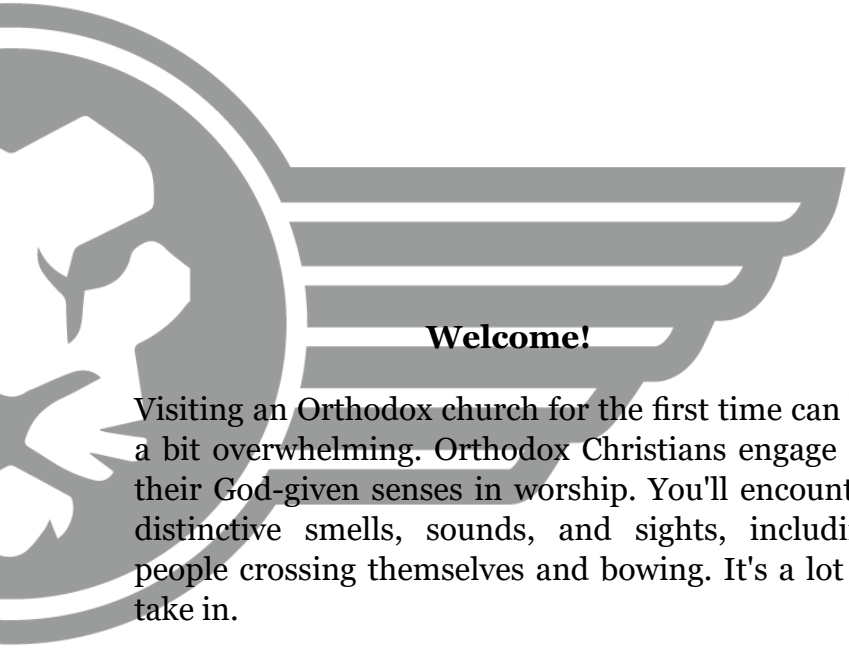

Welcome!

Visiting an Orthodox church for the first time can be a bit overwhelming. Orthodox Christians engage all their God-given senses in worship. You'll encounter distinctive smells, sounds, and sights, including people crossing themselves and bowing. It's a lot to take in.

We hope this guide helps you navigate the experience.

The next few pages will provide you with some information about the Orthodox Church, or you can skip to the start of the service on page 18.

What is the Divine Liturgy?

If you were to step into an Orthodox church anywhere in the world, whether in a bustling Russian city or a quiet village in Greece, you would likely encounter the Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom. This service is the central act of worship for more than 300 million Orthodox Christians. It is celebrated in a wide variety of languages, including Greek, English, Slavonic, Arabic, Swahili, Korean, and French. The words may differ from place to place, but the shape and spirit of the liturgy remain remarkably consistent across the globe.

The word "liturgy" comes from a Greek term that once referred to a public service offered for the good of the community. When the Hebrew Scriptures were translated into Greek, this same word was used to describe the worship offered in the Temple. That meaning continues today.

The liturgy is called “Divine” because it is not merely a human effort. It is a sacred work carried out by the people, always with the help and presence of God. This is not a performance by the priest for others to watch. Rather, it is the offering of the entire Church, united in prayer and worship, with every person present participating in something holy and eternal.

St. John Chrysostom, who lived in the fourth century and served as Archbishop of Constantinople, is closely associated with this form of the liturgy. Though he did not create it, he carefully edited and refined earlier versions, shaping the prayers and structure in ways that made them more accessible

and spiritually meaningful. His preaching was so eloquent that he was given the title “Chrysostom,” meaning “golden-mouthed,” a name that has endured to this day.

St. John Chrysostom was remembered not only for his eloquence, but also for his courage. He spoke out boldly against injustice, corruption, and the misuse of power, whether in politics or within the Church. He called the wealthy to generosity and insisted that the poor be treated with dignity and compassion. His willingness to speak the truth led to conflict with powerful figures and ultimately to exile. He died far from home, but his final words, “Glory to God for everything,” continue to inspire generations of Christians.

Basic Format of The Divine Liturgy

Liturgy of the Word

- **Opening Blessing:** The priest opens the service with a blessing.
- **Great Litany:** A series of petitions and responses between the priest and the congregation.
- **Antiphons:** Hymns sung alternately by two choirs or a choir and the congregation.
- **Little Entrance:** The procession of the Gospel book, representing the coming of Christ.

- **Hymns:** Specific hymns, including the Trisagion Hymn ("Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us").
- **Scripture Readings:** Readings from the Epistle and the Gospel.

Liturgy of the Eucharist

- **Cherubic Hymn:** A hymn sung while the gifts (bread and wine) are brought to the altar.
- **Great Entrance:** The procession of the gifts to the altar.
- **Litany of Supplication:** Further prayers and petitions.
- **Creed:** The Nicene Creed is recited by the congregation.
- **Anaphora:** The Eucharistic Prayer.
- **Lord's Prayer:** Recited by the congregation.
- **Elevation:** The priest elevates the consecrated bread and wine.
- **Holy Communion:** The faithful receive the Eucharist. Communion hymns are sung.
- **Thanksgiving Prayers:** Prayers of gratitude following communion.
- **Final Blessing:** The priest gives the final blessing.

What is the Orthodox Church?

The Orthodox Church is evangelical, but not Protestant.

It is orthodox, but not Jewish.

It is catholic, but not Roman.

It isn't non-denominational, it is pre-denominational.

It has believed, taught, preserved, defended and died for the Faith of the Apostles since the Day of Pentecost over 2000 years ago.

The Orthodox Church is the Christian community that has maintained the worship and beliefs of early Christians with nothing unnecessary added, nor anything essential deleted.

Orthodoxy refers to the Christian tradition that has held fast to right belief and right worship from the time of the apostles until today. The word itself comes from the Greek: ortho meaning “correct,” and doxa meaning “glory” or “teaching.” Together, they reflect a way of life that honors God with both true faith and faithful practice.

The Orthodox Church is committed to preserving the apostolic faith in its fullness. It continues to live by the guidance of the Holy Spirit, holding to what has been handed down without alteration. This faith is not frozen in the past but is alive, carried through centuries and across cultures.

Orthodox Christianity is made up of a worldwide communion of churches, all united by a shared faith, a common history, and a continuity of worship. They are bound together through apostolic succession, the teachings of the Scriptures, the Ecumenical Councils, the creeds, the canons, and the liturgy.

Today, the Orthodox Church stands as the second-largest Christian body in the world, after the Roman Catholic Church.

How did the Orthodox Church begin?

Jesus Christ established His Church through the apostles, sending them out to proclaim the Gospel to all nations.

Inspired by the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, the apostles established the Church throughout the ancient world. St. Paul founded the Church of Antioch; St. Peter and

St. James, the Church of Jerusalem; St. Andrew, the Church of Constantinople; St. Mark, the Church of Alexandria; and St. Peter and St. Paul, the Church of Rome.

For the first thousand years of Christian history, the Church remained united in faith, worship, and leadership.

That unity was broken in 1054 A.D., during what is known as the Great Schism. This event resulted in the separation of the Church in Rome from the other four ancient churches, primarily due to disagreements over the authority claimed by the bishop of Rome.

In the centuries that followed, the churches of the East became known as the Eastern Orthodox Church, distinguishing them from what would come to be called the Roman Catholic Church in the West.

Who is the head of the Orthodox Church?

Jesus Christ alone is the Head of the Church.

In the Orthodox Church, there is no single earthly leader who holds authority over all others. Orthodoxy does not recognize a pope with universal jurisdiction. Instead, all bishops are seen as equal in their calling, each entrusted with the care of the Church and the responsibility of preserving the faith. They work in communion with one another and remain accountable not only to their fellow bishops but also to the entire body of believers.

No person within the Church is regarded as infallible. What holds the Church together is not a single figure,

but a shared faith and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

In moments of difficulty or disagreement, the Church follows the pattern set by the apostles. Bishops come together in council, just as they did at the first gathering in Jerusalem, recorded in Acts chapter 15. This conciliar way of making decisions continues to shape the life of the Church today.

Is the Orthodox Church a denomination?

The Orthodox Church traces its roots directly to the time of the apostles and predates all modern Christian denominations by over 1,500 years.

Roughly 500 years ago, a significant split occurred within the Roman Catholic Church. Seeking what they believed to be a return to a more authentic form of Christianity, some broke away in what became known as the Protestant Reformation.

The Reformers emphasized the Bible as the sole authority for Christian teaching and sought unity through Scripture alone. However, even within the first generation, disagreements arose over interpretation and doctrine. These early divisions led to the formation of multiple branches within Protestantism, a pattern that continued over time.

Today, there are an estimated 30,000 different Protestant denominations, each interpreting the Bible according to its own understanding.

The Orthodox Church, by contrast, never underwent a reformation. It has continued to uphold the faith and practices of the early Church, preserving the

unity, worship, and doctrine that shaped the first thousand years of Christian history.

One, Holy, Catholic & Apostolic Church

The Church is one, just as Jesus prayed to His Father, saying, “May they be one, as You, Father, are in Me and I in You.” This unity is not based on human agreement or organization but flows from the very life of the Holy Trinity. Because its source is divine, the unity of the Church cannot be broken.

The Church is holy because it is the Body of Christ in the world. It is a people called out and set apart, a holy nation and a royal priesthood. This holiness does not come from human perfection, but from Christ Himself, who sanctifies His Church and dwells within it.

The word catholic means full, complete, and lacking nothing. It expresses the wholeness and universality of the Church, which holds the fullness of the Christian faith and embraces all people in every time and place.

The word apostolic means “sent.” The Church is apostolic because it is built on the foundation of the apostles and continues the mission they received from Christ. The apostles were sent into the world to proclaim the Gospel, and the Church today carries on that same calling: to bear witness to His Kingdom, to keep His word, and to do His will and His works in this world.

What does it mean to be "Greek Orthodox" and "Russian Orthodox"?

The Orthodox Church is one Church.

While you may hear terms like Greek Orthodox, Russian Orthodox, Romanian Orthodox, or Serbian Orthodox, these simply reflect the cultural and national backgrounds in which the faith has taken root. It is no different than someone being Irish Catholic or Italian Catholic—different traditions and languages, but the same Church and the same faith.

All Orthodox churches around the world share the same beliefs. They confess the same creed, celebrate the same sacraments, and worship through the same Divine Liturgy. There is no difference in doctrine or core practice from one to another.

You do not need to be Greek, Russian, or of any specific nationality to belong to the Orthodox Church.

The Church is open to all. No matter your background or heritage, you are welcome to come, to learn, and to take part in the life of the Church.

How ancient are Orthodox services?

Orthodox Christian worship follows both an ancient Jewish pattern and a heavenly one.

The Church carried forward the liturgical, sacramental, and ceremonial character of Hebrew worship. Many of the hymns still sung today come directly from the Psalms, preserving the prayer life of both the Jewish people and the early Christians.

Rooted in the structure of synagogue and Temple worship, the Church did not discard these Old Testament patterns but built upon them, now centered in the presence and teachings of Christ.

The New Covenant fulfilled what the Old Covenant foreshadowed, and Christian worship grew as a natural continuation of God's plan.

At the same time, early Christian worship was shaped by the vision of heavenly worship revealed in Scripture. Moses was shown a pattern on the mountain, and St. John saw a similar vision in Revelation, both offering a glimpse into how God is worshiped in heaven.

Today, Orthodox worship still reflects these same patterns. Much of the Divine Liturgy would have felt familiar to the early Church and remains firmly grounded in what Scripture reveals about the worship of God.

Is Orthodox Christianity 'faith'- based or 'works'- based?

The sharp divide between faith and works is a relatively recent development in Western Christian theology.

It emerged largely as a reaction to the use of "indulgences" in the Roman Catholic Church, and rightly so. However, it went too far and created an artificial separation between faith and action.

Such a division is not found in the Bible, nor in the

teachings of the early Church.

Scripture speaks clearly about the relationship between belief and behavior. St. Paul exhorts believers to “work out your salvation with fear and trembling” (Philippians 2:12), while St. James reminds us that “faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead” (James 2:17). Perhaps most striking is Paul’s warning that God “will render to each one according to his deeds” (Romans 2:5–6).

Orthodox theology, faithful to both Scripture and the early Christian witness, does not separate faith from works.

Why is everything sung?

The human voice is the instrument God Himself created, and it remains the most fitting way to offer Him praise. In Orthodox worship, the voice is not simply used, it is central.

The Divine Liturgy is, for the most part, one continuous prayer that is chanted from beginning to end.

Why do you stand through the entire service?

We stand during the Divine Liturgy to remain active, alert, and fully present before God, who is truly with us and at the center of our worship.

While there are moments in the service when we may kneel or sit, the standard posture during prayer is to stand. This reflects both reverence and readiness, as

we offer ourselves to God in worship.

Incense

Historically, incense has always been closely connected to the worship of God’s people, serving as a profound and meaningful act of devotion.

In the Old Testament, God commanded the people of Israel to offer incense daily in the Tabernacle during their years in the wilderness, and later in the Temple in Jerusalem (Exodus 30:7–8). This practice was not merely symbolic but an act of devotion and obedience.

The prophet Malachi foretold that a day would come when incense would be offered to the Name of the Lord among all the nations, not just in Israel (Malachi 1:11). That prophecy finds its fulfillment in Christian worship.

In the Book of Revelation, St. John describes the use of incense in heaven, where it accompanies the prayers of the saints rising before God (Revelation 5:8; 8:4). Orthodox worship reflects this same pattern.

During the Divine Liturgy and other services, we cense the Gospel Book, the altar, the icons, and the faithful, each of these set apart for the worship of God. The fragrant smoke is a visible reminder that our prayers are rising to heaven, joining in the unending praise offered before His throne.

Confession

In the early Church, Christians would confess their sins openly in the presence of the entire faith community.

As the Church grew, this became less practical, and the role of hearing confessions was entrusted to the priest, who stood as a representative of the community.

In Orthodox practice, we do not confess *to* the priest, but rather *to* God, in the presence of the priest. The priest serves as a witness and a guide, offering counsel and encouragement to help us grow spiritually and overcome the struggles we have named.

Just as someone who is physically ill turns to a doctor for help, a person seeking healing of the soul turns to a priest for spiritual guidance.

What are icons?

It has often been said that icons are like windows into the Kingdom of Heaven. In other words, you will not only hear the Gospel in an Orthodox Church, you will see it!

The use of sacred images has deep roots, appearing even in Jewish worship long before their presence in Christian churches.

In Orthodox tradition, icons depict the key moments of salvation history: the Birth of Christ, His Baptism in the Jordan, His Crucifixion and descent into

Hades, and His glorious Ascension into heaven.

Icons also portray the saints: holy men, women, and children whose lives were shaped by grace and a lifelong turning toward God. Through repentance and cooperation with the Holy Spirit, they became living reflections of the Kingdom.

For Orthodox Christians, these saints are not distant figures of the past. They are part of our spiritual family, the great "cloud of witnesses" that surrounds and supports us in every generation (Hebrews 12:1).

Why is the priest "Father" when Jesus says not to call any man "Father"?

When Jesus said, "Call no man father," He was addressing the spiritual pride of certain religious leaders in His time who were using titles to elevate themselves above others. If the common titles had been "reverend" or "pastor," He might just as easily have said, "Call no man reverend or pastor."

His warning was not against a particular word, but against the misuse of titles for personal status and recognition.

The use of the term "Father" is not rejected in the rest of Scripture. In fact, St. Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 4:15, "You might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers." He uses the word to describe a spiritual relationship, not a position of power.

Similarly, in Luke 16:24, Jesus tells a story in which

the rich man calls out, “Father Abraham, have mercy on me.” Abraham does not object or correct him, and Jesus Himself does not use the moment to make a point about the word.

Clearly, our Lord was not contradicting Himself. His words must be understood in their proper context, as a rebuke of prideful ambition, not as a universal ban on the respectful use of spiritual titles like “Father.”

Scripture and Tradition

The Orthodox Church is a Bible-believing Church!

At the same time, we also uphold the Holy Tradition that was passed down from the apostle to apostle, both in writing and by word of mouth.

Just as a child is expected to respect the guidance of both parents equally, the Orthodox Church sees Holy Scripture and Holy Tradition as complementary, not competing. Neither is placed above the other.

It was through the Holy Tradition of the Church that the books of the New Testament were recognized and compiled. The Church, guided by the Holy Spirit, preserved the apostolic teaching and identified the writings that faithfully expressed it. This same Spirit inspired both the Scriptures and the apostolic preaching that was not written down.

As St. Paul writes, “Stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or our epistle” (2 Thessalonians 2:15).

In the Orthodox Church, we continue to hold fast to both, trusting that the Holy Spirit remains at work in the life of the Church.

Scripture and Divine Liturgy

The language of the Divine Liturgy is deeply rooted in the language of Scripture.

At every Liturgy, two readings from the New Testament are proclaimed—one from the Epistles and one from the Gospels. The Lord’s Prayer is prayed at every service, and verses from the Psalms appear throughout, forming the foundation of many hymns and responses.

The prayers of the Liturgy are rich with biblical imagery and often include direct quotations from Scripture. In fact, the Liturgy contains at least 98 references from the Old Testament and 114 from the New Testament!

Before the invention of the printing press and the widespread availability of personal Bibles, attending the Divine Liturgy was one of the primary ways Christians encountered the Scriptures. Through hearing, praying, and singing the words of Scripture in worship, the faithful were nourished by the Word of God.

For over 1500 years, the Liturgy was the way Christians learned scripture!

THE GREAT DOXOLOGY

People: Glory be to You who showed the light. Glory in the highest to God. His peace is on earth, His good pleasure in mankind. We praise You, we bless You, we worship You, we glorify You, we give thanks to You for Your great glory. Lord King, heavenly God, Father, Ruler over all; Lord, only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ; and You, O Holy Spirit. Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, who take away the sin of the world, have mercy on us, You who take away the sins of the world. Accept our supplication, You who sit at the right hand of the Father, and have mercy on us. For You alone are holy, You alone are Lord, Jesus Christ, to the glory of God the Father. Amen. Every day I will bless You, and Your name will I praise to eternity, and to the ages of ages.

Vouchsafe, O Lord, this day, that we be kept without sin. Blessed are You, O Lord, the God of our fathers, and praised and glorified is Your name to the ages. Amen. Let Your mercy be on us, O Lord, as we have set our hope on You.

Blessed are You, O Lord. Teach me Your statutes. (*3x*)

Lord, You have been our refuge from generation to generation. I said: Lord, have mercy on me. Heal my soul, for I have sinned against You. Lord, I have fled to You. Teach me to do Your will, for You are my God. For with You is the fountain of life; in Your light we shall see light. Continue Your mercy to those who know You.

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. (*3x*)

What is the Great Doxology?

A doxology is a hymn of praise to the glory of God.

The Great Doxology is the hymn of praise par excellence, where we glorify God for all the wonders and works He has done throughout history and continues to do in our lives.

It is also a prayer asking God to keep working in our lives, and in turn, we bless our Creator.

The singing of the Great Doxology marks the end of the Matins (Orthros) service and leads into the beginning of the Divine Liturgy.

Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Both now and ever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.

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

People: (*Varies*) Today has salvation come to pass in the world. Let us sing to Him who resurrected from the tomb and is the Author of our life. For, destroying death by death, He gave us the victory and the great mercy.

The Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom

THE BEGINNING OF THE LITURGY

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

People: Amen.

During the Paschal season, the priest sings "Christ is Risen from the dead..." The choir and people then repeat the hymn twice more.

THE LITANY OF PEACE OR GREAT LITANY

Priest: In peace, let us pray to the Lord. (1 Ths. 5:13; Col. 3:15)

People: Lord, have mercy. (*After each petition*)

Priest: For the peace from above and for the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord. (*Phl. 4:7; Js. 1:17; Ps. 84:7*)

For the peace of the whole world, for the stability of the holy churches of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord. (*Eph. 2:12*)

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

Blessed is the Kingdom...

To call something "blessed" is to recognize that it is holy, good, and worthy of honor.

The Divine Liturgy begins with a bold and beautiful proclamation: "Blessed is the Kingdom of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit." These words are a declaration of our purpose and our path. The Liturgy is much more than just a church service; it is meant to be a spiritual journey. With every prayer, every hymn, every moment of silence, we are moving toward the Kingdom of God.

By starting the Liturgy this way, we are reminded that the Christian life is meant to be centered on the Kingdom. It is not something far away or abstract. It is near. And it is meant to shape how we live, what we value, and where we place our hope.

The people respond with one voice: "Amen." In saying this, the congregation affirms the truth of what has just been proclaimed. Yes, the Kingdom is blessed. Yes, this is our path. And yes, we will follow.

For pious and Orthodox Christians, let us pray to the Lord.

For our Archbishop (*Name*), for the honorable presbyterate, for the diaconate in Christ, and for all the clergy and the people, let us pray to the Lord. (*Js. 5:16*)

For our country, the president, all those in public service, and for our armed forces everywhere, let us pray to the Lord. (*1 Tim. 2: 1-2*)

For the Holy and Great Church of Christ, for our Sacred Archdiocese, [for this Sacred Metropolis,] for this city and parish, for every city and land, and for the faithful who live in them, let us pray to the Lord.

For favorable weather, for an abundance of the fruits of the earth, and for peaceful times, let us pray to the Lord. (*Js. 5:18; Acts 15:17*)

For those who travel by land, sea, and air, for the sick, the suffering, the captives and for their salvation, let us pray to the Lord. (*Js. 5:5-16*)

For our deliverance from all affliction, wrath, danger, and distress, let us pray to the Lord. (*Ps. 45:1; Ps. 33:6; 1Ki. 26: 23-25*)

Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and protect us, O God, by Your grace.

Priest: Commemorating our most holy, pure, blessed, and glorious Lady, the Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ our God.

People: To You, O Lord.

What is a Litany?

A litany is a series of petitions, offered by the clergy, with the people responding together in prayer.

The most common response is the simple phrase, “Lord, have mercy.” This call and response creates a steady rhythm, drawing the entire congregation into a single voice of prayer. It helps us set aside distraction and focus our hearts on what truly matters.

The litany known as the “Great Litany” is named for the wide range of concerns it brings before God. It lifts up our needs, the needs of the Church, the needs of the world, and the salvation of all people.

Its opening words set the tone for everything that follows. With the petitions “In peace,” “For the peace from above,” and “For the peace of the whole world,” we are invited to begin prayer from a place of calm and trust.

We ask for the peace of God to take root in our hearts and to reach into every corner of the world.

FIRST ANTIPHON (Psalm 102)

Priest: For to You belong all glory, honor, and worship, to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

Chanter: (*Varies*) Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy name.

People: Through the intercessions of the Theotokos, O Savior, save us.

Chanter: (*Varies*) Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all that He has done for you.

People: Through the intercessions of the Theotokos, O Savior, save us.

Chanter: (*Varies*) The Lord in Heaven has prepared His throne and his King rules over all.

People: Through the intercessions of the Theotokos, O Savior, save us.

THE SMALL LITANY

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

People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and protect us, O God, by Your grace.

People: Lord, have mercy.

What is an Antiphon?

An Antiphon is a hymn, typically derived from Psalms 103 and 146, sung by a chanter with each verse followed by a refrain sung by the congregation.

According to tradition, St. Ignatius introduced antiphonal singing to church prayers after a vision of angels singing praises to the Holy Trinity in this manner.

St. Gregory the Theologian described the human race as "antiphonal to the angels," stating that "the angels on one side and humans on the other form two choirs to sing ceaseless praise to their Creator."

In imitation of the angels, we engage in a dance of voices during worship, with one voice calling to and building up another.

Priest: Commemorating our most holy, pure, blessed, and glorious Lady, the Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ our God.

People: To You, O Lord.

SECOND ANTIPHON (Psalm 145)

Priest: For Yours is the dominion, and Yours is the Kingdom and the power and the glory, of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

Chanter: (*Varies*) Praise the Lord, O my soul! I shall praise the Lord while I live; I shall sing to my God as long as I exist.

People: Save us, O Son of God, risen from the dead (*varies*), we sing to You, Alleluia.

Chanter: (*Varies*) Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob; his hope is in the Lord his God.

People: Save us, O Son of God, risen from the dead (*varies*), we sing to You, Alleluia.

Chanter: (*Varies*) The Lord shall reign forever; your God, O Zion, to all generations.

People: Save us, O Son of God, risen from the dead (*varies*), we sing to You, Alleluia.

People: Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Only-begotten Son and Logos of God, being immortal, You condescended for our salvation to take flesh from the holy Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary and, without change, became man. Christ, our God, You were crucified and conquered death by death. Being one of the Holy Trinity, glorified with the

"Lord, have mercy"

"Lord, have mercy" originates from the pleas for mercy and healing found in the Gospels.

In Luke 17:13, the ten lepers cried out, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us." In Luke 18:13, the tax collector prayed, "God, have mercy on me, a sinner." In Luke 18:38, the blind man near Jericho called out, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me."

To ask the Lord for mercy is to seek not only forgiveness but also healing, healing that encompasses both physical and spiritual needs. It is a plea for the restoration of the whole person, body and soul.

Orthodox Christians continually strive to live in God's mercy, yearning to grow closer to Him and to become more like Him in every way.

Father and the Holy Spirit: Save us.

THE SMALL LITANY

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

People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and protect us, O God, by Your grace.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: Commemorating our most holy, pure, blessed, and glorious Lady, the Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ our God.

People: To You, O Lord.

THE SMALL ENTRANCE

During the singing of the Third Antiphon, the priest bows three times before the altar, lifts up the Holy Gospel, and, preceded by the servers, circles the altar and exits the sanctuary through the north door.

THIRD ANTIPHON

Priest: For You, O God, are good and love mankind, and to You we offer glory, to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

For the Third Antiphon, a hymn for the day may be sung alternately with verses, or The Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-12) may be chanted.

In your kingdom. Remember us, O Lord, when You come in Your Kingdom.

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.

What is the Small Entrance?

In ancient times, the Divine Liturgy began with a literal procession into the church. This marked the formal beginning of the service.

Today, that tradition is preserved through what is called the Little Entrance. The priest carries the Gospel book, exits the altar, and re-enters while the clergy sing the hymn, "Come, let us worship and bow down before Christ," taken from Psalm 95:6.

The Gospel book, carried with reverence, symbolizes Christ Himself. The procession recalls Christ's entrance into both Jerusalem and the world.

When the Gospel book is placed at the center of the altar, it reminds us that Christ is the heart of the Church—and that He is meant to be at the center of our lives as well.

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 for righteousness, for they shall be filled.

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.

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

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

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.

Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake.

Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven!

THE ENTRANCE PRAYER

Priest: Wisdom! Arise!

People: Come, let us worship and bow down before Christ. Save us, O Son of God, risen from the dead (*varies*), we sing to You, Alleluia.

HYMNS OF THE DAY

The hymns of the day (called Apolytikia and Kontakion) are two or more hymns that vary, but typically include at least one hymn for the Feast or Saint of the day and the hymn for the parish's patron. The hymn texts may be found in the bulletin.

Do you worship Mary?

Orthodox Christians worship only God—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

The Virgin Mary, though deeply honored, is not worshiped. She holds a unique and exalted place because she was the first to follow Christ and remains a model of faith for all believers. Mary both spiritually and physically embodied the Christian calling—to have Christ within us—as she quite literally bore Him in her own body.

The Church makes a clear distinction between worship, which belongs to God alone, and veneration, which is the honor and reverence given to those who have faithfully served Him. We venerate Mary because we worship the Son she bore. The Archangel Gabriel called her "full of grace" (Luke 1:28), and Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Spirit, called her "most blessed among all women" (Luke 1:42).

Mary is called Theotokos, meaning "Mother of God," because she gave birth to the eternal Word who took on human flesh. Our salvation came through her willing cooperation with God's plan.

We firmly reject the idea that Christ merely passed through her as water through a pipe. Mary was chosen by God not only to give birth to His Son, but also to love, nurture, and raise Him.

In honoring her, we affirm the true humanity of Christ, who had a real, human mother.

THE TRISAGION HYMN

Priest: Let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: For You, our God, are holy, and to You we offer up glory, to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever, and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

People: 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 forever and to the ages of ages. Amen. Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.

Priest: Dynamis!

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

Priest: Blessed is He Who comes in the name of the Lord. Blessed are You upon the throne of the glory of Your kingdom, enthroned upon the Cherubim always, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

The Trisagion Hymn

The Trisagion, which means "Thrice-Holy," is one of the most ancient and beloved hymns in the Orthodox Church. In this hymn, the Church praises God with the words:

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

With the simple words, "Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us," the Church lifts its voice in awe before the holiness of God. This hymn echoes the eternal worship of heaven, where angels continually cry out, "Holy, holy, holy," before the throne of the Almighty, as described in the visions of Isaiah and in the Book of Revelation.

It reminds us that the God we worship is beyond all we can comprehend,yet still near enough to hear our prayers.

In the Divine Liturgy, heaven and earth meet, and our worship here becomes a reflection of the heavenly worship shown to the prophets and apostles.

THE EPISTLE

Priest: Let us be attentive!

Reader: *The Reader chants the Prokeimenon refrain and verse.*

Priest: Wisdom!

Reader: *The Reader identifies the Epistle reading.*

Priest: Let us be attentive!

Reader: *The Reader reads the Epistle for the day.*

The Epistle Reading may be found in the bulletin.

Priest: Peace be with you, the reader.

People: Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia

THE HOLY GOSPEL

Please stand during the Gospel Reading.

Priest: Wisdom! Arise! Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Peace be with all.

People: And with your spirit.

Priest: The reading is from the Holy Gospel according to Saint…(*Matthew, Mark, Luke or John*). Let us be attentive!

People: Glory to You, O Lord, glory to You.

The Readings

For centuries, Christians around the world have followed a liturgical calendar that allows them to join together in reading the same passages each day.

The Orthodox Church maintains this tradition, walking through the New Testament with specific readings prescribed from both the Gospels and the Epistles for each day of the year.

Through the Epistles, we hear the witness of the apostles, who gave their lives to proclaim Christ, and we are encouraged to follow their example by offering ourselves fully to the work of the Gospel.

Through the Gospels, we witness the story of Jesus—how He lived, taught, died, and rose again—so we can learn to live as He lived and become more like Him.

Priest: *The Priest intones the Holy Gospel.*

The Gospel Reading may be found in the bulletin.

People: Glory to You, O Lord, glory to You.

THE SERMON OR HOMILY

THE LITANY OF FERVENT SUPPLICATION

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

People: Lord, have mercy. (*After each petition*)

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

Lord almighty, God of our fathers, we pray You, hear us and have mercy.

Have mercy on us, O God, according to Your great mercy, we pray You, hear us and have mercy.

Again we pray for our Archbishop (*Name*).

Again we pray for our brethren: the priests, the hieromonks, the hierodeacons, the monastics, and all our brotherhood in Christ.

Again we pray for mercy, life, peace, health, salvation, protection, forgiveness, and remission of the sins of the servants of God, all pious Orthodox Christians residing and visiting in this city: the parishioners, the members of the parish council, the stewards, and benefactors of this holy church.

Again we pray for the blessed and ever-memorable founders of this holy church, and for all our fathers and brethren who have fallen asleep before us, who here have been piously laid to their rest, as well as the Orthodox everywhere.

Again we pray for those who bear fruit and do good works in this holy and all-venerable church, for those

who labor and those who sing, and for the people here present who await Your great and rich mercy.

Priest: For You are a merciful God Who loves mankind, and to You we offer up glory, to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

THE PRAYERS FOR THE CATECHUMENS

Priest: Pray to the Lord, you catechumens.

People: Lord, have mercy. (*following each petition*)

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

That He will teach them the word of truth.

That He will reveal to them the gospel of righteousness.

That He will unite them to His holy, catholic, and apostolic Church.

Save them, have mercy on them, help them, and protect them, O God, by Your grace.

Catechumens, bow your heads to the Lord.

People: To You, O Lord.

Priest: Lord our God, Who dwells on high and watches over the humble, You sent forth Your only-begotten Son and God, our Lord Jesus Christ, for the

salvation of the human race. Look down upon Your servants, the catechumens, who have inclined their necks to You, and grant them at a proper time the baptism of rebirth, the remission of sins, and the garment of incorruption. Unite them to Your holy, catholic, and apostolic Church, and number them among Your chosen flock.

So that with us they also may glorify Your most honorable and majestic name, of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

Priest: Those who are catechumens, depart; catechumens depart; all those who are catechumens, depart. Let none of the catechumens remain.

THE FIRST PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

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

People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and protect us, O God, by Your grace.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: Wisdom!

Priest (in a low voice): We give thanks to You, O Lord God of Hosts, Who has made us worthy to stand even now before Your holy Altar of sacrifice and to fall

What is a Catechumen?

A catechumen is someone who has declared a desire to follow Christ, has been received as a learner of the Faith, and is being instructed in the teachings of the Church, but has not yet been fully united to the Body of Christ through Baptism or Chrismation.

In a way, the catechumen is like someone engaged to be married—joined in intention and promise, but not yet fully joined in union.

During the Liturgy, we pray for the catechumens, asking the Lord to guide them ever deeper into the Orthodox faith, preparing them for the day when they will be fully received through Baptism or Chrismation.

If you would like to become a Catechumen, or want to know more, please let us know and we would be happy to guide you on your journey!

down before You seeking Your compassion for our sins and those committed in ignorance by the people. Accept, O God, our supplication. Make us worthy to offer You prayers, supplications, and bloodless sacrifices for all Your people. By the power of Your Holy Spirit, make us, whom You have appointed to this, Your ministry, free of blame or stumbling and, with the witness of a clear conscience, able to call upon You at every time and in every place, so that, hearing us, You may be merciful to us in the abundance of Your goodness.

Priest (aloud): For to You all glory, honor, and worship are due, to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

THE SECOND PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

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

People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and protect us, O God, by Your grace.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: Wisdom!

Priest (in a low voice): Again and countless times we fall down before You, and we implore You, O Good One, Who loves mankind: That You, having regarded our prayer, may cleanse our souls and bodies from every defilement of flesh and spirit, and grant to us to stand before Your holy Altar of sacrifice, free of guilt and condemnation. Grant also, O God, to those who pray with us, progress in life, faith, and spiritual understanding. Grant that they always worship You with awe and love, partake of Your Holy Mysteries without guilt or condemnation, and be deemed worthy of Your celestial Kingdom.

Priest (aloud): That, ever guarded by Your might, we may ascribe glory to You, to the Father and to the

Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

THE GREAT ENTRANCE

The Great Entrance

The Great Entrance is a solemn procession in which the gifts of bread and wine are carried through the church and placed on the altar.

While the earlier Little Entrance symbolizes Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem, the Great Entrance reflects His willing and sacrificial journey to the Cross, where He offered His body and blood for the life of the world.

This offering of Himself for the salvation of all becomes the focus of the remainder of the service as we prepare for Holy Communion.

THE CHERUBIC HYMN

People: Let us, who mystically represent the Cherubim and who sing the thrice-holy hymn to the life-creating Trinity, now lay aside every worldly care. So that we may receive the King of all…

Priest: May the Lord God remember all of us in His Kingdom always, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

(*And complete the Cherubic Hymn*): ...Who is invisibly escorted by the angelic hosts. Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia.

THE LITANY OF COMPLETION

Priest: Let us complete our prayer to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy. (*After each petition*)

Priest: For the precious Gifts here presented, let us pray to the Lord.

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

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

Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and protect us, O God, by Your grace.

People: Grant this, O Lord. (*After each petition*)

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

For an angel of peace, a faithful guide, a guardian of our souls and bodies, let us ask the Lord.

For pardon and remission of our sins and transgressions, let us ask the Lord.

For that which is good and beneficial for our souls, and for peace for the world, let us ask the Lord.

"Let us complete"

The Divine Liturgy now draws near to the moment for which we have gathered.

The gifts of bread and wine are placed upon the holy altar as a thankful offering to God, and the Church prays that the Holy Spirit will descend to mystically transform both the gifts and those who receive them into the Body and Blood of Christ.

Just as the early Christians did, Orthodox believers come together to participate in the heart of the Liturgy—the Eucharist.

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

And let us ask for a Christian end to our life, peaceful, without shame and suffering, and for a good defense before the awesome judgment seat of Christ.

Priest: Commemorating our most holy, pure, blessed, and glorious Lady, the Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ our God.

People: To You, O Lord.

If today's service takes place during Lent, please turn to page 68.

THE OFFERTORY PRAYER

Priest: Lord God Almighty, You alone are holy. You accept the sacrifice of praise from those who call upon You with their whole heart, even so, accept from us sinners our supplication, and bring it to Your holy Altar of sacrifice. Enable us to offer You gifts and spiritual sacrifices for our own sins and the failings of Your people. Deem us worthy to find grace in Your sight, that our sacrifice may be well pleasing to You, and that the good Spirit of Your grace may rest upon us and upon these gifts presented and upon all Your people.

Through the mercies of Your only-begotten Son, with Whom You are blessed, together with Your all-holy, good, and life-creating Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

Priest: Peace be with all.

People: And with your spirit.

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

People: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: Trinity, one in essence and undivided.

Priest: The doors! The doors! In wisdom, let us be attentive!

The Creed - The Symbol of our Faith

The Creed is an ancient and powerful confession of faith, spoken aloud by believers in every corner of the globe. It encapsulates the essence of what it means to be a Christian, gathering into a few profound lines the truths that have been handed down through the centuries.

There are many traditions, customs, and practices that Christians may observe depending on where they live or how they worship. But the truths declared in the Creed are not optional. They are the foundation of our faith, the non-negotiables that unite us across time and place.

THE CREED - THE SYMBOL OF OUR FAITH

People: I believe in one God, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all ages; Light of Light, true God of true God, begotten, not created, of one essence with the Father, through 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. He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered and was buried; and He rose on the third day, according to the Scriptures. And He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father; He will come again with glory to judge the living and dead. His Kingdom shall have no end. And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Creator of life,

Who proceeds from the Father, Who together with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, Who spoke through the prophets. In one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. I confess one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the age to come. Amen.

THE HOLY ANAPHORA

Priest: Let us stand aright! Let us stand in awe! Let us be attentive, that we may present the Holy Offering in peace.

People: A mercy of peace, a sacrifice of praise.

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

People: And with your spirit.

Priest: Let us lift up our hearts.

People: We lift them up to the Lord.

Priest: Let us give thanks to the Lord.

People: It is proper and right.

Priest: It is proper and right to hymn You, to bless You, to praise You, to give thanks to You, and to worship You in every place of Your dominion. For You, O God, are ineffable, inconceivable, invisible, incomprehensible, existing forever, forever the same, You and Your only-begotten Son and Your Holy Spirit. You brought us out of nothing into being, and when we had fallen away, You raised us up again. You

What are saints?

They are men, women, and even children from every generation who show us what it truly means to follow Christ and to be called His friend. We know them as saints, a word that comes from the ancient Latin meaning “holy.”

Throughout the history of the Church, we honor these faithful ones—patriarchs and prophets, apostles and evangelists, teachers and preachers, martyrs, confessors, and ascetics—who gave themselves completely to the Lord. Their lives shine as examples of devotion, courage, humility, and love for God.

We look to them not only with admiration but also with the intention to follow in their footsteps. As the Apostle Paul urged the Corinthians, we strive to be “imitators of them, as they were of Christ,” allowing their witness to guide and inspire our own journey of faith.

left nothing undone until you had led us up to heaven and granted us Your Kingdom, which is to come. For all these things, we thank You and Your only-begotten Son and Your Holy Spirit: for all things we know and do not know, for blessings manifest and hidden that have been bestowed on us.

We thank You also for this Liturgy, which You have deigned to receive from our hands, even though thousands of archangels and tens of thousands of angels stand around You, the Cherubim and Seraphim, six-winged, many-eyed, soaring aloft upon

their wings, singing the triumphal hymn, exclaiming, proclaiming, and saying…

People: Holy, holy, holy, Lord Sabaoth, heaven and earth are filled with Your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is He Who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Priest: Together with these blessed powers, Master, Who loves mankind, we also exclaim and say: Holy are You and most holy, You and Your only-begotten Son and Your Holy Spirit. Holy are You and most holy, and sublime is Your glory. You so loved Your world that You gave Your only-begotten Son so that everyone who believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. When He had come and fulfilled for our sake the entire plan of salvation, on the night in which He was delivered up, or rather when He delivered Himself up for the life of the world, He took bread in His holy, pure, and blameless hands, and, giving thanks and blessing, He hallowed and broke it, and gave it to His holy disciples and apostles, saying:

"Take, eat, this is My Body, which is broken for you for the remission of sins."

People: Amen.

Priest: Likewise, after partaking of the supper, He took the cup, saying:

"Drink of this, all of you; this is My Blood of the new covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the remission of sins."

People: Amen.

Do you pray to saints?

"For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him."(Luke 20:38)

In God and within His Church, there is no separation between the living and the departed. In Christ, we remain one family—a true communion of saints.

We believe that through the risen Christ, prayer crosses even the boundary of death. Those who have gone before us continue to pray for us, just as we remember them in our own prayers. In our worship and personal devotion, we honor those who walked with Christ on earth and who, though no longer in their bodies, are alive in His presence now.

We turn to the saints and ask for their prayers just as we might ask a trusted friend on earth to pray for us. They endured the same kinds of struggles we face and, by God's grace, overcame them.

Who better to support us in our own trials than those who have already walked the path and emerged victorious?

Priest: Remembering, therefore, this saving commandment and all that has been done for our sake: the Cross, the tomb, the Resurrection on the third day, the Ascension into heaven, the enthronement at the right hand, and the second and glorious coming again.

Your own of Your own we offer to You, in all and for all.

People: We praise You, we bless You, we give thanks to You, and we pray to You, Lord our God.

Priest: Once again we offer to You this spiritual worship without the shedding of blood, and we beseech and pray and entreat You: Send down Your Holy Spirit upon us and upon the gifts here presented,

And make this bread the precious Body of Your Christ.

People: Amen.

Priest: And that which is in this Cup, the precious Blood of Your Christ.

People: Amen.

Priest: Changing them by Your Holy Spirit.

People: Amen. Amen. Amen.

Priest: So that they may be for those who partake of them for vigilance of soul, remission of sins, communion of Your Holy Spirit, fullness of the Kingdom of Heaven, boldness before You, not for judgment or condemnation. Again, we offer You this spiritual worship for those who have reposed in the faith: forefathers, fathers, patriarchs, prophets, apostles, preachers, evangelists, martyrs, confessors, ascetics, and for every righteous spirit made perfect in faith,

What is the view of the Orthodox Church towards the non-Orthodox?

Saint Irenaeus once said, "Where the Spirit of God is, there is the Church."

We believe that there is only one Church on earth, yet we also recognize that the Spirit of God is beyond our full understanding. We cannot presume to know with certainty where the Spirit may be at work outside the visible boundaries of the Orthodox Church.

It is not our place to judge non-Orthodox Christians or their communities.

Instead, we are called to live our faith with humility, repentance, and love. While we trust that some may find salvation outside the Orthodox Church, we also know that here, within the Church, are the tools and the medicine for salvation.

So we simply invite: Come and see!

Especially for our most holy, pure, blessed, and glorious Lady, the Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary.

People: It is truly right to bless you, Theotokos, ever blessed, most pure, and Mother of our God. More honorable than the Cherubim, and beyond compare more glorious than the Seraphim, without corruption you gave birth to God the Logos. We magnify you, the true Theotokos.

Priest: Among the first remember, Lord, our Archbishop (*Name*); grant him to Your holy churches in peace, safety, honor, and health, unto length of days, rightly teaching the word of Your truth.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: And remember those whom each one of us has in mind, and all the people.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: Remember, Lord, this city in which we live, and every city and land, and the faithful who live in them. Remember, Lord, those who travel by land, sea, and air; the sick; the suffering; the captives; and their salvation. Remember those who bear fruit and do good works in Your holy churches and those who are mindful of the poor, and upon us all send forth Your mercies.

And grant that with one voice and one heart we may glorify and praise Your most honorable and majestic name, of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

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

People: And with your spirit.

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

People: Lord, have mercy. (*After every petition*)

Priest: For the precious Gifts here presented and consecrated, let us pray to the Lord.

That our God Who loves mankind, having accepted them at His holy and celestial and mystical altar as an offering of spiritual fragrance, may in return send down upon us the divine grace and the gift of the Holy Spirit, let us pray.

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

Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and protect us, O God, by Your grace.

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

People: Grant this, O Lord. (*After every petition*)

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

For pardon and remission of our sins and transgressions, let us ask the Lord.

For that which is good and beneficial for our souls, and for peace for the world, let us ask the Lord.

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

And let us ask for a Christian end to our life, peaceful, without shame and suffering, and for a good defense before the awesome judgment seat of Christ.

Priest: Having asked for the unity of the faith and for the communion of the Holy Spirit, let us commend

ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ our God.

People: To You, O Lord.

Priest: We entrust to You, loving Master, our whole life and hope, and we beseech, pray, and implore You: Grant us to partake of Your heavenly and awesome Mysteries from this sacred and spiritual table with a clear conscience for the remission of sins, the forgiveness of transgressions, the communion of the Holy Spirit, the inheritance of the Kingdom of Heaven, and boldness before You, not unto judgment or condemnation. And grant us, Master, with boldness and without condemnation, to dare call You, the heavenly God, Father, and to say:

THE LORD'S PRAYER

People: 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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Priest: For Thine is the Kingdom and the power and the glory, of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

Priest: Peace be with all.

People: And with your spirit.

The Lord's Prayer

At the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus gave this prayer to the apostles as a model for how they should pray. Every prayer service in the Church includes the Lord's Prayer, and every Orthodox Christian makes it a central part of their personal daily prayer.

This prayer teaches us to seek God's will rather than our own. We ask for our daily needs to be met, for the grace to forgive others, and for deliverance from evil. At its heart, the Lord's Prayer is a way of surrendering ourselves to God's purposes, asking that His will be made manifest in our lives. It helps us to stand humbly and rightly before Him, aligning our hearts with His.

Aside from the Creed, the Lord's Prayer is the most common and essential expression of faith that a Christian can offer in daily life.

Priest: Let us bow our heads to the Lord.

People: To You, O Lord.

Priest: We give thanks to You, invisible King, Who by Your boundless power fashioned the universe, and in the multitude of Your mercy brought all things from nothing into being. Look down from heaven, O Master, upon those who have bowed their heads before You; for they have not bowed before flesh and blood, but before You, the awesome God. Therefore, O Master, make smooth and beneficial for us all, whatever lies ahead, according to the need of each:

Sail with those who sail; travel with those who travel; heal the sick, Physician of our souls and bodies.

Through the grace, compassion, and love for mankind of Your only-begotten Son, with whom You are blessed, together with Your all-holy, good, and life-creating Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

HOLY COMMUNION

Priest: Hearken, O Lord Jesus Christ our God, from Your holy dwelling place and from the throne of glory of Your Kingdom, and come to sanctify us, You Who are enthroned with the Father on high and are present among us invisibly here. And with Your mighty hand, grant Communion of Your most pure Body and precious Blood to us, and through us to all the people.

Priest: Let us be attentive!

Priest: The Holy Gifts for the holy people of God.

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

Holy Communion

Holy Communion, instituted by Christ at the Last Supper, is the most sacred mystery of the Church. On the night before His crucifixion, Christ took bread and wine, gave thanks, and gave them to His apostles, saying they were His Body and Blood, given for the life of the world. He commanded them to continue this sacred act in remembrance of Him. The Orthodox Church has faithfully preserved this command, making the Eucharist the central focus of the Divine Liturgy. Nothing is more important in our worship than this moment.

In the Eucharist, we receive Christ Himself, uniting with Him and drawing closer to our Creator. Through this mystery, we are nourished and transformed, growing more and more into His likeness. The Eucharist is unique to Christianity and lies at the very heart of our faith. In this holy communion, we are united with God, renewed as sons and daughters of the Father, and consecrated by the Holy Spirit.

The Church Fathers have called the Eucharist the “medicine of immortality,” the spiritual healing we need to live as Christ lived. By partaking of His Body and Blood, we obey His words: “Unless you eat My flesh and drink My blood, you have no life in you.” In this sacred mystery, we receive the eternal life that God desires for all His creation.

PRAYERS BEFORE COMMUNION

I believe and confess, Lord, that You are truly the Christ, the Son of the living God, Who came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the first. I also believe that this is truly Your pure Body and that this is truly Your precious Blood. Therefore, I pray to You, have mercy upon me, and forgive my transgressions, voluntary and involuntary, in word and deed, in knowledge or in ignorance. And make me worthy, without condemnation, to partake of Your pure Mysteries for the remission of sins and for eternal life. Amen.

Behold, I approach for Divine Communion. O Maker, burn me not as I partake, for You are fire consuming the unworthy. But cleanse me from every stain.

O Son of God, receive me today as a partaker of Your mystical supper. For I will not speak of the mystery to Your enemies, nor will I give You a kiss, as did Judas. But like the thief, I confess to You: Remember me, Lord, in Your Kingdom.

Tremble, O man, as you behold the divine Blood. It is a burning coal that sears the unworthy. The Body of God both deifies and nourishes me: It deifies the Spirit and wondrously nourishes the mind.

You have smitten me with yearning, O Christ, and by Your divine eros You have changed me. But burn up with spiritual fire my sins, and grant me to be filled with delight in You, so that, leaping for joy, I may magnify, O Good One, Your two comings.

Who May Receive Holy Communion?

To receive Holy Communion in the Orthodox Church, one must be a member of the Orthodox Church, striving to live faithfully in repentance, humility, and obedience to Christ. This means not only professing the Orthodox faith but also preparing the heart through prayer, fasting, and, when needed, confession. Communion is never approached casually; the faithful are called to examine themselves, repent, and come to the chalice with reverence and love.

The Church takes seriously the words of Saint Paul, who warns that receiving Communion unworthily can bring judgment rather than grace. Those who eat and drink “without discerning the Body” do so to their own harm. Out of respect for the holiness of the sacrament and concern for the spiritual well-being of all, we ask that those who are not Orthodox Christians refrain from receiving Communion. This is not a judgment on anyone’s heart, relationship with God, or His mercy, but rather a reflection of the Church’s responsibility to safeguard the mystery of the Eucharist.

If you are visiting today and not Orthodox, you are warmly welcome to join in the prayers and worship of the Church. We pray that you may feel God’s presence and His love surrounding you.

How shall I, who am unworthy, enter into the splendor of Your saints? If I should dare to enter into the bridal chamber, my vesture will condemn me, since it is not a wedding garment; and being bound up, I shall be cast out by the angels. Cleanse, O Lord, the filth of my soul, and save me, as You are the one Who loves mankind. In Your love, Lord, cleanse my soul, and save me.

Master Who loves mankind, Lord Jesus Christ, my God, let not these Holy Gifts be to my judgment because I am unworthy, but rather for the purification and sanctification of both soul and body and the pledge of the life and Kingdom to come. It is good for me to cleave unto God and to place in Him the hope of my salvation.

O Son of God, receive me today as a partaker of Your mystical supper. For I will not speak of the mystery to Your enemies, nor will I give You a kiss, as did Judas. But like the thief, I confess to You: Remember me, Lord, in Your Kingdom.

COMMUNION HYMN

People: (*Varies, may be sung multiple times with verses*) Praise the Lord from the heavens; praise Him in the highest. Alleluia!

Repentance

It is with the word repent that Jesus Christ began His public ministry. In the Gospels, the very first message we hear from Him is: “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!”

The word repentance means “a change of mind.” It is an invitation to transform the way we think and live—to stop living for ourselves and instead to live for God, pursuing the kind of life He calls us to. In one sense, repentance means looking back and turning away from past decisions, acknowledging the ways we have offended God, hurt ourselves, or wronged others. But it is not only about looking backward. Repentance also points us forward, reorienting our lives toward Christ and embracing the life He asks of us.

Repentance is not a single event but an ongoing way of life. Again and again we fall, but we rise to try again, choosing to follow His commandments and walk in His ways. To be a Christian is to live a life of continual repentance—turning away from everything that makes us less like Christ and turning toward everything that draws us closer to Him.

COMMUNION OF THE FAITHFUL

Priest: With the fear of God, faith, and love, draw near.

Choir: (*The choir may sing various hymns while the people commune*)

The people receive Holy Communion. After all have communed…

Priest: Save, O God, Your people, and bless Your inheritance.

People: We have seen the true light; we have received the heavenly Spirit; we have found the true faith, worshiping the undivided Trinity, for the Trinity has saved us.

Priest: Be exalted, O God, above the heavens, and let Your glory be over all the earth. (*3x*)

Blessed is our God, always, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen. Let our mouths be filled with Your praise, O Lord, that we may sing of Your glory, because You have made us worthy to partake of Your Holy Mysteries. Keep us in Your sanctification, that all day long we may meditate upon Your righteousness. Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia.

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

The Sign of the Cross

The Sign of the Cross is a physical expression of faith, recalling Christ's death on the cross and the power of His sacrifice in our lives, and it remains one of the most ancient practices in Christianity.

Orthodox Christians make the sign using their right hand, joining the thumb, index, and middle fingers together while placing the ring and little fingers against the palm.

The three fingers joined together symbolize the unity of the Holy Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, one God in three persons.

The two fingers against the palm represent the two natures of Christ, affirming our belief that He is both fully God and fully human.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: Help us, save us, have mercy upon us, and protect us, O God, by Your grace.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: Having prayed for a perfect, holy, peaceful, and sinless day, let us commend ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ our God.

People: To You, O Lord.

THE THANKSGIVING PRAYER

Priest: We give thanks to You, Master Who loves mankind, benefactor of our souls, that even on this very day You have made us worthy of Your heavenly and immortal Mysteries. Make straight our path, fortify us in Your fear, guard our life, make secure our steps, through the prayers and supplications of the glorious Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary and of all Your saints.

For You are our sanctification, and to You we give glory, to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

Priest: Let us go forth in peace.

Priest: Let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

THE PRAYER BEHIND THE AMBON

Priest: O Lord, Who blesses those who bless You and sanctifies those who put their trust in You, save Your people and bless Your inheritance. Protect the whole body of Your Church. Sanctify those who love the beauty of Your house. Glorify them in return by Your divine power, and forsake us not who have set our hope in You. Grant peace to Your world, to Your churches, to the clergy, to our civic leaders, to the armed forces, and to all Your people. For every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from You, the Father of lights. To You we give glory,

Salvation

Salvation is far more than simply reciting a "sinner's prayer" or agreeing to a set of doctrines or moral principles.

Salvation is not a single moment in time but a lifelong journey. It unfolds through countless moments in which we are either becoming more like Christ or drifting further away from Him. At every step, we are called to grow closer to God, to turn away from what separates us from Him, and to embrace the life He offers.

Salvation is a continuous process of transformation, drawing us ever deeper into His love and likeness.

In much of Western Christianity, salvation has often been described in legal or juridical terms, using metaphors of guilt, punishment, and acquittal. While Orthodox theology does not reject these biblical images, it places them alongside many other scriptural metaphors that describe Christ's redemptive work—images of healing, renewal, restoration, and rescue.

thanksgiving, and worship, to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen. Blessed be the name of the Lord, from this time forth and to the ages. (*3x*)

Priest: Let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: May the blessing of the Lord and His mercy come upon you by His divine grace and love for mankind, always, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

Priest: Glory to You, O God, glory to You.

People: Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen. Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy. Father bless!

Priest: May He Who (*varies*) rose from the dead, Christ our true God, through the intercessions of His all-pure and all-immaculate holy Mother; the power of the precious and life-giving Cross; the protection of the honorable, bodiless powers of heaven; the supplications of the honorable, glorious prophet and forerunner John the Baptist; of the holy, glorious, and praiseworthy apostles; of the holy, glorious, and triumphant martyrs; of our righteous and God-bearing fathers; of (name of the saint of the church); of our father among the saints John Chrysostom, archbishop of Constantinople; of the holy and righteous ancestors of God Joachim and Anna; of (saint of the day), whose memory we celebrate today; and of all the saints; have mercy on us and save us, for He is good and loves mankind.

People: Amen.

People: Lord, protect for many years the one who blesses and sanctifies us.

Priest: Through the prayers of our holy fathers, Lord Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us.

People: Amen.

Priest: May the Holy Trinity protect all of you.

Thank you for visiting us today.

You are our guest and are invited to join us for some coffee, food, and conversation.

If you are looking into Orthodoxy, we would be happy to answer any questions you might have.

THE OFFERTORY PRAYER

Priest: Lord, our God, You created us and brought us into this life. You have shown us the way to salvation and have bestowed upon us the revelation of heavenly mysteries. You have appointed us to this service by the power of Your Holy Spirit. Grant, therefore, O Lord that we may be accepted as servants of Your new Covenant and ministers of Your holy mysteries. Accept us as we draw near to Your holy altar, according to the multitude of Your mercy, that we may be worthy to offer You this spiritual sacrifice without the shedding of blood, for our sins and for the transgressions of Your people. Grant that, having accepted this sacrifice upon Your holy, heavenly, and spiritual altar as an offering of spiritual fragrance, You may in return send down upon us the grace of Your Holy Spirit.

Look upon us, O God, and consider our worship; and accept it as You accepted the gifts of Abel, the sacrifices of Noah, the burnt offerings of Abraham, the priestly offices of Moses and Aaron, and the peace offerings of Samuel. As You accepted this true worship from Your holy apostles, accept also in Your goodness, O Lord, these gifts from the hands of us sinners, that being deemed worthy to serve at Your holy altar without blame., we may obtain the reward of the faithful stewards on the fearful day of Your just judgment.

Through the mercies of Your only begotten Son with whom You are blessed, together with Your all holy, good, and lifegiving Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

Priest: Peace be with all.

People: And with your spirit.

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

People: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: Trinity, one in essence and undivided.

Priest: The doors! The doors! In wisdom, let us be attentive!

THE CREED - THE SYMBOL OF OUR FAITH

People: I believe in one God, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all ages. Light of Light, true God of true God, begotten not created, of one essence with the Father through 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. He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And He rose on the third day, according to the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. And He will come again with glory to judge the living and dead. His kingdom shall have no end. And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Creator of life, Who proceeds from the Father, Who together with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, Who spoke through the prophets. In one,

holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. I confess one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the age to come. Amen.

THE HOLY ANAPHORA

Priest: Let us stand aright! Let us stand in awe! Let us be attentive, that we may present the Holy Offering in peace.

People: A mercy of peace, a sacrifice of praise.

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

People: And with your spirit.

Priest: Let us lift up our hearts.

People: We lift them up to the Lord.

Priest: Let us give thanks to the Lord.

People: It is proper and right.

Priest: Master, Lord, God, worshipful Father almighty, it is truly just and right to the majesty of Your holiness to praise You, to hymn You, to bless You, to worship You, to give thanks to You, to glorify You, the only true God, and to offer to You this our spiritual worship with a contrite heart and a humble spirit. For You have given us to know Your truth. Who is worthy to praise Your mighty acts? Or to make known all Your praises? Or tell of all Your wonderful deeds at all times?

Master of all things, Lord of heaven and earth, and of every creature visible and invisible, You are seated upon the throne of glory and behold the depths. You are without beginning, invisible, incomprehensible, beyond words, unchangeable. You are the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the great God and Savior of our hope, the image of Your goodness, the true seal of revealing in Himself You, the Father. He is the living Word, the true God, eternal wisdom, life, sanctification, power, and the true light. Through Him the Holy Spirit was manifested, the spirit of truth the gift of Sonship, the pledge of our future inheritance, the first fruits of eternal blessings, the life giving power, the source of sanctification through whom every rational and spiritual creature is made capable of worshiping You and giving You eternal glorification, for all things are subject to You.

For You are praised by the angels, archangels, thrones, dominions, principalities, authorities, powers, and the many eyed Cherubim. Round about You 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; with two they fly,

Crying out to one another with unceasing voices and everresounding praises, singing the victory hymn, proclaiming, crying out, and saying:

People: Holy, holy, holy, Lord Sabaoth, heaven and earth are filled with Your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna to God in the highest.

Priest: Together with these blessed powers, loving Master we sinners also cry out and say: Truly You are

holy and most holy, and there are no bounds to the majesty of Your holiness. You are holy in all Your works, for with righteousness and true judgment You have ordered all things for us. For having made man by taking dust from the earth, and having honored him with Your own image, O God, You placed him in a garden of delight, promising him eternal life and the enjoyment of everlasting blessings in the observance of Your commandments. But when he disobeyed You, the true God who had created him, and was led astray by the deception of the serpent becoming subject to death through his own transgressions, You, O God, in Your righteous judgment, expelled 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 Your Christ. For You did not forever reject Your creature whom You made, O Good One, nor did You forget the work of Your hands, but because of Your tender compassion, You visited him in various ways: You sent forth prophets; You performed mighty works by Your saints who in every generation have pleased You. You spoke to us by the mouth of Your servants the prophets, announcing to us the salvation which was to come; You gave us the law to help us; You appointed angels as guardians.

And when the fullness of time had come, You spoke to us through Your Son Himself, through whom You created the ages. He, being the splendor of Your glory and the image of Your being, upholding all things by the word of His power, thought it not robbery to be equal with You, God and Father. But, being God before all ages, He appeared on earth and lived with humankind. Becoming incarnate from a holy Virgin, He emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant,

conforming to the body of our lowliness, that He might change us in the likeness of the image of His glory.

For, since through man sin came into the world and through sin death, it pleased Your only begotten Son, who is in Your bosom, God and Father, born of a woman, the holy Theotokos and ever virgin Mary; born under the law, to condemn sin in His flesh, so that those who died in Adam may be brought to life in Him, Your Christ. He lived in this world, and gave us precepts of salvation. Releasing us from the delusions of idolatry, He guided us to the sure knowledge of You, the true God and Father. He acquired us for Himself, as His chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation. Having cleansed us by water and sanctified us with the Holy Spirit, He gave Himself as ransom to death in which we were held captive, sold under sin. Descending into Hades through the cross, that He might fill all things with Himself, He loosed the bonds of death. He rose on the third day, having opened a path for all flesh to the resurrection from the dead, since it was not possible that the Author of life would be dominated by corruption. So He became the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep, the first born of the dead, that He might be Himself the first in all things. Ascending into heaven, He sat at the right hand of Your majesty on high and He will come to render to each according to His works.

As memorials of His saving passion, He has left us these gifts which we have set forth before You according to His commands. For when He was about to go forth to His voluntary, ever memorable, and life-giving death, on the night on which He was

delivered up for the life of the world, He took bread in His holy and pure hands, and presenting it to You, God and Father, and offering thanks, blessing, sanctifying, and breaking it, He gave it to His holy disciples and apostles saying:

"Take, eat, this is my body which is broken for you and for the forgiveness of sins."

People: Amen.

Priest: Likewise, He took the cup of the fruit of vine, and having mingled it, offering thanks, blessing, and sanctifying it. He gave it to His holy disciples and apostles saying:

"Drink of this all of you. This is my blood of the new Covenant, shed for you and for many, for the forgiveness of sins."

People: Amen.

Priest: Do this in remembrance of me. For as often as you eat this Bread and drink this Cup, you proclaim my death, and you confess my resurrection. Therefore, Master, we also, remembering His saving passion and life giving cross, His three; day burial and resurrection from the dead, His ascension into heaven, and enthronement at Your right hand, God and Father, and His glorious and awesome second coming.

We offer to You these gifts from Your own gifts in all and for all.

People: We praise You, we bless You, we give thanks to You, and we pray to You, Lord our God.

Priest: Therefore, most holy Master, we also, Your sinful and unworthy servants, whom You have made worthy to serve at Your holy altar, not because of our own righteousness (for we have not done anything good upon the earth), but because of Your mercy and compassion, which You have so richly poured upon us, we dare to approach Your holy altar, and bring forth the symbols of the holy Body and Blood of Your Christ. We pray to You and call upon You, O Holy of Holies, that by the favor of Your goodness, Your Holy Spirit may come upon us and upon the gifts here presented, to bless, sanctify, and make this bread to be the precious Body of our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ.

Priest: Amen.

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

Priest: Amen.

Priest: Shed for the life and salvation of the world.

Priest: Amen. Amen. Amen.

Priest: And unite us all to one another who become partakers of the one Bread and the Cup in the communion of the one Holy Spirit. Grant that none of us may partake of the holy Body and Blood of Your Christ to judgment or condemnation; but, that we may find mercy and grace with all the saints who through the ages have pleased You: forefathers, fathers, patriarchs, prophets, apostles, preachers, evangelists, martyrs, confessors, teachers, and every righteous spirit made perfect in faith.

Especially for our most holy, pure, blessed, and glorious Lady, the Theotokos and ever virgin Mary.

People: All of creation rejoices in you, O full of grace: the assembly of angels and the human race. You are a sanctified temple and a spiritual paradise, the glory from whom God was incarnate and became a child; our God, existing before all ages. He made your womb a throne, and your body more spacious than the heavens. All of creation rejoices in you, O full of grace. Glory to you.

Priest: Above all, remember, Lord, our Archbishop (*Name*) and our Bishop (*Name*): Grant that they may serve Your holy churches in peace. Keep them safe, honorable, and healthy for many years, rightly teaching the word of Your truth.

Priest: Remember also, Lord, those whom each of us calls to mind and all your people.

People: And all Your people.

Priest: Remember, Lord, all Orthodox bishops who rightly teach the word of Your truth. Remember Lord, my unworthiness according to the multitude of Your mercies; forgive my every transgression, both voluntary and involuntary. Do not take away the grace of Your Holy Spirit from these gifts presented because of my sins. Remember, Lord, the presbyters, the diaconate in Christ, and every order of the clergy, and do not confound any of us who stand about Your holy altar. Visit us with Your goodness, Lord; manifest Yourself to us through Your rich compassion. Grant us seasonable weather and fruitful seasons; send gentle showers upon the earth

so that it may bear fruit; bless the crown of the year of Your goodness. Prevent schism in the Church; pacify the raging of the heathen. Quickly stop the uprisings of heresies by the power of Your Holy Spirit. Receive us all into Your kingdom. Declare us to be sons and daughters of the light and of the day. Grant us Your peace and love, Lord our God, for You have given all things to us.

And grant that with one voice and one heart we may glorify and praise Your most honored and majestic name, of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

Priest: The mercy of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ be with all of you.

People: And with your spirit.

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

People: Lord, have mercy. (*After each petition*)

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

That our loving God who has received them at His holy, heavenly, and spiritual altar as an offering of spiritual fragrance, may in return send upon us divine grace and the gift of the Holy Spirit, let us pray.

Having prayed for the unity of the faith and for the communion of the Holy Spirit, let us commit ourselves, and one another, and our whole life to

Christ our God.

People: To You, O Lord.

Priest: Our God, the God who saves, You teach us justly to thank You for the good things which You have done and still do for us. You are our God who has accepted these Gifts. Cleanse us from every defilement of flesh and spirit, and teach us how to live in holiness by Your fear, so that receiving the portion of Your holy Gifts with a clear conscience we may be united with the holy Body and Blood of Your Christ. Having received them worthily, may we have Christ dwelling in our hearts, and may we become the temple of Your Holy Spirit.

Yes, our God, let none of us be guilty before these, Your awesome and heavenly Mysteries, nor be infirm in body and soul by partaking of them unworthily. But enable us, even up to our last breath, to receive a portion of Your holy Gifts worthily, as provision for eternal life and as an acceptable defense at the awesome judgment seat of Your Christ. So that we also, together with all the saints who through the ages have pleased You, may become partakers of Your eternal good things, which You, Lord, have prepared for those who love You.

And make us worthy, Master, with confidence and without fear of condemnation, to dare call You, the heavenly God, Father, and to say:

THE LORD'S PRAYER

People: 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 trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Priest: For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory, of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

Priest: Peace be with all.

People: And with your spirit.

Priest: Let us bow our heads to the Lord.

People: To You, O Lord.

Priest: Lord Master, the Father of mercies and God of every consolation, bless sanctify, guard, fortify, and strengthen those who have bowed their heads to You. Distance them from every evil deed. Lead them to every good work and make them worthy to partake without condemnation of these, Your most pure and life-giving Mysteries, for the forgiveness of sins and for the communion of the Holy Spirit.

By the grace, mercy, and love for us of Your only; begotten Son, with whom You are blessed, together with Your all holy, good, and life giving Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

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