

TROPARION & KONTAKION

There are eight tones, and are contained in a liturgical book called the Octoechos. The *'fixed'* Resurrection tropar & kontakion are sung each week (Tones 1-8). Festal troparion are inserted and are either sung as the daily sanctoral commemoration, or the Feastal period the church is in. These are variable (they change). Following these hymns, over 800 of which were written by Saint Romanos the Melodist (see HTOC iconostasis), the **Thrice-Holy Hymn** (*"Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal One ..."*) is sung. With the singing of Holy God those at Liturgy, along with the hosts of angels, are united in praise of God.

Important to know: The Thrice-Holy is occasionally replaced with *"As Many as Have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ ..."* (Galatians 3:27).

LECTIONARY

Composed of Epistle & Gospel Reading. There are prescribed readings for every day of Liturgical Year.

Epistle Reading: Translated as "letter", is epistle mostly read from Saint Paul's writings to one of the Christian communities of that day. (The Epistle during Lent is from the Book of Hebrews). The Epistle is announced with a verse from the Book of Psalms (Prokeimenon); after reading, Alleluia Psalm verses are sung. During reading, there is a censuring of the altar, iconostasis, and people.

Gospel Reading: The Gospel is God's "Good News" of salvation. It is a form of communion with God, so it can be said it is a sacramental act. The homily (Sermon) follows the reading from the Gospel.

Important to know: From antiquity, the proper way to show respect is to stand during the Gospel reading; this is also the proper way of prayer. When the Gospel is being read those entering into the church are to remain attentive in the Narthex, and candles should not be lit and all movement be minimized.

LITANY OF FERVENT SUPPLICATION

LFS is formal ending of the 'Liturgy of the Word' where prayer for particular needs is offered; as well as those of the entire cosmos. Its tone and fervor is indicated by its triple, *"Lord, have mercy ..."*

Important to know: LFS is very specific, and all-encompassing. Petitions of need are also included.

GREAT ENTRANCE

It is movement in solemn procession of the transfer of the Holy Gifts from the Table of Oblation where Proskomedia has previously taken place, to the Altar Table. The entrance is made when the singing of the Cherubic Hymn has been completed. The Holy Gifts, not yet consecrated, are placed on the Antimension.

Important to know: Antimension (key term) means *"instead of the table"*, and always contains a relic of a saint & is signed by a bishop. Antimension can be transported to serve Liturgy elsewhere.

THE CREED

The Creed is the only prayer in the Liturgy which begins with a personal pronoun. *"I believe ..."* No one is able to believe for us. The Creed is declaration of Orthodox Christian's faith. Nearly all the statements are from Scripture.

Important to know: Creed was written at First Ecumenical Council (Nicea, 325), and amended at Second Council (381). It has remained unchanged.

THE ANAPHORA – OFFERING OF GIFTS

The Anaphora (*'ascension'*) is called the Mystery of the Holy Eucharist. Anaphora begins with the command to *'Stand aright ... stand in fear ... be attentive ... that we may offer the Holy Oblation in peace.'* The Holy Spirit descends and makes the Divine Conversion of the wine and bread into the Blood and Body of Jesus Christ, and through their partaking of it, believers see themselves as together become the Body of Christ.

Important to know: The calling down of the Holy Spirit upon the Holy Gifts is known as the *"Epiclesis"*.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Christ used the Lord's Prayer as the model for his followers to pray (See Matthew 6:9, Luke 11:2).

Important to know: The first three of the seven petitions in Matthew's account address God; four remaining are related to human needs and concerns.

THE EUCHARIST

Crowning moment of Liturgy. Partaking of Lord should be the main reason Christian's attend church.

Important to know: Receiving Eucharist pours forth in us Sacramental grace, and with it, the ability to be One with Christ. Grace has the power to heal & save.

Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom



Holy Trinity
Orthodox Church
Willimantic, Connecticut

A Teaching Divine Liturgy

Sunday, October 28, 2018

DIVINE LITURGY – TWO PARTS:

I. **Liturgy of the Word** – From the beginning of Liturgy to prior to the Cherubic Hymn.

II. **Liturgy of the Faithful** – Begins with the Great Entrance, and through Dismissal Prayer.

THE SERVICE OF PROSKOMEDIA

Essential Elements:

a) Preliminary clergy preparation of the Eucharistic Bread (*Lamb*) and Wine which is used for Holy Communion; performed on **Table of Oblation**.

b) In the early church, and still preserved today, is that the faithful bring the gifts of bread and wine. This is seen as early as 3rd c.

Historical Variances Between East & West:

East: Gifts were brought on the way to church, and placed in a small room near the entrance to church.

West: Gifts are brought after the sermon, and are given to the deacon who places them on the altar.

Note: This variation in church custom has had enormous significance in the development of Byzantine Liturgy. Transfer of Holy Gifts were splendid moments, dignified with as much pomp as church allows. Gifts were brought to church by deacons, escorted by candles, incense, liturgical fans. Because deacons did Proskomedie in early church, some priests will bless a deacon to perform the rite today. In 21st c., deacons on Mount Athos (Holy Mountain) routinely perform Proskomedie.

Historical Timeline:

a) In mid 9th c., rite had become more elaborate. The lancing of the lamb, and accompanying prayers (“*as a sheep led to the slaughter ... and a blameless lamb before his sheers ...*”), was first documented in 969. These prayers are in Isaiah 53:7 & John 19:34.

b) Rite and prayers were the work of Pat. Germanos of Constantinople in 8th c. (715-730).

DL was modified a bit in 11th c., but by and large, it is today what it was in Germanos’ time.

d) One 11th c. development, and continuing to present day, is use of additional prosphora.

e) The commemorative prosphoras which are submitted to altar for prayers for living & departed was established (11thc.). This was the final major

development of DL. By mid-14th c., the Liturgy had acquired the form which is now celebrated.

f) On discussing commemorative prosphora for both living and departed, Saint Symeon the New Theologian said. “Because they are so close on the paten to the Lamb which is consecrated, they bring sanctification to those from whom they are offered. Put into the chalice, they effect a kind of spiritual communion, which can bring profit or condemnation to the soul of the person concerned, depending on their spiritual condition.”

g) **Proskomedie Commemorations Using Five Loaves (Slavic Tradition); Byzantine/Greek Trad: 1 Loaf.**

- 1) Jesus Christ – Lamb of God.
- 2) Theotokos.
- 3) Ranks of Saints (Nine):
Forerunner, Prophets, Apostles,
Hierarchs, Martyrs (*male/female*), Holy
Fathers & Mothers, Unmercenaries,
Ancestors of God, Chrysostom/Basil.
- 4) Living.
- 5) Departed.

Early Eucharistic Rite (Important to know):

The first Eucharistic Rite was established by St Justin Martyr, a Roman teacher & philosopher, in the 1st c. According to Justin, early rite consisted of:

- Read Scripture
 - Sermon
 - Intercessory Prayer
 - Kiss of Peace
 - Eucharist
-

GREAT LITANY (Greek: ‘Ektenia’)

Historical Significance: Prior to 13th c., GL was recited after the Gospel reading and the homily. From 9-13th c., Liturgy began with singing of the Antiphons. Beginning with 14th c., GL took on its present place within Liturgy (at the beginning).

GL: Begins every Orthodox worship service. It reveals the corporate aspect of communal prayer, not personal or private. “*Blessed is the Kingdom...*” reveals the focus and final destiny of entire Liturgy.

Petitions: The singular prayers which comprise any Litany. Ex: “*For the peace from above ... For this city, for every town, city, and country ... For seasonable weather ...*”

Doxology: “*For unto Thee is due all glory, honor, and worship ...*”

Important to know: The doxology (key theological term) concludes **every** Litany, and its purpose is to praise and glorify God. Other doxologies include “*Glory to the Father, and to the Son ... For thou art a good God who loves mankind*” ...).

First Antiphon, p. 32 (Psalm 103)

The first antiphon is ‘*fixed*’ (**key word**), means it does not change for every Sunday, with the exception of the season when church is in an 8-day post feast at which time Festal Antiphons are sung. These parts of the Liturgy are ‘*variable*’ (**key word**).

Festal Antiphons: Sung during Feast Day seasons. Exaltation of the Cross (pp.214-217, Sept. 14); Nativity of our Lord (pp.221-224, Dec. 25); Theophany (pp. 227-230, Jan. 6; and Transfiguration (pp.236-239), Aug. 6). For entire festal antiphons, see Divine Liturgy book starting on p.213ff. This indicates the emphasis on these days, and their high theological significance.

Little Litany, p. 32; p. 34: (“*Again and again ... Help us, save us, have mercy on us ... Commemorating our most holy, most pure, most blessed ...*”

Second Antiphon, p. 33 (Psalm 141).

See above. The majority of the Liturgy is fixed; does not change. Less than 10% of Liturgy is ‘*variable*’ (**key word**) which means it changes weekly. Liturgy is either a) fixed (90%) or variable (10%).

Third Antiphon, Beatitudes, p. 35 (*From Sermon on the Mount; See Matthew 5:3-11*).

If in season of post-feast, 3rd Antiphon becomes comprised of alternating verses & Troparion of Feast. Post-feast is normally 8 days, but can be as short as one (Annunciation).

LITTLE ENTRANCE

LE is movement of Gospel from altar during singing of 3rd Antiphon. It is first significant move of the Liturgy. The movement of Gospel proclaims the teaching of the Lord throughout the world.

Important to know: Christ comes in two forms in Liturgy: 1) His Word (*Gospel & Homily*); 2) His Body & Blood (*Eucharist*).

