepared and submitted to Fr. Peter about two weeks before the meeting so they can be copied and distributed:

- President's Report (Ron)
- All Financial Reports including Fundraising (Joe)
- Cemetery and Envelopes Reports (Natalie)
- Baking Report (Tina)
- 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Report (Laura or Ron)



## **CLEANING SCHEDULE**

Jan 2, Basil & Tim  
Jan 8, Susan  
Jan 15, Jean  
Jan 22, Stephanie



## **THEOPHANY – THE ANNUAL BLESSING OF HOMES**

Between the Feast of Theophany and the beginning of the Great Fast (Lent), it is customary in our Holy Church to have our homes blessed by the parish priest with the Holy Water sanctified on this glorious Feast Day. This is an ancient tradition of the Orthodox Church and through it we extend the "Blessing of Jordan" into our homes and private places.

This Blessing of our homes underscores and enhances the connection between our parish life and our “Home Church.” It also gives us and our children an opportunity to see our priest in a more personal setting. All of this strengthens our relationship with God and His Holy Church.

### **Why do we bless houses year after year?**

Christ, by entering the Jordan, sanctified it, and with it all creation. Material creation once again became “very good” as it was in the beginning. The central sign of God’s sanctification of all things through the feast of Theophany is the act of blessing the homes of faithful Christians.

The priest visits members of the Church to pray with them in the place where they live, and to bless their surroundings with Holy Water. He asks God to have mercy on the house, to rid it of every evil and to fill it with every blessing. Thus, the house itself, together with the living persons of the family, is “filled with all the fullness of God.”

*Parishioners who wish to have their house blessed are asked to fill out the form, which can be found in the vestibule. Each household that requests this blessing will be contacted by phone to schedule the mutual convenient time.*



### **HOLY WATER**

You may take some Holy Water home for your private use at any time. Just bring your own container and help yourself. The Holy Water Font is in the church and easily accessible.

### **CHARITIES FOR 2024**

During this year of 2024 we will be donating to the following charities:

**January** - OCMC Support a Priest

**February** - St. Vladimir Seminary

**March** - Mission Boxes (Danbury Food Pantry)

**April** - Lions Club/Diabetes

**May** - Baby Bottles (Heartbeat of Port Clinton)

**June** - St. Tikhon Seminary

**July** - Respect for Life Ministries

**August** - St. Herman's Seminary

**September** - Support our Seminarians

**October** - Danbury Holiday Bureau

**November** - St. Herman House

**December** - Bistro 163

### **CANDLES SPONSORING**

We would like to offer you an opportunity to sponsor candles which are burning continually or during the Divine Liturgy. You may make your monthly sponsoring for the memory of your loved ones deceased or for the health of your living relatives and friends. The following is the list of the candles that may be sponsored:

- Altar candles Monthly offering **\$50.00**
- Eternal Light and the candles at the iconostas – Monthly offering **\$25.00**
- candelabra at the cross – Monthly offering **\$20.00**
- candelabra at the icon of St. Sophia/ St. Tikhon – Monthly offering **\$20.00**
- candles at the tetrapod (at the icon of the Dormition and the icon(s) of the feast day(s) throughout the year – Monthly offering **\$40.00**, or **\$20.00** per one candle
- chandelier – Monthly offering **\$50.00**

Thank you in advance for your sponsorship and your generosity!



### **NEW VESTMENTS – SPONSORS NEEDED**

We would like to bring to your attention that our parish acquired a new set of matching vestments for altar servers and priest in gold color from Ukraine. The set will be blessed and worn for the first-time next Sunday, January 14<sup>th</sup>. If you would like to sponsor this beautiful set, in memory of your loved ones or for any special intention, please see Fr. Peter. The cost of the entire set including the shipping from Ukraine was \$450.00 (which would be the cost of one server's sticharion here in the USA). *We thank you in advance for your consideration and your generosity! Our goal is to replace all old vestments and especially the old altar linens in the near future.*



### **NEW CHRISTMAS GOSPEL BOOKMARK – SPONSORS NEEDED**

We would like to ask you if you would like to sponsor a new Gospel Bookmark for the Nativity of Our Lord (Christmas), which is used to mark Gospel readings during the Christmas and Theophany Season. The Bookmark was made and embroidered in Ukraine for the price of \$60.00. If you have a loved ones whom you would like to commemorate during the Christmas and Theophany season, or have some special intention for that season and would like to sponsor this Gospel bookmark, please see Fr. Peter. *We thank you in advance for your consideration and your generosity!*



### **Feast of the Theophany of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ**

Commemorated on January 6

Theophany is the Feast which reveals the Most Holy Trinity to the world through the Baptism of the Lord (Mt.3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-22). God the Father spoke from Heaven about the Son, the Son was baptized by Saint John the Forerunner, and the Holy Spirit descended upon the Son in the form of a dove.

From ancient times this Feast was called the Day of Illumination and the Feast of Lights, since God is Light and has appeared to illumine “those who sat in darkness,” and “in the region of the shadow of death” (Mt.4:16), and to save the fallen race of mankind by grace.

In the ancient Church it was the custom to baptize catechumens at the Vespers of Theophany, so that Baptism also is revealed as the spiritual illumination of mankind.

The origin of the Feast of Theophany goes back to Apostolic times, and it is mentioned in The Apostolic Constitutions (Book V:13). From the second century we have the testimony of Saint Clement of Alexandria concerning the celebration of the Baptism of the Lord, and the night vigil before this Feast.

There is a third century dialogue about the services for Theophany between the holy martyr Hippolytus and Saint Gregory the Wonderworker. In the following centuries, from the fourth to ninth century, all the great Fathers of the Church: Gregory the Theologian, John Chrysostom, Ambrose of Milan, John of Damascus, commented on the Feast of Theophany.

The monks Joseph the Studite, Theophanes and Byzantios composed much liturgical music for this Feast, which is sung at Orthodox services even today. Saint John of Damascus said that the Lord was baptized, not because He Himself had need for cleansing, but “to bury human sin by water,” to fulfill the Law, to reveal the mystery of the Holy Trinity, and finally, to sanctify “the nature of water” and to offer us the form and example of Baptism.

On the Feast of the Baptism of Christ, the Holy Church proclaims our faith in the most sublime mystery, incomprehensible to human intellect, of one God in three Persons. It teaches us to confess and glorify the Holy Trinity, one in Essence and Undivided. It exposes and overthrows the errors of ancient teachings which attempted to explain the Creator of the world by reason, and in human terms.

The Church shows the necessity of Baptism for believers in Christ, and it inspires us with a sense of deep gratitude for the illumination and purification of our sinful nature. The Church teaches that our salvation and cleansing from sin is possible only by the power of the grace of the Holy Spirit, therefore it is necessary to preserve worthily these gifts of the grace of holy Baptism, keeping clean this priceless garb, for “As many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ” (Gal 3:27).

On the day of Theophany, all foods are permitted, even if the Feast falls on a Wednesday or Friday.



### **Synaxis of the Holy Glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John** Commemorated on January 7

In the Orthodox Church it is customary, on the day following the Great Feasts of the Lord and the Mother of God, to remember those saints who participated directly in the sacred event. So, on the day following the Theophany of the Lord, the Church honors the one who participated directly in the Baptism of Christ, placing his own hand upon the head of the Savior.

Saint John, the holy Forerunner and Baptist of the Lord, whom the Lord called the greatest of the prophets, concludes the history of the Old Testament and opens the era of the New Testament. The holy Prophet John bore witness to the Only-Begotten Son of God, incarnate in the flesh. Saint John was accounted worthy to baptize Him in the waters of the Jordan, and he was a witness of the Theophany of the Most Holy Trinity on the day of the Savior’s Baptism.

The holy Prophet John, the son of the Priest Zachariah and Righteous Elizabeth, was related to the Lord on His mother’s side. The holy Forerunner, John, was born six months before Christ. The Archangel Gabriel announced his birth in the Temple at Jerusalem, revealing to Zachariah that a son was to be born to him.

Through the prayers offered beforehand, the child was filled with the Holy Spirit. Saint John prepared himself in the wilds of the desert for his great service by a strict life, by fasting, prayer and sympathy for the fate of God’s people.

At the age of thirty, he came forth preaching repentance. He appeared on the banks of the Jordan, to prepare the people by his preaching to accept the Savior of the world. In church hymnology, Saint John is called a “bright morning star,” whose gleaming outshone the brilliance of all the other stars,



announcing the coming dawn of the day of grace, illumined with the light of the spiritual Sun, our Lord Jesus Christ.

Having baptized the sinless Lamb of God, Saint John soon died a martyr's death, beheaded by the sword on orders of King Herod at the request of his daughter Salome. (On Saint John the Baptist, see Mt.3:1-16, 11:1-19, 14:1-12; Mark 1:2-8, 6:14-29; Luke 1:5-25, 39-80, 3:1-20, 7:18-35, 9:7-9; John 1:19-34, 3:22-26).

### **The Transfer of the Right Hand of the holy Forerunner from Antioch to Constantinople (956) and the Miracle of Saint John the Forerunner against the Hagarenes (Moslems) at Chios:**

The body of Saint John the Baptist was buried in the Samaritan city of Sebaste. The holy Evangelist Luke, who went preaching Christ in various cities and towns, came to Sebaste, where they gave him the right hand of the holy Prophet John, the very hand with which he had baptized the Savior. The Evangelist Luke took it with him to his native city of Antioch.

When the Moslems seized Antioch centuries later, a deacon named Job brought the holy hand of the Forerunner from Antioch to Chalcedon. From there, on the eve of the Theophany of the Lord, it was transferred to Constantinople (956) and kept thereafter.

In the year 1200, the Russian pilgrim Dobrynya, who later became Saint Anthony, Archbishop of Novgorod (February 10), saw the right hand of the Forerunner in the imperial palace. From the Lives of the Saints we learn that in the year 1263, during the capture of Constantinople by the Crusaders, the emperor Baldwin gave one bone from the wrist of Saint John the Baptist to Ottonus de Cichon, who then gave it to a Cistercian abbey in France.

The right hand continued to be kept in Constantinople. And at the end of the fourteenth to the beginning of the fifteenth centuries, the holy relic was seen at Constantinople in the Peribleptos monastery by the Russian pilgrims Stephen of Novgorod, the deacon Ignatius, the cantor Alexander and the deacon Zosimus. When Constantinople fell to the Turks in 1453, sacred objects were gathered up at the conqueror's orders and kept under lock in the imperial treasury.

In the Lives of the Saints is clear testimony that in the year 1484 the right hand of the holy Forerunner was given away by the son of the Moslem sultan Bayazet to the knights of Rhodes to gain their good will, since a dangerous rival for Bayazet, his own brother, had allied himself with them. A contemporary participant, the vice-chancellor of Rhodes, Wilhelm Gaorsan Gallo, also speaks of this event. The knights of Rhodes, having established their base on the island of Malta (in the Mediterranean Sea), then transferred the sacred relic they had received to Malta.

When the Russian Tsar Paul I (1796-1801) became Grand Master of the Maltese Order in honor of the holy Prophet John, the right hand of the Baptist, part of the Life-Creating Cross and the Philermos Icon (October 12) of the Mother of God (from Mt Philermos on the island of Rhodes) were transferred in 1799 from the island of Malta to Russia [because of the Napoleonic threat], to the chapel at Gatchina (October 12). In the same year these sacred items were transferred into the church dedicated to the Icon of the Savior Not Made by Hands at the Winter Palace. A special service was composed for this Feast.

Besides the Synaxis of the honorable, glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John, the Russian Orthodox Church celebrates his memory on the following days: September 23, his Conception; June 24, his Nativity; August 29, his Beheading; February 24, the First and Second Finding of his Head; May 25, the Third Finding of his Head; October 12, the Transfer of his Right Hand from Malta to Gatchina (1799).