

THE DIVINE LITURGY

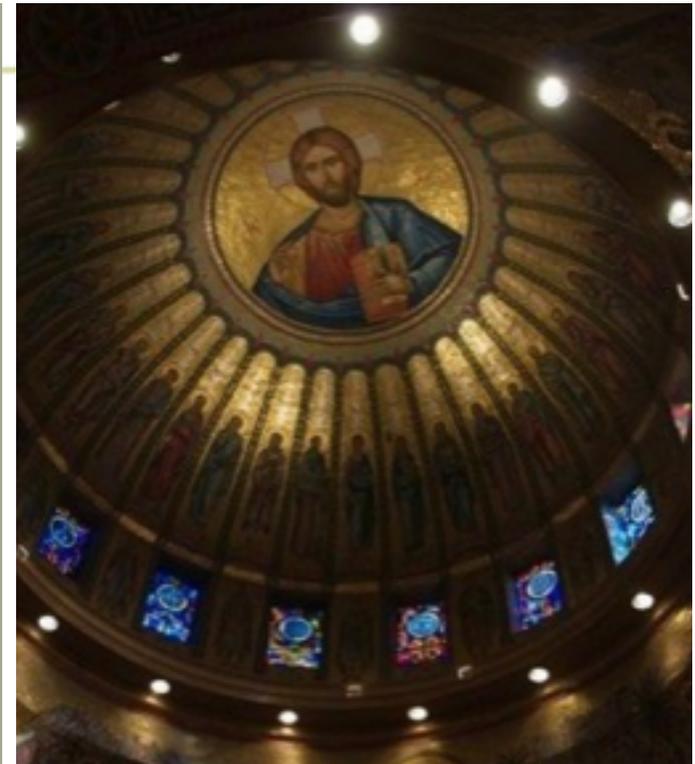
St Elizabeth Orthodox Christian Church
7004 Burnt Knob Road
Murfreesboro, Tennessee 37129

phone: 615.785.5285
e-mail: info@stelizabethtn.org
web: www.stelizabethtn.org

The Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese
of North America

"The church is an earthly heaven in which the heavenly God dwells and moves."

- St Germanus, Patriarch of Constantinople (8th century)



**St Elizabeth Orthodox Church
Murfreesboro, Tennessee**

ABOUT the DIVINE LITURGY:

The Divine Liturgy is the central expression of the very being of the whole Church, in heaven and on earth; it is the whole Orthodox community - in every place and every age - assembled in shared worship in the very presence of God. The Liturgy may also be understood as God's own redeeming work and offering to His Church. Through the Liturgy, God continues His work of creation - recreating humanity and, through us, the world.

Liturgy - from the Greek *leitourgia* - is defined as both "the shared work of the people" and "the offering of God to His Church," and is routinely used in both the Old and New Testaments, often translated as "service" or "mediation" (Exodus 28:35,43; 29:30; 37:19; Numbers 8:22; 16:9; 18:2,4; II Chronicles 31:2; Luke 1:23; Acts 13:2; Philippians 2:17; Hebrews 8:2,6; 9:21; 10:11).

ABOUT this BOOKLET:

- ◆ If you are a visitor to St Elizabeth's, please do not worry about "doing the right thing at the right time." Enjoy the service.
- ◆ Where one sees the symbol of the Cross (✙), it is customary for Orthodox Christians to make the sign of the Cross over themselves.
- ◆ Words followed by an asterisk (*) are defined in the Glossary at the end of the booklet.
- ◆ To affirm a sense of the sacred in our midst, the Royal Doors - the doors joining the nave with the sanctuary - are periodically opened and closed throughout the service. This suggests both God's *imminence*, for He has "broken down the wall of enmity" (Ephesians 2:14), and His *transcendence*, for He "dwells in unapproachable light" (I Timothy 6:16).
- ◆ Explanatory notes are in red.

With the majestic invocation of the Holy Trinity, the people of God - with one voice, one mind, one heart, as "one flock with one Shepherd" (John 10:16) - enter the kingdom of His presence, and "offer to God an acceptable worship with reverence and awe" (Hebrews 12:28).

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 [Genesis 1:26; Matthew 6:33; Mark 11:10; II Corinthians 13:14; Ephesians 1:3; I John 5:7].

The faithful "seal" the coming of the kingdom with their "Amen" - a word that means "indeed" or "let it be so," thus making everything the celebrant says their own.

All: Amen [Nehemiah 8:6; I Corinthians 14:15-17; Revelation 3:14; 7:12].

The Great Litany*

In the Great Litany, we intercede for the whole creation and its countless needs, for intercession is the ministry of the "royal priesthood" of all believers (I Peter 2:9). This we do with peace within and between us, for without tranquil thoughts the mind cannot penetrate heavenly mysteries.

In peace, let us pray to the Lord [Matthew 5:23-24; Mark 9:50; Ephesians 6:18; Philippians 4:6-7; Colossian 3:15; I Timothy 2:1; I Peter 2:9].

All: Lord, have mercy (*after each petition*) [Psalm 27:7; 51:1; Hebrews 4:16].

For the peace from above and the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord [John 14:27; Romans 8:6; 14:17; Galatians 5:22; Ephesians 2:14; Colossians 3:1-2; II Timothy 2:10].

For the peace of the whole world, the good estate of the holy churches of God, and the union of all men, let us pray to the Lord [Luke 2:14; John 17:23; II Cor 11:28; II Timothy 2:1-2].

For this holy house and those who with faith, reverence, and fear of God enter therein, let us pray to the Lord [Exodus 3:5; I Kings 8:29-30; Psalm 26:8; 93:5; Matthew 21:13; James 5:16].

For our Father and Metropolitan* (*name*), our bishop (*name*), the honorable presbytery, the diaconate in Christ, all the clergy and the people, let us pray to the Lord [Matthew 9:27; Acts 20:28; I Timothy 3:8; Hebrews 13:7; I Peter 5:1].

For our president (*or appropriate head of state*), civil authorities, and armed forces, let us pray to the Lord [I Timothy 2:1-2; Hebrews 13:7].

For this city and every city and countryside and the faithful who dwell therein, let us pray to the Lord [Jeremiah 29:7; Psalm 122:7].

For healthful seasons, abundance of the fruits of the earth and peaceful times, let us pray to the Lord [Psalm 65:9-13; Acts 14:17; James 1:17].

For travelers by sea, by land, and by air, the sick, the suffering, captives and their salvation, let us pray to the Lord [I Kings 8:46-50; James 5:13-15].

For our deliverance from all tribulation, wrath, danger, and necessity, let us pray to the Lord [I Samuel 26:24; Psalm 4:1; 25:16; 31:9; Matthew 26:41].

Help us; save us; have mercy on us; and keep us, O God, by Thy grace [I Chronicles 16:35; Psalm 25:20; 28:9; 106:47; 109:26; 123:3; Mark 9:22; Hebrews 7:25].

Mindful of our inadequacy before God's holiness, we call to mind the "great cloud of witnesses" (Heb 12:1) - such as the Blessed Virgin Mary, and all the saints through Christian history who have been well-pleasing to her Son and who are "away from the body and home with the Lord" (II Corinthians 5:8) - with whom we stand as one united and worshipping Church.

The invocation of the saints is the invocation of Christ who “christifies” them, “for He who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one source” (Hebrews 2:11).

Calling to remembrance our all-holy, immaculate, most blessed and glorious Lady the Theotokos* and ever-virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and each other and all our life unto Christ our God [Isaiah 7:14; Luke 1:42; Acts 20:32; Romans 11:14; I Corinthians 7:16; 9:22; I Timothy 4:16; James 5:20; Jude 22-23].

All: To Thee, O Lord [Acts 20:32].

Priest: For unto Thee are due all glory, honor, and worship to the (♣) Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages [I Chronicles 29:11; Psalm 115:1; Matthew 6:13; I Corinthians 10:31; I Timothy 1:17; Revelation 4:9-11].

All: Amen.

In these opening moments of the Divine Liturgy, we eagerly anticipate - as did our forefathers and foremothers of the Old Covenant (Testament) - the appearance of the Word and Lamb of God.

The First Antiphon*

All: Through the intercessions of the Theotokos, Savior, save us. (♣) Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. Through the intercessions of the Theotokos, Savior, save us. Both now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen. Through the intercessions of the Theotokos, Savior, save us.

The Little Litany

Priest (or Deacon): Again and again, in peace, let us pray to the Lord [I Thessalonians 5:17].

All: Lord, have mercy (*after each petition*).

Help us; save us; have mercy on us; and keep us, O God, by Thy grace.

Calling to remembrance our all-holy, immaculate, most blessed and glorious Lady the Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and each other and all our life unto Christ our God.

All: To Thee, O Lord.

Priest: For Thine is the majesty, and Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, of the (♣) Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

All: Amen.

The Second Antiphon

All: Save us, O Son of God who art risen from the dead (*or another expression appropriate to the liturgical season*), who sing to Thee: Alleluia!* (♣) Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. Save us, O Son of God who art risen from the dead, who sing to Thee: Alleluia! Both now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

The following hymn - sometimes called “the short creed” for its summary of basic Christian truths - written in the 6th century and encompassing urgent theological themes, addresses Christ - the Son of God who became the Son of Man - with a single request that He alone can fill: *save us*.

The Monogenes*

All: O Only-Begotten Son and Word of God, who art immortal, who for our salvation willed to be incarnate of the Holy Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary, and without change became man, and wast crucified, O Christ our God, and trampled down death by death, who art one of the Holy Trinity, glorified together with the Father and the Holy Spirit: save us [Matthew 8:25; Luke 1:35; John 1:1-18; 3:16; 17:5; 19:18; Philippians 2:6; Hebrews 2:14; I John 4:9].

The Little Litany:

Priest (or Deacon): Again and again, in peace, let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy (*after each petition*).

Help us; save us; have mercy on us; and keep us, O God, by Thy grace.

Calling to remembrance our all-holy, immaculate, most blessed and glorious Lady the Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and each other and all our life unto Christ our God.

All: To Thee, O Lord.

Priest: For Thou art a good God and lovest mankind, and unto Thee we ascribe glory, to the (♣) Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

All: Amen.

The Third Antiphon

Offered here is a hymn specific to the week or liturgical season.

The first part of the Divine Liturgy - the *Liturgy of the Word of God* - continues with the solemn procession of the Gospel Book into the presence of the people. This act reveals the incarnate self-emptying of the Son and Word of God, who enters our world by assuming human nature.

The lighted candle that precedes the Gospel Book is a symbol of John, the Baptist and Forerunner of the Lord, who is “the burning and shining light” (John 5:35) who goes before Him. The Gospel Book is held face-high by the celebrant, making the humility of the Forerunner his own: “He must increase; I must decrease” (John 3:30).

The Little Entrance* with the Gospel Book:

Priest (or Deacon): Wisdom*! Let us attend! [Proverbs 4:20; 5:1]

The usual Entrance Hymn: Come, let us worship and fall down before Christ. Save us, O Son of God who art risen from the dead, who sing to Thee: Alleluia! [Psalm 95:6; Revelation 19:1-6]

The Word of God, symbolized by the Gospel Book, having assumed our human nature, now returns, or “ascends” to “the right hand of the Father” (Acts 2:33), where humanity may now eternally dwell.

Now, Variable Hymns, including this Troparion to the patron saint of our parish, Elizabeth the Grand Duchess and New Martyr (1864-1918):*

Concealing the rank of a princess with humility, O divinely-wise Elizabeth, thou didst honor Christ with the two-fold service of Mary and Martha, having purified thyself by charitable works, patience, and love, thou wast brought to God as an offering of righteousness; as we venerate thy virtuous way of life and thy sufferings, we earnestly ask thee as our true teacher: O holy martyr and grand duchess Elizabeth, (✙) entreat Christ our God to save and enlighten our souls.

We, but mortal and earthbound, now join our voices with the angels who eternally sing “Holy, holy, holy” to God in heavenly worship, as in the great vision of the prophet Isaiah (Isaiah 6:2-3; see also Revelation 4:8). The Trisagion Hymn has been part of the Divine Liturgy since the fifth century.

In Orthodox usage, the Trisagion is Trinitarian: “God” refers to the Father, “Mighty,” to the Son, and “Immortal,” to the Holy Spirit.

The Trisagion Hymn*

Priest (or Deacon): Let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: For holy art Thou, O our God, and unto Thee we ascribe glory, to the (✙) Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages [Deuteronomy 32:30; Mark 1:24; Luke 4:34].

All: Amen.

(✙) Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us (*thrice*) [Leviticus 11:44-45; Isaiah 6:1-8; 57:15; Luke 1:49; Revelation 4:8].

(✙) Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen. Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.

Priest (or Deacon): With strength!

All: (✙) Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.

The Reading of the Epistle

Priest (or Deacon): Let us attend!

Reader: announces the *prokeimenon** of the Epistle.

Priest (or Deacon): Wisdom! [Proverbs 1:7; 5:1; 1 Corinthians 1:24]

Reader: announces the reference of the Epistle.

Priest (or Deacon): Let us attend! Now, the reading of the Epistle, followed by the thrice-sung “Alleluia!”

Knowledge of God is not the construct of human reason or intellect, but the revelation of God to the pure in heart. He is Light, perceived by those who are entering upon a “spiritual manner of living.” The Scriptures remain incomprehensible to those in the darkness of “carnal desires.”

The burning candles on either side of the biblical readings symbolize both the light of Christ and each human soul thus illumined by Him. “Let your lamps be burning” (Luke 12:35).

The Prayer Before the Holy Gospel

Priest: Illumine our hearts, O Master who lovest mankind, with the pure light of Thy divine knowledge, and open the eyes of our mind to the understanding of Thy gospel teachings; implant in us also the fear of Thy blessed commandments, that trampling down all carnal desires, we may enter upon a spiritual manner of living, both thinking and doing such things as are well-pleasing unto Thee. For Thou art the illumination of our souls and bodies, O Christ our God, and unto Thee we ascribe glory, together with Thine unoriginate Father and Thine all-holy and good and life-giving Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

The Reading of the Holy Gospel

Priest (or Deacon): Wisdom! Let us attend! Let us hear the Holy Gospel.

Priest: Peace be to all [John 14:27; 20:19].

All: And to thy spirit [Revelation 1:3].

Priest (or Deacon): announces the reference of the Holy Gospel.

The proclamation “Glory to *Thee*” before and after the reading of the Gospel, indicates that, in the proclamation of the Gospel, Christ Himself is speaking.

All: (✠) Glory to Thee, O Lord, glory to Thee.

Priest (or Deacon): Let us attend! Now, the reading of the Holy Gospel, followed by the thrice-sung “Glory to Thee, O Lord, glory to Thee.”

Customarily, the Homily is offered here.



Now, the *Liturgy of the Word of God* flows into the *Liturgy of the Lamb of God*.

Having been cleansed by the attentive hearing of the biblical word - “Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you” (John 15:3) - Orthodox Christians who have prepared through prayer, fasting, confession, and a striving to be at peace with all, now ready themselves to receive the precious and life-giving Body and Blood of Christ.

The Great Entrance* and the Cherubic Hymn*:

All worshipers present, having laid aside all earthly cares, fill the role on earth that the angelic powers fill in heaven: praising the life-giving Trinity.

All: We who mystically represent the cherubim and sing to the life-giving Trinity the thrice-holy hymn, let us now lay aside all earthly cares... [I Chronicles 16:9; 29:11-12; Psalm 47:7; Isaiah 6:1-8; Philippians 3:19; Colossians 3:1-2,10; Revelation 19:5-6]

In the procession of the bread and wine through the nave of the church, we see Christ’s solemn journey through Jerusalem to His Passion and the Cross, where the Lamb will lay down His life for the life of the world (John 1:29).

Priest (or Deacon): All of you, the Lord God remember in His kingdom, always, now and ever, and unto ages of ages [Psalm 106:4; Luke 23:42].

All: Amen (*after each petition*).

Our Father and Metropolitan (*name*), our Bishop (*name*), and all our brotherhood in Christ, the Lord God remember in His kingdom, always, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Our president (*or appropriate head of state*), civil authorities, and armed forces, the Lord God remember in His kingdom, always, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

The Orthodox servants of God, (*names*), that they may have mercy, life, peace, health, salvation and visitation, pardon and forgiveness of sins, the Lord God remember in His kingdom, always, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

The Orthodox servants of God departed this life in the hope of resurrection and life eternal, (*names*), the Lord God remember in His kingdom, always, now and ever, and unto ages of ages [Matthew 22:32; Luke 20:37-38; 23:43; John

11:25-26; Romans 6:3-11; 8:26-27,38-39; I Corinthians 15:43; 54; II Corinthians 5:8; I Thessalonians 4:13; Hebrews 12:1,22-24; Revelation 4:4,10,11; 5:8-10,13; 6:9-11; 7:9-12].

All: ...that we may receive the King of All who comes invisibly upborne by the angelic hosts. Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! [Matthew 16:27; 25:31; Mark 8:38; II Thessalonians 1:7]

While the Great Litany at the beginning of the Divine Liturgy included requests for God to meet a variety of mostly practical needs, this Litany of Supplication expresses needs more spiritual in focus. Thus, the Divine Liturgy is carrying our prayer from a lowly state toward a loftier one.

The Litany of Supplication

Priest (or Deacon): Let us complete our prayer unto the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy (*after each petition*).

For the precious gifts now set forth, let us pray to the Lord [Matthew 27:59-61; John 6:53-58; Romans 6:23].

For this holy house and those who with faith, reverence, and fear of God enter therein, let us pray to the Lord.

For our deliverance from all tribulation, wrath, danger, and necessity, let us pray to the Lord.

Help us; save us; have mercy on us; and keep us, O God, by Thy grace.

That the whole day may be perfect, holy, peaceful, and sinless, let us ask of the Lord [Matthew 5:48; 19:21; II Timothy 1:9; I Peter 1:16].

All: Grant this, O Lord (*after each petition*) [Psalm 20:5].

An angel of peace, a faithful guide, a guardian of our souls and bodies, let us ask of the Lord [Job 38:7; Matthew 18:10; 26:53; Luke 15:10; Hebrews 1:14; Revelation 4:8].

Pardon and forgiveness of our sins and transgressions, let us ask of the Lord [Psalm 32:1-2; Joel 3:21; Acts 2:38; I Corinthians 7:6].

All things good and profitable for our souls and peace for the world, let us ask of the Lord [I Timothy 4:8; II Corinthians 13:11; Philippians 4:8].

That we may complete the remaining time of our life in peace and repentance, let us ask of the Lord [III Corinthians 13:11; Ephesians 5:16; I Timothy 2:1-2].

A Christian ending to our life, painless, blameless, peaceful, and a good defense before the fearful judgment seat of Christ, let us ask [Psalm 7:10; John 5:28-29; Acts 2:31; Romans 14:10; II Corinthians 5:8-10].

Calling to remembrance our all-holy, immaculate, most blessed and glorious Lady the Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and each other and all our life unto Christ our God.

All: To Thee, O Lord.

Priest: (✠) Through the compassions of Thine only-begotten Son, with whom Thou art blessed, together with Thine all-holy and good and life-giving Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages [I Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 8:6; 9:15; 12:24].

All: Amen.

Peace with each other is a necessary condition for professing a united Faith and partaking in Holy Communion (Matthew 5:23-24).

The Kiss of Peace

Priest: Peace be to all.

All: And to thy spirit.

With one accord, or purpose, we proclaim the unity of the Body of Christ - a unity rooted in love that proclaims the Holy Trinity - "so that the world may believe" (John 17).

Priest (or Deacon): Let us love one another, that with one accord we may confess... [Romans 15:5-6; Galatians 3:28; James 5:16; I Peter 3:8; I John 4:7]

The Kiss of Peace happens this way: 1) we turn only to those only on our left or right, never turning our backs toward the Holy Altar; 2) one says, "Christ is in our midst!," while the other replies, "He is and ever shall be!"

All: ...Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: the Trinity, one in essence and undivided [Mark 12:29; John 1:1; Ephesians 4:6-7; I John 5:7].

This mention of "The Doors," though a historical reference, may also be understood as a call for each person to close the doors of distraction and open the doors of perception and the heart.

The Creed*

Priest (or Deacon): The Doors! The Doors! In wisdom, let us attend!

We now profess the Creed - the statement of what we as Orthodox Christians believe. The Creed was drafted by the great Church Councils (of Nicea and of Constantinople) in the fourth century. The exact wording is so precise and theologically essential, that no additions or subtractions are acceptable without the acquiescence of the whole universal Church.

I believe in (Romans 10:8-10; I John 4:15)

one God (Deuteronomy 6:4, Ephesians 4:6),

the Father (Matthew 6:9; I Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 6:4)

Almighty (Exodus 6:3),

Maker of heaven and earth (Genesis 1:1),

and of all things visible and invisible (Colossians 1:15-16);

And in one Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 11:17; I Corinthians 12:3),
the Son of God (Matthew 14:33; 16:16),
the Only-begotten, Begotten of the Father before all worlds (John 1:1-18; 3:16),
Light of Light (Psalm 27:1; John 8:12; Matthew 17:2,5),
Very God of Very God (John 17:1-5),
Begotten, not made; of one essence with the Father (John 10:30),
by Whom all things were made (Hebrews 1:1-2):
Who for us men and for our salvation (I Timothy 2:4-5)
came down from heaven (John 6: 33,35),
and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary (Luke 1:35),
and became man (John 1:14);
and was crucified also for us (Mark 15:25; I Corinthians 15:3)
under Pontius Pilate (Matthew 27:11-26; John 1:14),
and suffered (Mark 8:31)
and was buried (Luke 23:53);
and the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures (Luke 24:1; I
Corinthians 15:4),
and ascended into heaven (Luke 24:51; Acts 1:10),
and sitteth at the right hand of the Father (Mark 16:19; Acts 7:55);
and He shall come again with glory (Matthew 24:27)
to judge the living and dead (Acts 10:42; II Timothy 4:1),
Whose kingdom shall have no end (II Peter 1:11).

And I believe in the Holy Spirit (John 14: 26),

the Lord (Acts 5:3-4),

and Giver of life (Genesis 1:2),

Who proceedeth from the Father (John 15:26),

Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified

(Matthew 3:16-17),

Who spake by the prophets (I Samuel 19:20; Ezekiel 11:5,13);

And I believe in One (Matthew 16:18)

Holy (I Peter 2:5,9)

Catholic (Mark 16:15)

and Apostolic Church (Acts 2:42; Ephesians 2:19-22).

I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins (Ephesians 4:5).

I look for the Resurrection of the dead (John 11:24; I Corinthians 15:12-49),

and the Life of the world to come (Mark 10:29-30).

Amen (Psalm 106:48).

We now enter the most sacred moments of the Divine Liturgy, with sublime dialogue that awakens our deepest spiritual faculties as human beings. And we offer unto God the sacrifice for which He calls (Matthew 23:23; Micah 6:8).

The priest does not dare touch the gifts on the altar until he invokes the grace of God upon the faithful, and they return the invocation to his own spirit.

Priest (or Deacon): Let us stand aright. Let us stand with fear. Let us attend, that we may offer the holy oblation* in peace [Leviticus 3:1; 7:11-13; I Timothy 5:20].

All: A mercy of peace, a sacrifice of praise [Hebrews 13:15].

Priest: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God the Father and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all [II Corinthians 13:14].

All: And with thy spirit [Galatians 6:18; II Timothy 4:22].

Priest: Let us lift up our hearts [Lamentations 3:41; Colossians 3:2; Hebrews 12:22].

All: We lift them up unto the Lord [Ephesians 2:4-6; Hebrews 10:22].

Priest: Let us give thanks unto the Lord [Psalm 35:18; II Thessalonians 1:3].

All: It is meet and right to worship (✙) Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the Trinity, one in essence, and undivided [Mark 12:29; John 10:30; Colossians 1:19; I John 5:7].

“Anaphora” means “offering up.” Now, with one mind, one heart, one purpose, we offer up ourselves and the symbols of the works of our hands - the bread and wine - and proclaim “the wonderful works of God” (Acts 2:11).

Mindful of both His imminence *and* transcendence, we also address God by what He is *not* - “ineffable, inconceivable, invisible, incomprehensible.”

The Holy Anaphora*

Priest: It is meet and right to hymn Thee, to bless Thee, to praise Thee, to give thanks unto Thee and to worship Thee in every place of Thy dominion; for Thou art God ineffable, inconceivable, invisible, incomprehensible, ever-existing and eternally the same, Thou and Thine only-begotten Son and Thy Holy Spirit. Thou it was who didst bring us from nonexistence into being and when we had fallen away didst raise us up again, and didst not cease to do all things until Thou hadst brought us up to heaven, and hadst endowed us with Thy kingdom which is to come. For all these things we give thanks unto Thee, and to Thine only-begotten Son and to Thy Holy Spirit; for all things of which we know and of which we know not and for all the benefits bestowed upon us, both manifest and unseen. And we give thanks unto Thee also for this ministry which Thou dost vouchsafe to receive at our hands, even though there stand beside Thee thousands of archangels

and ten thousands of angels, the cherubim and the seraphim, six-winged, many-eyed, soaring aloft, borne on their wings:

Singing the triumphal hymn, shouting, proclaiming, and saying [Isaiah 12:5; Psalm 106:47]:

This triumphal hymn joins the angelic hymn heard the prophet Isaiah (6:3) with the earthly hymn offered by the people who received Christ as He entered Jerusalem for His voluntary Passion (Matthew 21:9). Angels and men give glory together.

All: Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord of Sabaoth*; heaven and earth are full of Thy glory: Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest [Psalm 118:25; Isaiah 6:3; Matthew 21:9; Mark 11:10; Romans 9:29].

Priest: With these blessed powers we also, O Master who lovest mankind, cry aloud and say: Holy art Thou and all-holy, Thou and Thine only-begotten Son and Thy Holy Spirit; holy art Thou and all-holy, and magnificent is Thy glory, who hast so loved Thy world as to give Thine only-begotten Son, that all who believe in Him should not perish but have everlasting life, who, when He had come and had fulfilled all the dispensation for us, in the night in which He was betrayed, or, rather, gave Himself up for the life of the world, took bread in His holy and immaculate and blameless hands; and when He had given thanks and blessed it and hallowed it and broken it, He gave it to His holy disciples and apostles, saying [Luke 22:15]:

Take, eat. This is My Body which is broken for you, for the forgiveness of sins [Matthew 26:26; John 6:51; I Corinthians 11:23-25];

All: Amen.

Priest: And likewise after supper, He took the cup, saying:

Drink of this, all of you. This is My Blood of the New Covenant, which is shed for you and for many, for the forgiveness of sins [Jeremiah 31:31-34; Matthew 26:27-28; Mark 14:23-24; Luke 22:20; I Corinthians 11:25; Hebrews 8:8-13; 9:22; 10:9,16-17].

All: Amen.

Priest: Having in remembrance, therefore, this saving commandment and all those things which have come to pass for us: the Cross, the Grave, the Third-day Resurrection, the Ascension into heaven, the Sitting at the Right Hand, and the Second and Glorious Coming:

All creation is from and in God. Man, desiring to express his gratitude but having nothing of his own to offer in return, offers creation back to God in thanksgiving.

With this uplifting, we now reach the height of human ability. This is our offering of the basics of creation - bread and wine - through which, in ineffable condescension and awesome mystery, the Life of the world shall come (Psalm 103:16-17).

(✝) Thine own of Thine own we offer unto Thee, in behalf of all and for all (I Chronicles 29:14-15; Romans 7:25; 8:26-27; Colossians 1:15-21; I Timothy 2:1).

All: We hymn Thee, we bless Thee, we give thanks unto Thee, O Lord. And we pray unto Thee, O our God [Psalm 5:2; 134:1; 146:1].

Priest: Again we offer unto Thee this rational and bloodless worship, and beseech Thee and pray Thee and supplicate Thee: Send down Thy Holy Spirit upon us, and upon these gifts here spread forth (I Kings 19:36-38; John 6:56; Acts 1:8; Galatians 6:16):

And make this bread the precious Body of Thy Christ;

All: Amen.

And that which is in this cup, the precious Blood of Thy Christ;

All: Amen.

Changing them by Thy Holy Spirit;

All: Amen. Amen. Amen.

The Son and Word of God assumed human nature. Because of this “exchange of natures,” whatever is true of Christ in His divinity is also true of Christ in His humanity. Therefore, the very Body and Blood of Christ are life-giving - the very source of divine life.

Priest: That to those who shall partake thereof they may be unto vigilance of soul, unto forgiveness of sins, unto the communion of Thy Holy Spirit, unto the fulfillment of the kingdom of heaven and unto boldness toward Thee, not unto judgment or unto condemnation. And again we offer unto Thee this rational worship for all those who in faith have gone before us to their rest: forefathers, fathers, patriarchs, prophets, apostles, preachers, evangelists, martyrs, confessors, ascetics, and every righteous spirit which has completed this life in faith:

Especially our all-holy, immaculate, most blessed and glorious Lady the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary [Matthew 1:20; Luke 1:42,48];

Having called to mind our great redemption in Christ, we now commemorate the one whose perfect and humble cooperation with God - “Let it be unto me according to thy word” (Luke 1:38) - brought Him to us.

Because the Divine Liturgy is the remembrance of Christ’s life, it is also a remembrance of the saints - those in whom Christ’s life most fully dwells.

The Megalynarion*

All: It is truly meet and right to bless thee, O Theotokos, who art ever-blessed and all-blameless and the Mother of our God; more honorable than the Cherubim, and more glorious beyond compare than the Seraphim; thou who, without stain barest God the Word, and art truly Theotokos, we magnify Thee [Luke 1:28,35,48].

Priest: And again we beseech Thee: Be mindful, O Lord, of every bishop of the Orthodox, who rightly divideth the word of Thy truth, of all the presbytery, the diaconate in Christ, and every priestly and monastic order.

And again we offer unto Thee this rational worship for the whole world, for the holy, catholic, and apostolic Church, for those who live in chastity and lead a godly way of life, and for all civil authorities, and our armed forces; grant them, O Lord, peaceful times, that we in their tranquility may lead a calm and peaceful life in all reverence and godliness (I Timothy 2:1-2).

The Apostles themselves were the first bishops of the Church; by the late-first century, the offices of bishop and priest were distinct. Bishops are to preserve the unity of the faith and practice of the Church.

Among the first be mindful, O Lord, of our Father and Metropolitan (*name*), and our bishop (*name*), whom do Thou grant unto Thy holy churches in peace, safety, honor, health, and length of days, and rightly dividing the word of Thy truth [Psalm 21:4-5; Acts 4:32; Philippians 1:1-2; 2:9-10; II Timothy 2:15; Philemon 1:1].

Priest (or Deacon): (And for those who offer these precious and holy gifts to the Lord our God, the honorable presbytery, the diaconate in Christ, and every priestly order and for their salvation), for the peace and stability of the whole world, the good estate of the holy churches of God, the salvation and help of the people here present, those whom they are remembering and of all mankind...

All: ...and of all mankind.

Priest: Be mindful, O Lord, of this city in which we dwell, and of every city and countryside, and of those who in faith dwell therein. Be mindful, O Lord, of those who travel by sea, by land, and by air, the sick, the suffering, captives and their salvation. Be mindful, O Lord, of those who bear fruit and do good works in Thy holy churches and who remember the poor, and upon us all send forth Thy mercies:

And grant us with one mouth and one heart to glorify and praise Thine all-honorable and majestic name of the (✝) Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

All: Amen.

Priest: And the mercies of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ be with you all [Ephesians 6:23-24; Philippians 4:9; II Timothy 1:13-14; Titus 2:13].

All: And with thy spirit.

The Litany before the Lord's Prayer

Priest (or Deacon): Having commemorated all the saints, again and again, in peace let us pray to the Lord [Psalm 112:6; Hebrews 1:1-2].

All: Lord, have mercy (*after each petition*).

For the precious Gifts which have been spread forth and sanctified, let us pray to the Lord [Romans 6:22-23; Hebrews 6:4].

That our God, who loveth mankind, receiving them upon His holy, most heavenly and ideal altar as a savor of spiritual sweetness, will send down upon us in return His divine grace and the gift of the Holy Spirit, let us pray [Genesis 8:21; Isaiah 6:6; Ephesians 5:2; Philippians 4:18; I Peter 1:19; Revelation 6:9; 8:3-4; 9:13; 11:1; 14:18; 16:7].

Asking for the unity of the faith and the communion of the Holy Spirit, let us commend ourselves and each other and all our life unto Christ our God [John 17:11; II Corinthians 13:13; Ephesians 4:3,13; I Peter 3:8; Jude 3].

All: To Thee, O Lord.

Priest: And vouchsafe, O Master, that with boldness and without condemnation, we may dare to call upon Thee, the heavenly God, as Father, and to say [Ephesians 3:12; Philippians 1:20; I Corinthians 11:34]:

*This placement of the Lord's Prayer just prior to Holy Communion reveals what the Church ultimately considers this *daily bread* to be - Christ Himself, the Bread of Life come down from heaven (John 6:32-33,51).*

The Lord's Prayer

All: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be 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 [Matthew 6:9-13].

Priest: For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory of the (✙) Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Priest: Peace be to all.

All: And to thy spirit.

Priest (or Deacon): Bow your heads unto the Lord [Exodus 4:31].

All: To Thee, O Lord.

Priest: We give thanks unto Thee, O King invisible, who by Thy boundless power hast made all things and in the multitude of Thy mercy hast brought all things from nothingness into being. Do Thou Thyself, O Master, look down from heaven upon those who have bowed their heads unto Thee; for they have not bowed down unto flesh and blood, but to Thee, the fearful God. Therefore, O Master, do Thou Thyself distribute these gifts here spread forth, unto all of us for good, according to the individual need of each: voyage with those who sail by sea; journey with those who travel by land and air; heal the sick, Thou who art the Physician of our souls and bodies:

(✙) Through the grace and compassions and love toward mankind of Thine only-begotten Son, with whom Thou art blessed, together with Thine all-holy and good and life-giving Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages [I Peter 1:2].

All: Amen.

The Elevation and the Pre-Communion Prayer

Priest (or Deacon): Let us attend!

*In both Greek (*hagios*) and Hebrew (*qadosh*), "holy" means "set apart." He who is set apart by *nature* comes to those who are set apart by *repentance*.*

Priest: The Holy Things are for the holy [Leviticus 6:18,29; Matthew 7:6; I Corinthians 8:6].

All: One is Holy, One is Lord: Jesus Christ, to the glory of God the Father. Amen [Mark 1:24; John 1:16; I Corinthians 8:6; Philippians 2:11].

The Royal Doors closed, the curtain drawn, Christ the Bridegroom will soon emerge from the "bridal chamber" of the Sanctuary, to give Himself fully to His Bride, the Church. "The marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready" (Revelation 19:7).

*To facilitate the personal preparation of each communicant, the liturgical language of the following prayer is rendered as *I* and *me*.*

All: I believe, O Lord, and I confess that Thou art truly the Christ, the Son of the living God, who didst come into the world to save sinners, of whom I am first. And I believe that this is truly Thine own immaculate Body and that this is truly Thine own precious Blood. Wherefore, I pray Thee, have mercy on me, and forgive my transgressions both voluntary and involuntary, of word and of deed, of knowledge and of ignorance; and make me worthy to

partake without condemnation of Thine immaculate Mysteries unto remission of my sins and unto life everlasting. Amen.

Of Thy Mystical Supper, O Son of God, accept me today as a communicant; for I will not speak of Thy Mystery to Thine enemies, neither will I give Thee a kiss as did Judas; but like the thief will I confess Thee: Remember me, O Lord, in Thy kingdom. Not unto judgment nor unto condemnation be my partaking of Thy Holy Mysteries, O Lord, but unto the healing of soul and body [Leviticus 4:27-28; Psalm 4:4; 51:1; Matthew 9:35; 16:16; Mark 14:45; Luke 23:42-43; John 3:36; 5:24; I Corinthians 11:29; I Timothy 1:15; 3:9].

All: Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord from the heavens. Praise Him, praise Him in the highest. Alleluia.

Finally, we have arrived at the highest moment of the Divine Liturgy: the Divine has assumed the human, so the human may now partake of the Divine (II Peter 1:4).

The Reception of Holy Communion

Priest (or Deacon): In the fear of God, with faith and love, draw near [Ecclesiastes 12:13-14; Proverbs 1:7; Luke 12:4-5; II Timothy 1:13; Hebrews 4:16; 10:22; I Peter 2:17; I John 4:18].

For Orthodox Christians, Holy Communion is not only a bridge toward unity, but also the expression of unity already achieved. While we respect the freedom of all persons to believe and live as they choose, partaking of Holy Communion in the Orthodox Church is the seal of a common baptism, common belief, common practice, and, essentially, a common Church.

For this reason, only Orthodox Christians, properly prepared, may receive Holy Communion. All others are welcome to partake of the blessed bread held by the altar servers.

All: Blessed is He who cometh in the Name of the Lord; the Lord is God and hath revealed Himself unto us [Psalm 118:26-27; Matthew 21:9; Mark 11:9-10; Luke 19:38; John 12:13].

Now, Communion Hymns. Then, after all have communed:

Priest: O God, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance [Psalm 28:9].

All: We have seen the true Light. We have received the heavenly Spirit. We have found the True Faith, worshipping the undivided Trinity, for He hath saved us (*or other hymns appropriate to the liturgical season*) [Matthew 5:8; Mark 12:29; John 1:9; 8:12; 9:5; Ephesians 2:22; Jude 3].

Priest: Wash away, O Lord, the sins of all those here commemorated by Thy precious Blood, and through the intercessions of all Thy saints. O Christ, great and most-holy Pascha*, O Wisdom, Word, and Power of God, grant that we may more perfectly partake of Thee in the never-ending Day of Thy

kingdom. Shine, shine, O New Jerusalem, for the glory of the Lord hath dawned upon thee. Dance and be glad, O Zion. And delight thou, O pure Theotokos, in the resurrection of Thy Son.

Be Thou exalted above the heavens, O Christ, and Thy glory above all the earth [Psalm 57:11].

Blessed is our God, always now and ever and unto ages of ages.

All: Amen. Let our mouths be filled with Thy praise, O Lord, that we may sing of Thy glory. For Thou hast permitted us to partake of Thy Holy, Divine, Immortal, and Life-Creating Mysteries. Keep us in Thy holiness, that all the day we may meditate upon Thy righteousness: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

We now offer, as did the Lord and His disciples after the Lord's Supper, our thanksgiving (Matthew 26:30; Mark 14:26). Thankfulness is a central element of a healthy Christian life and community.

The Litany of Thanksgiving

Priest (or Deacon): Let us attend! Having partaken of the divine, holy, immaculate, immortal, heavenly, life-giving and dread Mysteries of Christ, let us worthily give thanks unto the Lord [Psalms 45:4; 47:2; John 6:33; Ephesians 3:9; Colossians 1:26; I Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 3:1].

All: Lord, have mercy (*after each petition*).

Help us; save us; have mercy on us; and keep us, O God, by Thy grace.

Asking that the whole day may be perfect, holy, peaceful, and sinless, let us commend ourselves and each other and all our life unto Christ our God [Acts 20:32].

All: To Thee, O Lord.

Priest: We give thanks unto Thee, O Master who lovest mankind, Benefactor of our souls and bodies, for that Thou hast vouchsafed this day to feed us with Thy heavenly and immortal Mysteries. Make straight our path; establish us all in Thy fear; guard our life; make firm our steps; through the prayers and intercessions of the glorious Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary and of all Thy saints:

For Thou art our Sanctification, and unto Thee we ascribe glory to the (✙) Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages [I Corinthians 1:30; 6:11; I Thessalonians 5:2].

All: Amen.

Priest: Let us depart in peace [Judges 18:6; John 14:27; II Corinthians 13:11; Hebrews 12:14].

All: In the name of the Lord.

Priest (or Deacon): Let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: O Lord, who blessest those who bless thee and sanctifiest those who put their trust in Thee: Save Thy people, and bless Thine inheritance, preserve the fullness of Thy Church, sanctify those who love the beauty of Thy house, glorify them in recompense by Thy divine power, and forsake us not who hope on Thee. Give peace to Thy world, to Thy Churches, to the priests, to the civil authorities, to the armed forces and to all Thy people; for all good giving and every perfect gift is from above and cometh down from Thee, the Father of lights, and unto Thee we ascribe glory, thanksgiving, and worship, to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages [Genesis 12:3; II Samuel 22:25; Psalm 7:1; 26:8; 28:9; 29:2; 50:12; 138:8; John 17:22; Romans 11:25; I Corinthians 15:57; Colossians 3:17; I Thessalonians 5:23; I Timothy 2:2; Hebrews 13:5; James 1:17; I Peter 1:3].

All: Amen. Blessed be the name of the Lord, henceforth and forevermore (*thrice*) [Psalm 113:2].

Priest (or Deacon): Let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: The blessing of the Lord and His mercy come upon you through His divine grace and love toward mankind, always, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

All: Amen.

Priest: Glory to Thee, O Christ our God, glory to Thee.

All: (✙) Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen. Lord, have mercy (*thrice*). Father, bless [Luke 16:24; I Corinthians 4:15; Colossians 3:21].

The Dismissal

Priest: May (*appropriate liturgical phrase*), Christ our true God, through the intercessions of His all-immaculate and all-blameless holy Mother; by the power of the precious and life-giving Cross; by the protection of the honorable bodiless powers of heaven; at the supplications of the honorable, glorious, Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John; of the holy, glorious, and all-laudable apostles; of our father among the saints (John Chrysostom or Basil the Great), whose divine liturgy we have now celebrated; of the holy, glorious, and right-victorious martyrs; of our venerable and glorious God-bearing fathers; of the holy and glorious new martyr Elizabeth, patron saint

of our community of faith; of the holy and righteous ancestors of God, Joachim and Anna; of (*saint of the day*) whose memory we celebrate and of all the saints: have mercy on us, and save us, for He is good and loveth mankind [Psalm 106:47; 123:3; Malachi 3:1; John 1:15; 2:1-5 I Corinthians 15:4,12; II Thessalonians 2:16; I John 5:20].

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

All: Amen.



Now, the Divine Liturgy “continues” with our going forth, offering unto the Lord, in thanksgiving and intercession, the world we encounter and the people we meet.

May the Joy of Our Lord be with Us All!

GLOSSARY

Alleluia - In Hebrew, *al* means “He comes” or “He appears”; *el* means “God”; and *ouia* means “praise and sing hymns.” The Hebrew word *Alleluia* is directly transliterated in only one place in the New Testament - Revelation 19:1-6, which describes the marriage supper of the Lamb.

Anaphora - From the Greek verb *anapherien*, which is found frequently in Holy Scripture where it has the sense of “offering up a sacrifice” (Genesis 8:20; Leviticus 14:20; 17:5; Isaiah 57:6; Hebrews 7:27; 13:15; James 2:21). The Anaphora here refers to the offering of the Great Sacrifice of Christ.

Antiphon - Antiphons refer to something sung alternately by two choirs (or by male and female chanters), and contain references to Old Testament prophecies foretelling the coming of the Son of God. Antiphons represent the “first stage” of Christ’s coming and prepare the congregation for the Little Entrance, when Christ enters our midst as the “Word of God” (John 1:14).

Cherubic Hymn - this “song of the angels” enables us on earth to join our voices with the heavenly host. The Cherubic Hymn was added to the Divine Liturgy near the end of the sixth century.

Creed - literally, “I believe.” The Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed is the statement of faith and belief drafted at the First and Second Ecumenical Councils, in Nicea (325 AD) and Constantinople (381 AD).

Great Entrance - symbolizing the “walk of sorrow” of our Lord toward His Crucifixion, this procession carries the bread and wine that will later be consecrated on the holy altar as the Body and Blood of Holy Communion.

Litany - a list of material and spiritual petitions, offered to God on behalf of ourselves, others, and our world. Notice, the deacon (or priest) addresses the petitions to those present - “Let us pray to the Lord,” with those present lifting the need to the Lord - “Lord, have mercy” or “Grant this, O Lord.”

Little Entrance - The procession of the clergy to the altar led by the Book of the Gospels. In this action, the whole Church is represented as following Christ, our Head (Colossians 1:18) and Chief Shepherd (1 Peter 5:4).

Megalyrnarion - a short hymn for the saint of the day or the feast that is sung after “Among the first...” In this case, a hymn for the Virgin Mary.

Metropolitan - a senior bishop, usually overseeing a large ecclesiastical jurisdiction.

Monogenes - In Greek, *monogenes* means “Only-begotten Son.” Here, it is a 6th century hymn that emphasizes the triumph of the Redeemer Who, without change, became human, was crucified, and trampled down our death by His own death.

Oblation - literally, “the Offering.” The Oblation, or Sacrifice, refers to Lamb of God slain for the salvation of the world, and has its etymological roots in the meal offering under the Mosaic Law.

Pascha - literally, “Passover.” Pascha denotes both the Person of Christ, and the event of the Resurrection, through which we “pass over” from death to life.

Prokeimenon - literally, “that which is about to be set forth” - a verse or biblical passage announcing the apostolic reading.

Sabaoth - of Hebrew origin, “Lord of Sabaoth” is Lord of the “heavenly host.”

Symbol - from the Greek *symbolon*, meaning the joining of two realities together in which neither reality is diminished.

Theotokos - literally, “bearer of God,” a title for Mary, the Mother, or “bearer,” of Christ who is God-in-the-flesh.

Trisagion hymn - literally, “thrice-holy” hymn.

Troparion - a type of short hymn in Byzantine music, usually of one stanza.

Wisdom - in this context, usually understood as the Divine Logos who became incarnate as Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 1:23-24).

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For Further Reading

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St Germanus of Constantinople (8th cent.), *Church History and Mystical Contemplation*

St John Chrysostom (4th cent.), *On the Incomprehensible; Against the Jews; On Repentance; On the Nativity of our Savior Jesus Christ; On the Betrayal of Judas; On Isaiah; On Matthew; On John; On First Corinthians; On Ephesians; On First Timothy; On Hebrews*

St Maximus the Confessor (7th cent.), *Mystagogy*

St Nicholas Cabasilas (14th cent.), *Commentary on the Divine Liturgy*

St Symeon of Thessaloniki (15th cent.), *On the Holy Liturgy; Commentary on the Holy Church Building, the Holy Vestments, and the Divine Mystagogy*

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