

THE ORTHODOX WEEKLY BULLETIN VESTAL, CLIFFWOOD, NEW JERSEY

“ FOR THE FATHER’S VOICE BORE WITNESS TO THEE . . . ”

The Baptism of Christ in the Jordan River by St. John the Baptist – an event that is a large part of our celebration of the FEAST DAY OF THEOPHANY – was one of the most dramatic event in the history of mankind. On that awesome day, the Holy Trinity was revealed to the world as the Holy Spirit descended over our Lord in the form of a dove, and the voice of God the Father was heard from heaven, proclaiming: “*This is My Beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased.*” (Matthew 3:17)

How old was Jesus when He was baptized? The Evangelist Luke tells us: “*Now Jesus Himself began His ministry at about thirty years of age.*” (Luke 3:23) Up to this point, He lived in relative obscurity. Aside from the details of His Nativity, all the Gospels tell us about the early years of Christ is an incident when He was taken to Jerusalem by His parents for the celebration of the Pasover when He was 12 years old.

According to Jewish tradition, there is great significance attached to the age of 30. This was the age when a man was truly veiwed as an adult, having the knowledge and experience to teach others. If Christ were truly to be accepted as the Great Teacher that He was, and to be worthy of being called “Rabbi” by the people, He could not have been any younger than this. Yes, in all aspects of His life, our Lord carefully adhered to the religious customs and traditions of His time.