

# LESSON 3 Theophany (January 6)

## WE BELIEVE

### Jesus Is the Son of God

#### 1. GETTING STARTED

##### OBJECTIVE

Understand that Jesus is God's Son.

##### NEW VOCABULARY

**Theophany/Epiphany** - the day we celebrate the baptism of Jesus

##### OPENING PRAYER

Thank you God for your Son Jesus who was baptized in the River Jordan by John the Baptist. (Display the ICON OF THE BAPTISM OF CHRIST at the worship center).

##### MOTIVATION

Recall the Sacrament of Baptism, (Unit 2-Lesson 2). Talk about baptism and then relate to the class that Jesus was also baptized.

#### 2. LESSON DEVELOPMENT

##### TEACHING THE LESSON

1. Present the words **Theophany** and **Epiphany** to the class. Then read the lesson on pages 126 - 127. Then ask the following questions:
  - a. **What do we celebrate on January 6?** (Baptism of Jesus)
  - b. **What is that day called?** (Theophany or Epiphany)
  - c. **What does the priest do in church on that day?** (blesses the water)
  - d. **What does the priest do with that water?** (He sprinkles us with it)
  - e. **What do we do with that water?** (We drink it and take some of it home)

2. Let us see if we can learn the prayer that we say on the day of Theophany. Teach the prayer by memorization.

**Thank you God for Your Son Jesus who was baptized in the River Jordan by John the Baptist.**

##### USING THE BIBLE

##### The Baptism of Jesus

Read the Bible story on pages 128 - 129 to the class. Let them examine and discuss the picture. Then ask the following questions:

1. **How old was Jesus when He was baptized?** (30 years old)
2. **Who did Jesus want to baptize Him?** (John the Baptist)

3. **What did John say to Jesus?** ("I ought to be baptized by you and yet You have by me.")
4. **What did Jesus tell John?** (That John should baptize Him because that is what God wanted to be done)
5. **Where was Jesus baptized?** (River Jordan)
6. **What happened when Jesus was baptized and came out of the water?** (The heavens opened and the Spirit of God came down like a dove)
7. **Then what happened?** (a voice from heaven said, "This is My own dear Son with whom I am well pleased.")

## ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

**Making a Mobile** Use a wire coat hanger to make a mobile. Have the class draw a picture of a dove, a picture of Jesus and a picture of John the Baptist. Hang the drawings from the hanger with different lengths of string. The students can take their mobiles home.

### MATERIALS NEEDED

1. wire coat hanger
2. construction paper
3. string
4. crayons and/or felt tipped markers

**Making a Badge** Make a badge from blue construction paper. Have the student draw a dove on the white paper and then paste it on the badge.



### MATERIALS NEEDED

1. blue construction paper
2. white paper
3. paste

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

**The Feast of Theophany** In the Orthodox Christian tradition, the Feast of Theophany celebrates Our Lord's Baptism in the River Jordan, NOT the Adoration of the Magi. The basic meaning is summed up in its title "Theophany" -

manifestation of God. Christ's baptism in the Jordan River is a manifestation of God to the world. Three events occurred with this event: (1) the beginning of Our Lord's public ministry; (2) the baptism revealed to the world the Holy Spirit; and (3) all three Persons were made manifest together - the Father testified to the divine Sonship of Jesus, the Son received His Father's testimony, and the Spirit was seen in the form of a dove.

**The Icon Of The Theophany Of Our Lord** The Feast of the Theophany is a celebration of an historic event. In accordance with the Gospel this is the first revelation of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit - The Holy Trinity. At the top of the icon, the opening of the heaven is symbolized by the segment of a circle. This circle signifies God's presence and witness at the event. Emanating from the circle are rays of light surrounding the Holy Spirit, depicted in the figure descending upon our Savior, Who is being baptized in the Jordan by John the Baptist.

In this Icon, Christ stands in the water of the Jordan. The iconographic imagery expresses that not just a part, but the entire body of Christ is immersed in the Jordan in token of His burial (Col. 2:12). The Icon's illustration of the total immersion of Christ, as well as His right hand blessing the waters signifies the sanctification and purification of the water by Christ.

The role of John the Baptist is depicted by placing his right hand on the head of Christ - a gesture which has always been an integral part of the Sacrament of Baptism. With his left hand, John makes a gesture of prayer, symbolizing the awe which overwhelmed him at the sight of the divine manifestations.

Present in the icon are Angels with their hands covered. Their heads are bowed as an indication of their role of service to God, and as an indication of their reverence to Him Whom they serve.

### 3. REVIEW

#### RECALLING THE LESSON

Review the lesson before dismissing the class by asking the following questions:

1. **What is the name of the holy day that tells us about the baptism of Jesus?** (Theophany/Epiphany)
2. **Who baptized Jesus?** (John the Baptist)
3. **How old was Jesus when He was baptized?** (30 years old)
4. **Where was Jesus baptized?** (In the River Jordan)
5. **What happened when Jesus was baptized?** (A dove flew over Him)
6. **What did God say?** ("This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.")
7. **What happens on the holy day of Theophany in the Church?** (the priest blesses the water and sprinkles us with it)
8. **What do we do with the water?** (We drink it and take some of it home)
9. **What do we believe?** (Jesus is the Son of God)

#### CLOSING PRAYER

Recite the Lord's Prayer