



The Archdiocese of New York
of
The Holy Orthodox Catholic
And Apostolic Church of America

THE RENUNCIATION OF HERESY

At some time previous to the Baptism or Reception into the Catechumenate, the candidate is to profess his renunciation of previously held heresies, as follows:

The candidate is asked, in the presence of the Orthodox community, the following questions and gives the appointed responses.

Priest: Are you ready to renounce the errors and false teachings of your previous Confession?

Candidate: I am, with God's help.

Priest: Do you desire to enter into and abide in the communion of the Holy Orthodox Catholic Faith?

Candidate: I do so desire.

Here the Priest signs the candidate with the sign of the Cross;

In the Name ✠ of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

Then, laying his hand upon him, the Priest says the following prayer:

In your Name, O Lord God of truth,
and in the Name of your only-begotten Son,
and of your Holy Spirit, look upon this your servant **N.**,
whom you have graciously enabled to turn to your holy
Orthodox Church, and to take refuge under the shadow of
your wings.

Remove far from *him* his former errors, and fill *him* with the true faith and hope and love in you. Enable *him* to walk in all your commandments, and to fulfill all such things as are pleasing to you; for if a man do these things, he shall find life in them. Inscribe *him* in your Book of Life, and unite *him* to the flock of your inheritance. May your holy Name be glorified in *him*, together with the Name of your beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and of your life-creating Spirit. Let your eyes ever look upon *him* with mercy, and let your ears ever receive the voice of *his* supplications. Make *him* to rejoice in all the works of *his* life, that *he* may confess you, worshipping you and glorifying your great and holy Name, and ever magnify you all the days of his life. Amen.

Wherefore, renounce now, with all your heart and mind, the errors and false teachings and mistaken judgments you have held, and confess the Orthodox Catholic Faith.

The Candidate may be asked specific questions as to those heresies and false doctrines peculiar to the confession from which he comes. In the end he is asked:

Priest: Do you renounce and set aside all ancient and modern heresies and false teachings which are contrary to the teachings of Christ's holy Orthodox Catholic Church?

Candidate: I do renounce them.

Priest: Do you desire to be joined to The Orthodox Church:
The One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church of
Christ?

Candidate: I desire it with all my heart;
and I believe in one God who is glorified and adored
in the Holy Trinity of the Father, the Son, and the
Holy Spirit; and I worship him as my King and my
God.

I accept and confess the apostolic and church canons
as established at the seven holy Ecumenical Councils,
and the other traditions of the holy Orthodox Catholic
Church, with its rules and ordinances; and I accept
and understand Holy Scripture as interpreted and
held by our Mother, the holy Orthodox Church.

I believe and confess that there are seven Sacraments
of the New Covenant: Baptism, Chrismation, the Holy
Eucharist, Confession, the Priesthood, Marriage, and
Holy Anointing; and that these are instituted by
Christ and his Church, to the end that, by their
working and reception, we may receive blessings
from on high.

I believe and confess that in the Divine Liturgy of the
Eucharist, under the mystical forms of bread and
wine, the faithful partake of the true and real Body
and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, unto the
forgiveness of sins and life everlasting.

I believe and confess that it is proper to reverence and invoke the Saints who reign on high with Christ, as taught by the holy Orthodox Catholic Church; and that their prayers and intercessions avail with the Almighty God for our salvation.

Likewise, that it is pleasing in the sight of God to reverence the relics of his Saints which have been glorified through incorruption as precious memorials of their godliness.

I acknowledge that the images and icons of our Saviour Christ, of the ever-virgin Mother of God, and of the other Saints, are worthy to be possessed and honored, not in the manner of idols, but that in their contemplation we may be moved to devotion and emulation of the deeds of those holy ones represented in these images, who themselves follow Christ.

I confess that the prayers of the faithful offered up to God for the salvation of those who have departed this life in the faith, are favorably received through the mercy of God.

I believe and confess that power has been given by our Saviour Jesus Christ to his holy Orthodox Catholic Church to bind and loose; and that whatsoever by that power is bound or loosed on earth will be bound or loosed in heaven.

I believe and confess that the Foundation, Head, great High Priest and Shepherd of the Orthodox Church is our Lord Jesus Christ; and that Bishops, Priests and Deacons are appointed by him to rule and serve his Church; and that the Holy Spirit is the Guide and Pilot of the Church.

I confess that this Church is the true and only Bride of Christ, and that in her is found true salvation.

I promise true obedience to the holy Church: to the Bishops who are her true Pastors, and the Priests appointed by them until the end of my earthly life

All this I confess and promise with a sincere heart.

The Priest, placing the end of his stole into the candidate's right hand, says the following:

Enter into the holy Orthodox Church, casting away all the errors and false teaching you have previously held, and give honor to the Lord God, the Father almighty, his only-begotten Son Jesus Christ our Lord, and the Holy and Life-creating Spirit; to whom, one true and living God and Holy Trinity, be all honor and glory, unto ages of ages.

Candidate: Amen.

For a candidate who is to be baptized, the service ends here, or may be followed by the rite of entrance into the Catechumenate. But if a person already baptized is to be received through profession of faith and Chrismation, the Priest continues with the following prayers:

O LORD GOD almighty, who alone are holy and glory in your Saints; because of your great and immeasurable love toward mankind, you do ever offer to sinners all manner of repentance, and show to them that have wandered from the truth, the right path to the knowledge of you, the only true God, glorified and adored in the Holy Trinity, to the end that not one should perish, but that all may be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. We give you thanks, we glorify and magnify you, for that you has shed into the heart of this your rational creature **N.** the light and knowledge of your truth, and have graciously led *him* to your holy Orthodox Catholic Church. Illumine *his* heart, we beseech you, O Lord, with the perfect light of the grace of your Holy Spirit, and enlighten *his* mind with the truth of your Holy Gospel. Grant that *he* may honestly, irrevocably and sincerely unite *himself* to your Holy Catholic Church and truly accept and confess the holy Orthodox Faith. Number *him* with your chosen flock, and join *him* to the Body of your Holy Church. Make *him* a vessel of honor and the temple of your Holy Spirit; that, being ever nourished and guided by your Spirit, *he* may faithfully observe your saving commandments; and doing your gracious, acceptable and perfect will, may be counted worthy to receive your heavenly good gifts, with all those who are pleasing in your sight. For you are the God of mercy and compassion and the lover of mankind, who wills that all men should be saved. Unto you we ascribe glory, to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, ever one God, world without end.

Candidate: Amen.

The Priest holds forth the Cross and the Book of the Gospels, before which the candidate stands and makes his final profession of faith:

THIS TRUE FAITH of the holy Orthodox Catholic Church I now freely confess and sincerely hold, and I will, with God's help, firmly maintain and confess it whole and entire until my last breath; and I will teach it and proclaim it, insofar as I am able, and will strive to fulfill its obligations with a cheerful and joyful heart, enduring in purity and godliness. In confirmation of this, my true and sincere profession of faith, I now kiss the Word and Cross of my Saviour. Amen.

*He kisses the Cross and the Holy Gospels. The Priest, setting these aside, says the Absolution over the candidate who **kneels** before him:*

OUR LORD and God Jesus Christ committed to his Apostles the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and bestowed upon them full power through his grace both to bind and to loose a man from his sins upon earth. May he, through his unspeakable mercy, pardon and absolve you. And I, his unworthy priest, by his almighty power given to me, forgive you and absolve you **N.** of all your sins. I join you unto the fellowship of the faithful and to the Body of Christ's Church, and I admit you to the divine Sacraments of the Church: In the Name ✠ of the Father, and ✠ of the Son, and ✠ of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Rise, my brother (sister), and as a faithful servant of Christ, pray to him with us, that he will grant to you, through the anointing of holy Chrism, the grace of the Holy Spirit. *Go to Chrismation on page 33 above.*

Holy Baptism, Chrismation, and The Reception of The Holy Mysteries is full initiation into The Body of Christ: the Orthodox Church. The bond which God establishes in Baptism and Chrismation is indissoluble.

Holy Baptism is appropriately administered within the Liturgy on a Sunday or other feast. Appropriate times are The Great Vigil of Pascha, Pentecost, The Baptism of Our Lord and All Saints Day,

The priest is the usual minister of the Baptism using Chrism previously consecrated by the Bishop. If there are baptisms for Pascha it is appropriate during Lent that this service may be done in several stages leading to Baptism and Chrismation during the Great Vigil of Pascha.

Each candidate for Holy Baptism is to be sponsored by one or more baptized Orthodox persons.

Sponsors of adults and older children present their candidates and thereby signify their endorsement of the candidates and their intention to support them by prayer and example in their Christian life. Sponsors of infants, commonly called godparents, present their candidates, make promises in their own names, and also take vows on behalf of their candidates. It is fitting that the godparents are practicing Orthodox Christians because of the iconographic nature of their responsibility.

Parents and godparents are to be instructed in the meaning of Baptism, in their duties to help the new Christians grow in the knowledge and love of God, and in their responsibilities as members of his Church.

Besides a pool of water for Baptism, the following is also to be prepared beforehand:

- * The vessels of The Oil of Catechumens, Holy Chrism, and Blessed Salt*
- * Cotton for cleansing.*
- * A dish with a slice of bread and a slice of lemon.*
- * Purple and white stoles and a white cope if desired.*
- * A white alb for the newly baptized*
- * Candles and incense*

Adult Candidates are to be wearing a bathing suit and bring a bathrobe and white towels. They should also plan to wear clothes and shoes that are easily put on.

Holy Baptism and Chrismation

The Candidate comes to the door of the church at the appointed time and knocks loudly three times. The door is opened by the deacon. The priest, wearing purple vestments and standing before the candidate says:

Priest: Peace be with you!

All: And with your spirit

Priest: What do you seek of The Church?

Candidate: Illumination

Priest: What does Illumination offer you?

Candidate: The Way, the Truth, and Eternal Life.

Priest: If then, you desire to enter into life,
the Lord has shown you what is good,
and this is what he requires of you:

To do justly, to love mercy,
and to walk humbly with your God.

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,
and all your soul, and with all your mind;
and you shall love your neighbor as yourself.
On these two commandments depend the whole Law
and the Prophets.

Now Faith demands that one God in the Holy Trinity,
and Trinity in unity, neither confusing the Persons
one with the other, nor making a distinction in their
nature. For the Father is a distinct Person, so also the
Son, so also the Holy Spirit; yet all Three possess the
one nature, the one Godhead.

The Candidate is led into the narthex of the church where the Exorcism takes place:

The Simple Exorcism

Priest: The Holy, awesome, and glorious God, inscrutable and incomprehensible in all His works, has destined the Evil One to eternal damnation. Through His unworthy servants He commands deliverance for all who desire life in the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ, our true God.

I exorcise you, evil, unclean, vile, loathsome, and alien spirit, in the name of Jesus Christ who possesses all power and authority in heaven and on earth

Come out, ✠ in the Name of the Father,
Come out, ✠ in the Name of the Son,
Come out, ✠ in the Name of the Holy Spirit,
Depart from him/her who is being prepared for holy illumination in the name of the Holy Trinity.

For power and glory belongs to Christ our God,
with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
now and ever, and to ages of ages.

People: Amen.

The Collect of The Exorcism

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord have mercy.

Priest: O Lord and Master, You made man in Your own icon and likeness and enabled him to know eternal life; and when he fell through sin, You did not abandon him, but by the Incarnation of Your Anointed One, You planned the salvation of the world. Having now freed this Your creature from the bondage of the enemy, receive him/her into Your heavenly kingdom. Open the eyes of his/her understanding, that the light of Your Gospel may enlighten him/her. Wed him/her in life to a radiant angel, to safeguard him/her from every plot of the adversary, from every evil encounter, from the noonday devil, and from evil visions.

The priest breathes three times in the form of a Cross on the heart of the catechumen then lays hands upon the candidate saying:

Drive out from him/her every evil and unclean spirit, hiding and lurking in her heart:

The spirit of error, the spirit of evil, the spirit of idolatry and of all covetousness, and of all the works according to the teaching of the devil.

Give place now to the Holy Spirit, the Comforter. Make him/her a reason-endowed sheep of the holy flock of Your Christ, and an honorable member of Your Church, a hallowed vessel, a child of light, and an heir of Your kingdom. So that, having guarded the seal and kept it unbroken, and having preserved his/her garment undefiled, he/she may attain to the blessedness of the saints, in Your kingdom. Through the grace and compassion and love for mankind of Your only, begotten Son, with Whom You are blessed, together with Your all-

holy, good, and life-creating Spirit, now and ever and to
ages of ages.

People: Amen.

The Anointing of The Catechumen The Signing of The Senses

*The signing is carried out with Oil of the Catechumens by the priest or
deacon. The signing of each sense is followed by an acclamation in praise
of Christ.*

While the ears are being signed, the priest says:

Receive the sign of the cross ✠ on your ears,
that you may hear the voice of the Lord.

People: Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ, King of all creation!

While the eyes, are being signed:

Receive the sign of the cross ✠ on your eyes,
that you may see the glory of God!

People: Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ, King of all creation!

While the lips are being signed:

Receive the sign of the cross ✠ on your lips,
That you may respond to the word of God.

People: Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ, King of all creation!

While the breast is being signed:

Receive the sign of the cross ✠ over your heart,
that Christ may dwell there by faith.

People: Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ, King of all creation!

While the shoulders are being signed:

Receive the sign of the cross ✠ on your shoulders,
that you may bear the gentle yoke of Christ.

People: Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ, King of all creation!

While the hands are being signed:

Receive the sign of the cross ✠ on your hands,
that Christ may be known in the work which you do.

People: Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ, King of all creation!

While the feet are being signed:

Receive the sign of the cross ✠ on your feet,
that you may walk in the way of Christ.

People: Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ, King of all creation!

Without touching them, the priest makes the sign of the cross over all the candidates at once (or, if they are few, over each individually); saying:

I sign you with the sign of eternal life in the name of the
Father, and of the Son, ✠ and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen!

The Presentation of Salt

The priest places Blessed Salt on the tongue of the Candidate.

Priest: **N.**, receive the salt of wisdom; may it preserve you to
eternal life and cause you to thirst for the kingdom of God
and his righteousness.

The Entrance into the Church

The Priest, extending the left side of his stole to be held by the candidate now leads him/her, followed by the others into the nave of the church for the lessons saying:

N. enter into the temple of God that you may receive the blessing of Christ and have a part with him and all the saints in life everlasting.

The candidate stands before the priest who prepares the candidate to hear the Word of God. With his thumb (and spittle, if he so chooses), he touches the ears and nostrils of the candidate, saying:

Ephphata: Be opened...

And touching the nostrils, he says:

to savor the sweetness of God's Word and Holy Mysteries. You, O Devil, be gone, for the judgment of God is at hand.

The Collect of the Day

Priest: The Lord be with you.

People: And with your spirit.

Priest: Let us pray:

Almighty God and Father, by our baptism into the death and resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ, you turn us from the old life of sin and darkness: Grant that we being reborn to new life and light in him, may live in righteousness and holiness all our days; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

On Sundays or feasts, the Collect and Lessons are those of the Day. When Baptism is celebrated outside the Liturgy, they are selected from the Baptismal Readings.

The Lessons

The people sit. One or two Lessons, as appointed, are read, the Reader first saying

A Reading (Lesson) from_____.

After each Reading, the Reader says

The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Silence is kept for a few moments after each reading to reflect on its message.

A Psalm, hymn, or anthem may follow each Reading.

Then, all standing, the Deacon or a Priest reads the Gospel, first saying

The Holy Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ
according to_____.

People: Glory to you, Lord Christ.

After the Gospel, the Reader says

The Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to you, Lord Christ.

The Sermon

The Presentation and Examination of the Candidates

The Priest says:

The Candidate(s) for Holy Baptism will now be presented.

The Candidates stand facing the West. The priest faces the East

Adults and Older Children

The candidates who are able to answer for themselves are presented individually by their Sponsors, as follows

Sponsor: I present *N.* to receive the Sacrament of Baptism.

The priest asks each candidate when presented

Do you desire to be baptized?

Candidate: I do.

If only adults are being baptized go to The Solemn Exorcism:

Infants and Younger Children

Then the candidates who are unable to answer for themselves are presented individually by their Parents and Godparents, as follows

Parents and Godparents:

I present *N.* to receive the Sacrament of Baptism.

When all have been presented the priest asks the parents and godparents

Will you be responsible for seeing that the child you present is brought up in the Orthodox Christian faith and life?

Parents and Godparents:

I will, with God's help.

Priest: Will you by your example, prayers and witness help this child to grow into full spiritual maturity in Christ?

Parents and Godparents:

I will, with God's help.

The Solemn Exorcism

Priest: I exorcise you unclean spirit in the name of ✠ God the Father almighty and in the name of ✠ Jesus Christ his Son and in the power ✠ of the Holy Spirit.

Depart forever from this creature of God, **N**. For the Lord has been pleased to call him/her to be his holy temple.

May s/he become a living temple of God and the Holy Spirit abide in him/her: through the same Jesus Christ who will come to judge the living and the dead, and the world by fire.

People: Amen.

The Renunciation of Evil

Then the priest asks the following questions of the candidates who can speak for themselves, and of the parents and godparents who speak on behalf of the infants and younger children

Question: Do you renounce Satan and all the spiritual forces of wickedness that rebel against God?

Answer: I renounce them.

Question: Do you renounce the evil powers of this world which corrupt and destroy the creatures of God?

Answer: I renounce them.

Question: Do you renounce all sinful desires that draw you from the love of God?

Answer: I renounce them.

The priest now faces West and the candidate turns to the East

Question: Do you turn to Jesus Christ and accept him as your Savior?

Answer: I do.

Question: Do you put your whole trust in his grace and love?

Answer: I do.

Question: Do you promise to follow and obey him as your Lord within his Body: The One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church?

Answer: I do.

The priest addresses the congregation, saying

Will you who witness these vows do all in your power to support *these persons* in *their* life in Christ?

People: We will.

The priest may direct the praying of the following Litany here or later:

The Litany for the Candidates

Priest: Let us pray for *these* elect whom the Church has confidently chosen. May *they* successfully complete *their* long preparation and (at the paschal feast) find Christ in his Holy Mysteries.

Deacon: That they may ponder the word of God in their hearts,
and savor its meaning more fully day by day,
Let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord have mercy.

Deacon: That they may learn to know Christ who came to save
what was lost, let us pray to the Lord:

People: Lord have mercy.

Deacon: That they may humbly confess themselves to be sinners,
Let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord have mercy.

Deacon: That they may sincerely reject everything in their lives,
that is displeasing and contrary to Christ,
let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord have mercy.

Deacon: That the Holy Spirit, to whom all hearts are open, all
desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid may
help them to overcome their weaknesses through his
power, Let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord have mercy.

Deacon: That, the same Holy Spirit may teach them to know the things of God and how to please him,
let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord have mercy.

Deacon: That their families also may put their hope in Christ and find peace and holiness in him, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord have mercy.

Deacon: That each of us [who prepare for the Paschal Feast] may seek a change of heart, give ourselves over to prayer and fasting, and persevere in good works,
let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord have mercy.

Deacon: That throughout the whole world whoever is weak may be strengthened; whoever is broken, restored; whoever is lost, found; and whoever is found, redeemed,
Let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord have mercy.

Deacon: That, like the woman of Samaria, our elect may review their lives before Christ and acknowledge their sins,
Let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord have mercy.

Deacon: That they may be freed from the spirit of sloth, despair, lust of power, and idle talk; and that the Lord may give, instead, the spirit of chastity, humility, patience and love granting them the grace to see their own transgressions and not to judge their brother, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord have mercy.

Deacon: That while awaiting the gift of God, they may long with all their hearts for the living water that brings eternal life, Let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord have mercy.

Deacon: That by accepting the Son of God as their teacher, they may become true worshipers of the Father in spirit and in truth, Let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord have mercy.

Deacon: That they may share with their friends and neighbors the wonder of their own meeting with Christ, Let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord have mercy.

Deacon: That those whose lives are empty for want of the word of God may come to the Gospel of Christ, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord have mercy.

Deacon: That all of us may learn from Christ to do the Father's will in love, let us pray to the Lord

People: Lord have mercy.

Priest: The Lord be with you

People: And with your spirit.

Priest: Let us pray.

Almighty and all-powerful God, you sent your only begotten Son to be our savior. Grant that *this/these* catechumen(s) who, like the woman of Samaria thirst for

living water, may turn to the Lord as *they* have heard his word and acknowledge the sins and weaknesses which weigh *them* down. Protect *them* from vain reliance on self and defend *them*, from the power of Satan.

Free *them* from the spirit of deceit, so that, admitting the wrong *they* have done, *they* may attain purity of heart and advance on the way to salvation. we ask this through Jesus Christ your Son, our Lord who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, One God, forever and ever.

People: Amen

The Anointing with the Oil of The Catechumens

The priest now anoints the candidate with the Oil of Catechumens once on the breast at the base of the neck and once on the back between the shoulders saying only once:

I anoint you with the Oil of Salvation,
in the Name of Christ Jesus our Lord.

The Baptismal Covenant

The priest then cleanses his thumb and changes from purple to white vestments. The candidates face West and the priest East, he then asks:

Priest: Do you believe in God the Father?

People: I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

Priest: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

People: I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

Priest: Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

People: I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.

Priest: Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship,
in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers?

People: I will, with God's help.

Priest: Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you
fall into sin, repent, confess your sin, and return to the
Lord?

People: I will, with God's help.

Priest: Will you proclaim by word and example the Good
News of God in Christ?

People: I will, with God's help.

Priest: Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?

People: I will, with God's help.

Priest: Will you strive for peace among all people, and respect life in every human being?

People: I will, with God's help.

The Prayers for the Candidates

The Candidate now retires to the sacristy to undress. If an adult s/he wears a bathing suit and a bath robe. If an Infant or small child a loincloth.

The priest then says to the congregation:

Let us now pray for *these persons* who are to receive the Sacrament of new birth.

The Deacon slowly leads the following petitions:

Deacon: Deliver *them*, O Lord, from the way of sin and death.

People: Lord, we ask you hear our prayer.

Deacon: Open *their hearts* to your grace and truth.

People: Lord, we ask you hear our prayer.

Deacon: Fill *them* with your holy and life-giving Spirit.

People: Lord, we ask you hear our prayer.

Deacon: Keep *them* in the faith and communion of your holy Church.

People: Lord, we ask you hear our prayer.

Deacon: Teach *them* to love others in the power of the Spirit.

People: Lord, we ask you hear our prayer.

People: Lord, we ask you hear our prayer.

People: Lord, we ask you hear our prayer.

Let us pray:

Grant, O Lord, that all who are baptized into the death of Jesus Christ your Son may live in the power of his resurrection and look for him to come again in glory; who lives and reigns now and forever.

People: Amen.

During this time, or on the way to the pool of water the following psalm is sung slowly:



Psalm 42 *Quemadmodum*

- 1 As the deer longs for the water-brooks, *
so longs my soul for you, O God.
- 2 My soul is athirst for God, ↓ athirst for the living God; *
when shall I come to appear before the presence of God?
- 3 My tears have been my food day and night, *
while all day long they say to me,
"Where now is your God?"
- 4 I pour out my soul when I think on these things: *
how I went with the multitude
and led them into the house of God.

- 5 With the voice of praise and thanksgiving, *
among those who keep holy-day.
- 6 Why are you so full of heaviness, O my soul?
and why are you so disquieted within me?
- 7 Put your trust in God; *
for I will yet give thanks to him,
who is the help of my countenance, and my God.
- 8 My soul is heavy within me; *
therefore I will remember you from
the land of Jordan, and from the peak of Mizar
among the heights of Hermon.
- 9 One deep calls to another in the noise of your cataracts; *
all your rapids and floods have gone over me.
- 10 The LORD grants his loving-kindness in the daytime; *
in the night season his song is with me,
a prayer to the God of my life.
- 11 I will say to the God of my strength, ↓
"Why have you forgotten me? *
and why do I go so heavily
while the enemy oppresses me?"
- 12 While my bones are being broken, *
my enemies mock me to my face;
- 13 All day long they mock me *
and say to me "Where now is your God?"

14 Why are you so full of heaviness, O my soul? *
and why are you so disquieted within me?

15 Put your trust in God; *
for I will yet give thanks to him,
who is the help of my countenance and my God.

When the Priest, Deacon, Candidate, Sponsors, and People have gathered around the pool of water the Priest continues:

The Thanksgiving over the Water

The priest blesses the water, first saying

The Lord be with you.

People: And with your spirit.

Priest: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right to give him thanks and praise.

Priest: We thank you, Almighty God, for the gift of water.

Over it the Holy Spirit moved in the beginning of creation.
Through it you led the children of Israel out of their
bondage in Egypt into the land of promise.
In it your Son Jesus received the baptism of John and was
anointed by the Holy Spirit as the Messiah, the Christ, to
lead us, through his death and resurrection, from the
bondage of sin into everlasting life.

We thank you, Father, for the water of Baptism.
In it we are buried with Christ in his death.
By it we share in his resurrection.
Through it we are reborn by the Holy Spirit.

Therefore in joyful obedience to your Son, we bring into his fellowship those who come to him in faith, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

At the following words, the priest lays his hand on the water and may scatter it in four directions:

Now sanctify this water, we pray you, by the power of your Holy Spirit, that those who here are cleansed from sin and born again may continue for ever in the risen life of Jesus Christ our Savior.

To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and for ever.

People: Amen.

The Priest now incenses the font.

Where it is the custom, the priest may pour the Oil of the Catechumens and Sacred Chrism into the font or river in the form of a cross saying:

May this commingling of the Chrism of Sanctification, and of the Oil of Anointing with the waters of Baptism be blessed in the name of the ✠ Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

The Priest now turns to the Candidate and says:

N., Will you be baptized?

Candidate: I will!

The Baptism

Each candidate is presented by name to the priest by the deacon, who then assists them into the font. The Priest then places a hand on the candidates head and immerses him or her three times, saying

N., I baptize you in the Name
of the Father, (1st immersion)
and of the Son, (2nd immersion)
and of the Holy Spirit. (3rd immersion)

People Amen!

or the following formula may be used:

The servant (or handmaiden) of God *N.* is baptized
in the name of the Father, (1st immersion)
and of the Son, (2nd immersion)
and of the Holy Spirit. (3rd immersion)

People Amen!

The Priest dries his hands. As the Newly Baptized emerges from the water he says:

May the Holy Spirit come upon you
and the power of the Most High preserve you from sin.

The procession quietly returns to the church.

The Chrismation

The Newly Baptized retires to the sacristy with his or her sponsors to dress. Meanwhile the Priest may direct a psalm or hymn to be sung or the following:

The Litany for the Newly Baptized

Priest: Let us pray for the Newly Baptized whom the Church has confidently chosen. May *they* successfully complete *their* journey of life and find Christ in his Holy Mysteries.

Deacon: That they may ponder the word of God in their hearts,
and savor its meaning more fully day by day,
Let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord have mercy.

Deacon: That they may learn to know Christ who came to save
what was lost, let us pray to the Lord:

People: Lord have mercy.

Deacon: That they may humbly confess themselves to be sinners,
Let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord have mercy.

Deacon: That they may sincerely reject everything in their lives,
that is displeasing and contrary to Christ,
let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord have mercy.

Deacon: That the Holy Spirit, to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid
may help them to overcome their weaknesses through his
power, Let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord have mercy.

Deacon: That, the same Holy Spirit may teach them to know the things of God and how to please him,
let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord have mercy.

Deacon: That their families also may put their hope in Christ and find peace and holiness in him, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord have mercy.

Deacon: That each of us who prepare for the Holy Mysteries may seek a change of heart, give ourselves over to prayer and fasting, and persevere in good works,
let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord have mercy.

Deacon: That throughout the whole world whoever is weak may be strengthened; whoever is broken, restored; whoever is lost, found; and whoever is found, redeemed,
Let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord have mercy.

Deacon: That, like the woman of Samaria, we may review our lives before Christ and acknowledge our sins,
Let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord have mercy.

Deacon: That we may be freed from the spirit of sloth, despair, lust of power, and idle talk; and that the Lord may give us, instead, the spirit of chastity, humility, patience and love granting us the grace to see our own transgressions and not to judge each other, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord have mercy.

Deacon: That while awaiting the gift of Holy Spirit, they may give thanks with all their hearts for the living water that brings eternal life, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord have mercy.

Deacon: That by accepting the Son of God as our teacher, we may become true worshipers of the Father in spirit and in truth, Let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord have mercy.

Deacon: That we may share with our friends and neighbors the wonder of our own meeting with Christ,
Let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord have mercy.

Deacon: That those whose lives are empty for want of the word of God may come to the Gospel of Christ,
let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord have mercy.

Deacon: That all of us may learn from Christ to do the Father's will in love, let us pray to the Lord

People: Lord have mercy.

Priest: The Lord be with you

People: And with your spirit.

Priest: Let us pray.

Almighty and all-powerful God, you sent your only begotten Son to be our savior. Grant that the Newly Baptized who, like the woman of Samaria thirst for living water, may turn to the Lord as *they* have heard his word

and acknowledge the sins and weaknesses which weigh *them* down. Protect *them* from vain reliance on self and defend *them*, from the power of Satan. Free *them* from the spirit of deceit, so that, admitting the wrong *they* have done, *they* may attain purity of heart and advance on the way to salvation. we ask this through Jesus Christ your Son, our Lord who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, One God, forever and ever.

People: Amen.

The Newly Baptized, now dressed in white and/or wearing an alb, come and stand before the priest accompanied by Sponsors.

The priest prays over them saying:

Let us pray.

Heavenly Father, we thank you that by water and the Holy Spirit you have bestowed upon *these* your servants the forgiveness of sin, and have raised *them* to the new life of grace. Sustain *them*, O Lord, in your Holy Spirit. Give *them* an inquiring and discerning heart, the courage to will and to persevere, a spirit to know and to love you, and the gift of joy and wonder in all your works.

People: Amen.

He now lays hands upon the Newly Baptized and continues:

Priest: Send forth now upon this your child:
The Spirit of wisdom and understanding.

People: Amen

Priest: The Spirit of right judgment and courage.

People: Amen

Priest: The Spirit of knowledge and reverence.

People: Amen

Priest: Fill *him/her* with the Spirit of wonder and awe in your presence and, in your mercy, sign *him/her* with the sign of the cross of Christ to everlasting life. Through the same Jesus Christ your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the same Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.

People: Amen.

Then the Priest lays hands upon the person's head, marking on the forehead the sign of the cross using Chrism and saying to each one

N., you are sealed by the Holy Spirit in Baptism and ✠marked as Christ's own for ever.

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

If not done earlier, the Baptismal garment is put on the Newly Baptized.

The priest says:

N. You have put on the Lord Jesus Christ.

You have become a new creation being clothed in Christ Jesus and filled with the Holy Spirit.

You have put on this baptismal garment.

Bring it unstained to the judgment seat of Our Lord Jesus Christ, so that you may have everlasting life.

People: Amen

The Priest gives a lighted candle to the Newly Baptized saying:

Receive this burning light as a sign of your Illumination in Baptism and Chrismation.

Keep yourself burning with desire for heavenly things which will endure, so when the Bridegroom comes to the wedding feast you may meet him with your lamp burning brightly and enter with him and all the saints into the heavenly courts where you shall enjoy his blessedness and life everlasting.

People: Amen



Choir: Strengthen, O Lord what you have wrought in us, *
from your holy temple in Jerusalem.

Glory to the Father and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, *
as it was in the beginning, is now and ever,
for all ages of ages. Amen

Strengthen, O Lord what you have wrought in us, *
from your holy temple in Jerusalem.

Priest: Let us welcome the newly baptized.

People: We receive you into the Orthodox Church.
Confess the faith of Christ crucified,
proclaim his resurrection,
and share with us in his eternal priesthood.

Priest: Almighty and ever living God, let your fatherly hand ever
be over *these* your *servants*; let your Holy Spirit ever be

with *them*; and so lead *them* in the knowledge and obedience of your Word, that *they* may serve you in this life, and dwell with you in the life to come; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

People: Amen.

The Kiss of Peace

The Peace is then exchanged in the form of a triple embrace.

Priest: The peace ☩ of the Lord be always with you.

People: And with your spirit.

The service then continues with the Offertory of the Liturgy, at which the Bishop, when present, should be the principal celebrant. Except on Principal Feasts, the Proper Preface of Baptism may be used.

If there is no Liturgy, the service ends as follows.

The Conclusion of Baptism and Chrismation

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be they Name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

Priest: For yours 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 for all ages of ages. Amen.

Priest: All praise and thanks to you, most merciful Father,
for adopting us as your children, for incorporating us into
your holy Orthodox Church, and for making us worthy to
share in the inheritance of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the
saints in light; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, forever and ever.

People: Amen.

Priest: May the Lord bless you and keep you;
May the Lord make his face to shine upon you
and be gracious to you;
May the Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon you
and give you his peace

And may the blessing of God Almighty ☩ The Father,
The Son, and the Holy Spirit descend upon you
and remain with you this day and always.

People: Amen.

Deacon: Let us go forth into the world
rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

People: Thanks be to God!

*The Newly Illuminated must attend the following Sunday's Liturgy and
receive the Holy Sacrament if there was no Liturgy as part of this Service.*

THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE

Commonly called Confession

In the Sacrament of Penance one experiences the presence of Jesus Christ through his icon, the priest, who witnesses the confession of a penitent to God, gives “medicine for the soul” in advice, and prescribes ways for healing and avoidance of the sins committed. Therefore a penitent is to prepare for confession by an examination of conscience, reviewing the commandments, and making a mental note of those things that fall short of the Orthodox standard of a Christian life. A confession can be heard anywhere though the usual and most appropriate place is the church standing before the icon on the anology stand.

1. The penitent begins by saying:

Bless me Father for I have sinned.

Priest: The Lord be in your mind, on your lips and in your heart that you may worthily confess your sins in the name of the + Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Penitent: Amen

Here the penitent speaks openly about whatever is troubling his mind and heart. It is the nature of confession that whatever is said the context of confession is privileged information and both the confessor and the person confessing are bound by it.

I confess to Almighty God, to blessed Mary ever Virgin, to blessed Michael the Archangel, to blessed John the Baptist, to the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, to all the saints, and to you, Father, that I have sinned exceedingly in thought, word, and deed, through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault. *Here sins are confessed...* Therefore, I beseech blessed Mary ever Virgin,

blessed Michael the Archangel, blessed John the Baptist, the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, all the saints, and you, Father, to pray to the Lord our God for me.

2. *Before absolving a penitent, the priest gives advice and may give a salutary penance. When the penitent has accepted the penance, the priest begins:*

May almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you your sins, and lead you to everlasting life. Amen.

3. *Then he holds his right hand elevated toward the penitent and says:*

May the almighty and merciful Lord grant you pardon, + absolution, and full remission of your sins. Amen.

May our Lord Jesus Christ absolve you, and by his authority I do absolve you from every bond of excommunication, (suspension), and interdict, to the extent of my power and your need. Finally, I absolve you from your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son +, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

4. *If the penitent is a lay person, the word suspension is omitted. A bishop makes the sign of the cross three times.*

May the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, the merits of the blessed Virgin Mary and of all the saints, whatever good you have done and whatever evil you have endured achieve for you the forgiveness of your sins, the increase of grace, and the reward of everlasting life. Amen.

5. *The Penitent turns and cups his hands for a blessing and kisses the hand of the priest.*

6. *The priest bids farewell saying:* Go in peace and pray for me who am also a sinner.

Note: The wife and family of a priest are strongly urged to confess to a priest other than one to whom they are related.

THE SACRAMENT OF THE ANOINTING OF THE SICK



**The Orthodox Catholic and Apostolic Church
of America**

THE SACRAMENT OF THE ANOINTING OF THE SICK

INTRODUCTION

The Church presupposes ideal circumstances, or at least normal ones, as witnessed by the Roman Ritual, for carrying out her many prescriptions with dignity, edification, and effectiveness. Take, for example, the rubrics for processions, for the burial service, for communion brought to the sick, and for the sacrament of anointing of the sick. Yet how often her wishes in these matters are interfered with by enfeebled faith, by adverse conditions of weather, by an urge to rush through everything, or by inadequacies as to place, appurtenances, and participants. This is especially true in the case of conferring the sacrament of Christian consolation to the sick or dying. How often in our day, when negligence or violence or accidents or sudden seizure with fatal illness are by no means the exception, it is impossible to give this sacrament at all, or it is administered only in greatest haste, with curtailment of all but the essential anointing, thereby losing for the recipient as well as the bystanders so much of its signification as the Christ-mystery which heals, soothes, strengthens, purifies, consecrates, and ushers the Christian's soul into the joys of everlasting beatitude.

The Anointing of the Sick is the sacrament of Christian consolation, through which a member of Christ is made ready to share mystically by his suffering and bodily death in the suffering and sacrificial death of the head of the human race. It is the sacrament of consolation for the subject directly concerned as well as for his brethren in the faith. The note of consolation is so marked a feature that any illness which could prove fatal calls for its administration, long before the death rattle announces that the end is at hand. As

the rubric below directs: "It must be received if possible while the sick person is still conscious and rational, so that the recipient himself, in order to receive the sacrament more fruitfully, may assist with faith and devout intention while he is being anointed with the holy oil." Hence it is utterly reprehensible to delay this sacred anointing until the last agony has begun. Rather than delay until the final moments of illness, the rubrics provide that, should there be any doubt about the illness being critical, the sacrament may be administered conditionally. Better too early than too late! Moreover, the last sacraments are three. Penance may, and the holy Eucharist should ordinarily accompany the anointing. And instead of the sorry and unbecoming spectacle of the priest racing with death to the bedside of the sick, the Church prescribes a devout and dignified procession from church to home, with the minister assisted by clergy and acolytes and accompanied by devout layfolk, all of whom are to assist in imparting the consoling mysteries to the one afflicted on his bed of pain, and by their prayerful attendance give comfort and encouragement to him in the loneliness of suffering or of the final combat.

On the other hand, the Church feels that it is hardly too late, unless rigor mortis has set in, to come with her saving compassion to a stricken child of hers, even when all hope is abandoned by human reckoning. For if the dying person is no longer conscious or rational, her last sacrament is endowed by Christ with so much power that it does extraordinarily what sacramental absolution does normally, cleansing the soul even of grievous sin, provided the subject has remained habitually attrite. Some do not hesitate to maintain that this sacrament administered to a dying person deprived of his senses is a means of salvation by far more secure than even sacramental absolution. Or if the subject to all

appearances is dead, but there can be, nevertheless, some slight doubt, the rubrics direct that he be anointed conditionally. In the discipline regarding anointing of the sick every advantage is given to the afflicted Christian, for in her sacramental mysteries the Church is always conscious of herself in the role of a solicitous mother, and of Christ as the hound of heaven, watching over us from the cradle and pursuing us to the grave.

It is necessary, then, for priests and all the people of God to recapture the consoling meaning and purpose of the final sacrament of Christian life, to view it as Christ intended and as the Church has traditionally understood it. Although it may have about it a certain ring of finality, it is not exactly a last resort when everything else fails; it is not a substitute for any other sacrament, but it has a purpose all its own and a mystery all its own. It is not a substitute for the sacrament of penance; rather it is a complement of penance, for it accomplishes what penance leaves undone. Penance heals us of our sins, but not infrequently the scars of sin remain. Whereas anointing of the sick, if it proves to be the very last anointing, wipes away all scars or remains of sin, and heals the soul so perfectly that some conceive of it as an immediate anointing for glory, a *carte blanche* admittance to the beatific vision.

This sacrament can be regarded as a complement both of Baptism and Chrismation. In relation to the former it is a gratuitous restoration to the innocence of Christian rebirth. In relation to the latter it strengthens the member of Christ for the final and decisive battle against the infernal powers. "Holy Unction was regarded by the Fathers as being the finishing process not of penance alone but also of the whole Christian life." The coming of the Lord is anticipated for the benefit of the one departing this life. In this

coming the Son of God appears as judge, it is true; however, in virtue of the sacrament He comes above all as the Redeemer full of mercy, "Who shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and death shall be no more, nor mourning, nor crying, nor sorrow shall be any more, for the former things are passed away.... 'See, I make all things new.'" Anointed and consecrated with the holy oil of the sick, the person can approach the divine judgment seat confident that his personal unworthiness is swallowed up in the infinite mercy which the Savior has sacramentally communicated to him. Thus far the emphasis has been mainly on one aspect of this sacrament, namely, the aspect of its primary effect procuring for a departing soul such perfect condition that it can wing its way into the arms of its Maker immediately on shaking off the shackles of earthly existence. But theologians today are saying that this is altogether a too one-sided view. Basing their argument on the words of St. James, as well as on the prayers and actions that constitute the sacramental rite, not only its present forms but also those found in the ancient sacramentaries, they say that a better balance is necessary when speaking of the purpose and effects of the sacrament of anointing. In their view the sacrament is not primarily or exclusively a preparation for death. Nor is it exactly the last time Christ comes to man in a sacrament, for Viaticum is ideally the last sacramental encounter with Christ. Rather it is to be seen as the sacrament in which Christ comes to the Christian who is in suffering and in pain from serious illness or from a serious accident, to heal, soothe, strengthen, and purify. He comes to the sick person to extend to him His personal love and care, that compassion, that out-pouring through His sacred humanity of the divine power "which went forth from Him."

In the Church today, by this sacramental action, are renewed to the eyes of faith such scenes as the evangelist describes "Wherever He went, into village or hamlet or town, they laid the sick in the market places, and entreated Him to let them touch but the tassel of His cloak; and as many as touched Him were saved." Sacred Scripture sees sin and sickness as intimately related, as two aspects of a fundamental disorder in man. Therefore, God's saving action includes the deliverance of man not from sin alone nor from sickness alone, but from both. A rather strange attitude to bodily suffering is found in some works on the spiritual life, where it is supposed that the Christian is bound to regard suffering as primarily a real benefit and to accept it as a pure blessing. The truth of the matter is that suffering, whether of mind or body, is at once a trial and a call. Suffering and illness came into the world not from God but from sin. And bodily suffering can by its unnerving property engender in man not necessarily heroic virtue but also blasphemy and despair. So we find in the Gospel that our Lord was oftentimes the enemy of sickness and combated it in one and the same action of eradicating sin from the human heart and sickness from the body and mind. Consequently, it is a duty for the Christian to strive for and to pray for bodily and spiritual health, as the Church's official prayers make plain. And the sacraments were instituted precisely for the purpose of sanctifying the soul through the body.

In a collection of liturgical prayers called the "Sacramentary of Serapion" (ca. A.D. 350), a prayer used in the blessing of oil of the sick calls on God to endow the oil with power of healing, so that it may wipe out every weakness and infirmity, and act as a remedy against every devil and expel every unclean spirit; that it may

eradicate fever and chill and weakness; that it may be a good grace for the remission of sins, a remedy for life and salvation; that it may bring health and integrity of soul and body and spirit; that it may impart perfect well-being." That Christ, with His deep understanding of human nature, should institute a sacrament for the sick which alleviates body and soul at a single stroke ought not to cause wonderment. In this sacrament, then, as the anointing with soothing oil signifies, we may see Christ coming to the sick person to soothe, to comfort, to console by His presence, and to fully cure him if He so sees fit. We speak of the sacraments as encounters with Christ. We leave it to our blessed Lord to determine whether the encounter in the instance of this sacrament will result in health for the body as well as for the soul. Even if the sacrament does not bring a complete bodily cure--and in the opinion of doctors and nurses this happens more often than people think--it brings an interior peace and purity. It gives the sick person courage, helping him to a trusting self-surrender into the hands of a compassionate Savior.

PART VI. ANOINTING OF THE SICK

CHAPTER I: GENERAL RULES FOR ADMINISTERING THE ANOINTING OF THE SICK

1. The sacrament of anointing of the sick was instituted by Christ our Lord as a heavenly remedy, not only for the soul but likewise for the body's well-being. Although it is not per se required for salvation by necessity of means, nevertheless, no one may neglect to receive it, and it must be given with all care and zeal in cases of critical illness. In fact, it must be received if possible while the sick person is still conscious and rational, so that the recipient himself, in order to receive the sacrament more fruitfully, may assist with faith and devout intention while he is being anointed with the holy oil.
2. According to the general practice of the Church, this above all must be observed--if there is time and the condition of the sick person permits, the sacraments of penance and holy Eucharist are to be administered to him before he is anointed.
3. The pastor must provide that the holy oil of the sick be reserved in church in a glass, silver or pewter vessel, guarded under lock and key in an ambry which is neat and suitably ornamented. This oil, consecrated by the bishop on Maundy Thursday, must be renewed each year, and the old oil burned. Nor may one use the old oil unless some necessity warrants. If the consecrated oil does not suffice, then other non-consecrated olive oil is added, but in lesser quantity than the consecrated each time this happens.

4. A pastor must obtain the holy oil from his own Ordinary. He may not keep it in the rectory, save by reason of necessity or some other reasonable cause and with sanction of the Ordinary.
5. The oil can be reserved either in its fluid state or absorbed in cotton or similar material. Yet to avoid spilling it while carrying it on a sick call, it is more practical to reserve it in the latter way.
6. This sacrament can be administered validly by any priest and by a priest only. The ordinary minister is the pastor of the place where the sick person is confined. However, in an emergency or with permission of the pastor or also of the Ordinary (which permission can be reasonably presumed), any priest available can administer this sacrament.
7. The ordinary minister is in justice bound to administer this sacrament personally or by his substitute, and in a case of necessity every priest is bound out of charity to do so.
8. Anointing of the sick can be given only to one of the faithful. The sacrament may not be given more than once during the same illness, unless after receiving the sacrament, the sick person has recovered from the danger and then has a critical relapse.
9. The Anointing of the Sick does not require one to be in danger of death, but is an ongoing ministry of the healing power of the Lord Jesus Christ through His Holy Orthodox Church.
10. The sacrament is not to be conferred on the impenitent who obstinately persevere in manifest serious sin. Yet if there is a doubt about this, it may be administered conditionally.

11. Nonetheless, it must be administered absolutely to the sick who while they were rational did request it at least implicitly, or to all appearances would have requested it, yet afterward lose consciousness or their rational faculties.

12. If one is at the point of death and there is danger of his expiring before the anointing can be performed, he should be anointed at once, the minister beginning at the place: "By this holy anointing," etc., as given below. Later, if he is still alive, the prayers which were omitted should be said.

13. If there is doubt whether the person is still alive, the anointing takes place with the conditional form: "If you are still alive, by this holy anointing," etc., see below.

14. Should it happen that a sick person, after making a confession of his sins, is approaching the end, then the same priest who brings Viaticum can also carry with him the oil of the sick. Yet if another priest or a deacon is available, the holy oil should be carried by him. Vested in surplice and carrying the holy oil concealed, he accompanies the priest who bears the holy Viaticum. And after the sick person has received Viaticum he is anointed by the priest.

15. Five parts of the body chiefly must be anointed, the ones with which man is endowed by nature as the organs of sensation, namely, eyes, ears, nose, mouth, and hands. Yet the feet likewise are to be anointed, although this anointing may be omitted for any good reason. The anointing, except for some serious cause, must be made directly by the thumb of the minister and not applied with some instrument.

16. Whereas the hands of the laity must be anointed on the palms, a priest's hands are anointed on the back.

17. At the anointing of the eyes, ears, and the other organs which are double, the priest must take care lest, while anointing one of these parts, he should happen to complete the form of the sacrament before he has anointed both organs.

18. If a person is lacking one of these bodily members, the part nearest it is to be anointed, with the use of the same form.

19. The form of this sacrament used by the ancient Church of Rome is the solemn deprecatory form which the priest uses at each anointing, saying: "By this holy anointing and by His most tender mercy may the Lord forgive you all the evil you have done through the power of sight or hearing," etc. **R:** Amen.

20. In an emergency an anointing of only one of the senses suffices, or the forehead only may be anointed, the minister using the shorter form: "By this holy anointing may the Lord forgive you all the evil you have done." **R:** Amen. But the obligation of supplying all anointing remains when the danger later ceases.

21. Whenever this sacrament is administered to several sick persons at the same time, the priest presents the crucifix to each one to be kissed, recites once all prayers that precede the anointing, anoints each individually with the respective forms, and then says only once all the prayers that follow the anointing.

When anointing of the sick and Viaticum are administered at the same time the rite is to be arranged as follows: after the sprinkling

with holy water and the entrance prayers given in the rite of anointing, the priest hears the confession of the sick person, if necessary, then administers the anointing (see Invocation of the Trinity and Anointing), and then gives Viaticum (see Rite for Communion for the Sick), omitting the sprinkling with its formulas and the Confiteor and absolution.

CHAPTER II: RITE FOR ANOINTING OF THE SICK

1. As he is about to confer the sacrament of anointing of the sick the priest should see to it, if at all possible, that the following preparations are made. There should be in the sick-room a table covered with a white cloth; and on it a crucifix, two lighted candles, a container with cotton or similar material made into six separate pellets for wiping the parts anointed, a small piece of bread for cleansing the priest's fingers, and a bowl for washing his hands; a wax candle to be ignited later to give light to the priest as he performs the anointing. Before starting, it shall be his concern that everything is as clean and orderly as possible for the administration of this sacrament.

2. Then the clerics or servers are summoned, or at least one cleric to carry the hand cross (one without a staff, not the processional cross), holy water and aspersory, and the Ritual. The priest himself reverently takes the vessel containing the oil of the sick (encased in a silk cover of purple color), and bears it carefully so that it will not spill. If the journey is long or is to be made on horseback (sic!), or if there is any danger whatever of spilling the holy oil, the vessel enclosed in the sack or burse as already stated should be suspended from the neck so that it can be carried more easily and securely. No bells are rung in the course of the journey.

Introductory Prayers

The three introductory prayers that follow are very much the same as those ordinarily used for a priest's visit to the home of a sick person. They are preceded by the peace-greeting, the sacramental of sprinkling with holy water, which commonly is a reminder of baptism and an occasion for renewing the baptismal promises, confession if the person wishes to confess, and a little sermon in which the priest offers some consoling thoughts along with a summary of the nature and effects of the sacrament of the sick (see the introduction). If time permits the priest may choose to read one of the psalms and one or the other gospel passages taken from the rite of visitation and care of the sick.

3. Arriving at the place where the sick person is confined, the priest on entering the room says:

Priest: Peace be to this house.

All: And all who dwell herein.

4. The priest places the holy oil on the table, and then vests in surplice and stole. Next he presents a crucifix to be devoutly kissed by the sick person. After that he sprinkles holy water in the form of a cross on the patient, the room, and the bystanders, saying:

Sprinkle me O Lord with hyssop, and I shall be pure.

Wash me, O Lord, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your loving kindness.

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

All: As it was in the beginning, is now and ever,
for all ages of ages Amen.

Priest: Sprinkle me O Lord with hyssop, and I shall be pure.
Wash me, O Lord, and I shall be whiter than snow.

If the patient wishes to go to confession, he asks the others to leave the room, hears his confession and absolves him. Then he speaks words of consolation to him and if time permits briefly explains the power and efficacy of this sacrament. When advisable he adds words of encouragement and directs the patient's thoughts to hope of everlasting life.

5. Next he says:

Priest: Our help is in the name of the Lord.

All: The maker of heaven and earth

Priest: The Lord be with you.

All: And with your spirit.

The plural form used in the next prayer is by no means the majestic plural but a relic of the days when a number of priests assisted. Now it can refer to those who assist the priest.

Let us pray.

Lord Jesus Christ, as we, in all humility, enter this home, let there enter with us abiding happiness and God's choicest blessings. Let serene joy pervade this home and charity abound here and health never fail. Let no evil spirits approach this place but drive them far away. Let your angels of peace take over and put down all wicked strife. Teach us, O Lord, to recognize the grandeur of your holy name. Sanctify our humble visit and bless ✠ what we are about to do; for you are holy and kind, and abide with the Father and the Holy Spirit now and ever, and for all ages of ages.

All: Amen.

Let us pray and beseech our Lord Jesus Christ to bless this dwelling more and more and all who live in it. May He give them an able guardian angel. May He prompt them to serve Him and to ponder the wonders of His law. May He ward off all evil powers from them, deliver them from all fear and anxiety, and keep them in good health in this dwelling; He who lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, for all ages of ages.

All: Amen.

Let us pray.

Hear us, holy Lord Father, almighty everlasting God, and in your goodness send your holy angel from heaven to watch over and protect all who live in this home, to be with them and give them comfort and encouragement; through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

6. If time does not permit, all or part of the foregoing prayers may be omitted. Next comes as usual the general confession of sins:

I confess to Almighty God, to blessed Mary ever Virgin, to blessed Michael the Archangel, to blessed John the Baptist, to the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, to all the saints, and to you, Father, that I have sinned exceedingly in thought, word, and deed, through my fault, through my fault, through my very great fault. Therefore, I beseech blessed Mary ever Virgin, blessed Michael the Archangel, blessed John the Baptist, the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, all the saints, and you, Father, to pray to the Lord our God for me.

After which the priest says:

May almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you your sins, and lead you to everlasting life.

All: Amen.

Priest: May the almighty and merciful Lord grant you pardon, absolution, ✠ and remission of your sins.

All: Amen.

Invocation of the Trinity and Anointing

7. Before the priest begins to anoint the sick person he invites all present to pray for him and to make the responses while the priest administers the sacrament.

First the priest extends his right hand over the head of the sick person, saying:

In the name of the Father, ✠ and of the Son, ✠ and of the Holy ✠ Spirit; may any power the devil has over you be destroyed by the laying-on of our hands and by calling on the glorious and blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, her illustrious spouse, St. Joseph, St Michael the Archangel, and all holy angels, archangels, patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, confessors, virgins, and all the saints.

All: Amen.

8. Next he dips his thumb in the holy oil, and anoints the sick person in the form of a cross on all bodily members indicated below, pronouncing in each instance the respective form as follows:

In the case of bodily members which are double, the right organ is anointed at the place indicated in the form by the ✠, and the left organ before the remaining words are completed.

9. After every anointing the assistant, if in holy orders, otherwise the priest himself, wipes the part anointed with a fresh pellet of cotton or similar material. These pellets are taken to church where they are burned and the ashes thrown into the sacrarium or buried.

Anointing the Eyes (on the eyelids)

Priest: By this holy anointing ✠ and by His most tender mercy may the Lord forgive you all the evil you have done through the power of sight.

All: Amen.

Anointing the Ears (on the lobes)

Priest: By this holy anointing ✠ and by His most tender mercy may the Lord forgive you all the evil you have done through the power of hearing.

All: Amen.

Anointing the Nose (on each nostril)

Priest: By this holy anointing ✠ and by His most tender mercy may the Lord forgive you all the evil you have done through the sense of smell.

All: Amen.

Anointing the Mouth (on closed lips)

Priest: By this holy anointing ✠ and by His most tender mercy may the Lord forgive you all the evil you have done through the sense of taste and the power of speech.

All: Amen.

Anointing the Hands (on the palms)

10. Note priests are anointed on the back of the hands, not palms.

Priest: By this holy anointing ✠ and by His most tender mercy may the Lord forgive you all the evil you have done through the sense of touch.

All: Amen.

Anointing the Feet (either on the instep or sole)

Priest: By this holy anointing ✠ and by His most tender mercy may the Lord forgive you all the evil you have done through the ability to walk.

All: Amen.

11. The anointing of feet, as has been said, may be omitted for any good reason.

12. When the priest has finished the anointing he rubs his thumb with particles of bread, then washes his hands and wipes them with a towel. The water used for this purpose together with the bread is later thrown into the sacrarium, or for lack of such, buried.

Afterward the priest says:

Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Our Father ...

Priest: Save your servant.

All: Who puts his (her) trust in you, my God.

Priest: Lord, send him (her) aid from your holy place.

All: And watch over him (her) from Sion.

Priest: Let him (her) find in you, Lord, a strong tower.

All: In the face of the enemy.

Priest: Let not the enemy have power over him (her).

All: Nor the son of iniquity harm him (her).

Priest: O Lord, hear my prayer.

All: And let my cry come to you

Priest: The Lord be with you.

All: And with your spirit.

Priest: Let us pray.

Lord Jesus Christ our God, who spoke through your apostle James: "Is anyone of you sick? He should call in the priests of the Church, and have them pray over him, while they anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. That prayer, said with faith, will save the sick person, and the Lord will restore him to health. If he has committed sins, they will be forgiven him." We beg you, our Redeemer, to cure by the grace of the Holy Spirit this sick man's (woman's) infirmity.

Heal his (her) wounds, and forgive his (her) sins. Release him (her) of all pain of body and mind. Restore him (her), in your mercy, to full health of body and soul, so that having recovered by your goodness, he (she) may take up his (her) former duties. We ask this of you who live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, God, for all ages of ages.

All: Amen.

Priest: Let us pray.

We entreat you, Lord, to look with favor on your servant, **N.**, who is weak and failing, and refresh the life you have created. Chastened by suffering, may he (she) know that he (she) has been saved by your healing; through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Priest: Let us pray.

Holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, in pouring out the grace of your blessing on the bodies of the sick, you show your loving care for your creatures. And so now as we call on your holy name, come and free your servant from his (her) illness and restore him (her) to health; reach out your hand and raise him (her) up; strengthen him (her) by your might; protect him (her) by your power; and give him (her) back in all desired well-being to your holy Church; through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

13. Lastly, if the patient's condition allows, the priest may add a few well-chosen words, inspiring him to resist the temptations of the devil, and if death comes, to expire peacefully in the Lord.

14. He should leave some holy water for the use of the sick person and also a crucifix, unless he has one, so that he may often gaze on it and devoutly kiss it and embrace it.

15. He should likewise instruct the family or the nurse to notify the pastor immediately if the sick person gets worse or approaches the last agony, so that the priest may be present to assist the dying and commend his soul to God. But if death is imminent the priest should say the prayers for the commendation of a departing soul before he leaves the house.

16. All that pertains to the care and visitation of the sick, the prayers for the dying, the commendation of a departing soul, and the burial rites are found below in their proper place.

Then he approaches the sick person to ascertain if he is properly disposed to receive holy communion (or Viaticum), and (again) if he wishes to confess any sins. If so, he hears his confession and absolves him, although the person should have gone to confession beforehand, unless necessity dictates otherwise.

17. After the Confiteor has been said by the sick person or by someone else in his name, the priest says:

May almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you your sins, and bring you to life everlasting.

All: Amen.

P: May the almighty and merciful Lord grant you pardon, absolution, ✠ and remission of your sins.

All: Amen.

18. Having genuflected, he removes the host from the pyx, holds it up before the sick person, and says:

Behold the Lamb of God, behold Him who takes away the sins of the world. (And as usual he adds thrice:)

Lord, I am not worthy that you should come under my roof, but only say the word, and my soul will be healed.

19. The sick person says the words "Lord, I am not worthy," etc. with the priest at least once. in a subdued voice. As the priest gives the Eucharist to the sick person he says:

Take, my brother (sister), food for the journey to heaven, the body of our Lord Jesus Christ. May He shield you from hostile demons and lead you to everlasting life.

Sick person: Amen.

20. If holy communion is not given as Viaticum he says as usual:

P: The body of Christ.

Sick person: Amen.

21. If death is imminent and there is danger in delay, the priest omits all or part of the very first prayers, and beginning with the words "May almighty God," etc., gives Viaticum at once.

22. Afterward the priest cleanses his fingers in the glass of water and wipes them with the purificator. The water is later poured into

the sacrarium (of the church), or if there is none, into another decent receptacle (in the house of the sick person). Then he says:

P: The Lord be with you.

All: And with your spirit.

Let us pray.

O Holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, full of trust we beg you that our brother (sister) may find lasting health for body and soul in receiving the sacred Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you, and the Holy Spirit, God, for all ages of ages.

All: Amen.

{The preceding prayer speaks of the Eucharist as a help to the body of the sick person. Though this may be a thought quite foreign to the people in our day, the priest might find this moment a fine opportunity to comment on it. In the Eucharist Christ once more stands by to complete the baptismal consecration of the body, to heal it, and so restore it to its proper function as the soul's instrument. Over and over again in her official prayers the Church asks for health as one of the normal graces that flow from the body of Christ. It is true, of course, that bodily health is a subordinated good in the process of salvation. But when this good is needed the Eucharist has its part to play. It brings our body into contact with Him who healed the sick when He was on earth, and who may, in a measure He alone determines, again exercise His power and His mercy as the Savior and God who gives life. Little by little the Eucharist brings the body back under the governance of the soul.}

23. If the priest has brought with him another sacred host (and this should always be so except in the above-mentioned case), he puts on the humeral veil, genuflects, and, taking the host in its pyx and covered with the humeral veil, makes with it the sign of the cross over the sick person, without saying anything. He then reverently carries it in procession to the church, in the same order as he came, meanwhile saying Psalm 148 "Praise the Lord from the heavens" and other psalms and hymns as time permits.

24. Having returned to the church, he places the pyx on the altar, genuflects, and says:

P: You have given them the bread of heaven (P.T. Alleluia).

All: Which contains all delight within it (P.T. Alleluia).

P: The Lord be with you.

All: And with your spirit.

Priest: Let us pray.

O God, who under a wondrous Sacrament has left to us a memorial of your Passion: Grant us, we beseech you, so to venerate the sacred Mysteries of thy Body and Blood; that we may evermore perceive within ourselves the fruit of your Redemption. Who lives and reigns for all ages of ages.

People: Amen

25. He now announces the blessings and graces granted to those who act as an escort to the Blessed Sacrament.

26. Lastly he again covers the pyx with the humeral veil, and makes the sign of the cross over the people with the pyx, without saying anything, and replaces it in the tabernacle.

27. If only one sacred host was taken along, owing to the length or difficulty of the journey or the inconvenience of returning it to the church with the reverence demanded (see above), in that case, following the afore-mentioned prayers and administration of holy communion, the priest gives the blessing simply with his hand in the ordinary way, saying: "May the blessing of almighty God," etc. And having extinguished the lights, lowered the white liturgical umbrella, and concealed the pyx on his person, the priest and his assistants remove their vestments, and return to the church or to their respective homes.

28. When holy communion is distributed to several sick persons confined in the same home or hospital but in separate rooms, the priest or deacon should recite all prayers before communion (as prescribed in the Ritual) only in the first room. In the other rooms he says: "May almighty God," etc.; "Behold the Lamb of God"; "Lord, I am not worthy," etc., only once; "Take, my brother (sister)," etc.- or "The body of Christ"; and in the last room he adds "The Lord be with you," etc., and the prayer "O Holy Lord," etc. In the last room, moreover, if any sacred hosts are left over, he imparts the blessing with them. The prayers prescribed to be said in church at the very end are carried out in the usual way.

29. The rite described above is observed also when a deacon is the ministrant.

30. Whenever for a just and reasonable cause holy communion is brought to the sick in a non-solemn way, the priest wears at least a stole under his usual clothes. The pyx is encased in a burse

suspended from the neck on a cord and secured at the breast. Most clergy today slip the pyx into the chest pocket. He should never be alone but should be accompanied by at least one cleric or one of the faithful. Arriving at the sick-room, the priest should put on a surplice with the stole, if it was not worn before.

The Mystery of Marriage

Part I: The Betrothal



The Orthodox Western Rite Marriage Service

The Archdiocese of New York

of

**The Holy Orthodox Catholic
and Apostolic Church of America**

The Betrothal of an Orthodox Christian Man and Woman

On the Sunday appointed, following their engagement, the persons to be Betrothed, with their families assemble in the church for the Liturgy. Following the Nicene Creed, during which they may hold lighted candles, the priest invites the man and woman to be Betrothed and their parents to come forward.

If only one ring is given, it alone is used for the Betrothal of both persons then placed on the finger of the recipient.

The priest, facing the people and the persons to be Betrothed, with the woman to the right and the man to the left, addresses the congregation and says

Exhortation Before Betrothal

Beloved of Christ: The union of man and woman in Christian marriage is brought about by God and for the purposes of God. The prompting to enter this holy state has come, we trust, from Him, rather than from any mere passing affection on your part. Of the sacred mystery in which you are called to be a part, God is ever a third partner, and as you promise yourselves to each other, you are giving yourselves over to the fulfillment of His designs. All the while He stands by to accompany your union with the assistance of His grace, so that you may thankfully accept its blessings and faithfully fulfill its duties.

Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, Son of the eternal Father, came on earth to espouse Himself to His creatures. Thereby He inaugurated in the world a holy, priestly, and kingly people, the Church, through which all men are called to be brought to the

knowledge and service of God Father Son, and Holy Spirit. You are members of Christ through baptism. And now in Christ's name you are called to prepare for the sacrament of holy matrimony, that by your sacred bond a new cell may be formed within His body, the Church, to the advantage both of human society and the kingdom of God.

The Mystery of Christian Marriage, sanctified and raised to the dignity of a sacrament by our Lord, is ordained by the Almighty for your mutual love and consolation, for replenishing the earth, and for an icon of the union of Christ and His mystic spouse, The Church. Therefore, St. Paul bids the husband to love his wife as Christ loved the Church and be ready and willing to die for her; and he bids the wife to be subject to her husband as to the Lord.

Henceforth your task as husband and wife, under the headship of Christ, and in mutual accountability, will be for the purposes of Christ and for no other. You are called to live together in peace and in love. In this sacred relationship each must be eager to please, respect, and learn, and this will entail a constant sacrifice of self. Christian Marriage is also a school whereby we learn much about ourselves and are given the opportunity with God's grace and the love and support of our spouse to root out those things that are not helpful, holy, or life-giving. By denying your own will and inclination in all things, by stripping yourselves of selfishness and sin, you will model your coming marriage on the mystic nuptials of Christ. Thus God will be glorified, you will be made holy in His sight and pleasing to each other, and your joy will be assured throughout your life on earth and continue onward in the life to come.

Let the sacrifice of each to the other be merged in the sacrifice of Christ. Be of one mind with Him who will sanctify your every joy and lighten your every sorrow. Build your future marriage upon Him who is its unity and its stability. The Father will send His Spirit to sustain you and to deliver you out of the snares of the Evil One and of a world eager to trample this divine institution under foot.

May the Lord be in your heart and on your lips as you now state your intention.

Let all of you, families and friends who witness the intentions of this couple, now join with the Church of God in earnest prayer for this Christian Man and Woman, that they may be open to, and co-operate with, the grace bestowed in preparing for the Mystery of Marriage and thus reap its full fruits and blessings.

Declaration of Consent

Form I

The priest inquires of the man:

Do you, **N.** have a good, free, and unconstrained will and a firm intention to accept as your wife this woman **N.** whom you see standing here beside you?

The man: I have, Reverend Father.

Priest: Have you promised yourself to any other woman?

The man: I have not promised myself to any other,
Reverend Father.

The priest inquires of the woman:

Do you, **N.** have a good, free, and unconstrained will and a firm intention to accept as your husband this man **N.** whom you see standing here beside you?

The woman: I have, Reverend Father.

Priest: Have you promised yourself to any other man?

The woman: I have not promised myself to any other,
Reverend Father.

Form II

The priest says to the woman

N., will you accept this man **N.** to be your husband; to live together in the covenant of marriage? Will you love him, comfort him, honor and keep him, in sickness and in health; and, forsaking all others, be faithful to him as long as you both shall live?

Woman: I will.

The priest says to the man

N., will you accept this woman **N.** to be your wife; to live together in the covenant of marriage? Will you love her, comfort her, honor and keep her, in sickness and in health; and, forsaking all others, be faithful to her as long as you both shall live?

Man: I will.

The priest then addresses the congregation, saying

Will all of you witnessing these promises do all in your power to uphold these two persons in their coming marriage?

People We will.

The Betrothal

The priest now blesses the engagement ring(s) with Holy Water and, blessing the man with the ring(s) saying:

The servant of God **N.** is betrothed to the handmaid of God **N.**,
In the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen!

The priest now blesses the woman with the ring(s) saying:

The handmaid of God **N.** is betrothed to the servant of God **N.**,
In the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen!

The Betrothal Blessing

The priest extends his hands over the couple and prays:

Priest: Direct, O Lord, all their actions with your holy inspiration, and carry them on by your gracious assistance, that every prayer and work of theirs may begin with you, and by you be happily ended.

For from you all life and joy proceed, and to you do we return, giving praise and thanksgiving, to the Father, the Son, and Holy Spirit, now, and always, and to ages of ages.

All: Amen!

Exhortation After Betrothal

Priest: My dear friends, you have now been formally betrothed by the Church and are charged to begin to prepare spiritually for your marriage. Be patient and calm with each other during this time. Continue to learn about each other and with each other as you prepare for the Holy Mystery of Marriage. Be strong and faithful in your prayers and generous of spirit. Be slow to anger and quick to forgive, mindful always that we are forgiven as we forgive. Live in respect and chastity defying the ways of the world which only lead to disharmony and discontent.

Establish your marriage in and on Christ, the rock of ages.

Search out married couples of many years and inquire of them the secrets of love and stability. Finally, prepare to separate from your families mindful of the many blessings you have received from them, especially the gifts of life and love.

N. and **N.** go in peace and may the Lord be with you.

The couple returns to their place and the Liturgy continues with the Prayers of the People which include a special petition for the newly Betrothed:

For all who live in the Mystery of Marriage and for the newly Betrothed **N.** and **N.** who are called to be an icon of the Mystery of Christ and His Church, let us pray to the Lord.

The Betrothed Couple now begins a period of spiritual preparation for Marriage which includes: reviewing their Faith Commitment to Jesus Christ as their Saviour and their following Him as Lord within His body, the Holy Orthodox Church; counseling sessions with the priest, and regularly participating in the Liturgy. Their faithfulness to all of the above is the basis for the Church's decision to join them in Christian Marriage.

The couple is urged to continue living separate and apart in chastity as they prepare.

Parents are urged to support their children with their prayers and whatever other means they can offer to help them prepare for a Christian Marriage and Household.

Resources:

A reading From the Book of Tobias (Tobit) 7:11e – 8:7

Tobias said, "I will neither eat nor drink anything until you settle the things that pertain to me and promise to give me Sarah your daughter." So Raguel said, "I will do so. She is given to you in accordance with the decree in the book of Moses, and it has been decreed from heaven that she be given to you. Take your kinswoman; from now on you are her brother and she is your sister. She is given to you from today and forever. May the Lord of heaven, my child, guide and prosper you both this night and grant you mercy and peace." Then Raguel summoned his daughter Sarah. When she came to him he took her by the hand and gave her to Tobias, saying, "Take her to be your wife in accordance with the law and decree written in the book of Moses... And may the God of

heaven prosper your journey with his peace." Then he called her mother and told her to bring writing material; and he wrote out a copy of a marriage contract, to the effect that he gave her to him as wife according to the decree of the law of Moses. Then they began to eat and drink and praised God....

When they had finished eating and drinking they wanted to retire; so they took the young man and brought him into the bedroom. ...

When the parents had gone out and shut the door of the room, Tobias got out of bed and said to Sarah, "Sister, get up, and let us pray and implore our Lord today, tomorrow, and the next day; because for these three nights we are joined to God; and when the third night is over, we will be joined to each other." For we are the children of saints, and we must not be joined together like heathens who know not God. So she got up, and they began to pray and implore that they might be kept safe. Tobias began by saying, "Blessed are you, O God of our ancestors, and blessed is your name in all generations forever. Let the heavens and the whole creation bless you forever. You made Adam, and for him you made his wife Eve as a helper and support. From the two of them the human race has sprung. You said, 'It is not good that the man should be alone; let us make a helper for him like himself.' I now am taking this kinswoman of mine, not because of lust, but with sincerity. Grant that she and I may find mercy and that we may grow old together."

A reading From the Gospel of John (15:4-12)

Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in me, and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do

nothing. If a man does not abide in me, he is cast forth as a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you. By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be my disciples. As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full. "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. (Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.)

Or

A reading From the Gospel of John (15:14-17)

You are my friends if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide; so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you. This I command you, to love one another.

Before leaving the church, the Newly Betrothed couple as well as the witnesses and priest will affix their signatures to the document previously prepared for this purpose.

The Mystery of Marriage Part II: The Crowning



The Orthodox Western Rite Marriage Service

The Archdiocese of New York

of

**The Holy Orthodox Catholic
and Apostolic Church of America**

The Mystery of Marriage

Part II: The Crowning

The Mystery of Marriage in Orthodox Christianity is the supreme sign of the Mystery of the unity between Christ and His Church. It begins in the Rite of Betrothal which is celebrated at the time of the couple's "engagement" and continues through the time of preparation for the Mystery of Marriage. That time of preparation during which the couple prepares for the rest of their life together, by planning a reception, creating a list of invitees and finding a place to live, is also a time when they meet with the parish priest to discuss the foundational aspect of their future life together: their acceptance of Jesus Christ as Saviour and their following him as Lord within His Body: The Holy Orthodox Church.

Therefore it is expected that the couple will prepare as diligently and sincerely for the Mystery of Marriage and their future life together as they would any other aspect of that commitment.

The Orthodox Church teaches that it is Christ who joins the man and woman together. They offer themselves for the covenant in the act of Betrothal but it is Christ alone who joins them together, therefore "what God has joined together let no one tear apart!"

Orthodox Christian Marriage envisions a Christian couple joined in body, mind and spirit fed by the daily prayer and reading of scripture and the lives of the saints, frequent confession, and especially the weekly participation in the Liturgy. It is in the act of receiving communion that the oneness in Christ is most experienced and affirmed. It is preferred that the Mystery of Marriage take place within the Liturgy.

Finally, the parish priest always stands ready to help should disagreements come up (as they invariably do in all marriages) to guide you through and offer you prayer, perspective, and peace. In a truly Orthodox Marriage, divorce is not an option because it is Christ Himself who marries you. So you must use this "school of life" to teach you about yourself, your spouse, and to overcome the self centeredness which permeates our society.

The Mystery of Marriage may not be celebrated in Advent and Lent.

NOTE: The Service of Betrothal **MUST** take place before this service is conducted as it contains the declaration of consent of the Bride and Groom to God's will for their being joined in the Mystery of Marriage. The Church prefers this be done at their engagement but may be done at least 6 weeks before this ceremony.

Before the ceremony crowns of fresh flowers are prepared and placed on a small table in the sanctuary. The Priest meets the Wedding Party at the church door and leads the procession up to the altar: The groom may be escorted by his best man, followed by his parents and godparents, the attendants, and the bride may be escorted by her parents and godparents. The attendants each carry a lighted candle.

Organ music of a sacred character may be played as the guests gather.

During the procession to the Sanctuary the following in chant or hymn form is sung:

Psalm 128 *Beati omnes*



Blessed are they all who fear the LORD, *
and who follow in his ways!

You shall eat the fruit of your labor; *
happiness and prosperity shall be yours.

Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine within your house, *
your children like olive shoots round about your table.

The man who fears the LORD *
shall thus indeed be blessed.

The LORD bless you from Zion, *
and may you see the prosperity of Jerusalem
all the days of your life.

May you live to see your children's children; *
may peace be upon Israel.

Or a metrical version of the psalm printed below may be sung:

Priest

Dearly beloved:

We have come together in the presence of Almighty God to witness and bless the joining together of this man and this woman in Holy Matrimony. The bond and covenant of marriage was established by God in creation, and our Lord Jesus Christ adorned this manner of life by his presence and first miracle at a wedding in Cana of Galilee. It signifies to us the mystery of the union between Christ and his Church, and Holy Scripture commends it to be honored among all people.

The union of husband and wife in heart, body, and mind is intended by God for their spiritual growth, for mutual joy; for the help and comfort given one another in prosperity and adversity; and, when it is God's will, for the procreation of children and their nurture in the knowledge and love of the Lord.

Therefore marriage is not to be entered into unadvisedly or lightly, but reverently, deliberately, and in accordance with the purposes for which it was instituted by God.

Into this holy mystery **N.N.** and **N.N.**
now come to be joined.

The Priest then addresses the congregation, saying

God will give them the grace. Will all of you present do all in your power to uphold these two persons in their marriage?

People: We will.

Priest: Let us hear the teaching on marriage from the Apostle:

Reader: A Reading from the Epistle to the Ephesians (Ephesians 5:1-2, 21-33)

Be imitators of God, as beloved children, and live in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, be subject to your husbands as you are to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife just as Christ is the head of the church, the body of which he is the Savior. Just as the church is subject to Christ, so also wives ought to be, in everything, to their husbands. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, in order to make her holy by cleansing her with the washing of water by the word, so as to present the church to himself in splendor, without a spot or wrinkle or anything of the kind yes, so that she may be holy and without blemish. In the same way, husbands should love their wives as they do their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hates his own body, but he nourishes and tenderly cares for it, just as Christ does for the church, because we are members of his body. "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." This is a great mystery, and I am applying it to Christ and the church. Each of you, however, should love his wife as himself, and a wife should respect her husband.

Reader: The word of the Lord!

People: Thanks be to God

The Gospel

A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew **Matt 19:3-7**

At that time: Some Pharisees came to him, and to test him they asked, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any cause?" He answered, "Have you not read that the one who made them at the beginning 'made them male and female,' and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate."

The Sermon

Priest: Let us together turn to the Life-creating Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and offer our prayers for this Man and Woman.

The Deacon or other person appointed reads the following prayers, to which the People respond, saying, Amen.

Let us pray.

Eternal God, creator and preserver of all life, author of salvation, and giver of all grace: Look with favor upon the world you have made, and for which your Son gave his life, and especially upon this man and this woman whom you make one flesh in The Mystery of Marriage. *Amen.*

Give them wisdom and devotion in the ordering of their common life, that each may be to the other a strength in need, a counselor in perplexity, a comfort in sorrow, and a companion in joy. *Amen.*

Grant that their wills may be so knit together in your will, and their spirits in your Spirit, that they may grow in love and peace with you and one another all the days of their life. *Amen.*

Give them grace, when they hurt each other, to recognize and acknowledge their fault, and to seek each other's forgiveness and yours. *Amen.*

Make their life together a sign of Christ's love to this sinful and broken world, that unity may overcome estrangement, forgiveness heal guilt, and joy conquer despair. *Amen.*

Bestow on them, if it is your will, the gift and heritage of children, and the grace to bring them up to know you, to love you, to serve you and to be happy with you in your kingdom. *Amen.*

Give them such fulfillment of their mutual affection that by your grace they may reach out in love and concern for others. *Amen.*

Grant that all married persons who have witnessed this Mystery of Marriage may find their lives strengthened and their loyalties confirmed. *Amen.*

Grant that **N.** and **N.**, may imitate in their lives those saints who have been sanctified in the married state, especially Sts. Prisca and Aquila, whose intercession we also invoke this day. *Amen.*

Grant that, in the communion of the Blessed Virgin Mary and all the saints, by which all your children are united one to another, and the living to the dead, we may be so transformed by your grace, that your will may be done on earth as it is in heaven; where, O Father, with your Son and the Holy Spirit, you live and reign in perfect unity, now and ever, and for all ages of ages. *Amen.*

The Priest now takes the Bride's crown and blessing the couple says:

The handmaiden of God **N.** is crowned (married) to the servant of God **N.** in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. (3 times)

The crown is placed on her head.

The Priest now takes the Groom's crown and blessing the couple says:

The servant of God **N.** is crowned (married) to the handmaiden of God **N.** in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. (3 times)

The crown is placed on his head.

The Priest now takes the Bride's ring and blessing the couple says:

On behalf of Our Lord Jesus Christ and His Holy Church the
servant of God N. is joined to the handmaid of God N. in the
Mystery of Marriage in the Name

of the Father,

He touches her thumb

and of the Son,

He touches her 2nd finger

and of the Holy Spirit.

He touches her 3rd finger

All: Amen!

The Groom places it on her ring finger

On behalf of Our Lord Jesus Christ and His Holy Church the
handmaiden of God N. is joined to the servant of God N. in the
Mystery of Marriage in the Name

of the Father,

He touches his thumb

and of the Son,

He touches his 2nd finger

and of the Holy Spirit.

He touches his 3rd finger

All: Amen!

The Bride places it on his ring finger

If celebrated within the Liturgy, the Preparation of the Altar
follows.

After the Lord's Prayer, the Nuptial Blessing is given to the Bride
and Groom:

The people remain standing. The husband and wife stand or
kneel, the acolytes or maid of honor and best man hold the four
corners of an altar cloth which is held over their heads, and the
Priest extends his hands over them and says the following:

Most gracious God, we give you thanks for your tender love in sending Jesus Christ to come among us, to be born of a human mother, and to make the way of the cross to be the way of life. We thank you, also, for consecrating the union of man and woman in his Name. By the power of your Holy Spirit, pour out the abundance of your blessing upon this man and this woman. Defend them from every enemy. Lead them into all peace. Let their love for each other be a seal upon their hearts, a mantle about their shoulders, and a crown upon their foreheads. Bless them in their work and in their companionship; in their sleeping and in their waking; in their joys and in their sorrows; in their life and in their death. Finally, in your mercy, bring them to that table where your saints feast for ever in your heavenly home; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for all ages of ages. Amen.

The husband and wife still kneeling, the Priest adds this blessing

God the Father, ✠ God the Son, ✠ God the Holy Spirit, ✠ bless, preserve, and keep you; the Lord mercifully with his favor look upon you, and fill you with all spiritual benediction and grace; that you may faithfully live together in this life, and in the age to come have life everlasting. Amen.

After the Post Communion Prayer of the Nuptial Liturgy the Blessing is given; then the priest kisses the husband, then the wife, and they kiss each other.

Priest: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord!

People: Thanks be to God!

