

PASTORAL GUIDELINES

Regarding The Rubrics For Liturgical Services And Handling  
Of Liturgical Objects, According To Byzantine Romanian  
Practice

I  
THE SANCTUARY

By definition, "the sanctuary" is the entire area behind and in front of the iconostas including the altar with the holy table, the adjoining rooms, the cantor's stand (strana) and the solea.

Only those who have some part in the actual services are allowed in the sanctuary and particularly near the holy table.

On the holy table should be placed: the antimens; the Gospel Book; the tabernacle; a candelabra holding seven candles, if possible, or at least two candlesticks; the blessing cross and a stand for the liturgy book. No other objects, such as parish records, calendars, lists of remembrances, etc., should be on the holy table. The cleaning of the holy table is the responsibility of the priest and deacon.

No one, except the priest in vestments, should walk in front of the holy table.

In compliance with the old established tradition, women are not allowed in the area behind the iconostas. Only in monasteries for nuns, may a professed nun by special permission be appointed as sacristan and be allowed to enter the altar through the deacon's doors.

Confessions of both men and women are preferably heard before the icon of Christ, just to the right of the holy doors. If, however, many people are confessing and more than one priest is available, confessions may be heard in other appropriate places in front of the iconostas.

II  
VESTMENTS

General principles

- A. The sacraments are officiated with all vestments on.
- B. The other services such as blessing of water, funerals, thanksgiving services, etc., are officiated in epitrachil and felon if a gospel is read. If there is no gospel, an epitrachil suffices.

- C. If circumstances require, confession and communion of the sick may be done wearing just the epitrachil.

### Vespers

- A. On Saturday and on the day before a feast, the priest starts wearing only the epitrachil. After the censuring at "Lord I have called," the priest puts on the felon for the entrance and keeps it on for the rest of vespers.
- B. On weekdays, only the epitrachil is worn.

### Matins

- A. Matins on a weekday is served in epitrachil only.
- B. On Sunday or a feast, the priest begins matins wearing the epitrachil. At the antiphons, the felon is put on and worn until after the 50th Psalm when it is taken off. It is put on again for the Great Doxology when the cantor/choir sings, "Let everything that breathes".
- C. If matins precedes the Liturgy, it is recommended that the priest say the Entrance Prayers on entering the church before matins and that he fully vest and serve matins. This would allow him uninterrupted time for vesting, proskomedia and matins and he would be ready for the Liturgy.

### Regarding the color of vestments

There is no prescribed rule concerning the color of vestments. However, the general practice of the Orthodox Churches is that the Holy Liturgy and all the sacraments are served in light colored vestments.

Although in some places the local custom is to wear black vestments at funerals and during fasting times, there is no such requirement in the general tradition of the Orthodox Church.

## III THE PROSKOMEDIA

The proskomedia is the most important action in preparation for the Holy Liturgy.

### Regarding the time, the proskomedia could be done:

- A. Before matins. In this case, the priest says the Entrance Prayers and fully vests beforehand.
- B. During the matins while the cantor sings the "canon".
- C. Between matins and Liturgy. In this case, at the proper time, the cantor/reader reads the 3rd and 6th Hours. This reading of the hours is also done when no matins is served before the Liturgy.

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The prosfora used for the offering at the proskomedija should be of pure wheat flour, yeast, water and salt. No animal nor dairy products nor oil or any other ingredients may be added. The prosfora may be made by anyone young or old, male or female who has been properly instructed to do so.

In the early centuries only one loaf was used. Later the size and the number of the loaves changed according to local practice and tradition. Some churches use small loaves, others use a large and some small loaves. No matter what the size of the prosfora, it must bear the clear and proper imprinted seal on the top:

IC XC

NI KA

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The wine used for the offering must be pure grape wine.

## IV

CENSING

Censing is done at various times in the services. It often depends on the time and the architecture of the church. There are some principles that are valid for all censing.

1. If the deacon is to cense, he starts by presenting the censer to the priest for a blessing. When the bishop is present, the deacon or priest asks him for the blessing.
2. When the holy doors are open, the deacon and the priest exit through them for the censing. When they are closed, exit is made through the north deacon's door and entry is through the south one.
3. In regard to the icons, positions and persons to be censed, the general rule is that each one is to be censed three times. There is a different practice among the slavs.

Great and little censing

Depending on the space to be censed, there are two types of censing: the great and the little censing.

For the great censing, the deacon ( or the priest) follows this procedure.

- A. He begins in front of the holy table, then censes each side of it as he moves to his right.
- B. Then he censes the table of preparation (proskomedija).
- C. From there he goes to the high place and censes it and then all the icons in the altar.
- D. He then censes all the clergy in the altar.
- E. He exits and censes the icons on the holy doors.

- F. He remains standing before the holy doors and turns toward the right and censes the icon of Christ. Then he turns toward the left and censes the icon of the Mother of God. He turns to the right and censes the patron icon of the church and then to the left to the corresponding icon.
- G. Descending from the solea, he goes to the stand or table bearing the icon of the day (if there is a stand) and censes it.
- H. From there, he censes the bishop's throne.
- I. If the censuring is before the beginning of the Liturgy, he censes the entire nave of the church, walking in a clockwise direction. Then he ascends the solea and censes all the people from there.
- J. If the censuring is during the matins, he censes, after the bishop's throne, the cantor stands on both sides. Then he turns toward the people and walking through the center aisle censes the faithful on the right side. At the end of the aisle, if there is a stand with an icon on it, he censes that. Then, turning toward the sanctuary, he returns censing the faithful on his right.
- K. Reaching the solea, he stops before the holy doors and censes the icon of Christ and then the icon of the Mother of God.
- L. He enters the altar and again censes the front of the holy table, the proskomedia and the main celebrant ( if it is a concelebrated service ) and then gives the censer to the altar boy.

The little censuring differs from the great in that there is no censuring around the church nor down the aisle. After the censuring of the icon of the day and the bishop's throne, the deacon or priest censes the two choirs (stranas) then turns toward the faithful censing them from the center of the solea. The re-entry into the altar follows the same procedure as for the great censuring.

### When to cense

#### Vespers:

1. The great censuring is done by the deacon, if present, at the "Lord I have called".
2. At the entrance, after reaching the center of the solea, the deacon advances toward the holy doors and censes the four main icons. Then he turns and from the same place, he censes toward bishop's throne, the clergy and the faithful on both sides. He then turns toward the altar and at the right time, enters censing three times toward the holy table at the words, " we praise God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit..." from the hymn, "O Jesus Christ".
3. If there is a service with litia, the deacon censes at the beginning around the table and then the iconostas and turning toward the faithful, he censes them. At the breaking of the bread, while the tropars are sung, the priest, preceded by the deacon holding a lighted candle, censes all four sides of the table. He does this each time the tropar is sung.

**Matins:**

1. The great censuring is done everyday at the Ninth Ode of the canon and is done by the deacon, if present.
2. On Sunday, the great censuring is done during the Resurrection Hymns of Blessing (Binecuvântări) by the priest with the deacon preceding him with a lighted candle.
3. If the Polyeleos is sung, the censuring is as above, 2.

**Holy Liturgy:**

1. Before the Liturgy begins, after the completion of the proskomedia there is a great censuring done by the deacon, if present.
2. If the hours are not read, then the great censuring may be done at the beginning of the Great Doxology so that the priest has enough time to bring in the Gospel Book. The deacon, if present precedes the priest after the censuring has been done and he carries a lighted candle.
3. Before the reading of the Gospel, the little censuring is done by the deacon, if present, during the singing of the "Alleluia" verses.

The present practice of censuring during the Epistle reading should be discouraged because of the disturbance caused to listeners and to the reader.

4. Before the Cherubic Hymn, the main celebrant does the little censuring. The deacon, if present, precedes him holding a lighted candle.
5. After the great entrance, the priest wraps the aer around the censer. He covers the diskos and chalice with it and censes the gifts three times.
6. At the singing of the hymn to the Birthgiver of God, the priest takes the censer and censes the holy gifts three times. Then he gives the censer to the deacon, if present, who censes the remaining three sides of the holy table. If there is no deacon, the priest does only the initial three times censuring. There is no requirement at this time to cense the iconostas and people.
7. After blessing the faithful with the holy Gifts, the priest censes the holy table three times, then gives the censer to the deacon, if present, who hangs it on the little finger of his right hand and takes it and the diskos to the proskomedia. After placing the diskos on the table, he turns to the priest carrying the holy cup and he censes it. The priest places the cup on the table and takes the censer from the deacon and censes the holy cup three times.

## V

THE PLACE OF THE DEACON IN THE SERVICES

The deacon must always be at the disposition of the main celebrant.

When the deacon is not saying the litanies or attending some prescribed action, he stands at the right of the main celebrant, a step or so behind him.

The main functions of a deacon

- A. He censures at the proper time.
- B. He says the litanies prescribed for him.
- C. He carries the Gospel Book at the little entrance.
- D. He reads the Gospel at all liturgies.
- E. He carries the aer and diskos at the great entrance.
- F. He lifts the star off the diskos when the words, "Singing the triumphant hymn" are sung.
- G. He lifts the cup and diskos when the priest says "We offer you your own..."
- H. He presents the hot water for the blessing and then pours it into the holy cup.
- I. He breaks the parts "NI" and "KA" for the communion of the people.
- J. He raises the cup and invites the people to communion.
- K. Takes the censer and diskos to the table of preparation.
- L. He consumes the gifts after the hymn, "Blessed be the name ..."

VI

CLOSING AND OPENING THE HOLY DOORS AND THE CURTAINS

The old practice of the Romanian Church was to have, during the Liturgy, the holy doors:

- A. Open at the beginning as are the curtains.
- B. Closed after the blessing, with the curtains remaining open.
- C. Open at the third antiphon.
- D. Closed after the reading of the Gospel with the curtains remaining open.
- E. The curtain is closed after the exclamation, "Catechumens, depart".
- F. Both the doors and the curtains are opened at the Cherubic Hymn when the censuring is to take place.
- G. Doors and curtains are closed after the great entrance.
- H. The curtains are opened at the exclamation, "The doors!" The doors remain closed.
- I. The doors are open at the "Let us stand aright!"
- J. The doors and curtains are closed after, "Let us give thanks..."
- K. The curtain is opened at, "Especially our most holy..." but the doors remain closed.
- L. The curtains are closed after, "And may the mercies of our..."
- M. The doors and curtains are opened at the communion of the people.

It should be noted that the old custom of closing the doors during the holy Liturgy has fallen into disuse. The present tendency, in a great majority of Orthodox Churches is to leave the doors open at all

times during the Liturgy so that the faithful may be close to all the prayers and the actions taking place in the altar. In all churches, the doors remain open if the bishop is present.

If the customary collection is done during the time of the priest's communion, the doors may be closed at that time.

## VII CONCELEBRATED LITURGY

A concelebrated liturgical service is presided over by the bishop or the highest ranking priest who is the main celebrant and is called the "protos". The other priests and deacons are the concelebrants.

### Main characteristics

- A. The protos alone stands in front of the holy table. The concelebrants line up on the right and on the left of the holy table in the order of their ordination or rank. The <sup>oldest</sup> priest stands to the right of the protos.
- B. All prayers are said by the protos alone in a loud voice. The concelebrants silently follow.
- C. Only the protos raises his hands at the Entrance Prayers and at the prescribed moments.
- D. He alone kisses the sponge and the star at the prescribed times.
- E. He alone points to the diskos and the cup at the Epiklesis.
- F. He commemorates the hierarch after the "Axion".
- G. He has the privilege of giving all the blessings and saying all the exclamations.
- H. He assigns ekfonises, blessings or parts of the Liturgy to the concelebrating clergy.
- I. He censes at those moments prescribed for the priest serving with a deacon.

### The order of the little entrance

- A. At the little entrance, the following order should be observed.
  - A. The protos takes the Gospel, kisses it and gives it to the deacon. If no deacon is serving, the protos carries the Gospel Book.
  - B. The deacon carries the Gospel around the altar, carrying it raised in his hands and approaches the deacon's door. (There is no requirement for the deacon or priest to bow at the sides of the holy table or the proskomedia)
  - C. The youngest priest at the right side of the protos walks after the deacon. He is followed by all the priests on the right side, including the protos.
  - D. When the protos reaches the deacon's door, the oldest priest on the left side walks after him. He is followed by the remaining

- priests, the youngest being the last.
- E. After exiting in single file, the procession continues in a semi-circle, with the deacon approaching the holy doors. The priests following him continue to walk until the protos has reached the center behind the deacon.
  - F. The deacon rests the Gospel Book on his left arm and with his right hand, holding his orar between his fingers, bows slightly towards the altar and looking to the protos, says, "Father, bless the holy entrance".
  - G. After "Wisdom", the entrance is made, two by two, starting with the two youngest priests who are closest to the doors. They enter and take their places on the right and on the left of the table.
  - H. The protos enters last, bowing to the icon of Christ and to the icon of the Birthgiver of God.

#### The Thrice Holy Hymn

At the Thrice Holy Hymn, the bishop or the protos goes to the high place. The concelebrants follow this procedure.

- A. If there are many concelebrants and the high place is crowded, each of the celebrants remains in his place.
- B. If there is enough space, the concelebrants join the protos in this manner:

The deacon remains in his place.

The priests on the right, with the eldest leading, move to their left. The priests from the left side move to their right so that the two parallel lines meet in front of the holy table.

Proceeding to the high place, they reach the protos in the same order as they were around the table.

They return to their places, meeting again in parallel lines, but this time behind the holy table.

#### Procession at the great entrance

- A. The protos and the deacon go to the holy table and after the protos kisses the antimens and the deacon the table, both turn to the people, make a bow and go to the proskomedia.
- B. The two oldest priests, one from the right and one from the left, move in front of the holy table, kiss the antimens, bow to each other and to the people and follow the protos. They stand, single file, behind him.
- C. All other celebrants do the same so that a single line is formed with the youngest at the end.



- D. If no deacon is serving, the protos takes the aer, diskos and cup.
- E. The procession in single file follows the deacon until he reaches the center of the solea. The deacon continues and goes directly into the altar where he waits at the right corner of the holy table, holding the diskos until the protos enters and takes it from him.
- F. The protos, carrying the chalice, stops in the center of the solea and faces the people.
- G. If there is a small number of concelebrants, they take their place standing on the right of the protos. The oldest is closest to him. All the celebrants face the people.
- H. If there are many concelebrants, the oldest priests take their places to the right and the left of the protos. The others arrange themselves as they stood at the holy table. All stand single file and face the people.
- I. The protos says the remembrances.
- J. For the entrance into the altar, the protos goes first with the chalice. The two older priest follow and the rest enter, two by two.

#### Censing at a concelebrated liturgy

- A. After the proskomedia, before the beginning of the Liturgy, the censing is done by the deacon, if present. If no deacon serves, the priest who did the proskomedia does the censing.
- B. At the "Alleluia" verses, the deacon, if present does the censing. If none serves, the priest who did the proskomedia does the censing.
- C. During the Cherubic Hymn, the censing is done by the protos who is preceded by the deacon with a lighted candle or by altar boys if no deacon is present. If the bishop serves, he is preceded by the deacon holding the dikiri.
- D. After the great entrance, the protos censes the gifts on the holy table, three times.
- E. During the "Axion", the protos censes the holy things three times, standing at the front of the table. If the deacon serves, he censes the remaining sides of the holy table.

#### The kiss of peace

At a concelebrated Liturgy, when the time has come for the kiss of peace:

- A. The priests standing at the right of the protos circle behind the holy table and form one line with the group of priests at the left of the altar. The oldest being the first in line for the kiss, the youngest being the last.
- B. The first concelebrant approaches the holy table, then he kisses the diskos, chalice and the holy table. Then he exchanges the kiss of peace on both shoulders of the protos as the protos says: "Christ in our midst". He then moves to the right of the protos waiting for the other priests to exchange the kiss of peace with the

protos and with him.

- C. All other priests follow the same procedure.
- D. The deacons do not receive the kiss of peace from the priest, but exchange it among themselves.
- E. For waving the aer over the holy gifts, the protos is assisted by the two oldest priests.

#### Communion of the clergy

In preparing to receive holy Communion, the concelebrants should observe this order:

- A. The oldest priest on the right side, followed by the others on his right, circle behind the holy table and combine with the other priests to form a single line in order of rank. The oldest priest is closest to the protos. All approach from the left.
- B. The protos breaks the part "XC" into as many particles as may be needed to commune the clergy. If a deacon is serving, the protos does not now take the precious Body himself but he steps back toward the holy doors. If no deacon is serving, he takes his portion now.
- C. The oldest priest takes a particle of the holy Body in his right hand. Then he moves to the right and stopping at the corner of the right side of the holy table, waits with his hands crossed, right over left, on the table. The other concelebrants follow the same procedure and stop next to the right of the previous priest.
- D. When all the concelebrants have taken a particle, the protos gives the precious Body to the deacon. Then, he himself takes the remaining portion.
- E. After the prayers and partaking of the holy Body, the protos partakes of the holy Blood and steps back again, letting the other priest come to the chalice, this time from the right side. The oldest priest is first after the protos.
- F. If a deacon serves, the last priest in line gives him the precious Blood from the chalice.
- G. The celebrants move back to their former places, circling behind the holy table.
- H. If the bishop serves, he distributes the communion. The same order and procedure for forming the lines is observed. In receiving the holy Body from the bishop, the priest kisses his hand. But there is no requirement to kiss the bishop's hand or the chalice after partaking of the holy Blood.
- I. If there are priests present who did not concelebrate but come to receive communion, they are the last in line after the priests have received both the Body and Blood. The deacon receives the holy Blood from the youngest concelebrant.
- J. When all have partaken, the deacon approaches the table and breaks the particles "NI" and "KA" for the communion of the people.

VIII  
READING OF THE EPISTLE

- A. The Epistle is read by the person appointed to do so. It may be read by anyone, including women.
- B. After having selected the proper text, the reader moves to the indicated place. Traditionally, the reading is done from the center of the church, facing the altar. However, in order to make the reading better understood and heard by the faithful, the reader may stand two or three steps in front of the cantor's stand, half-way facing the people.
- C. After concluding the Epistle, the reader should remain in his place to say the "Alleluia" verses (see the Liturgy Book) while the deacon or priest censes.
- D. It should be understood here that the "Alleluia" verses are not a conclusion to the Epistle but are an introduction and preparation for the reading of the Gospel. The censing, too, is part of that preparation. It is, therefore, very important to have the verses sung. If the choir or cantor is present, they sing the "alleluiaes" after the reader chants the verse. In the Romanian Epistle Book the verses are included. In English, see the Liturgy Book, according to the tone.

IX  
READING OF THE GOSPEL

- A. In regard to Sunday matins, the Resurrection Gospel is always read by the priest from the left of the holy table, the side closest to the proskomedia.
- B. The Gospel is read from the center of the holy doors at Liturgy when no deacon serves and at matins on a feastday. ( If a feast falls on a Sunday, the Gospel read at matins is still and only that of the Resurrection.) At the Liturgy of a feast on Sunday, the Gospel, if it is one of the twelve great feasts, is of the feast. Otherwise, it can be of the Sunday or of the feast.
- C. When the deacon serves, he reads the Gospel at all Liturgies, standing in the center of the church facing the altar. If there is a pulpit, he reads the Gospel from there, facing the people. After reading the Gospel, the deacon hands it to the priest at the holy doors and then he returns to say the litanies.

X  
BREAKING THE LAMB FOR COMMUNION

- A. Only the Lamb, the IC-XC-NI-KA is consecrated at the Epiklesis and thus only the Lamb may be given as holy communion. The particles of remembrance of the Birthgiver, the nine ranks and those for the living and the dead cannot be given as communion.
- B. The Lamb is broken during the prayer, "The Lamb of God is broken.. It is broken by separating the Lamb in two: the IC-XC from the NIKA. The IC-XC is set down and then NIKA is divided: the NI ~~or~~

- is placed on the diskos at the priest's left hand and the KA on the opposite side. Then the IC is separated from the XC. The XC is placed on the bottom of the diskos. The priest then places the IC into the cup saying the prayer: "The completion of the cup..." This part is not given as communion. It remains in the cup to be consumed at the end of the Liturgy. It can be distinguished from the NIKA which is broken up for communion.
- C. Communion of the clergy is from the part XC only. It is divided into as many parts as there are clergy partaking. It is entirely consumed by the clergy and is not given to the faithful.
  - D. Communion of the faithful is prepared by the deacon, if present, who breaks up the parts NI and KA into the cup as he says the hymn, "Seeing the resurrection of Christ..."
  - E. The commemoration particles are placed in the cup only after the communion of the faithful.
  - F. The hot water should be hot. The priest blesses it but the deacon is the one who pours it into the cup after the IC has been placed in the cup. The remaining water can be used at the consuming of the gifts after the Liturgy to wash the chalice and be consumed.
  - G. The communion of the faithful is done with one single spoon. The use of plastic or interchangeable spoons is neither required nor appropriate.

## XI

### THE BLESSINGS

The blessings are given by the bishop or priest only and they are given with the Gospel Book, with the chalice, with the cross and by hand.

- A. Blessings with the Gospel Book
  - 1. At the beginning of the Liturgy over the antimens on the holy table.
  - 2. After the reading of the Gospel.
  - 3. At the ekfonosis at the conclusion of the Liturgy, "For you are our sanctification..." over the antimens.
- B. Blessings by hand
  - 1. All blessings of "Peace be to all."
  - 2. At the consecration of the holy gifts, towards the diskos and chalice.
  - 3. For the blessing of the anafora/antidor.
- C. Blessings with the cross
  - 1. After the creed, at "the grace of our Lord..."
  - 2. At the "May the mercies of our great God..."
  - 3. At the final blessing before the dismissal.

## D. Blessings with the chalice

1. At the great entrance.
2. After the communion of the faithful, at the exclamation, "O God save your people...."

No other blessings are proscribed, necessary or appropriate.

XII  
REMEMBRANCES

- A. The proper time to mention the names of the living and the dead is at the proskomedia by cutting a particle for each person commemorated.
- B. Prayers for special needs (sick, travelers, etc.) may be said at the Liturgy during the litany of fervent intercession.
- C. Although included in the Liturgy books, the litany for the dead is not part of the Liturgy and in the old practice was never said on Sunday nor on a feastday. The litany of the dead was introduced particularly for the Liturgies preceding funerals.
- D. For the great entrance, the text of the Liturgy indicates that only those remembrances are said which are proscribed by the authority of the local synod of bishops. The introducing of individual names is not proscribed and is not in the practice of the Orthodox Churches.
- E. According to an old practice, the deacon, if present, makes remembrances during the time he censes the holy table at the "Axion" when the priest says the ekfonosis after the "Axion".

XIII  
PREPARATION OF THE COMMUNION FOR THE SICK

The preparation of the communion for the sick takes place at the proskomedia and at the Liturgy on Great Thursday.

Two prosforas are needed on that day.

One Lamb for the Liturgy is cut from the first prosfora. A second Lamb is cut from the second prosfora using the same prayers and it is placed next to the first lamb on the diskos.

At the time of breaking the holy Lamb after "Holy things are for the holy", the one Lamb is broken for the Liturgy. The second one remains whole.

Before the communion of the clergy, the second Lamb is turned with the seal down on a diskos, and with the spoon, the holy Blood from the chalice is poured carefully over it. (This is the same procedure as for the Lamb of a Presanctified Liturgy.)

The Lamb is imbued with the holy Blood and set aside on a diskos and being covered with a star and veil, is left to dry until the second day of Pascha, Monday.

On the second day of Pascha, the priest, fully vested, cuts the Lamb into small pieces with the spear and proceeds to dry them on a hot plate, making sure that they are not burned nor left humid, by constantly turning them with the spoon.

Once dried, the particles are set with attention into the container to be reserved in the tabernacle for use during the year.

#### XIV SERMONS

The sermon is an essential part of each Liturgical service. The sermon is a teaching part of the Liturgy. In the old times, the sermon was aimed particularly at the catechumens and was given right after the reading of the Gospel.

In our days, sermons are given either after the Gospel or after the communion of the clergy or at the end of the Liturgy.

Regarding the contents, the sermon should be based on the biblical texts of the day, although it could touch other aspects of the faith. A sermon shall never be used to convey the priest's ideas on policy in administrative ideas of the parish nor should it touch on personalities.

#### XV ANNOUNCEMENTS

- A. All announcements should be made after the Liturgy and separated from the sermon.
- B. The only prescribed announcements to be made in the church are:
  1. The holy days for the coming week.
  2. Pastoral letters and announcements from the bishop.
  3. Marriage banns.
- C. Permitted announcements are:
  1. Calling general assemblies of the parish.
  2. Meetings of the auxiliary organizations of the parish.
  3. Sickness and death among parishioners.
  4. Genral invitations to parish dinners following the Liturgy.
- D. The announcements dealing with secular affairs, political gatherings, dances, individual donations to the parish, individual names of guests attending the Liturgy, private affairs, etc., have no place in the church. They lower the dignity of the priest and of the

church and are apt to create misunderstandings, criticism, jealousies and even conflicts.

XVI  
RESPONSES TO THE SERVICES

In the Orthodox practice, the responses to the services are given:

- A. By trained cantors.
- B. By choirs.
- C. By the congregation.

The responses to the Liturgy, be they sung or read, are considered to be prayer and should be given reverently.

Musical instruments in church are not in the Orthodox tradition.

The responses to all the services are part of the liturgical tradition of the Church. They are an integral part of the respective service and cannot be altered nor replaced by non-Orthodox and secular compositions and texts.

XVII  
CHURCH BELLS

Tower bells are rung:

- A. At the beginning of every service in the church.
- B. During the Liturgy at the "Axion".
- C. At Funerals, at the end of the service too.
- D. During processions around the church.
- E. At Thanksgiving Services, at the end.
- F. During the canonical visit of the bishop when he enters the church.

When available, the traditional, real church bells are preferred to be rung.

The electric devices and recordings may be used but special care should be given so that the tuning and recording be as close as possible to the authentic sound of bells. Care should be taken to avoid the metallic and artificial sound that is more disturbing than conducive to prayer.

Hand bells have their origin in the Roman Catholic Church and as their service differs from our Liturgy, the use of hand bells in Orthodox services is awkward and disturbing.

A typical example of this is at the Epiklesis when priest and people are mystically united in prayer for the transforming of the holy gifts. A shrill, sharp, strident ring of the handbells at the time is totally out of place.

It is also highly inappropriate to use handbells as a signal to the people to stand, sit or kneel.

### XVIII PERSONAL DEVOTIONS

There are no fixed or specific regulations for personal devotions for the faithful at liturgical services. Customs, traditions and local circumstances vary.

However, candle lighting, kneeling, kissing icons, prostrations are very much a part of Orthodox services.

Generally speaking, the Orthodox Christian acts in accordance with his spirit and for this reason, individual expressions remain with the individual and are not regulated for each and every case. The Orthodox Christian may cross himself, kneel, venerate an icon, stand or sit depending on how he is moved at that particular moment. The only condition is that he does not disturb the service nor his co-worshippers.

### XIX ALTAR BOYS

The altar boys are considered to be "minor clergy", and as such, they are in some way concelebrants of the Liturgy. To correspond to this function, they should be properly trained by the priest before being inducted into the ranks of altar boys. Special sessions of theory and practice are absolutely necessary.

Those so trained may take their place in the altar. They should be present from the beginning to the end of the service. During the time when they have no specific assignment, they should be watching the development of the Liturgy behind and around the altar table. Their place is not in the adjoining rooms. By congregating there, the purpose of their being at the service is missed.

For the good order of the services, the priest should assign the boys by turns. Two or a maximum of four altar boys are enough for a service.

#### Some assignments for altar boys.

- A. They should be ready with water and towel for the washing of the hands at the times prescribed.
- B. They should be familiar with how to prepare the censer and when to hand it to the deacon or priest.
- C. They precede the deacon and priest with candles at the censuring of the church. To do this, they should be instructed in advance of the great and little censuring.



- D. They precede the procession at the little and great entrances and should be instructed to go in front of the icon of Christ and of the Mother of God, where, facing the people, they wait for the entrance of the priests. They are the last to enter the altar. They should know that for all exits and entrances they use the deacon's doors.
- E. They cut the prosfora and present it to the priest for blessing during the "Axion".
- F. They may read the "Creed" and the "Lord's Prayer" if the choir or congregation does not recite or sing it.
- G. They prepare the hot water for the communion and hand it to the deacon or priest.

The altar boys should not be sent out of the altar by themselves. Their function is to precede the clergy with lighted candles at the specified times.

If four altar boys are serving, it would be most appropriate that only two carry lighted candles and the other two carry the fans.

Only boys baptized Orthodox Christians may be altar boys.

#### XX HIERARCHICAL LITURGY

The guidelines for the concelebrated liturgy also apply to the hierarchical Liturgy.

There are some variations which are:

- A. The bishop is received in the church by the clergy in procession.

The priests and deacons, in liturgical vestments, exit from the altar through the holy doors. The priests come out, two by two. The deacon is first and carries the censer and mantiya. The deacon is followed by the dean of the area or by the oldest priest who carries the Gospel Book and the cross. If altar boys are present, they precede the deacon and at the re-entry, they walk behind the bishop. The remaining priests follow in rows, two by two with the oldest going first and the youngest last. They meet the bishop at the entrance and he kisses the Gospel Book, the cross and vests in mantiya. Then, all the priest turn to the altar and slowly move to the solea. Arriving at the table on which are the bishop's vestments, the two rows separate to the right and to the left, advancing in straight lines on either side of the table. They wait for the bishop to reach the solea.

When the bishop arrives at the solea, the deacon, if present, or the youngest priest, with the censer precedes the bishop for the veneration of the icons. During this time, the priest with the Gospel Book enters the altar through the deacon's door and sets the Gospel on the holy table. The deacon or oldest priest reads the Entrance Prayers aloud.

The bishop comes to the table whereon are laid the vestments. He is helped in vesting by the deacons or by the priests closest to him. One of the priests reads the vesting prayers aloud while the choir gives the responses.

The vesting is concluded with the blessing given by the bishop with the dikiri and trikiri.

B. After the vesting, the bishop alone raises his hands and says the prayers before the Liturgy.

The deacon and the first ranking priest approach the bishop for the blessing to begin the Liturgy. The priest enters the altar using the south deacon's door and takes his place on the right side of the holy table. The deacon moves toward the right side, the icon of Christ and stops about in the middle of the solea, makes a bow to the bishop, turns halfway toward the altar and the Liturgy begins.

At the first antiphon, two priests, one from the right and one from the left approach the bishop for the blessing and they enter the altar through the deacon's door closest to them.

At the second antiphon, two more priests receive the blessing and enter the altar.

At the third antiphon, the remaining clergy approach the bishop for the blessing and each enters the altar through the deacon's door on his side.

The altar boys, if present, remain behind the bishop. One holds the staff and the other the liturgy book.

C. At the little entrance, if there are two more altar boys, they proceed the procession of the clergy from the altar, and advance until they stand behind the bishop where they line up with the other altar boys.

The deacon, if present, if not, the oldest priest, carries the Gospel Book. If there is a second deacon, he precedes with the censer. The two oldest priests carry the dikiri and trikiri.

The clergy follow the same procedure as at the little entrance of a concelebrated Liturgy with the only difference being that the right side group of priests takes its place moving behind the bishop.

The second deacon, with the censer, stops in front of the icon of Christ ready to cense the entrance of the bishop.

The entrance into the altar is lead by the bishop, followed by the priests, two by two. The oldest are first, the youngest last.

D. At the Cherubic Hymn, the censuring is done by the bishop or the oldest priest present. If a deacon is present, he precedes with a lighted candle if a priest censes. If the bishop censes the deacon carries the dikiri. They move around the holy table, stopping at each side ( as at the Easter service), the proskomedia, the altar, clergy and then they exit, through the holy doors. They stop in the center of the solea while the bishop censes the iconostas. When the bishop turns to cense the people, the deacon enters the altar through the deacon's door and proceeds to prepare the water and towel for the washing of hands.

If altar boys are present, they exit through the deacon's door while the the deacon comes out and they stand in the center of the church during the censuring. They follow him in when he enters the altar.

E. The great entrance is the same as at a concelebrated Liturgy!

The bishop approaches the proskomedia and after making his remembrances, gives the aer and diskos to the deacon, if present. If not, they are given to the youngest priest. The chalice is given to the oldest priest. If there is a second deacon, he leads the procession holding the censer and stops with it before the icon of the Mother of God, and he faces the bishop.

Reaching the center of the church, the diskos carrier approaches the bishop, saying: "May the Lord God remember your episcopacy...." The second deacon hands the censer to the bishop to cense the holy gifts.

The bishop makes the remembrances of the living and then takes the diskos and sets it on the holy table.

The bishop returns to his place and the priest with the chalice approaches, saying: "May the Lord God remember your episcopacy..."

The Bishop censes and makes the remembrances of the dead and then takes the chalice into the altar.

The entrance is made, two by two. The oldest priest first, the youngest last.

F. For the hierarchical Liturgy, the holy gifts are left uncovered at the proskomedia. At the Cherubic Hymn the bishop makes his commemorations and then they are carried in procession.

G. At the exclamation, "Among the first..." the bishop remembers the Church hierarchy. The oldest priest then remembers the name of the officiating hierarch.

H. The two oldest priests assist the bishop when he enters the altar at both entrances.

Guidelines for choirs and cantors at a hierarchical Liturgy

1. When the bishop enters the church the hymn, "It is truly right" is sung.
2. At the vesting, the responses "Lord, have mercy." and "Amen" are given.
3. After the vesting, while the bishop is blessing with the dikiri-trikiri, the bishop's anthem or "Many Years" is sung.
4. The Trisagion Hymn is sung three times as usual by the cantor or choir. After the third time, they stop and the priests sing the fourth one with the interruptions for the blessings. After the blessings, and the conclusion of the priests' singing, the choir continues with the "Glory-Now" and the rest of the Trisagion.
5. At the censuring during the "Alleluia" verses, just before the Gospel, the deacon or priest censuring carries on his left arm the bishop's omofor.
6. After the reading of the Gospel, when the bishop blesses the people, the choir sings, "Many years".
7. The Cherubic Hymn should be sung slowly, and if the preparation for the entrance is still going on, the choir or cantor continues singing the last part of the hymn until they see the start of the procession.
8. When the priest mentions the name of the bishop, saying "Among the first"; the choir or cantor sings, "Many Years" and after that comes the response, "And all your people".
9. At the end of the service, when the bishop comes out to give the anafora/antidor, the choir sings once more the Bishop's Anthem.

XXI

WHEN THE BISHOP ATTENDS THE LITURGY

- A. The bishop is received at the entrance with the Gospel Book and the cross. During the time he enters, the choir sings, "It is truly right". The holy door should be opened so that the bishop can enter to venerate the holy table.
- B. When the bishop takes his place at the throne, the choir or cantor sings "Many years" or the Bishop's Anthem.
- C. Before beginning the Liturgy, the celebrants come to the bishop to receive his blessing.
- D. The holy doors remain open for the entire Liturgy.
- E. At the little entrance, the deacon or priest brings the Gospel Book to the bishop to venerate it and asks him for the entrance blessing.
- F. Before the reading of the Epistle and of the Gospel, the reader comes to the bishop to ask for the blessing.
- G. Before any censuring, the deacon or priest presents the censer to the bishop for the blessing. This is done from the holy doors.
- H. The bishop gives the major blessings and may say the Creed if he so desires.
- I. When the bishop leaves the church after the Liturgy, the choir or cantor sings the Bishop's Anthem.