



***THE ORDER OF THE DIVINE AND HOLY LITURGY
OF
OUR FATHER AMONG THE SAINTS
GREGORY THE THEOLOGIAN
OR
LITURGY OF THE PRESANCTIFIED GIFTS***

The Divine and Holy Liturgy being the banquet of Christ is a festive, a joyous and a triumphant celebration. The ancient discipline did not permit such a celebration during Great Lent, this period being a time of penitence and mourning for sin, a remembrance of the falling of Adam and of the whole creation with Adam, and a remembrance of our

slavery to the enemy of salvation. In order to allow the faithful to participate in the mysteries of Christ, the holy species were carefully preserved after the Sunday Liturgy and offered to the faithful at the end of an evening service of the days of fast during a ceremony called the Liturgy of the presanctified or sanctified beforehand. This Liturgy, then, is actually the Office of Vespers followed by holy communion.

According to the present Byzantine discipline, the Liturgy of the Presanctified is celebrated from fifteen to eighteen times a year:

- 1. On every Wednesday and Friday of the first six weeks of Lent.*
- 2. On Thursday of the fourth week of Lent.*
- 3. On Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of Holy Week.*

According to this same discipline, no Liturgy is permitted on Monday and Tuesday of the first six weeks of Lent, on Holy Friday, and on Wednesday and Friday of the week preceding Lent, called the week of Cheese-fare. These are aliturgical days.

In case of concurrence with a feast of the third class (February 24, and March 9) or with the feast of the Patron Saint of a local church, the celebration of the Presanctified is permitted on an aliturgical day. Yet this permission does not apply to the first week of Lent. The complete Sacrificial Liturgy is observed on all Saturdays and Sundays of Great Lent, on the Feast of the Annunciation and on Holy Thursday.

Between the two parts, the Office of Vespers and holy communion, the catechumens are dismissed and the holy gifts are transferred in procession to the holy table.

PARTICULARITIES TO BE OBSERVED

At the Holy and Divine Liturgy which prepares for the Presanctified, the following practices must be observed:

- 1. At the Prothesis, after having prepared the principal "Lamb," the priest prepares as many "Lambs" as there will be liturgies of the Presanctified during the week, saying for each "Lamb" the same prayers as he did for the first one.*
- 2. At the Epiclesis, however, the priest blesses all the "Lambs" together, as one, saying: "And make this bread" ... for Christ is one.*
- 3. At the elevation he elevates all the hosts together.*
- 4. At the breaking of the bread, he breaks only the "Lamb" that was cut first at the Prothesis. As for the other "Lambs," he takes them one by one in his left hand and with the right hand pours crosswise a spoonful of the holy and precious blood of our Lord on the side marked with the cross and places them in the tabernacle.*

5. *the sign of the cross over each garment and says: "Let us pray to the Lord." The he takes it, kisses it and puts it on saying nothing.*

CELEBRATION OF THE LITURGY

After the recitation of the Order of the Ninth Hour, the deacon receives a blessing from the priest and goes to stands at his customary place. He makes three bows and says in a low voice:

Deacon: Give the blessing, Father.

The priest, lifting the holy Gospel Book with both hands and making with it the sign of the cross over the Antimension, says aloud:

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

All: Amen.

The deacon makes a bow and enters the sanctuary through the south door.

And immediately the reader or the presiding priest or hierarch starts the proeemial or introductory psalm, Psalm 103. While the proeemial is being recited the priest uncovers his head ands, standing before the holy doors by the icon of the Lord, says the Lamplighting prayers in a low voice starting with the fourth prayer .

The presiding priest or hierarch or the reader says aloud:

COME, let us worship God, our King and bow down before Him (*reverence*). Come, let us worship Christ-God, our King and bow down before Him (*reverence*). Come, let us worship Christ, our King and our God and bow down before Him (*reverence*).

PSALM 103

Praise of God's Creation

- Bless the Lord, O my soul!
You are very great, O Lord, my God!
- Clothed in pomp and brilliance,
arrayed with light as with a cloak.
- Stretching out the sky as a tent cloth,
covering your lofty halls with water.
- You make the clouds your conveyance,
You surge on the wings of the wind.
- You make spirits your messengers
and flaming fires your attendants.

—You settle the earth on its firm foundation:
it shall stand unmoved from age to age.

—The abyss covers it like a garment;
waters stand over the mountains.

—At your rebuke, they will take to flight,
at the peal of your thunder they will fear.

—They hurdle the hills and run down the dales
to the place you have chosen for them.

—You have set up a boundary not to be passed:
they shall never return to cover the earth.

—Down in the gullies, You make springs to rise:
waters shall go down between the mountains.

—They shall give drink to the beasts of the field;
wild asses will seek them to quench their thirst.

—The birds of the sky will abide by them:
from among the rocks they will raise their song.

—From your lofty halls You refresh the mountains;
the earth shall be fed with the fruit of your works.

—You make green pastures for the cattle
and food—plants for the service of man,

—So that bread may be brought forth from the earth
and wine that gladdens the heart of man.

—So that oil may put a gleam upon his face
and that bread may strengthen the heart of man.

—The trees of the plain will be satisfied,
the cedars of Lebanon that He planted.

—The sparrows will build their nests in them
and the herons will call them their home.

—To the deer belong high mountains,
to rodents, the shelter of the rocks.

—You have made the moon to mark the seasons;
the sun knows the time of its setting.

—You establish darkness and it is night
wherein the forest creatures prowl around.

—Young lions roar for their prey
and call out to God for their meat.

—As the sun rises, they will come together
and lay themselves down in their dens.

—Man will go out to his labor
and work until eventide.

—How great are your works, O Lord!
In wisdom You have wrought them all:
the earth is filled with your creatures.

—Even the wide and open sea itself:
within it there are countless creeping things,
living beings small and large.

—Upon it there are ships a-sailing
and that great beast You made to have fun.

—All of them look up to You
to give them their food in due time.

—You provide and they gather up;
You open your hand and they are full.

—You hide your face and they cringe,
You suspend their breath and they die and return to their dust.

—You send forth Your breath and they live:
You renew the face of the earth!

—May the Lord's glory endure forever,
may the Lord rejoice in his works.

—He looks upon the earth and makes it quake,
He touches the mountains and they smoke.

—I will sing to the Lord as long as I live,
I will praise my God as long as I last.

—Would that my thoughts be pleasing to Him
and I will rejoice in the Lord.

—May the sinners vanish from the earth
and may the wicked be no more.

—Bless the Lord, O my soul!

—Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now
and ever, and forever.

All: Amen.

—Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia.

Glory be to You, O God. (3 times with a bow)

LITANY OF PEACE

The deacon, having obtained a blessing from the priest, kisses his hand and goes out through the north door and, standing before the Holy doors, he makes a reverence, and holding the hem of his Orarion with the three fingers of his right hand, he intones the litany of peace.

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

All: Lord, have mercy.

– For peace from on high, and for the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy.

– For peace in the whole world, for the well-being of the holy Churches of God and for the union of all, let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy.

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

All: Lord, have mercy.

– For our holy ecumenical pontiff N., the Pope of Rome, for our most reverend Archbishop and Metropolitan N., for our God loving Bishop N., for the venerable priesthood, the diaconate in Christ, and all the clergy and the people, let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy.

– For our civil authorities and all in the service of our country, let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy.

– For this city, for every city and country, and for those living within them in faith, let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy.

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

All: Lord, have mercy.

– For those who travel by sea, air, and land, and for the salvation of the sick, the suffering and the captive, let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy.

– For deliverance from all affliction, wrath, and need, let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy.

– Protect us, save us, have mercy on us and preserve us, O God, by your grace.

All: Lord, have mercy.

– Having remembered our most holy, most pure, most blessed and glorious Lady, the Mother of God and ever-virgin Mary with all the saints — let us commend ourselves and one another, and our whole life, to Christ, our God.

All: To You, O Lord.

The deacon makes a reverence and goes into the sanctuary through the south door and stands at the right of the priest. The priest says in a low voice the prayer of the first antiphon:

Priest: O Lord, our God, whose might is beyond description, whose glory surpasses all understanding, whose mercy is without limits, whose love for man is beyond expression, now, O Master, in your kindness, look down upon us and this holy church, and bestow on us and upon those praying with us your abundant mercies and your benefits. **(Aloud)** For to You is due all glory, honor, and worship, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

All: Amen.

The reader starts immediately the reading of the first stasis of the 18th kathisma. The priest and deacon uncover their heads and proceed to the artophorion or tabernacle. The priest opens it and the deacon makes three profound reverences and incenses the holy gifts. He then takes the pyx with devotion and piety and goes to the altar of prothesis preceded by the deacon who holds in his hand a lighted candle. He then lays the holy gifts upon the holy diskos. He pours the wine and water in the usual manner into the holy chalice, but saying nothing, and covers the diskos and the chalice with asterikos and veils as usual, but still saying nothing, not even the prayer of oblation. He ends all these preparations by saying in a low voice:

— Through the prayers of our holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us. Amen.

The priest says no other prayer because the sacrifice has already been perfected.

The Eighteenth Kathisma

First Stasis

PSALM 119

Complaint Against Treacherous Tongues
(A Song of Ascents)

- In my distress I cried out to the Lord
And He listened to me.
- O Lord, save my soul from unjust lips
and from a deceitful tongue.
- What shall be given you and what more shall be done to you,
you deceitful tongue?
- Sharpened is the weapon of the mighty warrior
with firebrands made of the broomtree.
- Woe is me that my exile has been so long;
that I have set up my tent in the camp of Kedar.
- Long have I lived among those who hate peace.
I was peaceable, but when I spoke to them
they warred against me without cause.

PSALM 120

The Lord, our Guardian
(A Song of Ascents)

- I lifted up my eyes to the hills
whence help shall come to me;
- My help shall come from the Lord
who made heaven and earth.
- He will not suffer your foot to stumble
He who is your Guardian will not fall asleep.
- Behold, He will neither sleep nor slumber,
the Watcher over Israel.
- The Lord shall keep watch over you,
the Lord is your shelter at your right hand.
- The sun shall not harm you by day,
nor shall the moon by night.
- The Lord shall preserve you from every evil,
the Lord shall preserve your soul;
- The Lord shall preserve Your coming and your going
henceforth and for evermore.

PSALM 121

The Pilgrim Greeting to Jerusalem
(A Song of Ascents)

- I was happy when they said to me:
"Let us go to the house of the Lord."
—Our Feet stood in your courts, Jerusalem,
Jerusalem built as a city firmly bound together.
- For there did the tribes go up,
the tribes of the Lord as it was decreed to Israel
to profess the name of the Lord;
—For there have been placed thrones for judgement,
thrones for the house of David.
- Pray, then, for what brings peace to Jerusalem,
and may prosperity be with those who love you;
—May peace remain within your walls
and prosperity within your castles.
- For the sake of my brethren and of my friends,
I have indeed desired peace for you;
—For the sake of the house of the Lord our God,
I have earnestly sought your good.

Psalm 122

Israel's prayer in persecution
(A Song of Ascents)

- I have lifted up my eyes to You who dwell in heaven:
Behold, as the eyes of the servants
are on the hands of their masters,
as the eyes of a maid
are on the hands of her mistress,
—So are our eyes on the Lord our God,
until He have mercy on us.
- Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us,
for we are more than filled with contempt.
—Yes, our soul has been more than filled.
May reproach fall on the prosperous
and contempt on the proud.

PSALM 123

*The Lord is a Rescuer of his People
(A Song of Ascents)*

—Had not the Lord been with us
— Let Israel now say —
—Had not the Lord been with us
at the time men rose up against us.

—Truly they might have eaten us alive
when their anger was inflamed against us;
—Truly the water might have drowned us:
the torrent might have gone over us.

—Truly the raging waters
might have overwhelmed us.
—Blessed be the Lord who has not given us
as a prey to their teeth.

—Our soul, like the bird of passage,
has escaped the hunter's net;
—The net was torn asunder
and we have escaped.

—Our help is in the name of the Lord
who made heaven and earth.

—Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and
always and unto ages of ages. Amen.

—Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia: Glory to You, O God (*Three times*).

—Lord, have mercy (*Three times*).

—Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

*And he does not add the "now and always..." After reading the first stasis of the kathisma,
the deacon goes out through the north door and, standing before the holy doors, he
makes a reverence and says the little synapte:*

The Little Synapte:

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

All: Lord, have mercy.

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

All: Lord, have mercy.

—Let us remember our all-holy, spotless, most highly blessed and glorious Lady the Mother of God and ever-virgin Mary, with all the saints, and commend ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ God.

All: To You, O Lord.

The priest says in a low voice the prayer of the Second Antiphon:

Lord, in your anger rebuke us not; chastise us not in your wrath; but deal with us according to your loving kindness, O Physician and Healer of our souls! Guide us to the harbor of your will; enlighten the eyes of our hearts that we may know your truth; and grant that the remainder of this day be peaceful and without sin, and also all the time of our life, through the prayer of the holy Mother of God and of all the saints. **(Aloud:)** For yours is the might, and yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory, of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and always and unto ages of ages.

All: Amen.

The deacon makes a reverence and goes into the sanctuary through the south door and stands at the right of the priest. And the reader reads the second stasis of the 18th kathisma of the psalter.

Reader: Now and always and unto ages of ages. Amen.

PSALM 124

*The Lord Protector of Israel
(A Song of Ascents)*

—Those who trust in the LORD
are like the mountain of Sion,
—Which cannot be moved,
which will stand forever.

—Mountains are all round Jerusalem,
and the LORD is all about his people,
henceforth and forevermore.

—For the Lord will not let the sinner's rule
rule over the lot of the just

—In fear that the just themselves
might stretch out their hands to iniquities.

—Do good, O LORD, to those who are good,
and to those whose heart is well disposed.

—But those who stray into crooked ways
the LORD will expel with the evildoers.

—Peace be upon Israel!

PSALM 125

The People's Prayer for Full Restoration (A Song of Ascents)

—When the LORD brought back the captives of Sion,
we were like in a dream;

—Then our mouth was filled with joy,
and our tongues exultation.

—Then it was said among the gentiles:
"The LORD has done great things for them."

—The LORD has done great things for us,
we have been made to rejoice.

—Bring back, O Lord, our captives
like torrents to the south:

—Those who weep as they sow
shall rejoice as they reap.

—Those who go shedding tears
as they scatter their seeds,

—They shall come back again with exultation
bearing with them their sheaves.

PSALM 126

The Need of God's Blessing (A Song of Ascents)

—Unless the LORD build the house,
in vain. Do the builders toil;

—Unless the LORD guard the city,
in vain do the guardians keep watch.

—In vain do you rise early and retire late,
to eat the bread of grief:
—He bread to his beloved
while they sleep.

—Behold, Sons are the Lord's inheritance
and his reward, the fruit of the womb;
—As arrows in the hand of a mighty warrior
so are the sons of one's youth.

—Blessed the man who will be able
to fill them with his quiver:
—They will never be put to shame
when they speak with opponents at the gates.

PSALM 127

The Happy Home of the Just
(A Song of Ascents)

—Blessed are all who fear the LORD,
who walk in his ways.

—You shall eat of your hands' labor:
blessed are you and it shall be well with you.

—Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine
in the recesses of your house;
—Your sons, like olive shoots
around your table.

—Behold, in this way shall be blessed
the man who fears the LORD.

—May the LORD bless you out of Sion
and may you see the prosperity of Jerusalem,
all the days of your life;

—May you see your children's children.

—Peace be upon Israel.

PSALM 128

Prayer for the Overthrow of Israel's Foes
(A Song of Ascents)

- Often they have warred against me since my youth
let Israel say it!
- Often they have warred against me since my youth,
but they have not prevailed over me.
- Let them all be confounded and turned back
those who hate Sion:
- Let them become like grass on the house-tops,
which dries before it is plucked out;
- With which the reaper fills not his hands,
nor the binder the of sheaves his bosom.
- While those who go by do not say,
"The blessing of the LORD be upon you;
- We bless you in the name of the LORD."

And he does not add the "now and always..." After reading the first stasis of the kathisma, the deacon goes out through the north door and, standing before the holy doors, he makes a reverence and says the little synapte:

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

All: Lord, have mercy.

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

All: Lord, have mercy.

—Let us remember our all-holy, spotless, most highly blessed and glorious Lady the Mother of god and ever-virgin Mary, with all the saints, and commend ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ God.

All: To You, O Lord.

The priest says in a low voice the prayer of the Third Antiphon:

Lord our God, be mindful of us sinners and your unprofitable servants, as we call upon your holy name; and put us not to shame for having placed our hope in your mercy but graciously grant us, O Lord, all the means of salvation; make us worthy to love and fear You with all our

heart and to accomplish your will in all things. **(Aloud:)** For You are a good god and You love mankind, and we send up glory to You, Father, Son and Holy spirit, now and always and unto ages of ages.

All: Amen.

The deacon makes a reverence and goes into the sanctuary through the south door and stands at the right of the priest. And the reader reads the second stasis of the 18th kathisma of the psalter.

Reader: Now and always and unto ages of ages. Amen.

PSALM 129

Prayer of Pardon and Mercy
(A Song of Ascents)

- Out of the depths I have cried to you, LORD:
O Lord, listen to my voice.
- Let your ears be attentive
to the voice of my supplication.
- If you retain sins, Lord,
O Lord, who will be left?
With you there is forgiveness.
- For your name's sake, O Lord, I have waited for You;
my soul has waited for your word,
My soul has hoped for the Lord.
- From the watch of dawn until the night,
from the watch of dawn
let Israel long for the LORD.
- For with the LORD is mercy
and with Him abundant redemption.
- And it is He who will redeem Israel
from all his iniquities.

PSALM 130

Humble Trust in God
(A Song of Ascents)

- O LORD, My heart is not exalted,
nor have my eyes been haughtily raised;

—I have not walked in pride,
nor in things too high for me.

—If I have not humbled myself
I lifted up my soul to You.

—As a suckling weaned from its Mother,
so is my soul within me.

—Let Israel hope in the LORD
from henceforth and forevermore.

PSALM 131

A Pact with the Lord
(A Song of Ascents)

—O LORD, remember David
and all his forebearance.

—How he swore to the LORD
and made a vow to the God of Jacob:

—"I will not enter tent, my abode
nor go up to the couch where I sleep.

—I will not give any sleep to my eyes,
nor to my eyelids any repose,
nor to my temples any rest

—Until I find a place for the LORD,
a tabernacle for the God of Jacob."

—Behold, we heard He is in Ephrata,
we found Him in the forest clearings.

— Let us enter into his tabernacle;=
let us worship where his feet once stood.

—Arise, O LORD, and go up to your rest,
you and the ark of your holiness.

—Your priests shall put on righteousness;
and your saintly ones rejoice.

—For the sake of David your servant,
turn not away the face of your anointed one.

—The LORD swore an oath to David,
from which he shall never depart:

—"It is a fruit of your loins
that I will place on your throne.

- If your sons will keep my covenant
and the testimonies I will teach them,
 - Their sons shall also be seated
on your throne for evermore."
- For the LORD has elected Sion,
he has chosen it for his dwelling:
 - "This is my resting place for ever and ever;
Here I will dwell because I have chosen it.
- I will bless abundantly her provisions;
I will feed her poor with bread;
- I will clothe her priests with salvation,
and her saintly ones will exult with joy.
- There I will increase David's power;
I have readied a lamp for my Anointed One.
- I will clothe his enemies with shame,
but on Him his crown shall shed its luster.

PSALM 132

The Benefits of Brotherly Concord
(A Song of Ascents)

- Behold how good and pleasant it is
for brothers to dwell in unity!
- It is as the chrism upon the head,
which ran down into the beard,
 - The beard of Aaron,
and ran down even to the hem of his garment.
 - It is as the dew of Hermon
which falls on the hills of Sion.
- For there the LORD commanded the blessing:
life for evermore.

PSALM 133

Exhortation to Bless the Lord
(A Song of Ascents)

- Come now, bless the LORD,
all you servants of the LORD

—Who stand in the house of the LORD,
who stand by nights in the courts
of the house of our God.

—Lift up your hands in the holy places
and bless the LORD.

—May the LORD, who made heaven and earth
bless you out of Sion.

At the end of this stasis, the deacon goes out through the north door and, standing before the holy doors, he makes a reverence and says again the little synapte:

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

All: Lord, have mercy.

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

All: Lord, have mercy.

—Let us remember our all-holy, spotless, most highly blessed and glorious Lady the Mother of god and ever-virgin Mary, with all the saints, and commend ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ God.

All: To You, O Lord.

The priest says aloud:

For you are our God, the God of mercy and salvation, and to You we send up glory, Father, son and Holy Spirit, now and always and unto ages of ages.

All: Amen.

And the deacon goes into the sanctuary through the south door and stands at the right of the priest while the choir sings the Lamp-lighting psalm called "Kyrie Ekekraksa, Gospodi Vozzach" (from the first words of Psalm 140) in the same tone as the ideomeion of the day.

PSALM 140

Prayer Against the Enticements of Wickedness

—O Lord, I have cried out to You: hear me,
give heed to the voice of my supplication when I cry out to You.

When the choir begins the singing of the next verse, the deacon takes the censer from the server, puts incense into it and presents it to the priest for his blessing, saying:

Deacon: Bless this incense, Father.

And the priest blessing it says:

Priest: Blessed is our God at all time, now and always and unto ages of ages.

Deacon: Amen.

The deacon then performs the Great Incensing. Walking around the holy table he incenses its four corners, then goes out through the north door and incenses the choirs, the icons, and the people according to custom. Returning to the holy doors, he incenses once again the choirs and all those in the sanctuary. Finally, he returns the censer to the server and stands to the south of the holy table.

—Let my prayer rise like incense before You
and the lifting of my hands, like an evening sacrifice.

—Set a guard, O Lord, before my mouth,
and a portal around my lips.

—Incline my heart away from evil dealings,
from finding excuses for sinful deeds.

—In company with men who work iniquity
let me not partake of what they choose.

—May a just man chasten me with justice and reprove me;
may the oil of the wicked never touch my head.

—Yet even then shall I pray for their welfare.
Their rulers were swallowed near the rock.

—My words will be heard for they were sweet.
As a lump of clay broken on the ground,
so their bones were strewn near the grave.

—To You, Lord, O Lord, my eyes are lifted up;
in You have I hoped: let not my soul be lost.

—Keep me from the snare that was set up for me
and from the stumbling—blocks of wicked men.

—The wicked shall fall into their own nets
while I remain alone until I can escape.

PSALM 141

Prayer of a Man Persecuted

—With my voice I cried out to the Lord,
with my voice I implored the Lord.

—Before Him I pour out my supplication,
before Him I declare my distress.

—When my breath was escaping me,
then You knew my paths.

—On the road upon which I was walking
they set up snares for me.

—I looked to my right and observed:
there was no one friendly to me.
—Even flight was denied me;
there was no one to take care of my life.

—I cried out to You, O Lord,
and said: "You are my hope,
my share in the land of the living."

—Listen to my supplication
for I am very low.

—Deliver me from my oppressors,
for they have overwhelmed me.

*Readings of the Proper on ordinary Sundays see the tone of the week in Octo-Echos. On
Feast-days see the proper.*

(Ten Sticha)

—Release my soul from its prison
that I may praise your name.

(Nine Sticha)

—The just shall gather around me
until You give me my reward.

PSALM 129

*Prayer of Pardon and Mercy
(A Song of Ascents)*

(Eighth Sticha)

—Out of the depths I have cried to you, LORD:
O Lord, listen to my voice.

(Seven Sticha)

—Let your ears be attentive
to the voice of my supplication.

(Six Sticha)

—If you retain sins, Lord,
O Lord, who will be left?
With you there is forgiveness.

(Five Sticha)

—For your name's sake, O Lord, I have waited for You;
my soul has waited for your word,
My soul has hoped for the Lord.

(Four Sticha)

—From the watch of dawn until the night,
from the watch of dawn
let Israel long for the LORD.

(Three Sticha)

—For with the LORD is mercy
and with Him abundant redemption.
—And it is He who will redeem Israel

PSALM 116

A Doxology

(Two Sticha)

—Praise the Lord, all you nations,
exalt Him, all you peoples.

(One Stichon)

—For mighty is his love for us,
And the truth of the Lord endures for ever.

As the choir begins to sing the Glory Be, the priest puts on the phelonion and both he and the deacon make three reverences before the holy table. The holy doors are opened. If there is to be a reading of the Gospel, the priest gives the holy Gospel book to the deacon who holds it with reverence and piety. The server puts incense into the censer and passes it to the deacon. The priest lets down the phelonion. Both priest and deacon walk around the holy table and go out through the north door where the cross-bearer, candle-bearers and fan-bearers are waiting to march before them in procession. When they come before the holy doors, the deacon stands to the right of the priest and bows slightly to him, saying in a low voice:

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

And the priest recites the Entrance Prayer in a low voice:

At nightfall, dawn and noon, we sing to You, we bless You , we give thanks to You and we beseech You, O Master of All, O Lord and Lover of Mankind: guide our prayers aright as an offering of incense before You, let not our hearts be led to words or thoughts of wickedness, but save us from all those who pursue our souls. For all glory, honor and adoration are you due, Father, son and Holy Spirit, now and always and unto ages of ages. Amen.

If the deacon is carrying the Gospel book, he presents it to the priest, who kisses it. Then the deacon, holding the orarion with three fingers of the right hand and pointing to the East says to the priest in a low voice:

Deacon: Bless the holy entering, Father.

And the priest gives the blessing in a low voice:

Priest: Blessed is the entering into your holy places, at all times, now and always and unto ages of ages.

Deacon: Amen.

When the choir has completed the singing of the Theotokion, the deacon says aloud:

Deacon: Wisdom! Let us stand.

And the priest or the ecclesiarch intones the first words of the Evening Prayer of Thanksgiving, which is then continued by the choir:

Hymn of the Evening

—O Joyful Light!
Light and Holy Glory
of the Father immortal,
the heavenly, holy, the Blessed One;
O Jesus Christ.

—Now that we have reached
the setting of the sun,
and see the evening light,
we sing to God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

—It is fitting at all times
to raise a song of praise
in measured melody
to You, O son of God,
the giver of life.

—Behold the universe sings
your glory.

While this hymn is being sung the deacon incenses the priest, the icons and the whole congregation. After the singing of the hymn the deacon goes to the royal doors, turns to the congregation, and announces:

Deacon: The Prokimenon of Vespers.

The holy doors are closed. The reader comes and stands in the middle of the ambo and reads first the prokimenon or verses of Vespers and then the proper selections from Genesis or Exodus, to be found in the Triodion.

Deacon: Wisdom!

The reader reads the title of the selection. He turns toward the people.

Deacon: Let us be attentive.

The reader reads the selection. After the reading:

Deacon: Please proceed, Father.

The holy doors are opened. The priest takes in his right hand a lighted candle and the censer, makes with them the sign of the cross over the altar.

Priest: Wisdom! Let us stand.

Then, turning toward the people he blesses them with the same lighted candle and the censer.

Priest: The light of Christ enlightens all men!

And the holy doors are closed. The priest then puts aside candle and censer.

Deacon: Let us be attentive!

The reader reads the selection. When the reading is completed, the reader turns toward the holy table and makes a bow.

Priest: Peace ☩ to you, Reader.

The holy doors are opened. The deacon takes in his hand a lighted candle and stands at the right of the priest ready to walk before him around the altar. The priest takes the censer. He incenses while saying aloud:

Priest: Let my prayer rise like incense before You, and the lifting of my hands, like an evening sacrifice.

All: Let my prayer rise like incense before You, and the lifting of my hands, like an evening sacrifice.

Then the priest goes to the left side of the altar (his right) and the deacon marches before him. He incenses the left side of the altar, saying aloud:

Priest: O Lord, I have cried out to You: hear me. Give heed to the voice of my supplication when I cry out to You.

All: Let my prayer rise like incense before You, and the lifting of my hands, like an evening sacrifice.

Meanwhile the priest goes to the back of the altar, always preceded by the deacon, and he incenses saying aloud:

Priest: Incline my heart away from evil dealings, from finding excuses for sinful deeds. In company with men who work iniquity, let me not partake of what they choose.

All: Let my prayer rise like incense before You, and the lifting of my hands, like an evening sacrifice.

Then the priest comes between the holy doors and incenses as usual. The deacon comes out and stands in the middle of the ambo. The priest incenses, saying aloud:

Priest: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and always and unto ages of ages. Amen.

All: Let my prayer rise like incense before You, and the lifting of my hands, like an evening sacrifice.

The priest comes back to the altar and the deacon comes in also and stands to the right of the priest.

Priest: Let my prayer rise like incense before You, and the lifting of my hands, like an evening sacrifice.

All: And the lifting of my hands, like an evening sacrifice.

Both priest and deacon recite the Prayer of Ephrem. Making a prostration, they begin in a low voice:

Lord, Master of my life, grant that I may not be infected with the spirit of slothfulness and acquisitiveness, with the spirit of ambition and vain talking

They rise, then making another prostration:

—Grant instead to me your servant the spirit of purity and humility, the spirit of patience and neighborly love.

They rise, then making a third prostration:

—O Lord and King, bestow upon me the grace of being aware of my sins and of not thinking evil of those of my brethren.

They rise, and continue aloud:

—For You are blessed for ever and ever.

All: Amen

And, making a reverence each time, the priest says:

—O God, be propitious to me a sinner and have mercy on me. *(Twelve times)*

And, making a final prostration, he repeats:

—Yes, O Lord and King, bestow upon me the grace of being aware of my sins and of not thinking evil of those of my brethren.

If this Liturgy is celebrated on the days of St. Charalampos (Feb. 10), or of the recovering of the head of St. John the Baptist (Feb. 24), or of the forty martyrs of Sebastea (March 9), there is a proper Epistle and Gospel (see Menaion) On the first three days of Holy Week there is only the Gospel.

When the Epistle is to be read, the deacon goes before the holy doors and says aloud:

Deacon: Let us be attentive!

And the reader announces the proper prokimenon of the Epistle.

Deacon: Wisdom!

And the reader, turning toward the people, reads the title of the Epistle.

Deacon: Let us be attentive!

And the reader reads the Epistle. While the reader reads the Epistle, the deacon uncovers his head and brings the holy Gospel book to the priest, bows to him and says:

Deacon: Bless, Reverend Father, the herald of the Gospel of the holy apostle and evangelist **N.**

And the priest blesses him and says:

Priest: May God grant you through the prayers of the holy and glorious apostle and evangelist **N.**, that you give out the good news with great power for the fulfillment of the Gospel of his beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

And the priest hands the holy Gospel book to the deacon who answers:

Deacon: Amen.

The deacon makes a reverence towards the holy gospel book, takes it up, and puts the hem of his orarion on it and carries it before him. And going out through the holy doors, he proceeds to the customary place for the reading of the Gospel. When the reading of the Epistle is concluded:

Priest: Peace to you, Reader.

While the Alleluia is being sung by the reader and choir, the priest takes the censer, puts incense into it and incenses crosswise the holy table all around, the whole sanctuary, the icons of the Iconostasis, both choirs and the people, while reciting secretly the Gospel prayer:

Shine in our hearts, Master who love mankind, the pure light of your divine knowledge, and open the eyes of our mind that we may understand the announcing of your Good News; set in us the fear of your blessed commandments, so that, trampling all carnal desires, we may begin to live according to the spirit, both willing and doing everything for your pleasure. For You are the light of our souls and bodies, Christ God, and we send you glory to You and to your eternal Father and to your all-holy, good and life-giving Spirit, now and always and unto ages of ages. Amen.

When this prayer is completed, the priest stands between the holy doors. He faces the people and says aloud:

—Let us beseech the Lord our God to be made worthy to hear the holy Gospel.

—Wisdom! Let us stand! Let us listen to the holy Gospel.

—Peace to all!

All: And to your spirit.

Deacon: The holy Gospel according to the evangelist N.

All: Glory to you, Lord, glory to you.

Priest: Let us be attentive!

The priest gives the censer to the server, lets down his phelon and looks with devotion and attention at the deacon reading the Gospel. When the reading of the Gospel is completed, the choir sings:

Glory to you, Lord, glory to you.

The deacon then returns to the holy doors and give the closed Gospel book to the priest; and the priest, receiving it and kissing it, says to the deacon:

Priest: Peace to you, herald of the Gospel.

He then makes the sign of the cross over the people with it, and places it on the holy table.

If there is no reading of the Epistle, all the prayers concerning the readings are omitted. If there is no reading of the holy Gospel, after the prayers of St. Ephrem, the deacon comes out through the north door and stands in his customary place in the ambo for the ecumenical prayers. The holy doors are closed. The deacon, standing in his usual place, intones the litany and the choir answers with great reverence:

–LET US ALL SAY, with our whole soul and our whole mind, let us all say:

All: Lord, have mercy *(Three times)*.

– Lord Almighty, God of our fathers, we pray to You, hear us and have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy *(Three times)*.

– Have mercy on us, O God, in your great mercy: we pray to You, hear us and have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy *(Three times)*.

– Again we pray for our Most Reverend Bishop N., and for the reverend clergy, let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy *(Three times)*.

– Again we pray for our brothers the priests, the deacons, the monks and nuns, and for all our brothers in Christ.

All: Lord, have mercy *(Three times)*.

– Again, we pray for mercy, life, peace, health, salvation, protection, forgiveness and remission of sins for the servants of God who live in this city (or village, or for the brethren of this holy monastery).

All: Lord, have mercy *(Three times)*.

– Again, we pray for the blessed and ever to be remembered founders of this holy church (or monastery,) and for our Orthodox Fathers and brethren who have gone before us and who here or elsewhere have been laid to pious rest.

All: Lord, have mercy *(Three times)*.

– Again, we pray for those who bear offerings, those who do good works in this holy and most venerable church, those who toil, those who sing and all the people here present who await from You great and abundant mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy *(Three times)*.

Then the priest says in a low voice:

God, our God, Creator and Maker of all things who ordained that all men should be saved and should come to the knowledge of truth, look upon your servants the catechumens and wash from their past and

from the wiles of the adversary. Call them to eternal life, enlightening their souls and bodies, and number them among your spiritual flock over which your holy name is invoked. (Aloud) That with us they too may glorify your most noble and magnificent name, of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and always and unto ages of ages.

All: Amen.

Deacon: All Catechumens, depart. Catechumens, depart. All Catechumens, depart. Let no Catechumen remain.

Prayer for Those who are Ready for Illumination

The following prayers are added only from the Wednesday of the fourth week of Lent until the Wednesday of Holy Week.

—You who were admitted for illumination, come forth. Pray, all you who are preparing for illumination. Let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy.

—For our brethren who are preparing for holy illumination, and for their salvation, let us faithful pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy.

—That the Lord our God may confirm them and strengthen them, let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy.

—That He may enlighten them with the light of wisdom and piety, let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy.

—That He may make them worthy in due time of the bath of regeneration, of the remission of sins and of the robe of immortality, let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy.

—That He may give them a new birth, of water and of the Spirit, let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy.

—That He may endow them with the fullness of the faith, let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy.

—That He may receive them among his holy and chosen flock, let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy.

—Save them, have mercy on them, protect them and guard them, O god, by your grace.

All: Lord, have mercy.

—You who are preparing for illumination, bow your heads to the Lord.

All: To you, O Lord.

The priest says in a low voice:

Shine, O Master, with the light of your face, upon these who are preparing for holy illumination and who aspire to put away the defilement of sin. Enlighten their hearts; confirm them in faith; strengthen them in hope; perfect them in love; make them precious members of your Christ who gave Himself as a ransom for our souls.
(Aloud) For You are our illumination and we send up glory to You, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and always and unto ages of ages.

All: Amen.

Deacon: All you who are preparing for illumination depart. You who are preparing for illumination, depart.

—All we faithful, again and again in peace, let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord have mercy.

And the priest recites in a low voice the first prayer for the faithful.

GREAT AND PRAISED GOD, who through the life-giving death of your Christ made us pass from corruption into incorruptibility: deliver all of our senses from deadly passion, setting over them inner reason as a sure guide. And let the eye not look upon evil, nor the ear listen to idle talk, but let the tongue be cleansed of unbefitting speech. Purity our

lips which praise You, O Lord. let our hands abstain from evil deeds but do only such things as are pleasing to You, having strengthened by your grace all our limbs and our understanding. (Aloud) For all glory, honor and worship, are your due, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and always and unto ages of ages.

All: Amen.

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

All: Lord, have mercy.

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

All: Lord, have mercy.

—Wisdom!

And the priest recites in a voice the second prayer of the faithful

HOLY Master, infinitely good, we beseech You who are rich in mercy to have pity on us sinners and to make us worthy of receiving your oily Son and our God, the King of Glory. For behold, his spotless body and life-giving blood are about to make their entrance at this time, and to be laid on this mystical table, escorted by angel hosts unseen. Make us receive them in blameless communion, that when the eyes of our understanding are enlightened we may become children of light and day. (Aloud) Through the gift of your Christ with whom you are blessed, together with your all holy, good and life-giving Spirit, now and always and unto ages of ages.

All: Amen

—Now the powers of heaven minister with us in an invisible manner; for, lo, the King of glory is coming.

The holy curtain and the holy doors are opened. The deacon makes a reverence and goes into the sanctuary through the south door and taking the censer, he incenses the char, the prothesis and the priest. Then both priest and deacon make three deep reverences to the ground, saying in a low voice:

Priest: Now the powers of heaven minister with us in an invisible manner; for lo, the King of glory is coming.

Deacon: And, behold, the Mystic Sacrifice presanctified and perfected, is escorted in. let us approach with eager faith, so as to become sharers in eternal life. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

They proceed to the altar of prothesis. The deacon says:

Lift up, Father.

The priest places the aer on the deacon's left shoulder, and carries in his hands both holy chalice and holy dishes: the deacon takes up a lighted candle and the incense, And both priest and deacon make the great entrance. If other clerics are present, they too carry lighted candles and walk in the procession. During this procession:

Priest: Holy is God! Holy the Mighty One Holy the Immortal One! Have mercy on us.

When the priest enters the sanctuary, he places the holy chalice and the holy diskos upon the holy table. Then, taking the veils from the holy diskos and the holy chalice, he sets them aside on the holy table. He takes the aer from the deacon's shoulder, presents it to be incensed, and covers the holy gifts with it, saying nothing. When the procession enters into the sanctuary;

Choir: Behold the Mystjc Sacrifice, presanctified and perfected, is escorted in. Let us approach with eager faith, so as to become sharers in eternal life. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

The priest incenses the holy gifts three times. Both priest and deacon make three deep reverences to the ground before the holy gifts. The deacon, receives a blessing from the priest, comes out through the north door, stands in his customary place, and says aloud:

Deacon: Let us complete our prayer to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy.

—For these precious gifts that are offered and presanctified, let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy.

—That our God who loves mankind, having received them on his holy and mystical altar in heaven as a sweet spiritual fragrance, may send down upn us in return his divine grace and the gift of the Holy Spirit, let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy.

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

All: Lord, have mercy.

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

All: Lord, have mercy.

—Having prayed that this whole day may be perfect, holy, peaceful, and without sin, let us commend ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ God.

All: To You, O Lord.

Meanwhile, the priest prays in a low voice:

GOD of ineffable and invisible mysteries with whom are the hidden treasures of wisdom and knowledge, who have revealed to us the service of this liturgy and who, through your great love for mankind, have established us sinners for the offering of gifts and sacrifices to You for our sins and for the people's faults; O You, King invisible, who perform great works, inscrutable and glorious marvels which cannot be numbered: look upon us your unworthy servants who stand, as before your throne of the cherubim, at this holy altar where your only-begotten Son, our God, reposes under these awesome mysteries offered here. And deliver us all and your faithful people from impurities; sanctify the souls and bodies of all of us with a sanctification that cannot be taken away, so that partaking of these divine mysteries with a pure conscience, faces unashamed and enlightened hearts, and being quickened by them, we 'nay thus be united with your Christ Himself, our true God, who said: "He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me and I in him." Thus, your Word having his abode in us and walking in our midst, O lord, we become the temple of your all-holy and adorable Spirit, being delivered from every wile of the devil working in our acts, words or thoughts and we shall obtain the blessings you promised us, together with all the saints who pleased you since time began. *(Aloud)* And make us worthy, Master, to dare with inner confidence and without condemnation to call you Father, O God of heaven, and to say:

The **people** or, if customary, the **reader**:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by 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, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever and ever.

All: Amen.

—Peace ✕ to all.

All: And to your spirit.

Deacon: Bow your heads to the Lord.

All: To You, O Lord.

And the priest prays in a low voice:

GOD, the only one good and compassionate, who dwell on high and look upon the humble: look with compassionate eyes upon your people and preserve them. Grant us all to partake without condemnation of these your life-giving mysteries, for it is before You that we bow our head in the hope of your abundant mercy. **(Aloud)** Through the grace and mercy and love for mankind of your only-begotten Son, with whom you are blessed, together with your all-holy, good and life-giving Spirit, now and always and unto ages of ages.

All: Amen.

The deacon slants the orarion across his breast, and the priest again prays in a low tone:

LORD JESUS CHRIST OUR GOD, give heed from your holy dwelling place and from the throne of glory of your kingdom, and come to make us holy, O You who are enthroned on high with the Father and yet are present here though unseen to us. And accord by the might of your hand to give us a share of your spotless body and precious blood, and through us to all the people.

Then the priest, and the deacon also from where he stands, make three reverences saying to themselves:

—O God, be propitious to me a sinner and have mercy on me **(Three times)**

When the deacon sees the priest stretching out his hands and touching the holy bread before making the elevation, he says aloud:

Deacon: Let us be attentive!

And the priest, touching the presanctified gifts under the aer which cover them, says aloud:

Priest: Holy Presanctified things for the holy.

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

And the kinonikon (communion verse) is sung:

Taste and see how good the Lord is. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

The deacon makes a deep reverence and enters the sanctuary through the south door, and standing at the right of the priest, he points to the holy gifts and says:

Break the holy bread, Father.

The priest rakes off the aer and the asterirkos, puts them aside, breaks the Lamb into four parts with care and reverence and says:

Broken and distributed is the Lamb of God, broken and not dismembered, always eaten and never expended, but making holy those who receive.

And he places the portions on the holy diskos in this manner:

IC

NI KA

XC

And the deacon points to the holy chalice and says:

Fill the holy chalice, Father.

The priest takes the upper portion marked IC, makes with it the sign of the cross over the holy chalice and drops it in saying nothing. The deacon takes the zeon (warm water) and says to the priest:

Bless the warm water, Father.

And the priest blesses it and says:

Blessed is the fervor of your saints, at all times, now and always and unto ages of ages. Amen.

And the deacon pours a sufficient quantity of the warm water crosswise into the holy chalice, saying nothing. The deacon hands the zeon to the server and stands a little way off. As this point, in some Slav churches, the deacon is summoned by the priest and receives the species of bread. Also the priest takes a particle of the holy Bread with the words: The precious and holy and spotless Body, etc., before reciting the prayer of Holy Communion. The priest bows his head and says the following prayer in a low voice in preparation for Holy Communion:

I BELIEVE, O LORD, and profess that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God, come to this world to save sinners, of whom I am the greatest. I believe also that this is really your spotless body, and that this is really your precious blood. Wherefore I pray to You: have mercy on me and pardon my offenses, the deliberate and the indeliberate, those committed in word and in deed whether knowingly or inadvertently; and count me worthy to share without condemnation your spotless mysteries, for the remission of sins and for eternal life. Amen.

RECEIVE ME NOW, O Son of God, as a participant in your mystical supper: for I will not betray your mystery to your enemies, nor give You a kiss like Judas, but like the thief I confess You: remember me, O Lord, in your kingdom.

And, if he wishes, he can add the following:

Lord, I am not worthy that You should enter under the stained roof of my soul, but as You accepted to be laid down in a cave and a manger for dumb animals, and to enter the house of Simon the Leper, and to receive, when she approached You, the sinful woman who resembled me: deign to enter both into the manger of my senseless soul and into my rubbish-filled body (which is that) of a dead and leprous (man). And as You did not recoil when the filthy mouth of the sinful woman kissed your spotless feet, likewise, my Master and God, do not shun the sinner that I am, but in your goodness and love for mankind grant that I may become a communicant of your all-holy body and blood.

O our God, remit, forgive, excuse my transgressions by which I sinned against You, knowingly or inadvertently, in word or in deed. In your goodness and love for mankind, hold me excused for all of them. Through the prayers of your all-pure and ever-virgin Mother, grant that I may partake without condemnation of your precious and spotless body, for the healing of (my) soul and body. For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

And finally with a deep bow:

—May the reception of your holy mysteries, O Lord, be for me, not to judgment or condemnation, but to the healing of (my) soul and body.

Then the priest takes the chalice in both hands and the purificator veil and says:

—Glory to You, O God (Three times).

And he partakes three times of It, and with the purificator veil he wipes his lips and the brim of the chalice. saying nothing. Then he invites the deacon again saying:

Deacon, approach once more. And the deacon comes before the holy table, on the right, makes a reverent bow, and coming up to the chalice he partakes of it three times saying nothing. The curtains are drawn and the doors opened. If the faithful are to receive from the hand, the priest leaves the holy Bread and the portions on the uncovered paten. If the faithful are to receive from the spoon, the deacon empties the holy paten into the chalice wiping it with great care and devotion. He puts the spoon in the chalice and covers it with the pacificator. And so, the door of the holy sanctuary is opened. The deacon, making one reverence, takes the chalice with great care and goes to the door, and lifting up the holy chalice, he shows it to the people, saying:

—Come up in fear of God with faith and with love.

All: Amen. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. The Lord is God and He has revealed Himself to us.

And the faithful approach to receive communion. Each one standing with his arms crossed on his breast, telling the priest his Christian name if the priest does not know it. The priest says to each communicant:

The servant of God N. receives the precious and holy body of our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ, for the remission of his (her) sins and for eternal life.

During the communion of the faithful, the choir: sing melodiously, once once or several times according to the number of communicants:

RECEIVE ME NOW, O Son of God, as a participant in your mystical supper: for I will not betray your mystery to your enemies, nor give you a kiss like Judas, but like the thief, I confess You: remember me, Lord, in your kingdom.

After the divine partaking, the priest blesses the people, saying aloud:

O God, save your people and bless ✠ your inheritance.

All: I will bless the Lord at all times. His praise shall constantly be in my mouth. Taste the heavenly bread and partake of the chalice of life and see how good the Lord is. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Both the priest and deacon return to the holy table, and the priest incenses it three times, saying to himself:

May You be raised up above the heavens, O God, and your glory above all the earth *(Three times)*

Then he takes the holy diskos and places it on the deacon's head. The deacon holds it with reverence and goes to the door in silence, then to the altar of offering where he puts it down. Turning the orarion around, he goes out through the south door and stands in his customary place. The priest makes a reverence, takes the holy chalice, turns to the door facing the people and says in a loud voice:

Blessed is our God at all times, now and always and unto ages of ages.

And he goes to the altar of offering and puts down the holy chalice.

All: Amen.

And if customary:

Let our mouth be filled with your praise, O Lord, that we may sing your glory, for You have counted us worthy to share your holy, immortal and spotless mysteries; keep us in your sanctification that we may sing your glory, meditating on your holiness all the day. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

The priest bows and returns to the holy table.

Deacon: Let us stand. Now that we have received the divine, holy, spotless, immortal, heavenly, life-giving awesome mysteries of Christ, let us give worthy thanks to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy.

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

All: Lord, have mercy.

—Now that we have asked that this whole day (or evening) may be perfect, holy, peaceful and without sin, let us commend ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ God.

All: To You, O Lord.

Meanwhile the priest folds the antimimension. Holding up the holy Gospel book. he makes the sign of the cross over the antimimension with it, places the holy Gospel book on it and says the prayer of thanksgiving in a low voice:

WE THANK YOU, Savior and God of the universe, for all the blessings You bestowed upon us and for our partaking of the holy body and blood of your Christ. And we pray You, Master who love mankind: keep us under the shadow of your wings, and grant us to partake worthily, even until our last breath, of your holy mystery for the enlightening of our soul and body and the inheritance of your heavenly kingdom.

(Aloud) For You are our sanctification, and we send up glory to You, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and always and unto ages of ages.

All: Amen.

—Let us go forth in peace.

All: In the name of the Lord.

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Then the priest, standing before the icon of the Lord and letting down his phelonion over his hands, says this prayer aloud:

MIGHTY LORD who created the whole universe in wisdom; who by your ineffable providence and great goodness have brought us to these salutary days for the purification of our souls and bodies, for the control of Our passions and for hope in the resurrection; You who after forty days gave Moses, your servant, the tablets of the law inscribed by

your divine hands: enable us also, O Good One, to fight the good fight, run the course of the fast, to keep the faith, to crush the heads of the invisible dragons, to come out victorious over sin and to attain without reproach unto the worship of your holy resurrection.

The priest bows to the icon of the Lord and goes with the deacon into the sanctuary, saying:

—For blessed and glorified is your most honorable and magnificent name, of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and always and unto ages of ages.

All: Amen.

—Blessed the name of the Lord henceforth and forever *(Three times)*

Meanwhile the priest turns toward the altar of offering and says the following prayer in a low voice:

—O Lord our God, who brought us to these most salutary days and permitted us to partake of your awesome mysteries: unite us to your spiritual flock and make us heirs of your kingdom, now and always and unto ages of ages. Amen.

The reader reads the psalms:

Psalm 33

Praise of God the Protector of the just

—I WILL BLESS THE LORD at all times;
his praise shall be constantly in my mouth.

—My soul shall glory in the Lord:
let the meek hear and rejoice.

—Magnify the Lord with me
and let us exalt his name together.

—I sought the Lord and He heard me,
and delivered me from all my fears,

—Approach the Lord and be enlightened,
and your face shall never be shamed.

—This poor man cried out, and the Lord heard him
and delivered him from all his afflictions.

—The angel of the Lord will set up camp
around those who fear the Lord, and save them.

—Taste and see how good the Lord is:
blessed is the man who hopes in Him.

—Fear the Lord, all you his saints,
for there is no privation for those who fear Him.

—The rich have become poor and hungry,
but those who seek the Lord shall not want any good.

—Come, children, hear me:

I will teach you the fear of the lord.

—who is the man who desires life,
who loves to see good days?

—Keep your mouth from evil

and your lips from deceitful speech;

—Turn away from evil and do good,
seek peace and pursue it.

—The eyes of the Lord are upon the just
and his ears are open to their pleas;

—The face of the Lord is against evildoers
to erase their memory from the earth.

—The just cried out, and the lord heard them,
and He delivered them from all their trials.

—The lord is close to men of contrite heart
and He will save the humble in spirit.

—Many ace the trials of the just,
but out of them all, the Lord will save them.

—He keeps watch over all their bones:
not a single one of them shall be broken.

—The death of the sinners is wretched;
those who hate what is right will be condemned.

—The Lord will redeem the souls of his servants,
and none of those who hope in Him will go astray.

Psalm 144

The greatness and goodness of God

—I WILL EXALT YOU, my God and my King
and bless your name forever

and to all eternity;

—Every day, I will bless You

and praise your name forever
and to all eternity.

—The Lord is great and highly praised,
and to his greatness there is no end.

—Age after age will Praise your work,
and will proclaim your power.

—They will tell the glorious splendor or your holiness,
they will recount your wondrous works;

—They will speak of your mighty and awesome deeds,
they will recount your immensity.

—They will recall your abundant goodness
and will exult in your righteousness.

—The Lord is full of compassion and mercies:
He is long-suffering and abounding in love.

—The Lord is good towards everyone
and his mercies extend over all his works.

—Let all your works confess You, Lord,
and all your saintly ones shall bless You.

—They shall speak of the glory of your kingdom
and talk of your might

—To make known your might to the sons of men
and the glorious majesty of your kingdom.

—Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,
and your dominion endures throughout all generations.

—The Lord is faithful in all his words
and holy In all works.

—The Lord supports all those who are falling
and straightens all those who are broken

—The eyes of all wait upon You,
and You give them their food m due season

—You open your hands,
and fill all living beings with good things.

—The Lord is just in all his ways
and holy in all his works.

—The Lord is near all those who call to Him
all those who call to Him in truth |

—He will do the will of those who fear Him
and hear their pleas and save them.

—The Lord keeps watch over all those who love Him,
but all the wicked He will utterly destroy.
—My mouth shall speak the praise of the Lord,
and let all flesh bless his holy name
forever and to all eternity.

—Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and
always and unto ages of ages. Amen.

—Lord, have mercy (*Three Limes*).

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: May the blessing ✕ or the Lord and his mercy be upon you
through his grace and love for mankind, at all times, now and always
and unto ages of ages.

All: Amen.

Then the priest turns to the east and says:

—Glory to You, Christ God, our hope, glory to You.

All: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now
and always and unto ages of ages. Amen.

—Lord, have mercy (*Three times*)

—Give the blessing, Father.

The priest turns toward the people and makes the great dismissal, saying:

Christ our true God, through the prayers of his all-spotless and all-pure
Mother...

On Monday he adds:

And through the supplications of the venerable and bodiless powers of
heaven, of the holy apostles worthy of all praise...

On Tuesday he adds:

And through the supplications of the venerable and glorious prophet
and forerunner John the Baptist, of the holy apostles worthy of all
praise,...

On Wednesday and Friday he adds:

And through the power of the divine and life-giving cross, of the holy apostles worthy of all praise, ...

On Thursday he adds:

And of the holy apostles worthy of all praise, of our holy father Nicholas, Archbishop of Myra in Lyca, the wonder-worker,

And he continues:

of Saint N., patron of this holy church, (or monastery), of Saint N., whose memory we celebrate today, of the holy and just ancestors of Christ Joachirn and Anne and of all the Saints, have mercy on us and save us, for he is good and loves mankind.

Print and deacon turning toward the holy table make a final reverence and say together:

Through the prayers of our holy fathers, Lord, Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen.

And the holy doors are closed and the curtains drawn. The deacon consumes the holy gifts with all fear and reverence, so that none of the remainders may fall off, and he washes his hands in the usual place. The priest goes out and distributes the antidoron to the people, saying to each one:

May the blessing of the Lord and his mercy be upon you.