

## **The Significance of the Divine Liturgy:**

The Divine Liturgy is for the Christian, the meeting place of Heaven and Earth. In it the earthly gifts of bread and wine, symbolic of earthly life, become the Body and Blood of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and those who partake of this food for the soul are joined in a mystical life with Christ. So through the Divine Liturgy, the Life of Christ is extended into the every-day lives of His children.

When an Orthodox Christian is preparing to partake of the Holy Communion, he must first of all cleanse his soul through repentance and confession. Without these, the Orthodox Church will not allow the faithful to Commune. Confession is a whole-hearted acknowledgement of all our sins, errors, and faults, together with a determination to be good and to live according to the commandments of Christ. At confession, absolution is received, which is the Church's assurance of God's forgiveness. Repentance is joined with fasting, and on the day that we receive the Sacrament we must abstain from food until we have communed.

During the Divine Liturgy all present must stand with reverence and join in the common prayer. Prayer in the church elevates the soul, diverts the mind from worldly things, and gives the soul peace and contentment. Prayer must be taught in childhood. One who does not know how to pray, cannot be a real Christian. The Apostles command us to pray continually, everyday, at home and in traveling, working or resting. In church, prayer has a special significance because a person here prays not alone but with many others. A public prayer is a very important part in the Divine Liturgy as well as at all Divine Services, which are celebrated in the Church. Common prayer of the faithful in the church is offered in the litanies. Common prayer cultivates Christian sentiments of love, faith and hope.

A Christian upbringing is of the greatest importance. It elevates the mind and heart towards a truly Christian existence and directs all actions and deeds of a person to the way ordained by the Founder of Christianity, the God-Man Jesus Christ and His Holy Apostles. Therefore, we should hold fast to the Orthodox Apostolic Faith, to be true sons of the Church as our forefathers have been before us. Orthodoxy is our spiritual wealth, which we are obliged to develop while increasing in Faith and Love of Jesus Christ.