

THE OUTLINE OF THE DIVINE LITURGY

- **Beginning:** The Liturgy starts with a blessing of the Kingdom of God.
- **Petitions:** They are small prayers the priest offers for the peace of the world.
- **Antiphons:** These are readings from the Old Testament from Psalms 102 and 145, with refrains of Christian meanings and specifically reference to the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.
- **Entry with the Gospel:** This entry represents the ancient practice when the priest took the Gospel by the light of torches from the crypt, and under safeguard to protect the Gospel from destruction by the pagans, bringing it up to the Church.
- **Trisagion:** A short prayer praising the Holiness of God.
- **Readings from the New Testament:** (The sections are determined by the Church and are the same every year.)
 - The reader reads part of the Book of Acts or the Epistles of the Apostles.
 - Another section from the Gospels is read by the priest.
- **Sermon:** It is incorporated as an exhortation from the priest to the people on the Good News of salvation.
- **Cherubic Hymn and Entry with the Holy Gifts:** This is the procession with the yet unsanctified Species take from the table of Preparation and brought to the Altar with the Cherubic hymn being sung.
- **Ectenia of the Oblations:** They are small prayers completing “our supplications to the Lord”.
- **A Short Creed:** This is proclamation of the Holy Trinity in connection with brotherhood.
- **Creed:** This is recited by the people. It is the concise and accurate confession of the Christian faith.
- **Prayer of Sanctification:** It includes dialogues of excerpts from the long prayers of sanctification which is read by the priest and which, in fact, is the very heart of the significance of the Divine Liturgy. The offering of the Oblation (the Species, Bread, and Wine) is done with continue blessings, with the climax in the sanctification of the Species. The Bread and Wine are lifted by the priest, and generally the people

kneel at this time. In continuation, the priest commemorates the Saints and especially the Virgin Mary, as well as the faithful ones.

- **Petitions:** These are small prayers referring to the spiritual welfare of the city, the nation, the Church, and the individual.
- **Lord's Prayer:** This is recited by the people; the priest follows it with the exaltation. (Means the priest will say the last part.)
- **Breaking the Lamb:** The priest elevates the Lamb (the consecrated Bread). Also, at this time the priest pours warm water, zeon, into the Chalice, a reminiscence of the primitive Church.
- **Prayer before Holy Communion and Partaking of the Holy Gifts by the Priest:** The doors of the Altar are generally closed and the priest partakes of the Holy Gifts separately and then combines both Elements into the Chalice.
- **Holy Communion:** Both the Holy Body and Precious Blood in Christ, combined in the Chalice, are given to the faithful prepared and baptized in the Orthodox faith.
- **Thanksgiving Prayers:** These are prayers of gratitude to the Almighty God for the privilege which is given to the faithful to commune with Him.
- **Dismissal Hymn:** The priest calls the people to depart with a prayer. The people seal the Liturgy by responding, "Amen." Blessed bread, antithoron, which means "instead of the Gift," is given to all (even non-baptized Orthodox) at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy.