
ON THE LITURGY

In a recent survey it was found that 75% of those responding wanted to know more about the services of the Church, especially the Divine Liturgy. This column will focus on what the participant in the Liturgy has to put into the service and what one should expect to get out of the experience. As the Liturgy is divided into 4 main parts, each one will be taken in turn.

THE PREPARATION (BADRASDOOTYOON)

While the choir members arrive and seat themselves and the altar servers prepare the church for the start of Liturgy, you should arrive and get settled into a pew. Stopping at a candle stand, you can light a candle and pray your own prayers before going to the pew. Once in place, you should remain standing and quietly recite the Lord's Prayer before sitting to await the first notes of the first hymn. Take the time to be quiet. Let the surroundings of the church building influence your attitude. Look at the holy pictures about you and meditate on the life of Christ and the lives of the saints. Shut out the annoyances of the world and focus on the Kingdom that awaits.

As the choir sings "O Great Mystery" (KHORHOORT KHOREEN) and the priest dresses in the vestry, think about the words of the hymn which trace our relationship with God from Adam and Eve through Jesus Christ. Or think about the virtues you would like to concentrate on developing in the week ahead. While vesting, the priest prays over each garment asking God's help in fulfilling his responsibilities in the Liturgy. You could pray for the same things.

When the priest arrives in the chancel, the purification takes place. As the priest ritualistically washes and purifies himself, you should rid yourself of the burden of your sins so they won't interfere with your participation in the Liturgy. Consider your most pressing sins and pray that you be released from their penalties and guilt (remittance).

As the priest ascends to the altar, lift your spirits up and focus on a higher level of your life—your presence in God's Kingdom. Look at the beauty of the altar and imagine the beauty of the life to come in Christ.

During the Prothesis the priest receives the gifts we have brought to the Church that day: not just our monetary offering, but our talents and abilities, our presence and our concern for those not present, our portion of the bread and wine which will be used in the Sacrifice. Think about what you can personally offer to God to make His Kingdom manifest on earth (Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven). The priest sets the gifts of the bread and wine on the altar and all remember the offering Christ

made for our benefit, His death on the cross for the remittance of our sins.

Recommit yourself to submitting to the will of God and come to the end of the Preparation ready to listen to new lessons on more fully understanding God's will for His people and reclaiming your adherence to the beliefs of your Church. As the curtain closes be reassured that it will open again and the glory of the Lord will touch the congregation again.

The Seven Sacraments of the Church

1. Baptism
2. Chrismation
3. Penance
4. Holy Communion
5. Matrimony
6. Holy Order
7. Unction with oil (for the sick)

Four Notes of the True Church

1. One
2. Holy
3. Catholic
4. Apostolic

The Four Symbols of the Gospels

The Angel	St. Matthew
The Winged Lion	St. Mark
The Winged Ox	St. Luke
The Eagle	St. John



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