

# Rubrics of the Divine Liturgy on Ordinary Sundays

## Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom, Liturgy of St. Basil the Great

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*Again we offer unto thee this rational and bloodless worship ...*  
*Anaphora of Saint John Chrysostom*<sup>1</sup>

No event that regularly takes place on earth can be as important as the Divine Liturgy of the Orthodox Church offered on Sundays. How could any event on earth rank equal with Christ our true God, the pre-eternal Word of the Father, giving his immaculate Body and precious Blood to us mortals? This is our weekly taste of *theosis*, the inconceivable reality of becoming by the grace of God what our God is by nature. To paraphrase Saint John of Kronstadt (1829-1908), what event could be holier or more life-giving? [slide 2: St. John of Kronstadt quotation].

Ineffable and inconceivable as it is, however, the Divine Liturgy actually takes place in earthly time and space at the hands of a priest. It is *logikē latreía*: reasonable, meaningful worship as befits reason-endowed persons. A brief look at serving the Divine Liturgy on the 'average' Sunday (as if there were such a thing!) reminds us that the impenetrable Mystery nonetheless is constructed rationally in order to make the Kingdom visible and tangible. As

Germanos of Constantinople (d. 840), a defender of the holy icons, states: *'the Church is an earthly heaven in which the heavenly God makes his home and walks about'*.<sup>2</sup> As such, the Divine Liturgy is not an exact science but an art. Artists quibble - and no two bishops or two priests are likely to serve **identically**. A reasonable degree of harmony, however, illustrates that the heavenly God indeed is at home here on earth.

The Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom, offered on most Sundays and feasts, shares the essential structure and rubrics of the older, longer Divine Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great that we serve mostly on Sundays of Great Lent. Both reflect the '*Byzantine Synthesis*', a set of rubrics that spread from Antioch to the imperial capital, Constantinople, in the fourth and fifth centuries. As a standardized language supplants local dialects,<sup>3</sup> so the rites of Antioch gradually supplanted a variety of early forms. Only by the thirteenth century were these two main Liturgies fully distinct even from each other.<sup>4</sup> Texts and rubrics became fixed primarily in response to heresies: fourth century Arianism,<sup>5</sup> ninth

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<sup>1</sup> *The Liturgikon: the Book of Divine Services for the Priest and Deacon*, 3rd ed., Englewood, NJ: Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America, p. 282.

<sup>2</sup> Germanos of Constantinople, *On the Divine Liturgy*, trans. Paul Meyendorff, Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, p. 57.

<sup>3</sup> Robert Taft (1992) *The Byzantine Rite: a Short History*, Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, p. 25.

<sup>4</sup> Taft, p. 55; Gregory Dix (1945) *The Shape of the Liturgy*, 2nd ed., Westminster: Dacre Press, p. 530, note 3.

<sup>5</sup> Taft, p. 19.

century Iconoclasm,<sup>6</sup> and the attack on the hesychast monks in the fourteenth century. While the *Codex Barberini* manuscript of the eighth century already closely resembles our Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom, the text and rubrics that we recognise today were more or less intact only by 1351. An outline of the formal structure shared by these two Divine Liturgies should keep us on course [**handout: outline**]. It is vital to bear in mind, however, that no **standardised terms** are used consistently in current English. A list of '**temple terminology**' [**handout: temple terminology**] should help us to identify both parts of the Divine Liturgy (e.g., the *epiclesis*), of the temple (e.g., the *ámvon*), and the sacred objects (e.g., the *kalíma*). Please refer to this itemised, alphabetical vocabulary if a word sounds unfamiliar.

Let us find our way around the temple [**slide 3: the temple**]. Passing an entry vestibule if any, we enter the **narthex**, or entry hall. From there, we enter the **sanctuary**, or **nave**, the main body where the worshippers stand. At the eastern end is the **sólea**, a raised platform in front of the **iconostasis**, or icon screen, and its centre, the **ámvon**, jutting forward. The iconostasis itself has three sets of doors or curtains: two **deacon's doors** on the sides and the **Holy Doors** (often wrongly called '*Royal Doors*') in its centre. Behind the iconostasis is the **Holy Altar** (confusingly, called the sanctuary in the West) with the **próthēsis**, or table of preparation, at the northeast corner and the **Holy Table** (often confusingly called the altar) in the front centre. At the eastern end is the **High Place**, with the **sýnthronon**, the symbol of apostolic authority consisting of the bishop's throne flanked by chairs for the priests.

### *I. Kairon and Vesting*

The first liturgical action is *kairon*, a sacred time (*kairos*) of prayer before entering the Altar.

Entering the nave, the main body of the temple, the priest and deacon stand before the Holy Doors [**slide 4: iconostasis**]. They bow to the bishop's exterior throne, perpendicular to the iconostasis, then three times toward the Holy Table. They say the *Trisagion* Prayers, venerating the iconostasis: Christ, his Mother, John the Forerunner, and the patron saint or feast of the parish [**slide 5: sólea and ámvon**]. Here we see the **sólea** (platform) with the **ámvon** extending from its centre in front of the Holy Doors. The priest bows, lifts both arms, and says the prayer: '*Stretch forth thy hand, O Lord ...*' then reads the Dismissal. Crossing their arms, priest and deacon bow to each other, then the people, then enter the north and south doors [**slide 6: holy table**]. The priest kisses the Gospel and **Antimēnsion** cloth on the Holy Table, while the deacon kisses the southwest corner of the Table.

Now it is time to dress. The deacon presents his vestments, especially his **orárion** [**slide 7: deacon's orárion**] for the priest to bless. As the deacon vests, the priest blesses his own vestments [**slide 8: priest's vestments**]. Given the number, it is helpful to memorise

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<sup>6</sup> Taft, p. 55.

all the vesting prayers. The priest, followed by the deacon, wash their hands, then proceed to the **próthesis [slide 9: próthesis]**, the table of preparation of the Holy Gifts.

## ***II. Proskomedía***

On the próthesis are a Cross or an icon, the **chalice**, the **dískos**, the **star**, the **spoon**, the **spear** (or lance), and a wooden plate for cutting the **prósphoron**. A standing **candle** and a **censer** ready at the sides. Before the Fourth Crusade in 1204, the próthesis was generally located in a separate building, the *skeuophylákion*, or 'fortress of the utensils'. The people brought gifts of bread and wine for the deacon to prepare.<sup>7</sup> Here is a closer look at the holy objects **[slide 10: chalice, dískos, etc.]**, including the utensils, the spear and spoon.

Bowing three (3) times before the próthesis, the priest holds up the próphoron **[slide 11: próphoron]** in his left hand at a level with his brow. With the spear in his right hand, he touches the central seal, saying the prayer: 'Thou hast redeemed us from the curse of the law ...' The deacon invites him to bless. The priest lifts the whole prosphoron and signs the Cross three (3) times with the spear, saying: 'In remembrance of ...' He cuts the sides of the Lamb - right, left, top, and bottom - and sets it seal down on the dískos. He cuts the Lamb in the centre vertically, then horizontally, being sure not to break the seal. He places the Lamb seal upwards and pierces it just below the initials *NI* for 'nika', 'conquers'. The deacon then presents cold water and wine, the priest blesses them, and the deacon empties them into the **chalice**. Now the commemorations of the saints are ready to begin.

The priest cuts the triangle of bread for the *Theotokos* **[slide 12: Lamb and particles]** and particles for the Nine Orders of angels and saints. Commemorating first his own diocesan bishop or metropolitan, he then places particles for the living (on his right hand) and for the departed (on his left). Some find it convenient to cut out the entire square with these Nine Orders, a practice which prevails on the Holy Mountain. The deacon brings the **censer** for the priest to bless. Having blessed it, he holds the **star** over it **[back to slide 11]**, then the **veils [forward to slide 12: aër and veils]** for the diskos and the chalice. Holding up the

**aër** over the censer, he drapes the diskos and chalice together **[slide 14: aër covering the dískos and chalice]**. He censers the covered vessels **[slide 15: censer]** and gives up the censer to the deacon. Finally, the priest kisses the vessels and the Cross on the aër. The deacon kisses the edge of the aër. He is now ready for the Great Censing.

## ***III. The Great Censing***

The deacon censers the Altar, beginning with the próthēsis, the four sides of the Holy Table (counter-clockwise, west to north), the south side (or *Christ* side) of the Altar, the north side (or *Theotokos* side), the exits the north door to cense the nave **[slide 16: deacon censing]**.

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<sup>7</sup> Hugh Wybrew (1989), *The Orthodox Liturgy: the Development of the Eucharistic Liturgy in the Byzantine Rite*, London: SPCK, p. 135.

Returning to the sólea, he censes the people from the ámvon and the small icons on both edges of the Holy Doors. This Great Censing has characterised the Antiochian rite at least since the fifth century and later spread throughout the East.<sup>8</sup>

Entering by the south door, the deacon censes the front of the Holy Table, the próthēsis, the High Place, and finally the priest. He takes his place at the southwest corner of the Holy Table, on the right hand of and slightly behind the priest.

#### ***IV. The Preparation***

The Liturgy of the Catechumens, the first part of the *public* Divine Liturgy, is ready to begin.

From inside the Altar, the deacon opens the Holy Doors which remain open until Dismissal.

(It is a late, Russian practice to close them for the Communion of the Clergy). Bowing to the Holy Table, the priest lifts his arms for ‘*O Heavenly King*’ (or the seasonal equivalent) and the short prayers following. He kisses the **Gospel [slide 17: Gospel]** which lies flat with the icon of the Crucifixion visible (opposite of this slide). He kisses the Antimēnsion **[slide 18: antimēnsion]**, with the bishop’s signature authorising him to serve the Liturgy. Depicting the burial of Christ and normally containing a relic, it recalls the early practice of serving the Divine Liturgy on the tomb of a martyr.<sup>9</sup> Bowing, the deacon alerts the priest: ‘*It is time for the Lord to act*’. The priest blesses the deacon, who exits the north door, bows three times, and exclaims: ‘*Bless, Master*’. Tracing the Sign of the Cross with the Gospel Book over the

Antimēnsion, the priest declares: ‘*Blessed is the Kingdom ...*’

#### ***V. The Litany of Peace, First and Second Antiphons***

Lifting his orarion in his right hand **[slide 19: deacon with orarion]**, the deacon intones the **Litany of Peace**: ‘*In peace, let us pray to the Lord*’. At the end, he stands before the icon of Christ. Two **Antiphons** follow, with verses from Psalms 102 and 145 (XXL). Originally, they were festal hymns for processions from Hagia Sophia to the surrounding parish churches.<sup>10</sup>

Once inserted into the Divine Liturgy, originally they were sung by two sets of chanters from either side of the ámvon **[slide 20: antiphons]**: the literal meaning of *antiphons*, opposing voices. The hymn ‘*Only-begotten Son*’ by Justinian the Great (r. 527-565), which was inserted around 537 to celebrate constructing the Great Church, Hagia Sophia,<sup>11</sup> is not an antiphon *per se* but neatly summarises the Gospel. As the priest quietly reads the prayer for each antiphon, the deacon returns to the sólea and intones a **Little Litany** (‘*Again and again ...*’). After the second, he enters the south door and

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<sup>8</sup> Wybrew, p. 154.

<sup>9</sup> *A Pastoral Guide to the Holy Mysteries* (2001), trans. Samir Gholam and David Frost, Cambridge: Aquila Books, pp. 34-35.

<sup>10</sup> Alexander Schmemmann (1988), *The Eucharist: Sacrament of the Kingdom*, trans. Paul Kachur, Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, p. 51.

<sup>11</sup> Taft, p. 29.

removes his *kalimáfkion* (tall hat) if he is wearing one. Bowing to the priest, then to the High Place, he takes his place at the southwest corner of the Holy Table.

## ***VI. The Little Entrance***

At the Third Antiphon, the priest and deacon bow three times toward the Holy Table. The priest hands the Gospel to the deacon, who covers it with his orarion and kisses the priest's right hand. Led by candle-bearers [**slide 21: Little Entrance**], the deacon with the Gospel, then the priest, exit the north door and go to the foot of the ámvon facing the Holy Doors. As the candle-bearers stand on either side, the deacon stands at the south side of the bishop's exterior throne (right of the priest), points with his orarion toward the Holy Doors, and bids the priest bless the **Little Entrance**.

Holding up the Gospel for the priest to bless, the deacon exclaims: '*Wisdom!*' Deacon, then priest, enter through the Holy Doors while the candle-bearers use the deacon's doors at the sides. The priest lays the Gospel flat on the Antimēnsion, kissing the Gospel and the Table.

Originally the beginning of the Divine Liturgy,<sup>12</sup> the Little Entrance echoes ancient services called '*stations*', outdoor processions in response to natural disasters such as earthquakes and plagues.<sup>13</sup> After churches grew smaller following 1204, such services gradually moved indoors.

## ***VII. The Trisagion***

While the chanters sing the *apolytikia*, or hymns of the day, the priest reads the long Prayer of the Trisagion ('*O holy God, who restest in the holy place ...*'). All concelebrant clergy sing the *Kontakion*, the chanters taking the last verse. Likewise, at the priest's exclamation '*For holy art thou, O our God ...*', the deacon sweeps his orarion over the heads of the people, concluding it with: '*... unto ages of ages*'.

During the **Trisagion** ('*Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal ...*'), the priest and deacon say

the same prayer quietly at the Holy Table. At the chanters' single petition '*Holy Immortal ...*', the deacon calls '*With strength!*' (or '*Dýnamis!*' in the original Greek) from the Holy Doors. Bidding the priest '*Command, Master*', he escorts him to the High Place [**slide 22: the high place**] where the *sýnthronon* stands. The priest blesses the bishop's throne, or *cáthedra*, then stands to the north of it - *i.e.*, on its right. Originally located on the Great Amvon, raised in the centre of the nave,<sup>14</sup> Saint John Chrysostom had the throne moved in order to preach from the sólea facing all the people.

## ***VIII. The Prokeimenon, Alleluia, Epistle, and Gospel***

If there is a tonsured reader, he enters the Altar to ask a blessing and exits the north door. In the centre of the nave [**slide 23: prokeimenon, etc.**], facing the Altar, he intones the

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<sup>12</sup> Schmemmann, p. 50.

<sup>13</sup> Taft, pp. 30, 42.

<sup>14</sup> Wybrew, p. 49.

verses of the **Prokeimenon** and **Alleluia**, followed by the **Epistle**. At the conclusion of the Epistle, the priest blesses him from the Holy Doors. During the Alleluia (or else, quietly during the Epistle itself), the deacon censes the Holy Table, Altar, iconostasis, and people. During the chanting of the Alleluia, the priest recites the Prayer of the Gospel (*'Illuminate our hearts ...'*). When serving with no deacon, it is helpful if the priest has memorised this prayer and prays it while censuring.

After censuring, the deacon asks a blessing to read the Gospel and carries it onto the ámvon.

Facing the people [**slide 24: deacon holds Gospel**], not the Altar (as in this Russian-style slide), the deacon reads the Gospel. This next slide [**slide 25: deacon reads Gospel**] of a much older deacon shows the proper Byzantine direction to face. At the conclusion of the Gospel, he hands it to the priest to bless the people. The **prótos**, or main celebrant of the Divine Liturgy, preaches the homily [**slide 26: preaching**]. Some priests can be emphatic. The homily after all is not a lecture, a Sunday School unit, or a few nice words. If the Epistle instructs, the Gospel proclaims:<sup>15</sup> Christ our true God, trampling down death by death.

### ***IX. The Litanies of Fervent Supplication and the Catechumens***

Bowing to the priest, the deacon exits the north door and intones four (4) special Litanies from the sólea. At the words (*'with all our soul ...'*) in the the Litany of Fervent Supplication, he makes the Cross with the Gospel over the Antimēnsion [**slide 27: pale antimēnsion**] in preparation for the sacrifice. He unfolds it gradually and kisses the signature of the bishop or metropolitan. Once it is fully unfolded, the priest makes the Cross with the **sponge** that is kept inside it. He then kisses the sponge and places it at the upper right hand corner so as to secure it from falling off the Holy Table. At the words '*... guarded always by thy might ...'*', the deacon enters the south door and takes his usual place.

In our Orthodox practice today, the catechumens are not dismissed. After the **Litany for the Catechumens**, however, the first **Litany of the Faithful** begins the Liturgy of the Faithful: the concluding half of the Divine Liturgy.

### ***X. The Cherubic Hymn and Great Entrance***

As the chanters begin the Cherubic Hymn [**slide 28: cherubim**], the priest reads the Prayer

(*'No one who is bound ...'*). This powerful prayer, common to both Sunday Liturgies, vividly reminds us that no one is worthy to offer the same Liturgy as the angels except through the inexhaustible mercy of God. Lifting up his arms [**slide 29: clergy at Cherubic Hymn**], as the deacon lifts up his orárion, the priest recites the first half of the hymn and the deacon the second. Priest and deacon bow in unison, then the priest censes the Holy Table, Altar, any concelebrant clergy, and the iconostasis. From the Holy Doors, he censes the people. While censuring, he recites Psalm 50 (*'Have mercy on me, O God'*) while the deacon mirrors him with a candle. Returning to cense the High Place, he hands the

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<sup>15</sup> Archimandrite Meletios (Webber) (2007), *Bread and Water, Wine and Oil: An Orthodox Christian Experience of God*, Ben Lomond, CA: Conciliar Press, p. 141.

censer to the deacon, who censes him. (It is a Russian practice for the deacon to do this censing before the Great Entrance). The priest kisses the Antimēnsion, then the priest and deacon bow to each other and to the people.

The Cherubic Hymn, inserted around 573 or 574,<sup>16</sup> reflects the tradition of *mystagogy*, that is, of interpreting the Divine Liturgy as re-enacting events in the history of our salvation. It is the traditional way of interpreting the Liturgy, dating to Theodore of Mopsuestia (d. 428) but taking firm hold with Saint Maximos the Confessor in the seventh century.<sup>17</sup>

The **Great Entrance** really begins at the próthēsis, when the priest censes the Gifts three times, bows (with the deacon), and holds up the aër for the deacon to kiss. He then wraps it over the deacon's two shoulders, tucking it in as needed, and hands the deacon the dískos. Placing his orárion over the dískos, to hold it steady, the deacon carries it, while the priest carries the chalice [**slide 30: Great Entrance**]. Candle-bearers lead the procession out the north door, around the nave, and up the centre. The deacon commemorates '*All of you ...*' Facing the Holy Doors (unless he has the rank of archimandrite), the priest commemorates the diocesan bishop or metropolitan. At the conclusion, the priest takes the chalice through the Holy Doors and commemorates the deacon.

Laying the chalice on the Holy Table to the left of the dískos [**slide 31: dískos and chalice**] (that is, at his right), he removes the veils, folds them, and lays them neatly near the corners of the Table. The deacon presents the censer. Taking the aër from the deacon's shoulders, the priest wraps it around the censer, held aloft, and drapes it over the dískos and chalice. If two priests are concelebrating, a brief dialogue occurs here.

### ***XI. The Litany of the Precious Gifts and the Symbol of Faith***

Bowing to the priest, the deacon exits the north door for the **Litany of the Precious Gifts**. The priest reads the Prayer of the Proskomedia (or the Prayer of Offering), then blesses the people. At the words of the deacon '*Let us love one another ...*', the priest bows three times toward the Holy Table, kisses the dískos, chalice, the Cross on the aër, and the Holy Table itself [**slide 32: waving the aër**]. At '*The doors, the doors*' - the ancient warning to beware of hostile pagan intruders - he lifts the aër and waves it with both hands over the dískos and chalice. Here we see a priest of our own archdiocese with a concelebrant.

The **Symbol of Faith**, sometimes called **the Creed**, was inserted as late as 511.<sup>18</sup> While it is usually sung (often, rather operatically) in Russian practice, we keep the ancient custom of reciting it in unison. At the phrase '*... and ascended into heaven*', the priest folds the aër, then uses it to trace the Cross over the Gifts. He lays it on the edge of the Table or on top of the folded veils.

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<sup>16</sup> Taft, p. 29.

<sup>17</sup> Taft, p. 46.

<sup>18</sup> Taft, p. 29.

Outside on the sólea, the deacon lifts his oráron and invites the people to *'Stand upright'*. Using his right hand [**slide 33: Christ's blessing hand**], the priest blesses the people in the words of II Corinthians 13.14: *'The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ ...'* Still facing them, he lifts his arms [**slide 34: priest lifting his arms**] to illustrate the prayer: *'Let us lift up our hearts'*. At the conclusion of this dialogue with the chanters, the deacon enters by the south door and resumes his usual place.

## ***XII. The Holy Oblation, or Anaphora***

The **Anaphorá**, or priestly prayer of *'lifting up'*, is the centrepiece of the liturgical text. While many of the so-called secret prayers differ between the Liturgies of Saint John Chrysostom and Saint Basil, the Anaphorá differs most. In the 2010 edition of our *Liturgikon* published in the US, Saint Basil's Anaphorá is 11 ½ pages long. While the priest reads it, the deacon fans the Holy Gifts with either the folded aër or a liturgical fan (if he has arms of steel!) Until the fourth century, the bishop or presbyter had great leeway, improvising this prayer within the confines of Holy Tradition.<sup>19</sup> It is doubtful, however, that **any** prayer better summarises the Orthodox faith better than the glorious Anaphorá of Saint Basil the Great.

The words *'though there stand beside thee ...'*, referring to the angels, cue the deacon to cross over to the north side of the Holy Table [**slide 35: tapping the star**]. With his oráron in his right hand, he taps the diskos with the tips of the star (on top, bottom, left, right) upon hearing the priest's words: *'Singing the triumphal hymn ...'* At the song of the angels from Isaias 6.3 (*'Holy, holy, holy'*), he wipes the tips, folds the star, and holds it for the priest to kiss. The priest lays the star on the veils and the deacon returns to his usual place.

During the **Anámñēsis**, or narrative of the Last Supper (a part of the Anaphorá), the deacon comes into his own. Bowing low along with the priest at the command *'Take, eat'*, he steps in front of the Holy Table in the usual place of the priest [**slide 36: anaphorá**]. At the words *'Thine own of thine own ...'*, he elevates the diskos in his right hand, the chalice in his left.

He makes the Cross with them over the Antimēnsion and lays them in place. At the solemn hymn *'We hymn thee'*, the priest bows low. Please note that it is a Russian, not Byzantine, practice to recite the Prayer of the Third Hour (*'O Lord, who at the third hour ...'*) at this point.

Instead, the priest is reverently silent until the **Epíclēsis**, literally, the *'calling down'* of the Holy Spirit: *'Send down thy Holy Spirit ...'* As the priest lifts his arms, so the deacon lifts his orarion. Invoking the Holy Spirit at this point dates at least from Saint Cyril of Jerusalem in the mid-fourth century<sup>20</sup> and invariably was said aloud.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Dix, p. 156, note 2.

<sup>20</sup> Dix, p. 287.

<sup>21</sup> Wybrew, p. 41.

Bidding the priest bless the holy bread and cup, the deacon points at each in turn with his oráron. In blessing, the priest traces the Sign of the Cross over either vessel. At *'Changing them by thy Holy Spirit'*, he makes the Cross over both vessels, then bows deeply with the deacon at *'Amen, Amen, Amen'*. The inexpressible consecration is complete.

### ***XIII. The Theotokion and the Commemorations***

Commemorating *'especially our most pure ... and glorious Lady'*, the priest now censes the Precious Gifts nine times as the chanters sing the *Theotokion* [slide 37: **Theotokion**]. This hymn differs markedly between the *'It is truly meet'* of Saint John Chrysostom and the *'All of creation rejoiceth'* of Saint Basil. The priest then hands the censer to the deacon, who then censes the four sides of the Holy Table. When he reaches the back of the Holy Table, the deacon may commemorate any names that he wishes.

The priest commemorates the Forerunner and Baptist John, the Apostles, and all the saints of the Sunday. It is helpful to have a small written or typed list on hand. *'Among the first'*, the priest and deacon commemorate the bishop/metropolitan aloud in unison. It is courteous to bow toward the priest at the mention of *'the honourable presbytery'* and likewise toward the deacon at *'the diaconate in Christ'*. At the final phrase *'And grant us with one mouth ...'*, the deacon bows and exits the north door.

### ***XIV. The Our Father***

Once the priest has blessed the people (*'And the mercies of our great God ...'*), the deacon begins the **Litany before the Our Father**. He stands before the Holy Doors while the priest reads the corresponding prayer. The congregation then recites the **Our Father** aloud in full unison. As with the Symbol of Faith, it is a late, Russian practice to sing it.

The priest blesses the people (*'Peace be to all'*), then the deacon commands them to bow their heads. At the priest's words *'Through the grace and compassion ...'*, the deacon ties his oráron across his torso in the shape of a Cross and enters the south door. After the priest blesses the congregation with *'Peace be to all'*, the deacon commands them to bow their heads unto the Lord.

### ***XV. Holy Communion of the Clergy and the People***

The hour of Communion has come. Praying *'O God, be gracious to me, the sinner'*, priest and deacon bow three times before the Holy Table. Reverently [slide 38: **hand on Lamb**], the priest lifts the Lamb at **IC-XC** in both hands and says *'The Holy Things are for the holy'*. He divides the Lamb [slide 39: **IC-XC-NI-KA**] into its four quarters, placing **IC** at the top of the dískos, **XC** at the bottom, and so forth. Lifting the **IC** particle [slide 40: **IC in chalice**], he reverently places it in the chalice. The deacon presents the **Zēon** [slide 41: **Zēon**], the cup of hot water, which the priest blesses and the deacon pours into the chalice.

The priest and deacon then read the final Pre-Communion Prayers, starting with *'I believe, O Lord, and I confess'*. (In some places, these are recited aloud in unison by all). Priest

and deacon bow to each other, then the people, asking their forgiveness. The priest communes himself in the Precious Body of Christ [**slide 42: priest receives Body**], then he invites the deacon to draw near. He places the Precious Body in the deacon's hands at the south side of the Holy Table. Having communed, the deacon crosses over to the north side. The priest then communes himself in the Precious Blood [**slide 43: priest receives Blood**], holding the red kalíma cloth securely under his chin. He communes the deacon from the north side. The deacon divides the remaining particles with the spear and places them in the chalice. Once the particles are inside, the priest covers the chalice with the kalíma and the spoon. It is crucial to ensure that the spoon is secure, whether in or atop the chalice.

Holding up the chalice at the Holy Doors, the deacon bids the people draw near in the fear of God [**slide 44: communing the people**]. The priest carefully communes each Orthodox faithful by name while the deacon holds the kalíma to ensure that no portion of the Precious Body or Blood falls to the ground. It is a Russian practice, not Byzantine, to kiss the chalice after receiving the Gifts. Infants require special care [**slide 45: communing infants**] if they are fidgety or do not commune weekly. After the last communicant has received, the priest covers the chalice with the kalíma. Saying 'O God, save thy people ...', he blesses with his right hand while holding the chalice in his left. The deacon employs the spoon and sponge to remove any remaining crumbs from the diskos [**slide 46: crumbs on diskos**].

The priest places the chalice on the Holy Table, censing it three times with the prayer of the Ascension: 'Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens and thy glory over all the earth'. He hands the dískos to the deacon, who lifts it before the people at the Holy Doors, takes it over to the próthēsis, then prepares the censer. Saying 'Blessed is our God' quietly [**slide 47: blessing with chalice**], the priest turns toward the people holding the chalice aloft and saying aloud 'Always, now and ever ...' and using it to make the Sign of the Cross over the people. The deacon censes backwards, while the priest carries the chalice to the próthēsis.

The priest censes the próthēsis three times and returns to his place at the Holy Table.

## ***XVI. Thanksgiving***

Signing the Cross over the Antimēnsion with the sponge, the priest folds it and places it in the centre of the Holy Table. Bowing to the priest, the deacon exits the north door to intone the **Litany of Thanksgiving**. At the final words of the thanksgiving prayer, 'For thou art our sanctification ...', the priest signs the Cross over the folded Antimēnsion with the Gospel. Saying 'Let us go forth in peace', the priest exits the Holy Doors and goes to stand at the foot of the ámvon [**slide 48: prayer at the foot of the ámvon**]. There he reads the **Prayer behind the Ámvon**: 'O Lord, who blessest those who bless thee ...'

As the chanters sing 'Blessed be the name of the Lord', the priest enters by the Holy Doors and goes to the próthēsis for the short Prayer at the Consumption of the Gifts. This use of the Holy Doors clearly signifies that heaven (the Holy Altar) and earth (the nave) are

united by the Precious Body and Blood of Christ. The deacon consumes the remaining Gifts, then carefully rinses the chalice three times with water and wipes it with the spoon, the sponge, and the kalíma to ensure that no particles remain to decay. These post-Communion rituals of thanksgiving date as early as 400.<sup>22</sup> Indeed, the Prayer behind the Ámvon is identical to the one found in the *Codex Barberini*, the earliest extant manuscript of the Liturgy.<sup>23</sup>

Blessing the people from the Holy Doors, the priest lifts his arms toward the icon of Christ, saying: ‘*Glory to thee, O Christ our God and our hope ...*’ Facing the people, he reads the **Dismissal**, always invoking the patron saint and the saints of the day. Turning again toward Christ, he says: ‘*Through the prayers of our holy fathers ...*’, referring to the bishops (not the glorified saints!) Facing the people, he prays ‘*the Holy Trinity protect you all*’, thus uniting bishop, priest, and people in the one, true Church. Here he may make any announcements relevant to the parish. Finally, distributing the **antídora** (the remainder of the prósphoron cut into bite-sized chunks), he hands the Cross to the people [**slide 49: priest gives Cross**]. Entering the Altar by the Holy Doors in order to divest, he says ‘*Glory to thee, our God*’ to cue the reader to read the Post-Communion Prayers. At last, bowing three times before the Holy Table, priest and deacon wash their hands, kiss the Table, and exit the Altar: priest by the north door, deacon by the south.

‘*As far as it is in our power*’ [**slide 50: divine liturgy icon**], as we hear Saint Basil’s Prayer at the Consumption of the Precious and Holy Gifts, the Divine Liturgy offered visibly here on earth has been accomplished.

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<sup>22</sup> Dix, p. 516.

<sup>23</sup> Wybrew, p. 122.

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**Fr. Alexander Tefft, M.Div., Ph.D. 'Rubrics of the Ordinary Sunday Liturgy'**

## **TEMPLE TERMINOLOGY**

### **ARCHITECTURE OF THE TEMPLE (THE CHURCH BUILDING)**

**Ámvon.** The centre of the *sólea*, in front of the Holy Doors.

**High Place.** The *bēma*, or area behind the holy table where the bishop's throne is.

**Holy Altar.** The *hierón*, or area behind the *iconostasis*, sometimes called the sanctuary.

**Holy Doors.** The *oréa píli*, the central doors of the *iconostásis*, wrongly called royal doors.

**Holy Table.** The table of sacrifice, sometimes called the altar.

**Iconostásis.** The icon screen linking the nave to the Holy Altar.

**Nárhex.** The entry hall of the temple.

**Nave.** The main body of the temple, where the worshippers stand.

**Próthesis.** The small table on which the bread and wine are prepared.

**Sólea.** The platform in front of the *iconostasis*.

**Throne.** The bishop's *cáthedra*, in the high place (*bēma*) or adjacent to the Holy Altar.

### HOLY OBJECTS USED IN THE DIVINE LITURGY

**Aër.** The dense cloth used to cover the chalice and the diskos.

**Antídora.** Portions of the *prósphoron* distributed at the end of the Divine Liturgy.

**Antimēnsion.** The embroidered cloth icon of the burial of Christ signed by the bishop.

**Chalice.** The *potērion*, or cup holding the Precious Body and Blood of Christ.

**Dískos.** The circular dish that holds the Precious Body, sometimes called the paten.

**Kalíma.** The red cloth that covers the chalice, held under the mouths of communicants.

**Prósphoron.** The loaf from which the Priest cuts the Lamb and commemorative pieces.

**Star, Spear, Spoon, Sponge.** Used in preparing the Precious and Holy Gifts.

**Zēon.** The cup of hot water emptied into the chalice just before Holy Communion.

### PARTS OF THE DIVINE LITURGY

**Anámñēsis.** The narrative of the Last Supper, etc., in the Priest's *Anaphorá*.

**Anaphorá.** The priestly prayer of offering, sometimes called the Eucharistic Canon.

**Epíclesis.** The invocation of the Holy Spirit in the *Anaphorá*.

**Proskomēdia.** The service of preparing the gifts of bread and wine.

### CLERGY ROLES AND VESTMENTS

**Orárion.** The strip of cloth that the deacon lifts for litanies, sometimes called the stole.

**Prótos.** The main celebrant of the Divine Liturgy, the bishop (or in his absence, the priest).

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### OUTLINE OF THE DIVINE LITURGY (ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM, ST. BASIL)

**Kairón.** Clergy preparatory prayers outside the iconostasis.

**Vesting Prayers** of the deacon and the priest.

**PROSKOMĒDIA.** Preparation of the gifts of bread and wine.

**Great Censing** of the Holy Table, the Altar, the iconostasis, and the entire temple.

**Preparation and Opening Dialogue.** 'O Heavenly King ... It is time for the Lord to act'.

### LITURGY OF THE CATECHUMENS

'Blessed is the Kingdom'.

**Litany of Peace.** 'In peace, let us pray to the Lord'.

Three (3) **Antiphons**, followed by **Little Litanies**. *'Again and again, in peace ...'*

**The LITTLE ENTRANCE** with the Book of the Gospels.

Prayer of the *Triságon* (Thrice-Holy Hymn). *'O holy God, who restest in the holy place ...'*

**Triságon**. *'Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us'*.

**Prokeímenon** and **Alleluia** verses.

**Epistle**. Read from the centre of the nave.

**Gospel**. Read from the *ámvon*, facing the people.

**Homily**. Application of the Gospel reading.

**Litany of Fervent Supplication**. *'Let us all say with our whole soul ...'*

**Litany of the Catechumens**. *'Pray to the Lord, ye catechumens'* (omitted during *Pascha*).

### LITURGY OF THE FAITHFUL

**First and Second Litanies of the Faithful**. *'As many as are of the faithful ...'*

**Prayer of the Cherubic Hymn**. *'No one who is bound ...'*

**Cherubic Hymn** (*'Let us who mystically ...'*) and **GREAT ENTRANCE** with bread and wine.

Dialogue of Concelebrant Priests (if any).

**Litany of Supplication (or of the Precious Gifts)**. *'Let us complete our prayer ...'*

Blessing of the people and **Symbol of Faith (or Creed)**. *'I believe in one God ...'*

*'Let us stand aright ... The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ ... Let us lift up our hearts'*.

**HOLY ANAPHORÁ**. *'It is meet and right to hymn thee ...'* (JC) or *'O Existing One ...'* (B).

Including *'Holy, Holy, Holy'*, **Anámnesis** (Last Supper), **Epiclesis** (Calling down the Holy Spirit), **Theotókion** (Hymn to the *Theotokos*) and **Commemorations**.

**Litany before the Our Father**. *'Having commemorated all the saints ...'*

**Our Father**. *'... who art in heaven ...'* and *'Peace be to all'*.

Preparation of the Precious Gifts: dividing the Lamb, filling the chalice. *'I believe ...'*

**Holy Communion** of the clergy and the people.

**Litany of Thanksgiving**. *'Stand upright. Having partaken ...'*

**Thanksgiving Prayer**. *'We give thanks unto thee ...'*

**Prayer Behind the Ámvon**. *'O Lord, who blessest those who bless thee ...'*

Prayer at the Consumption of the Holy Gifts (at the *próthēsis* table in the Holy Altar).

**Dismissal**. *'May [he who is risen from the dead], Christ our true God ...'*