

On Holy Water

The practice of blessing water on the day of Christ's Baptism was already existent in the 3rd century. This holy water is used to sprinkle and bless icons, liturgical articles, priestly vestments and crosses. It is also used to bless houses, food, automobiles and other articles. When received with faith, it has the power to cure both physical and spiritual infirmities. Although holy water cannot replace Holy Communion, it can be taken instead of Communion by one who is, for one reason or another, deprived of the consolation of the Sacrament. During times of despondency, confusion and spiritual turmoil it offers tranquility and relief. For this reason Christians keep this holy water in a special place in their homes near icons and partake of it in the morning, with prayer before eating any food.

“On the Feast of Theophany, that is the Day of the Lord's Baptism, every year a great miracle is performed. The Holy Spirit, coming down upon the water, changes its natural properties. It becomes incorrupt, that is, it does not spoil, remains transparent and fresh for many years, receives the grace to heal illnesses, to drive away demons and every evil power, to preserve people and their dwellings from every danger, to sanctify various objects whether for church or home use. Therefore, Orthodox Christians with reverence drink Holy Water--a great Agiasma (holy thing), as the Greeks call it.

One should have at home enough Theophany water so that it will last the whole year, and make use of it at every need: in cases of illness, leaving on a journey, whenever one is upset, students when going to examinations. They do well who daily, before eating any kind of food, drink a little Holy Water. It strengthens the powers of the soul--if it is done, of course, with prayer and reverence, and one does not merely expect from it a mechanical result.”

/St. John of Shanghai and San Francisco/

Please note: Holy Water must be poured into and stored in vessels specifically designated for holy water, or in clean glass containers with a corresponding sticker (sold at the candle kiosk). One should never use plastic bottles from soda or juices especially with their original labels.

Prayer Before Consuming Prosphora and Holy Water

O Lord my God, may Thy holy gift and Thy holy water be unto the enlightenment of my mind, unto the strengthening of my spiritual and physical powers, unto the health of my soul and body, unto the taming of my passions and weaknesses, according to Thy limitless mercy, through the prayers of Thy Most-pure Mother and of all Thy Saints. Amen.