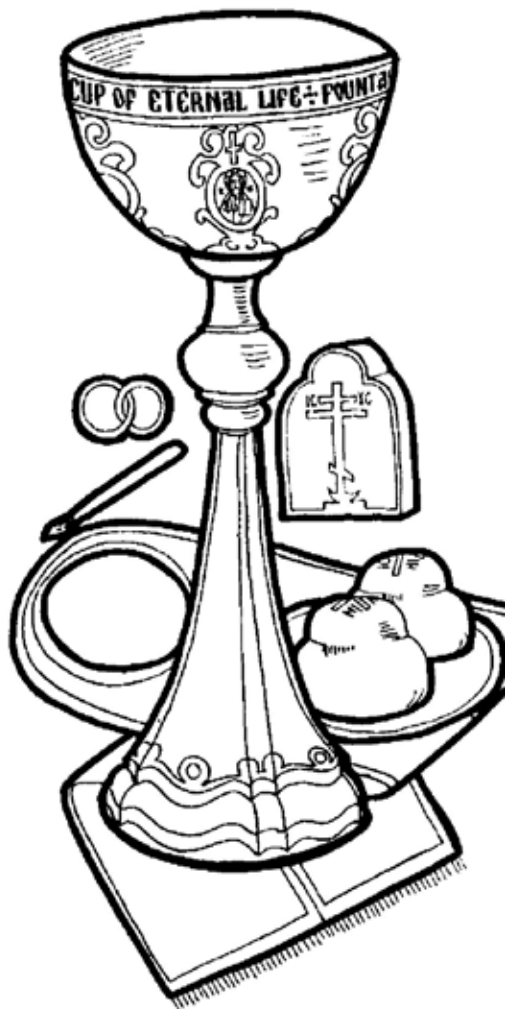




DIVINE LITURGY
OF ST. BASIL THE GREAT



THE DIVINE LITURGY OF ST. BASIL^{THE} GREAT

When a deacon is not serving, the priest reads his petitions.

Deacon: Bless, Master.

Priest: Blessed is the Kingdom of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

The Great Litany

Deacon: In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For the peace from above and for the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For the peace of the whole world, for the welfare of the holy churches of God, and for the union of all, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For this holy house and for those who enter with faith, reverence, and fear of God, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Again we pray for His Beatitude, our Metropolitan_____, and His (Eminence, Grace), our (Archbishop, Bishop)_____, for priests, deacons, and all other clergy; and for all our brethren in Christ.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For the President of our country, for all civil authorities, and for the armed forces everywhere, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For this city, for every city and country, and for the faithful dwelling in them, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For seasonable weather, for abundance of the fruits of the earth, and for peaceful times, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For travelers by land, by sea, by air, and by space; for the sick and the suffering; for captives and for their salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For our deliverance from all affliction, wrath, danger, and necessity, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by Thy grace.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Commemorating our most holy, more pure, most blessed and glorious Lady Theotokos and ever-Virgin Mary with all the Saints, let us commend ourselves and each other, and all our life unto Christ our God.

Choir: To Thee, O Lord.

Priest: (SILENTLY) *O Lord our God, Thy power is incomparable. Thy glory is incomprehensible. Thy mercy is immeasurable. Thy love for man is inexpressible. Look down on us and on this holy house with pity, O Master, and impart the riches of Thy mercy and Thy compassion to us and to those who pray with us.*

(ALoud) For unto Thee are due all glory, honor, and worship: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

First Antiphon

Bless the Lord, O my soul. Blessed art Thou, O Lord.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His Holy Name.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits.

Who forgives all your iniquities, who heals all your diseases.

The Lord is compassionate and merciful, long suffering and of great goodness.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, blessed art Thou, O Lord.

The Little Litany

Deacon: Again and again in peace let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by Thy grace.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Commemorating our most holy, most pure, most blessed and glorious Lady Theotokos and ever-Virgin Mary with all the Saints, let us commend ourselves and each other, and all our life unto Christ our God.

Choir: To Thee, O Lord.

Priest: (SILENTLY) *O Lord our God, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance. Preserve the fullness of Thy Church. Sanctify those who love the beauty of Thy house; glorify them in return by Thy divine power, and forsake us not who put our hope in Thee.*

(ALoud) For Thine is the majesty, and Thine is the Kingdom and the power and the glory: of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

Second Antiphon

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. . .

Praise the Lord, O my Soul.

I will praise the Lord as long as I live,

I will sing praises to my God while I have being.

Put not your trust in princes, in sons of men in whom there is no salvation.

When his breath departs, he returns to his earth.

On that very day his plans perish.

The Lord will reign forever: Thy God, O Zion to all generations.

Both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

“Only Begotten Son”

Only-Begotten Son and Immortal Word of God,

Who for our salvation willed to be incarnate,
Of the Holy Theotokos and Ever-virgin Mary,
Who without change became man and was crucified.
Who is one of the Holy Trinity,
Glorified with Father and the Holy Spirit:
O Christ our God, trampling down death by death, save us.

The Little Litany

Deacon: Again and again in peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by Thy grace.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Commemorating our most holy, most pure, most blessed and glorious Lady Theotokos and ever-Virgin Mary with all the Saints, let us commend ourselves and each other, and all our life unto Christ our God.

Choir: To Thee, O Lord.

Priest: (SILENTLY) *O Thou who hast given us grace with one accord to make our common supplications unto Thee, and didst promise that when two or three are gathered together in Thy name Thou wouldst grant their requests. Fulfill now, O Lord, the petitions of Thy servants as may be expedient for them: granting us in this world the knowledge of Thy truth, and in the world to come, life everlasting.*

(ALoud) For Thou art a good God and lovest mankind, and unto Thee do we ascribe glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

Third Antiphon

Choir: In Thy Kingdom remember us, O Lord, when Thou comest into Thy kingdom.

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven.
Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.
Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.

Reader: (chants verse of the day)

Choir: Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

Reader: (chants verse of the day)

Choir: Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God.

Reader: (chants verse of the day)

Choir: Blessed are they that are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven.

Reader: (chants verse of the day)

Choir: Blessed are you when men shall revile you and persecute you and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake.

Reader: (chants verse of the day)

Choir: Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in Heaven

Reader: (chants verse of the day)

Choir: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

Reader: (chants verse of the day)

Choir: Both now and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Reader: (chants verse of the day)

The Little Entrance

The clergy make the Little Entrance with the Book of the Holy Gospels. Standing before the open Holy Doors, facing the Altar, the Deacon (or Priest) says:

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

The Prayer of the Entrance

Priest: (SILENTLY) *O Master, Lord our God, who hast appointed in heaven orders and hosts of angels and archangels for the service of Thy glory. Grant that with our entrance there may be an entrance of holy angels, serving with us and glorifying Thy goodness.*

(ALoud) For unto Thee are due all glory, honor and worship: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Deacon: Bless, Master, the Holy Entrance.

Priest: Blessed is the entrance of Thy saints always, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Deacon: Wisdom! Attend.

The Entrance Hymn

Choir: Come, let us worship and fall down before Christ. O Son of God, who art risen from the dead, save us who sing to Thee: Alleluia!

The Troparion and Kontakion are sung by the Choir/People. Please consult the bulletin of the day.

The Prayer of the Trisagion Hymn

The Priest offers the following prayer when he enters the altar:

Priest: (SILENTLY) *O holy God: who dost rest in the Saints; who art hymned by the Seraphim with the thrice-holy cry, and glorified by the Cherubim, and worshipped by every heavenly power; who out of nothing hast brought all things into being; who hast created man after Thine own image and likeness, and hast adorned him with Thine every gift; who givest to him who asks wisdom and understanding; who dost not despise the sinner, but instead hast appointed repentance unto salvation; who hast vouchsafed to us, Thy humble and unworthy servants, even at this hour to stand before the glory of Thy holy altar, and to offer worship and praise which are due unto Thee. Thyself, O Master, accept even from the mouths of us sinners the thrice-holy hymn, and visit us in Thy goodness. Forgive us every transgression, both voluntary and involuntary. Sanctify our souls and bodies, and enable us to serve Thee in holiness all the days of our life. Through the intercessions of the holy Theotokos and of all the saints who from the beginning of the world have been well-pleasing unto Thee.*

As the Troparion and Kontakion are ending, if a Deacon is serving he says to the Priest:

Deacon: Bless, Master, the time of the Thrice-holy.

Let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: For holy art Thou, O our God, and unto Thee do we send up glory, to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever...

Deacon: O Lord, save the God-fearing!

Choir: O Lord, save the God-fearing!

Deacon: And hear us!

Choir: And hear us!

Deacon: ...and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

If a Deacon is not serving, the priest says:

Priest: For holy art Thou, O our God, and unto Thee do we send up glory, to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

The Trisagion Hymn

Choir: Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. (3x)
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.

The Prokeimenon

Please consult the bulletin of the day for these hymns.

Priest: Let us attend!

Priest: Peace be unto all!

Reader: And to Thy spirit!

Priest: Wisdom!

Reader: The Prokeimenon in the _____ tone: (*chants first prokeimenon verse*)

Choir: (*sings first prokeimenon verse*)

Reader: (*chants second prokeimenon verse*)

Choir: (*sings first prokeimenon verse*)

Reader: (chants first half of first prokeimenon verse)

Choir: (sings second half of first prokeimenon verse)

The Epistle Reading

Please consult the bulletin of the day for this reading.

Priest: Wisdom!

Reader: The reading from _____.

Priest: Let us attend!

Reader: (chants the Epistle reading of the day)

Priest: Peace be unto you!

Reader: And to Thy spirit!

Priest: Wisdom!

Reader: The Alleluia in the _____ tone. Alleluia! (3x)

Choir: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

Reader: (chants the first Alleluia verse)

Choir: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

Reader: (chants the second Alleluia verse)

Choir: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

The Prayer before the Gospel

Priest: (SILENTLY) Illumine our hearts, O Master who lovest mankind, with the pure light of Thy divine knowledge. Open the eyes of our mind to the understanding of Thy gospel teachings. Implant also in us the fear of Thy blessed commandments, that, trampling down all carnal desires, we may enter upon a spiritual manner of living, both thinking and doing such things as are well-pleasing unto Thee.

(ALoud) For Thou art the illumination of our souls and bodies, O Christ our God, and unto Thee we ascribe glory, together with Thy Father, who is from everlasting, and Thine all-holy, good, and life-creating Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

The Gospel Reading

Please consult the bulletin of the day for this reading.

Priest: Wisdom! Let us attend! Let us listen to the Holy Gospel.

Priest: Peace be unto all.

Choir: And to Thy spirit.

Priest: The Reading is from the Holy Gospel according to Saint _____.

Choir: Glory to Thee, O Lord, glory to Thee.

Priest: Let us attend!

Priest: (*chants the Gospel reading of the day*)

Choir: Glory to Thee, O Lord, glory to Thee.

SERMON

The Litany of Fervent Supplication

(THE AUGMENTED LITANY)

Priest: Let us all say with all our soul and all our mind, let us say:

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: O Lord almighty, the God of our fathers, we pray Thee, hearken and have mercy.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: Have mercy on us, O God, according to Thy great goodness, we pray Thee, hearken and have mercy.

Choir: Lord, have mercy. (3x)

Priest: Again we pray for His Beatitude, our Most Blessed Metropolitan _____, and all our brethren in Christ.

Choir: Lord, have mercy. (3x)

Priest: Again we pray for the President of our country, for all civil authorities, and for the armed forces everywhere.

Choir: Lord, have mercy. (3x)

Priest: Again we pray for our brethren, the Priests, the Priestmonks, and for all our brotherhood in Christ.

Choir: Lord, have mercy. (3x)

Priest: Again we pray for the blessed and ever-memorable holy Orthodox Patriarchs; and for the blessed and ever-memorable founders of this holy house; and for all our fathers and brethren, the Orthodox departed this life before us, _____, who, here and in all the world, lie asleep in the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy. (3x)

Priest: Again we pray for mercy, life, peace, health, salvation, and visitation for the servants of God _____, and for the pardon and remission of their sins.

Choir: Lord, have mercy. (3x)

Priest: Again we pray for those who bring offerings and do good works in this holy and all-venerable house; for those who labor and those who sing; and for all the people here present, who await Thy great and rich mercy.

Choir: Lord, have mercy. (3x)

Priest: For Thou art a merciful God, and lovest mankind, and unto Thee we ascribe glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

The Prayer of Fervent Supplication

Priest: (SILENTLY) *O Lord our God, accept this fervent supplication of Thy servants, and have mercy on us according to the multitude of Thy mercy. Send down Thy bounties upon us and upon all Thy people who await the rich mercy that comes from Thee.*

(ALoud) For Thou art a merciful God, and lovest mankind, and unto Thee we ascribe glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

The Litany for the Catechumens

Priest: Pray to the Lord, you catechumens.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: Let us, the faithful, pray for the catechumens, that the Lord may have mercy on them.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: That He may teach them the word of truth.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: That He may reveal to them the gospel of righteousness.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: That He may unite them to His Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: Help them, save them, have mercy on them, and keep them, O God, by Thy grace.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: Bow your heads unto the Lord, you catechumens.

Choir: To Thee, O Lord.

The Prayer for the Catechumens

Priest: (SILENT) *O Lord our God, who dwellest in the heavens and regardest all Thy works: Look down on Thy servants the catechumens, who have bowed their necks before Thee. Grant them a light yoke; make them honorable members of Thy Holy Church; make them worthy of the laver of regeneration, the remission of sins, and the robe of incorruption—for the knowledge of Thee, our true God.*

(ALoud) That with us they may glorify Thine all-honorable and majestic name: of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

Priest: All catechumens, depart. Depart, catechumens. All that are catechumens, depart. Let no catechumen remain. Let us, the faithful, again and again in peace pray unto the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by Thy grace.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

The First Prayer of the Faithful

Priest: (SILENT) *Thou, O Lord, hast revealed to us this great mystery of salvation. Thou hast permitted us, Thy humble and unworthy servants, to be ministers at Thy Holy Altar. By the power of Thy Holy Spirit, enable us also to perform this service; so that standing blamelessly before Thy holy glory, we may offer Thee a sacrifice of praise. For Thou alone accomplishest all things in all men. May our sacrifice be acceptable and well-pleasing in Thy sight, O Lord, for our sins and for the errors of all Thy people,*

Priest: Wisdom!

Priest: (ALoud) For unto Thee are due all glory, honor and worship: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

The Litany for the Faithful

Priest: Again and again in peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

If the Priest serves without a Deacon, this section is not prayed.

Priest: For the peace from above and for the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: For the peace of the whole world, for the welfare of the holy churches of God, and for the union of all, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: For this holy house and for those who enter with faith, reverence, and the fear of God, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: For our deliverance from all affliction, wrath, danger and necessity, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by Thy grace.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

The Second Prayer of the Faithful

Priest: (SILENT) *O God, in mercy and compassion You have visited our lowliness. Thou have set us, Thy humble and sinful and unworthy servants, to serve at Thy Holy Altar before Thy holy glory. By the power of Thy Holy Spirit, strengthen us for this service; and grant speech to our lips so that we may call down the grace of Thy Holy Spirit on the gifts that are about to be offered,*

Priest: Wisdom!

Priest: (ALoud) That guarded always by Thy might we may ascribe glory unto Thee: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

The Prayer of the Cherubic Hymn

Priest: (SILENT) *No one who is bound with the desires and pleasures of the flesh is worthy to approach or draw near or to serve Thee, O King of Glory; for to minister to Thee is great and awesome even for the heavenly powers. Nevertheless, through Thine inexpressible and boundless love for mankind, Thou becamest man, yet without change or alteration; and as Ruler of all, Thou becamest our High Priest, and committed to us the ministry of this liturgical and bloodless sacrifice. For Thou alone, O Lord our God, rulest over those in heaven and on earth. Thou art borne on the throne of the cherubim. Thou art Lord of the Seraphim and King of Israel. Thou alone art holy and rest in the heavenly sanctuary. Therefore, I entreat Thee, Who alone are good and ready to listen: look down on me, a sinner, Thine unprofitable servant, and cleanse my soul and my heart from an evil conscience; and by the power of the Holy Spirit enable me, who am endowed with the grace of the priesthood, to stand before this, Thy Holy Altar, and perform the sacred mystery of Thy holy and pure body and precious blood. For I draw near to Thee, and bowing my neck I implore Thee: do not turn Thy face away from me, nor cast me out from among Thine children; but account me, Thy sinful and unworthy servant, worthy to offer gifts to Thee. For Thou art the Offerer and the Offered, the Receiver and the Received, O Christ our God, and to Thee we ascribe glory,*

together with Thy Father, Who is without beginning, and Thine all-holy, good, and life-creating Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

The Cherubic Hymn

Choir: Let us who mystically represent the Cherubim, and who sing to the life-giving Trinity the Thrice-holy hymn. Let us now lay aside all earthly care:

The Great Entrance

(Procession of the Clergy.)

Priest: His Beatitude, the Most Blessed _____, Archbishop of Washington DC, and Metropolitan of all America and Canada, our Bishop _____, the Lord God remember in His kingdom always, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

(The priest may additionally commemorate the president, those in ill health, etc.)

Priest: May the Lord God remember all of Thee Orthodox Christians in His Kingdom always, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

(Choir/People continue singing The Cherubic Hymn)

Choir: That we may receive the King of all, who comes invisibly upborne by the Angelic Hosts. Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia.

The Litany of Supplication

Priest: Let us complete our prayer unto the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: For the precious Gifts now offered, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: For this holy house, and for those who enter with faith, reverence, and the fear of God, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: For our deliverance from all affliction, wrath, danger and necessity, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by

Thy grace.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: That the whole day may be perfect, holy, peaceful, and sinless, let us ask of the Lord.

Choir: Grant this, O Lord.

Priest: An angel of peace, a faithful guide, a guardian of our souls and bodies, let us ask of the Lord.

Choir: Grant this, O Lord.

Priest: Pardon and remission of our sins and transgressions, let us ask of the Lord.

Choir: Grant this, O Lord.

Priest: All things that are good and profitable for our souls, and peace for the world, let us ask of the Lord.

Choir: Grant this, O Lord.

Priest: That we may complete the remaining time of our life in peace and repentance, let us ask of the Lord.

Choir: Grant this, O Lord.

Priest: A Christian ending to our life, painless, blameless, and peaceful; and a good defense before the dread judgment seat of Christ, let us ask of the Lord.

Choir: Grant this, O Lord.

Priest: Commemorating our most holy, most pure, most blessed and glorious Lady Theotokos and ever-Virgin Mary with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and each other, and all our life unto Christ our God.

Choir: To Thee, O Lord.

The Prayer of Offering

Priest: (SILENT) *O Lord, our God, Thou hast created us and brought us into this life. Thou hast shown us the ways to salvation, and have bestowed upon us the revelation of heavenly mysteries. Thou hast appointed us to this service in the power of Thy Holy Spirit. Therefore, O Lord, enable us to become servers of Thy new Covenant and ministers of*

Thy holy Mysteries. Through the magnitude of Thy mercy, accept us as we draw near to Thy Holy Altar, so that we may be worthy to offer to Thee this reasonable and bloodless sacrifice for our sins and for the errors of Thine people. Having received it on Thy holy, heavenly and ideal altar as an offering of sweet spiritual fragrance, send down on us in turn the grace of Thy Holy Spirit. Look down on us, O God, and observe this our worship. Accept it as Thee accepted the gifts of Abel, the sacrifices of Noah, the whole burnt offerings of Abraham, the priestly offices of Moses and Aaron, and the peace-offerings of Samuel. As Thou hast accepted this true worship from Thy holy Apostles, so now, in Thy goodness, accept these gifts from the hands of us sinners, O Lord, that having been permitted to serve without offense at Thy Holy Altar, we may receive the reward of wise and faithful stewards on the awesome day of Thy just retribution,

(ALoud) Through the compassions of Thine only-begotten Son, with whom Thou art blessed, together with Thine all-holy, good, and life-creating Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

Priest: Peace be to all.

Choir: And to Thy spirit.

The Kiss of Peace

Priest: Let us love one another, that with one mind we may confess:

Choir: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit! The Trinity, One in essence and undivided!

Priest: The doors! The doors! In wisdom, let us attend!

The Creed

Choir: I believe in one God, the Father almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the only-begotten, begotten of the Father before all ages. Light of Light; true God of true God; begotten, not made; of one essence with the Father, by whom all things were made; Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and became Man. And He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered, and

was buried. And the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of the Father; and He shall come again with glory to judge the living and the dead; whose Kingdom shall have no end.

And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of Life, Who proceeds from the Father; Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified; who spoke by the prophets.

In one Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church. I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins. I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

The Anaphora

Priest: Let us stand aright! Let us stand with fear! Let us attend, that we may offer the Holy Oblation in peace.

Choir: A mercy of peace! A sacrifice of praise!

Priest: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with all of Thee.

Choir: And with Thy spirit.

Priest: Let us lift up our hearts.

Choir: We lift them up unto the Lord.

Priest: Let us give thanks unto the Lord.

Choir: It is meet and right, to worship the Father, and the Son, and Holy Spirit, the Trinity, one in essence, and undivided.

Priest: (SILENT) *O Existing One, Master and Lord; O God, the almighty and adorable Father: it is truly proper, right, and befitting the majesty of Thy holiness to praise Thee, to hymn Thee, to bless Thee, to worship Thee, to give thanks to Thee, to glorify Thee, the only God Who truly exists, and to offer Thee this our rational worship with a contrite heart and in a spirit of humility, for Thou hast granted us the knowledge of Thy truth. Who can relate Thy mighty acts? Or make all Thy praises known? Who can tell of all Thy miracles at all times? O Master of all, Lord of heaven and earth, and of all creation both visible and invisible, Thou sittest upon the throne of glory and behold the depths. Thou art without beginning, invisible, incomprehensible, indescribable, and immutable. Thou*

art the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who is the great God and Savior, our hope. He is the image of Thy goodness, the seal of Thine equal likeness. In Himself He is expressing Thee, the Father. He is the living Word, the true God, the eternal Wisdom, the Life, the Sanctification, the Power, the true Light. Through Him was revealed the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth; the Gift of sonship; the Pledge of future inheritance; the First Fruits of eternal blessing; the life-creating Power; the Fountain of sanctification. Through Him every creature of reason and understanding is empowered, worshipping Thee and sending up to Thee the eternal hymn of glory, for all things are subject to Thee. Thou art praised by angels, archangels, thrones, dominions, principalities, authorities, powers, and the many-eyed Cherubim. Around Thee stand the Seraphim, one with six wings and the other with six wings; with two they cover their faces, with two they cover their feet, and with two they fly, crying one to another with unceasing voices and ever-resounding praises,

(ALLOUD) Singing the triumphant hymn, shouting, proclaiming, and saying:

Choir: Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord of Sabaoth! Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory! Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!

Priest: (SILENT) *With these blessed powers, O loving Master, we sinners also cry aloud and say: Thou art holy, most holy, and there are no bounds to the majesty of Thy holiness. Thy art holy in all Thy works, for with righteousness and true judgment Thou hast ordered all things for us. When Thou created man by taking dust from the earth, honoring him with Thine own image, O God, Thou settest him in a paradise of delight, promising him eternal life and the enjoyment of eternal blessings in the observance of Thy commandments. But when man disobeyed Thee, the true God Who had created him, and was misled by the deception of the serpent, he became subject to death through his own transgressions. In Thy righteous judgment, O God, Thou didst expel him from paradise into this world, returning him to the earth from which he was taken, yet providing for him the salvation of regeneration in Thy Christ Himself. For Thee, O good One, did not desert forever Thy creature whom Thou hadst*

made. Nor did Thou forget the work of Thine hands, but through the tender compassion of Thy mercy, Thou didst visit him in various ways: Thou didst send prophets. Thou didst perform mighty works by Thy saints who in every generation were well-pleasing to Thee. Thou didst speak to us by the mouth of Thy servants, the prophets, who foretold to us the salvation which was to come. Thou didst give us the law as a help. Thou appointest angels as guardians. And when the fullness of time had come, Thou didst speak to us by Thy Son Himself, through Whom Thou also madest the ages. He, being the Radiance of Thy glory and the Image of Thy person, upholding all things by the word of His power, thought it not robbery to be equal to Thee, the God and Father. He was God before the ages, yet He appeared on earth and lived among men. Becoming incarnate from a holy virgin, He emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being conformed to the body of our lowliness, that He might conform us to the image of His glory. For since through a man sin entered the world, and through sin death, so it pleased Thine only-begotten Son Who was in the bosom of Thee, the God and Father, born of a woman, the holy Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, born under the law, to condemn sin in His own flesh, so that those who were dead in Adam might be made alive in Himself—Thy Christ. He lived in this world and gave us commandments of salvation. Releasing us from the delusions of idolatry, He brought us to knowledge of Thee, the true God and Father. He obtained us for Himself, to be a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation. Having cleansed us in water, and sanctified us with the Holy Spirit, He gave Himself as a ransom to death, in which we were held captive, sold under sin. Descending through the Cross into Hades that He might fill all things with Himself, He destroyed the torments of death. And rising on the third day, He made a path for all flesh to the resurrection from the dead, since it was not possible for the Author of Life to be overcome by corruption. So He became the first-fruits of those who have fallen asleep, the First-born of the dead, that He, Himself, might truly be the first in all things. Ascending into heaven, He sat down at the right hand of Thy majesty on high, and He will come to render to each man according to his works. As memorials of His saving Passion, He has left us these things which we have set forth

according to His command. For when He was about to go forth to His voluntary, ever-memorable and life-creating death, on the night in which He gave Himself up for the life of the world, He took bread into His holy and pure hands. And when He had shown it to Thee, the God and Father, after giving thanks, having blessed it, and sanctified it, and broken it, He gave it to His holy disciples and apostles, saying:

(ALoud) Take! Eat! This is My Body which is broken for Thee, for the remission of sins.

Choir: Amen.

Priest: *And likewise, when He had taken the cup of the fruit of the vine and had mixed it, and having given thanks, blessed it and sanctified it, He gave it to His holy disciples and apostles, saying:*

(ALoud) Drink of it, all of Thee! This is My Blood of the New Testament, which is shed for Thee and for many, for the remission of sins!

Choir: Amen.

Priest: (SILENT) *Do this in remembrance of Me! For as often as you eat this Bread and drink this Cup, you proclaim My death, you confess My resurrection! Therefore, we also, O Master, remembering His saving Passion and life-giving Cross, His three-day Burial and Resurrection from the dead, His Ascension into heaven and Enthronement at the right hand of Thee, the God and Father, and His glorious and awesome Second Coming,*

(ALoud) Thine own of Thine own we offer unto Thee, on behalf of all and for all.

Choir: We praise Thee! We bless Thee! We give thanks unto Thee, O Lord, and we pray unto Thee, O our God!

The EpiClesis

Priest: (SILENT) *O Lord, Who sent down Thine most Holy Spirit upon Thine apostles at the third hour: do not take Him from us, O Good One, but renew Him in us who pray to Thee.*

Priest: *O Lord, Who didst send down Thy most Holy Spirit upon Thine apostles at the third hour: do not take Him from us, O Good One,*

but renew Him in us who pray to Thee. (3x)

Priest: Therefore, most holy Master, we also, Thy sinful and unworthy servants, whom Thou hast permitted to serve at Thy Holy Altar, not because of our own righteousness (for we have done nothing good upon the earth), but because of Thy mercy and compassion (which Thou hast so richly poured out on us), now dare to approach Thy Holy Altar, and to offer Thee these figures of the holy Body and Blood of Thine Christ. We implore Thee and call upon Thee, O Holy of Holies, that by the favor of Thy goodness Thy Holy Spirit may come upon us and upon the gifts now offered, to bless, to sanctify, and to show...

(ALoud) ...this bread to be the precious Body of our Lord and God and Savior, Jesus Christ,

People: Amen.

Priest: ... and this cup to be the precious Blood of our Lord and God and Savior, Jesus Christ,

People: Amen.

Priest: Making the change by Thy Holy Spirit.

People: Amen. Amen. Amen.

Priest: (SILENT) And unite all of us to one another who become partakers of the one Bread and Cup in the communion of the one Holy Spirit. Grant that none of us may partake of the holy Body and Blood of Thy Christ unto judgment or condemnation. Instead, may we find mercy and grace with all the saints who through the ages have been well-pleasing to Thee: ancestors, fathers, patriarchs, prophets, apostles, preachers, evangelists, martyrs, confessors, teachers, and every righteous spirit made perfect in faith...

(ALoud) ...especially for our most holy, most pure, most blessed and glorious Lady Theotokos and ever-Virgin Mary.

Hymn to the Theotokos

Choir: All of creation rejoices in Thee, O Full of grace; the assembly of angels and the race of men. O sanctified temple and spiritual paradise, the glory of virgins, from whom God was incarnate

and became a child, our God before the ages. He made Thine body into a throne, and Thine womb He made more spacious than the heavens. All of creation rejoices in Thee, O Full of grace. Glory to Thee!

Priest: (SILENT) . . .with the holy prophet, forerunner, and baptist John; the holy, glorious, and all-laudable apostles; with Saint _____, whom we commemorate today; and with all Thy saints; through their prayers, visit us, O God. Remember all those who have fallen asleep before us in the hope of the resurrection to eternal life, especially _____. Grant them rest, where the light of Thy countenance shines on them. Furthermore, we implore Thee: remember, O Lord, Thy holy, catholic, and apostolic Church which is from end to end of the universe. Give peace to Thy Church whom Thee have obtained with the precious Blood of Thy Christ. Also preserve this holy house until the end of the world. Remember, O Lord, those who offered Thee these gifts, and those for whom and through whom they offered them, and their intentions. Remember, O Lord, those who bear fruit and do good works in Thy holy churches, and those who remember the poor. Reward them with Thy rich and heavenly gifts. For their earthly, temporal, and corruptible gifts, grant them Thy heavenly, eternal, and incorruptible ones. Remember, O Lord, those who are in the deserts, mountains, caverns, and pits of the earth. Remember, O Lord, those who live in chastity and godliness, in asceticism and holiness of life. Remember, O Lord, this country and all civil authorities. Grant them a secure and lasting peace. Speak good things into their hearts concerning Thy Church and all Thy people, that we, in their tranquillity, may lead a calm and peaceful life in all godliness and sanctity. Protect in Thy goodness those who are good, and in Thy kindness make good those who are evil. Remember, O Lord, the people here present, and also those who are absent for honorable reasons. Have mercy on them and on us according to the multitude of Thy mercies. Fill their treasuries with every good thing. Preserve their marriages in peace and harmony. Nurture the infants. Guide the Theeng. Support the aged. Give courage to the faint-hearted. Reunite the separated; bring back those who are in error and unite them to Thy holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. Free those who are held captive

by unclean spirits. Sail with those who sail; travel with those who travel by land and by air. Defend the widows; protect the orphans; deliver the captives; heal the sick. Remember, O God, those who are in courts, in mines, in exile, in harsh labor, and those in every affliction, distress, or crisis. Remember, O Lord our God, all those who entreat Thy great compassion, those who love us and those who hate us; those who have asked us to pray for them, unworthy though we may be. And remember all Thy people, O Lord, our God. Pour out Thy rich mercy on them all. Grant them all the petitions which are for their salvation. And may Thee, Thyself, O God, remember all those whom we have not remembered through ignorance, forgetfulness, or the multitude of names; since Thee know the name and age of each, even from his mother's womb. For Thee, O Lord, are the Helper of the helpless, the Hope of the hopeless, the Savior of the bestormed, the Haven of the voyager, the Physician of the sick. Be all things to all men, O Lord Who knows each man and his request, his home and his need. Deliver this city and countryside, O Lord, and every city and countryside from famine, plague, earthquake, flood, fire, sword, invasion by enemies, and civil war.

(ALoud) Among the first, remember, O Lord, His Beatitude, our Metropolitan _____, Archbishop of Washington and Metropolitan of all America and Canada, His Grace, our Bishop _____. Grant them for Thy holy churches in peace, safety, honor, health, and length of days, rightly to divide the word of Thy truth.

Choir: And all mankind.

Priest: (SILENT) *May the Lord God remember Thee in His kingdom always, now and ever and unto ages of ages.*

Priest: *Watch over us in Thy kindness, O Lord. Manifest Thyself to us through Thy rich compassion. Grace us with temperate and healthful weather. Send gentle showers upon the earth so that it may bear fruit. Bless the crown of the year with Thy goodness. Prevent schisms between the churches. Pacify the ragings of the nations. Quickly destroy the uprisings of heresies by the power of Thy Holy Spirit. Receive us all into Thy Kingdom. Show us to be*

sons of the light and sons of the day. Grant us Thy peace and Thy love, O Lord our God, for Thee have given all things to us.

(ALoud) And grant that with one mouth and one heart we may praise Thine all-honorable and majestic name; of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

Priest: And the mercies of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ shall be with all of Thee.

Choir: And with Thy spirit.

The Litany Before the Lord's Prayer

Priest: Having remembered all the saints, again and again in peace let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: For the precious Gifts offered and sanctified, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: That our God, who loves mankind, receiving them upon His holy, heavenly, and ideal altar as a sweet spiritual fragrance, will send down upon us in return His divine grace and the gift of the Holy Spirit, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: For our deliverance from all affliction, wrath, danger, and necessity, let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by Thy grace.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: That the whole day may be perfect, holy, peaceful, and sinless, let us ask of the Lord.

Choir: Grant this, O Lord.

Priest: An angel of peace, a faithful guide, a guardian of our souls and

bodies, let us ask of the Lord.

Choir: Grant this, O Lord.

Priest: Pardon and remission of our sins and transgressions, let us ask of the Lord.

Choir: Grant this, O Lord.

Priest: All things that are good and profitable for our souls, and peace for the world, let us ask of the Lord.

Choir: Grant this, O Lord.

Priest: That we may complete the remaining time of our life in peace and repentance, let us ask of the Lord.

Choir: Grant this, O Lord.

Priest: A Christian ending to our life; painless, blameless, and peaceful; and a good defense before the dread judgment seat of Christ, let us ask of the Lord.

Choir: Grant this, O Lord.

Priest: Having asked for the unity of the Faith, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, let us commend ourselves and each other, and all our life unto Christ our God.

Choir: To Thee, O Lord.

Priest: (SILENTLY) *O God, our God Who saves, Thee teach us to thank Thee worthily for the good works which Thee have done and are doing with us. Thee, our God, have accepted these gifts. Cleanse us of every defilement of flesh and spirit, and teach us how to mature in sanctification in fear of Thee; so that, receiving a portion of Thy Holy Gifts with a pure conscience, we may be united with the holy Body and Blood of Thy Christ. Having received them worthily, may we have Christ dwelling in our hearts, and may we become a Temple of Thy Holy Spirit. Yes, O our God, let none of us be guilty of these, Thine awesome and heavenly Mysteries, nor be infirm in soul and body by partaking of them unworthily. But grant us, even to our last breath, to receive a portion of Thy Holy Gifts worthily, as a provision on the road to eternal life and an acceptable defense at the dread judgment seat of Thy Christ. May we also, together with all the saints who through the ages have pleased Thee, become partakers*

of Thine eternal blessings, which Thee have prepared for those who love Thee, O Lord,

(ALoud) And make us worthy, O Master, that with boldness and without condemnation we may dare to call on Thee, the heavenly God, as Father, and to say:

The Lord's Prayer

Choir: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

Priest: For Thy is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory: of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

Priest: Peace be unto all.

Choir: And to Thy spirit.

Priest: Bow your heads unto the Lord.

Choir: To Thee, O Lord.

Priest: (SILENTLY) *O Master and Lord, the Father of compassions and God of every consolation: bless, sanctify, guard, fortify, and empower those who have bowed their heads to Thee. Distance them from every evil deed. Join them to every good work and count them worthy to partake without condemnation of these, Thy most-pure and life-creating Mysteries, for the forgiveness of sins and for the communion of the Holy Spirit,*

(ALoud) Through the grace and compassion and love toward mankind of Thine only-begotten Son, with whom Thou art blessed, together with Thine all-holy, good, and life-creating Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

The Elevation

Priest: Attend, O Lord Jesus Christ our God, from Thy holy dwelling-place, from the glorious throne of Thy Kingdom, and come to

sanctify us, O Lord, Who sit on high with the Father, and are here invisibly present with us; and by Thy mighty hand impart to us Thy most pure Body and precious Blood, and through us to all the people.

O God, cleanse me, a sinner, and have mercy on me. (3x)

Priest: Let us attend!

Priest: The Holy Things for the holy!

Choir: One is Holy! One is Lord Jesus Christ, to the glory of God the Father! Amen.

The Communion Hymn

Choir: Praise the Lord from the heavens. Praise Him in the highest. Alleluia (3x)

After the Communion of the Clergy, the clergy then open the doors of the sanctuary, and elevating the Holy Chalice, shows it to the people, saying:

In the fear of God, with faith and love, draw near.

The Communion Prayer

People: I believe, O Lord, and I confess, that Thou art truly the Christ, the Son of the Living God, who camest into the world to save sinners, of whom I am first. I believe also that this is truly Thine own most pure Body, and that this is truly Thine own precious Blood. Therefore, I pray Thee: have mercy upon me and forgive my transgressions both voluntary and involuntary, of word and of deed, committed in knowledge or in ignorance. And make me worthy to partake without condemnation of Thy most pure Mysteries, for the remission of my sins and unto life everlasting. Amen.

Of Thy Mystical Supper, O Son of God, accept me today as a communicant; for I will not speak of Thy Mystery to Thine enemies, neither like Judas will I give Thee a kiss; but like the thief will I confess Thee: Remember me, O Lord, in Thy Kingdom.

May the communion of Thy holy Mysteries be neither to my judgment, nor to my condemnation, O Lord, but to the healing of soul and body.

The Communion of the Faithful

Those Orthodox Christians who wish to commune and have prepared themselves shall then approach. They come one by one and they make a reverence with all contrition and fear, holding their hands folded on their breast. Thus each receives the Divine Mysteries.

The Priest says on communing each person:

The servant of God, _____, partakes of the precious and holy Body and Blood of our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins and unto life everlasting.

After Communion, the Priest blesses the people.

Priest: O God, save Thy people, and bless Thine inheritance!

And turning to the Altar, the Priest censes it thrice, saying:

Be thou exalted above the heavens, O God, and above all the earth Thy glory.

Choir: We have seen the true Light! We have received the heavenly Spirit! We have found the true Faith! Worshipping the undivided Trinity, Who has saved us!

And the Priest, having made a reverence, takes the Holy Chalice, turns toward the doors, and, looking toward the people, says: "Blessed is our God..."

Priest: (ALLOUD) Always, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen. Let our mouths be filled with Thy praise, O Lord, that we may sing Thy glory; for Thou hast made us worthy to partake of Thy holy, divine, immortal and life-creating Mysteries. Keep us in Thy holiness, that all the day we may meditate upon Thy righteousness. Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

The Litany of Thanksgiving

Priest: Let us attend! Having partaken of the divine, holy, most pure, immortal, heavenly, life-creating, and awesome Mysteries of Christ, let us worthily give thanks unto the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by Thy grace.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: Asking that the whole day may be perfect, holy, peaceful and

sinless, let us commend ourselves and each other, and all our life, unto Christ our God.

Choir: To Thee, O Lord.

The Prayer of Thanksgiving

Priest: (SILENTLY) *We thank Thee, O Lord our God, for the participation in Thy holy, pure, immortal, and heavenly Mysteries, which Thee have granted us for the benefit and sanctification and healing of our souls and bodies. May Thee, Thyself, O Master of all, grant that the communion of the holy Body and Blood of Thy Christ may become for us a faith unashamed, a love unfeigned, an increase of wisdom, a healing of soul and body, a repelling of every adversary, the observance of Thy commandments, and an acceptable defense at the fearful judgment seat of Thy Christ,*

(ALoud) For Thou art our Sanctification, and unto Thee we ascribe glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

Priest: Let us depart in peace.

Choir: In the name of the Lord.

Priest: Let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord, have mercy.

Prayer behind the Ambo

Priest: O Lord, Thee bless those who bless Thee and sanctify those who trust in Thee: save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance. Preserve the fullness of Thy Church. Sanctify those who love the beauty of Thy house. Glorify them in turn by Thy divine power, and do not forsake us who put our hope in Thee. Give peace to Thy world, to Thy churches, to Thy Priests, to all those in civil authority, and to all Thy people. For every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from Thee, the Father of lights, and to Thee we ascribe glory, thanksgiving, and worship: to the Father and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen. Blessed be the name of the Lord, henceforth and forever more! (3x)

Prayer said at the Consuming of the Holy Things

Priest: (SILENTLY) *O Christ our God, who art Thyself the fulfillment of the law and the prophets, who didst fulfill all the dispensation of the Father: fill our hearts with joy and gladness always, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.*

(ALLOUD) The blessing of the Lord be upon Thee through His grace and love for mankind always, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

The Dismissal

Priest: Glory to Thee, O Christ our God and our hope, glory to Thee!

Choir: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto age of ages. Amen.

Lord, have mercy. (3x) Father, bless!

Priest: May He who rose from the dead, Christ our true God, through the prayers of His most pure Mother; of the holy-glorious and all-laudable apostles; of our father among the saints, Basil the Great, Archbishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia, and of _____, patron of this holy temple, and _____, whom we commemorate today, of the holy and righteous Ancestors of God, Joachim and Anna; and of all the saints: have mercy on us and save us, for He is good and loves mankind.

Choir: Amen. His Beatitude, the Most Blessed _____, Archbishop of Washington, Metropolitan of all America and Canada, His Grace, _____, Bishop of the Diocese of the South, this God-protected land, all civil authorities, and all Orthodox Christians: Preserve O Lord, for many years!

On the Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great

During the five Sundays of Great Lent we celebrate the Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great on the Lord's Day. This Liturgy is used on five other occasions during the year, two more of which are during Holy Week—Thursday and Saturday. (The other three times are the Feasts of Nativity and Theophany, as well as on Saint Basil's day of commemoration, January 1). This Liturgy is known for its longer prayers, some of which may challenge our capacity to stand still in concentration and prayerful attention. But what prayers! They strike me personally as being unrivaled in our entire Tradition for their beauty of expression and the depth of their theological/spiritual content. Even though we are hearing them in translation, that beauty and depth remain intact and shine through quite well.

Saint Basil did not sit down and “compose” the entire Liturgy “from scratch,” to use a common expression. The basic structure of the Liturgy was already an essential element of the Church's living liturgical Tradition. However, there is every reason to believe that he is responsible for the magnificent Anaphora prayers. These prayers reflect Saint Basil's intense preoccupation with the Church's Trinitarian faith—that we worship the One God as the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit; the Son and the Holy Spirit being consubstantial with the Father as to their divine nature, and thus co-enthroned and co-glorified with the Father from all eternity. (Saint Basil wrote a separate, magnificent treatise *On the Holy Spirit*, demonstrating the divinity of the Holy Spirit through his knowledge of the Scriptures and the Church's liturgical Tradition). That belief in the Holy Trinity, though present “in the beginning” of the Church's proclamation of the Gospel, was under attack during the turbulent fourth century, with the Arian heresy and its various offshoots stirring up seemingly interminable debate and dissension. Saint Basil was one of the premier exponents of the Church's faith that the one God is the Holy Trinity; and he helped establish the classical terminology of the Church in expressing that Faith: God is one in “essence” (in Greek, *ousia*), yet three distinct “Persons” (*hypostaseis*). That terminology remains intact to this day. The opening Anaphora Prayer, “O Existing One, Master, Lord God, Father almighty and adorable,” is steeped in praise and glorification of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit; and thus deserves our deepest attention and sense of overwhelming awe as we stand in the presence of the Holy Trinity and as we join the angelic powers in “singing, shouting, and proclaiming: Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord of Sabaoth!”

In profound relationship to the prayers of the Liturgy revealing the Church's belief in the Holy Trinity, we find Saint Basil's unrivaled expression of the divine

“economy” (in Greek *oikonomia*) throughout. This refers to God’s providential dispensation/design toward His creation—culminating in the salvation of the world—in and through the Incarnation, Death, Resurrection and Glorification of our Lord Jesus Christ. If I were asked to present to an interested inquirer the most compelling and succinct expression of the divine economy as taught and proclaimed by the Orthodox Church, I would definitely refer this person to the long Anaphora Prayer of Saint Basil’s Liturgy beginning where the Thrice-holy left off: “With these blessed powers, O Master who lovest mankind...” After praising God “for the magnificence of Thy holiness,” we begin to prayerfully recall—and thus make present—the full extent of His providential dispensation toward the world: “When Thou didst create man by taking dust from the earth, and didst honor him with Thine own image, O God...” This long remembrance takes us through what we refer to as the “Fall,” through the promises of the prophets—“foretelling to us the salvation which was to come...”—all the way through to the Lord’s Incarnation, Death, Resurrection, Ascension and even Second Coming: “Ascending into heaven, He sat down at the right hand of Thy majesty on high, and He will come to render to every man according to his works...”

Further recalling, and thus actualizing “the night in which He gave Himself up for the life of the world,” this entire process will culminate with the Epiklesis, or Invocation of the Holy Spirit, “to bless, to hallow and to show” that the bread and wine of our offering will “become” the Body and Blood of our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ. We will then receive the Holy Gifts “for the remission of sins and unto life everlasting.”

Today, the Orthodox faithful are blessed in that the prayers of Saint Basil’s Liturgy generally are read aloud so that the entire gathered assembly of believers may actually “hear” the prayers that reveal the Lord God’s Trinitarian nature and the divine economy together with the consecration of the Holy Gifts. In the past that may have not been so, and even today it is not so in all Orthodox churches. So we thank God for our own liturgical revival which has so enlivened our contemporary worship experience with full parish participation in the Church at prayer and praise. However, and admittedly, there is one prayer that is usually read while the choir is singing—a final prayer near the very end of the Liturgy that the priest will say while facing the Table of Preparation and the remaining Holy Communion that will eventually be consumed by the priest, and while the choir is singing “Blessed be the name of the Lord, henceforth and forevermore” three times: “The mystery of Thy dispensation, O Christ our God, has been accomplished and perfected as far as it was in our power; for we have had the memorial of Thy death; we have seen the type of Thy Resurrection; we have been filled with Thine unending life; we have enjoyed Thine inexhaustible food; which in the world to come be well-pleased to vouchsafe to us all, through the grace of Thine eternal Father, and Thine holy and good and life-creating Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.” This summation of the meaning, purpose

and experience of the Liturgy is an “awesome” claim that perhaps may strike us in its awesomeness even more effectively if we break the prayer down into its component parts:

- We have had the memorial of the Lord’s death;
- We have seen the type of the Lord’s Resurrection;
- We have been filled with the Lord’s unending life;
- We have enjoyed the Lord’s inexhaustible food;
- We ask to continue in this partaking in the world to come; and
- All this through the grace of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit!

That is quite a Sunday morning experience which we so blandly describe as “going to church!” Clearly the remainder of the day is all downhill—no matter what we do! When we begin the Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great we know that we have a long road ahead of us. That will require some patience, concentration, and a willingness to “stay with it” through to its dismissal. If we are able to do that, then the “rewards” are inestimable. It will also test our deepest desires about what is “the one thing needful” in our lives and what is the treasure of our hearts. Yet, the Sundays of Great Lent are a unique opportunity to further our movement towards the Lord as we move through Great Lent and our lives toward the gladsome light of the Kingdom of God.

<https://www.oca.org/reflections/fr.-steven-kostoff-on-the-liturgy-of-saint-basil-the-great>

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