

# ORTHODOX NEWS



January - March 2013

*Patriarchate of Alexandria and all Africa  
Archbishopric of Good Hope (Cape Town)*



**The Greek consul in Cape Town, Mir K Soulios, cuts the Vasilopita at the Cathedral of Saint**



On 1 January 2013, the civil New Year was marked in the Church of the Holy Archangels Michael and Gabriel in George with the Vasilopita Blessing.

On 1 January, the beginning of the civil new year was marked by the Divine Liturgy at Saint George's Cathedral, Cape Town. His Eminence, Archbishop Sergios, opened his address to the congregation by underlining that the first day of January is not only the start of a new year, but also the day on which we commemorate the Circumcision of our Lord Jesus Christ who came in to the world to guide us on how to lead our lives as Christians.

On the first day of January the Church also commemorates Saint Basil the Great, one of the greatest and most important pillars of our Orthodox Church. St Basil grew up in a family which numbers among its members several illustrious saints - both men and women.

He was well educated in the Greek classics. A learned philosopher, who compared Greek Philosophy with the teachings of Christ.

He abandoned the secular arena and passionately devoted himself to serving Christ.

# Sunday, 6 January

## The great feast of the Theophany of Our Lord Jesus Christ

This feast, on which we commemorate Christ's baptism by Saint John the Baptist in the River Jordan, the feast marks the public manifestation of Jesus Christ and the beginning of His ministry. In the Nativity we celebrated the Incarnation of Christ and His coming among us. In His Theophany (sometimes called Epiphany), His true identity is revealed and His glory shines forth for the entire world to see.



When thou was baptised in the Jordan, O Lord, the worship of the Trinity was made manifest; For the voice of the Father bare witness to Thee, Calling Thee His Beloved Son. And the Spirit in the form of a dove confirmed the certainty of the word.

O Christ our God, who hast appeared and has enlightened the world, glory be to Thee.

**Troparion for Theophany.**



**Cathedral of Saint George  
Cape Town**



**Church of the Holy Archangels  
Gabriel and Michael**



**Church of Saint George  
East London**

On January 6, Orthodox priests throughout the world throw crosses, symbolic of Jesus' crucifixion, into bodies of water, symbolic of His baptism. This is called the Blessing of the Waters. Volunteers jump into the water to retrieve the Cross. The priest, according to tradition, prays a blessing on the person who gets the cross to the Cross first and brings it back to him.



**Demetrius Kapoutsis  
receives a blessing from  
His Eminence Archbishop Sergios**



**Diving for the cross  
East London**



**Pericle Vougdis receives a  
blessing from  
Archimandrite Evlogios**

**Thursday, 10 January 2013**

On Thursday, 10 January, we were pleased to welcome Professor Renos Papadopoulos of Essex University in the UK to deliver a lecture on death and bereavement from both an Orthodox and a psychological perspective. The meeting was well attended by about 150 people and was followed by a lively discussion.

**In Summary:**

Professor Papadopoulos began by noting how our modern society has given rise to a culture of specialisation in which we tend to "outsource" many aspects of our lives. While this might be appropriate for computers, when it comes to the care of human beings it can have serious consequences for our lives. Earlier generations often cared for the sick at home, with people dying in their own beds, and the entire family taking care of them and learning to appreciate death as a part of life and as a preparation for eternal life. The care of the dying, and the reverence shown to their bodies after death, went together with prayer for them, both as they were dying, at the funeral and in the memorial services after their death.

However, with the rise of our technological and increasingly specialised society, we have lost this natural contact with death. Instead we find a denial of death and yet at the same time a morbid fascination with it. Yet at the same time, people continue to feel the need for some sort of rituals for the dead, although these are often divorced from a real care for the dead. Praying for the dead needs to go together with a genuine respect and care for them, and with a proper appreciation of death. As Christians death is not something to be avoided, but rather, the awareness of death should help us to prepare for eternal life.

In thanking Professor Papadopoulos after the lecture His Eminence Archbishop Sergios said that the Church is called to pray and to care for all people. Alluding to the lively discussion on the Church's prohibition of cremation following the lecture, His Eminence stressed that this is rooted in our understanding of the human person and the care which we owe to the dead. Our prayer for the dead should be of one piece with the way we treat them both during their lives, as they die and after their death and the various services of the Church, and our private prayers for the departed, cannot be separated from this respectful care.



*His Eminence Archbishop Sergios  
thanks Professor Papadopoulos  
after the lecture*

*On two Saturdays this January there were baptisms at the Church of St Mary of Egypt in Robertson*



On the 12th of January, the Smuts family was baptised as Orthodox Christians in the Church of St Mary of Egypt in Robertson. .



**On the 19th of January** there were two further baptisms: that of Daniel Loubser and that of Makarios (previously known as Godwin) Sibanda.



**Church of Saint Mary of Egypt**



The Ambassador and High Commissioner of Cyprus to South Africa, Mr Petros Nacouzis, recently visited Cape Town for the opening of parliament. He stayed on for a few extra days to meet with the Hellenic community of Cape Town, and on 17 February attended the service of the Holy Eucharist at St George's Cathedral, accompanied by Mr Dimitri Constandinides, the honorary Consul of Cyprus.

After the service, His Eminence Archbishop Sergios welcomed Mr Nacouzis and invited him to address the community.

### Sunday 17 February Sunday School Picnic at the Archbishopric



**“Fun, sun and family” aptly describe the picnic hosted by our Sunday School teachers at the Archbishopric on Sunday 17 February after Church.** The sizzle and aroma from the braai, the squeals and laughter from the children as they climbed trees, played ball and delighted in the cooling water from the sprinkler and the chatter and companionship of all, created a sensory feast. Adding distinction and sense of community to the day was the presence of the Ambassador of Cyprus Mir Petros Nakouzis and the Consul of Cyprus Mir Dimitri Constandinides. They mingled, interacted and shared of themselves.

## The Liturgy of St James celebrated in George



On Forgiveness Sunday, 17 March, the beginning of Great Lent was marked in the Church of the Holy Archangels in George, by the celebration of the Divine Liturgy according to St James, the Brother of the Lord. This Liturgy is an ancient Liturgy that was served in Jerusalem in the first centuries of the Church's life. However, because of its length it is only served on special occasions during the liturgical year. In it we see some of the oldest prayers that have been retained in the Church. It contains movements, prayers and actions that we are not accustomed to finding in the Liturgy of St John Chrysostom, such as the way the faithful receive the Body and Blood separately in the same way as the priest does.

### CHEESE FARE SUNDAY 2013

the Sunday school at St George held their annual **Cheesefare** feast by providing dairy delights on Cheese Fare Sunday. The teachers decorated the table with festive flowers and tablecloths but the winning décor was the platters filled with sumptuous snacks.

his particular Sunday is a reminder of the Lenten period that is beginning, as well as of the virtues of sharing and giving. It is a day when the children, mums, dads, aunties, uncles, and grandparents and friends come together to enjoy in a collective collaboration.



**Film crew visits Saint George's Cathedral – Cape Town** on Sunday 24 February 2013 The children of Saint George's Cathedral Sunday School were filmed for the **next** episode of the popular SABC 1 children's television programme Siyakholwa - "We believe" - which is aired on Saturday mornings at 6.30am. The children recited the Lord's Prayer both in English and in Greek and Christo Luizinho, who is one of our regular Altar boys, was filmed in the Altar sanctuary and interviewed about his participation in the Divine Liturgy on Sundays. After the service the film crew joined one of our teachers during her lesson and continued filming while the children proceeded with their Sunday School activities. The film was aired on SABC 1 at the end of March