

ANTASDAN SERVICES

This service of the Church is performed 25 times during the year, but most notably as part of the celebration of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. Then the usual service is elaborated and includes the decoration of the Cross with basil.

Antasdan means 'fields' and the service allows for the blessing of the 'four corners of the earth'. The priest says prayers and offers blessings four times standing in different positions in the church, each time tracing the form of a cross. The response to his blessing is the singing of 'Amen, Alleluia.'

In the days when this service was initiated, the common work was farming and the fields, fruit and farmers are mentioned in the blessing. Now the service may be regarded as blessing the workplace, the work and the worker and asking God's blessing on everything He made. What we carry home from attendance at this service is the knowledge that we have asked God to enter into our lives and give us His special care as we work. And as we ask God to be with us as we work, we should remember to pray to God even as we work.

