# COPTIC RITES (4): Liturgy of the Believers



### The Liturgy Prayers

- Raising of Evening Incense (Vespers) \* Midnight Praises
- 2. Raising of Morning Incense (Matins)
- 3. Offering of the Lamb
- 4. Liturgy of the Word/ Catechumen (Readings)
- Liturgy of the Believers (Eucharist)



### Rite of the Liturgy of the Believers

- 1. The Eucharistic Prayers (3)
  - 1. The Anaphora: "O God the Great..."
  - 2. The Sanctus: "Holy. Holy. Holy"
  - 3. <u>"Was incarnated" till ... "He arose from the dead"</u>
- 2. The Sanctification (Institution Narrative)
- 3. <u>The Litanies</u>
- 4. The Commemoration of the saints
- 5. <u>The Diptych</u>
- 6. The Fraction
- 7. <u>The Confession</u>
- 8. The Distribution of the Sacraments (Communion)
- 9. The Dismissal

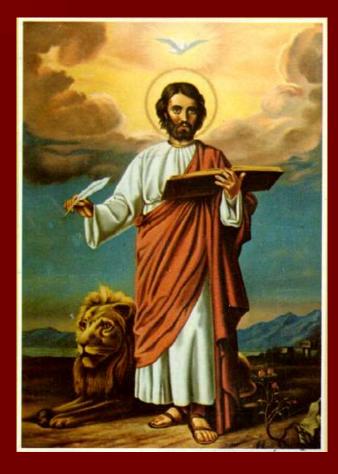
## 1. The Anaphora

- Anaphora: a Greek term meaning "a raising up" or "an offering".
  All the parts of the liturgy up to the Creed are the same
- There are many anaphoras:
  - Coptic (3): Basil, Gregory, Cyril
  - Armenian (1): Athanasius of Alexandria
  - Ethiopian (18)

# **Coptic Anaphoras**

#### Liturgy of St. Basil

- Most common
- Shortest
- Addresses God the Father
- Liturgy of St. Gregory
  - Usually prayed on feast days
  - Addresses God the Son
- Liturgy of St. Mark (St. Cyril)
  - Rearranged by St. Cyril I
  - Usually prayed during fast days
  - Oldest, Longest
  - Addresses God the Father



#### **The Anaphora**

The priest puts the (triangular) veil that was over the "Епросферім" ОП his left hand

He puts the one that was on the paten on his right hand.





He holds the cross and sign the congregation with it while saying "The Lord be with you all"

He sign the servants on his right saying "lift up your hearts"

He signs himself while saying "let us give thanks to the Lord"

# "Meet and Right"

The priest lefts up his hands, covered with the veils and prays: "meet and right".



#### "Meet and Right"

- The priest lifting his hands covered with the veils resemble the seraphim
  - After the reconciliation, through the cross, we became able to share the heavenly hosts their praises.
  - "who has given to the earthly the praising of the seraphim,"
     (Gregorian Anaphora)

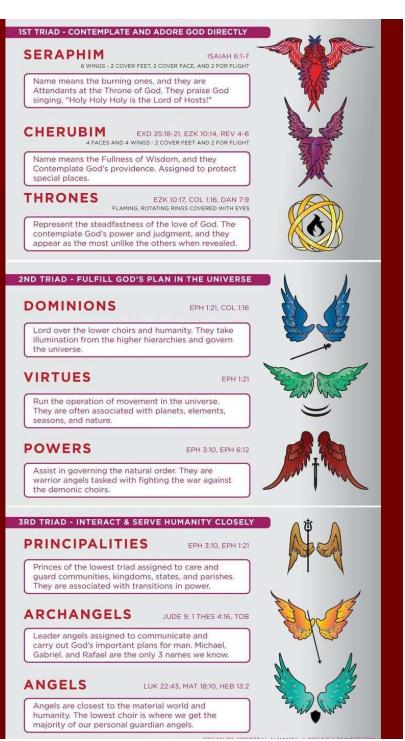


In the first part of "meet and right", the priest praises God who exists before all ages, who created heaven and earth:

"who has created the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all that is therein..."

 In the second and the third parts, he mentions the nine ranks of the heavenly that praise
 God without ceasing:

the angels, archangels,
the principalities, the
authorities, the thrones,
the dominions, the
powers, the cherubim
and the seraphim.

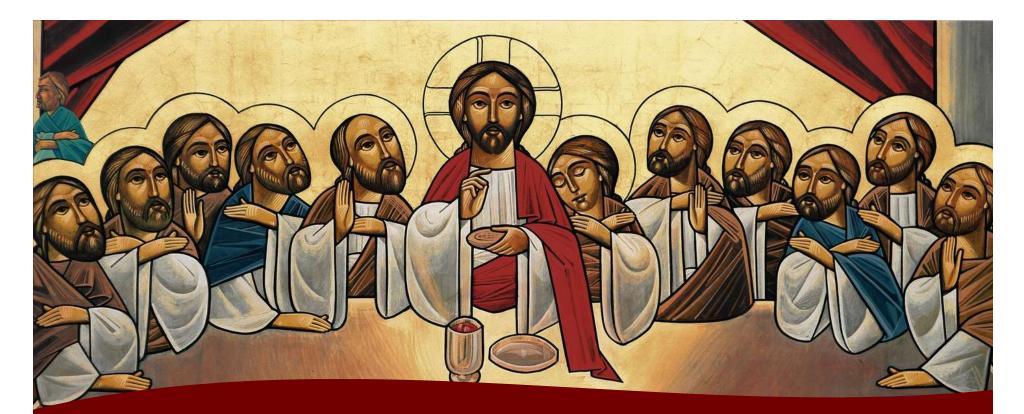


### The Sanctus: "Holy. Holy. Holy"

The priest holds the cross, while his hand is covered with a veil and make three signs of the cross while saying: "Asioc" (Agios)

- The first sign is on himself
- the second is on the servants
- and the last is on the congregation.





- The veil on the priest's hand holding the cross is the one that was on the chalice
  - We are to be sanctified only through His blood.
- The priest signs himself first as being the one who is mostly in need for the sanctification.

## The Sanctus

The priest begins by praising God like the Angels:

St. Basil	St. Gregory	St. Cyril
Holy, holy, holy, indeed. O Lord our God.	Holy, holy, O Lord, and holy are You in everything, and most excellent is the light of Your essence.	heaven and earth are

*The* four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night, saying: "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come!" (Rev 4:8)



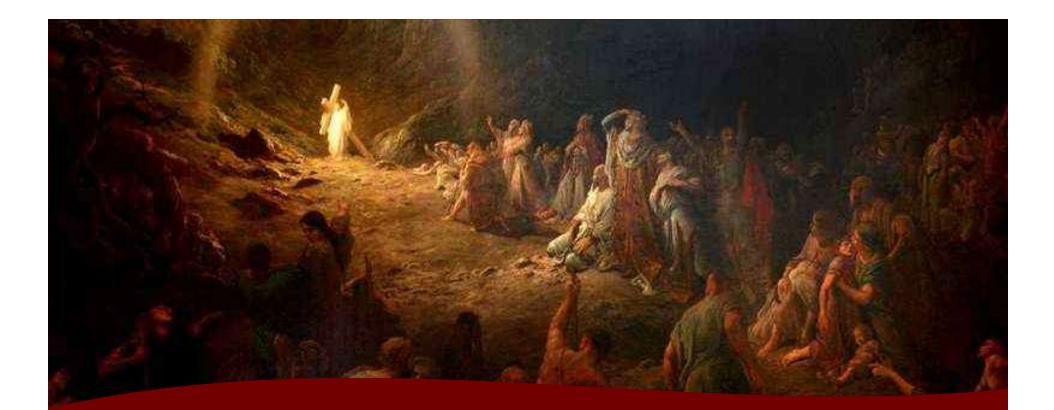
# The priest tells us the story of salvation:

St. Basil	St. Gregory	St. Cyril
the serpent, we fell from eternal life and were exiled from the Paradise of joy In the last days You manifested Yourself to us,	forbidden me to eat, that of which You have said to me, "Of it only do not eat." But according to my will, I did eat. I plucked for myself the sentence of death You, the Infinite, being God emptied Yourself and took the form of a	You are He who has created man according to Your own image and after Your likeness. And You have created everything through Your Wisdom— Your true Light, Your only-begotten Son, our Lord, God, Savior, and King of us all, Jesus Christ;

Was incarnated"
 The priest puts

 incense in the
 censor while saying
 was incarnate and
 became man".

Putting the incense
 in the censor points
 to the incarnation of
 the Lord Christ.



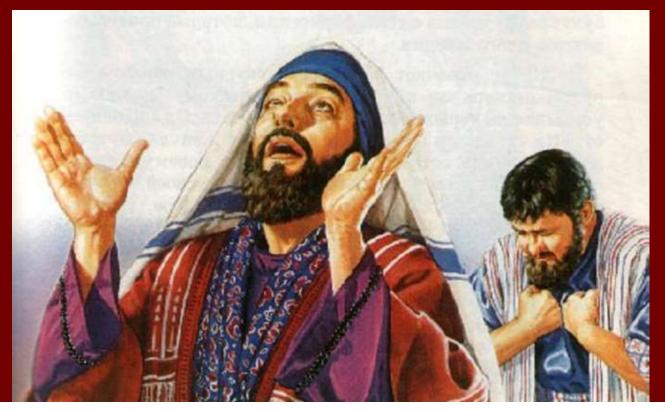
# "He descended into Hades "

When he reaches "He descended into Hades <u>through the cross</u>", the priest bows while setting his arms on his chest in the likeness of the cross.

## "He arose from the dead"

- The priest continues praying: "He rose from the dead"
  - when he says "..and give each one according to his deeds", he beats his chest in a sign of regret for his

sins.



# 2. The Sanctification

The priest removes the veils on his hands and "cleanses" his hands with the incense ascending from the censor.

 This is done as he is about to hold the mysteries and sanctify them.



Then he takes from the smoke of the incense and put it over the paten and the chalice while saying "...for being determined to give Himself up to death for the life of the world".

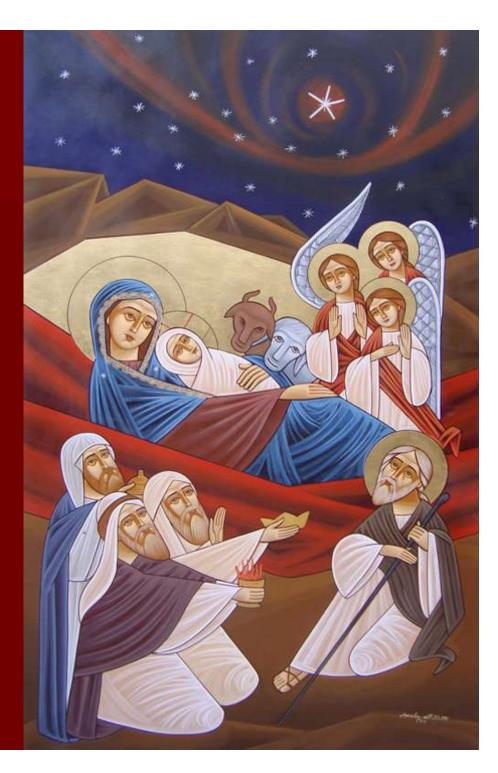
Putting the smoke of the incense above the bread and the wine points to the Lord giving up his Spirit on the cross.

The incense represents the life of the Lord Christ and the altar represents the cross. The priest takes the bread on his hands when saying "He lifted up his eyes..." He signs the bread three times saying "He had given thanks, He blessed it He sanctified it"

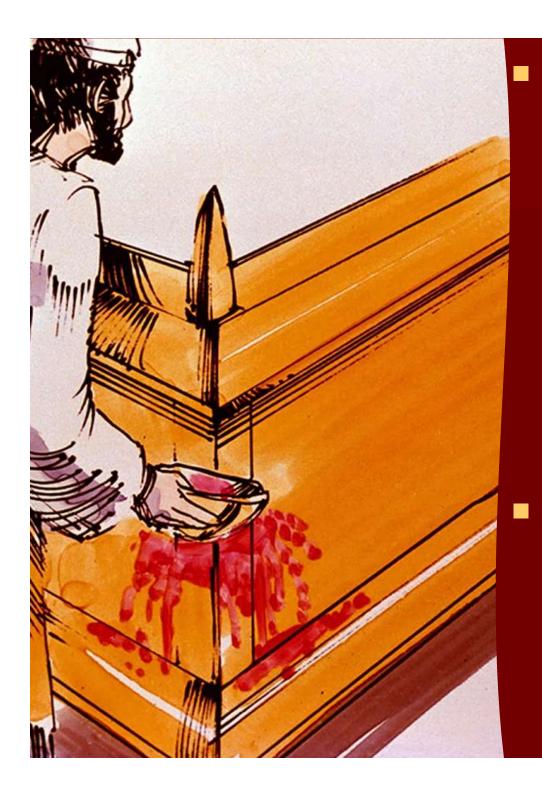


He divides into a third and two thirds from above downwards <u>without</u> separating the pieces.  This division resemble the incarnation of the Lord (one of the
 *Trinity*) without being separated from the
 Father or the Holy
 Spirit.

 It also represents that none of his bones were broken on the cross



The priest puts his finger on the edge of the chalice and make one circle counter-clockwise while saying 'Likewise also the cup after supper He mixed it of wine and water"



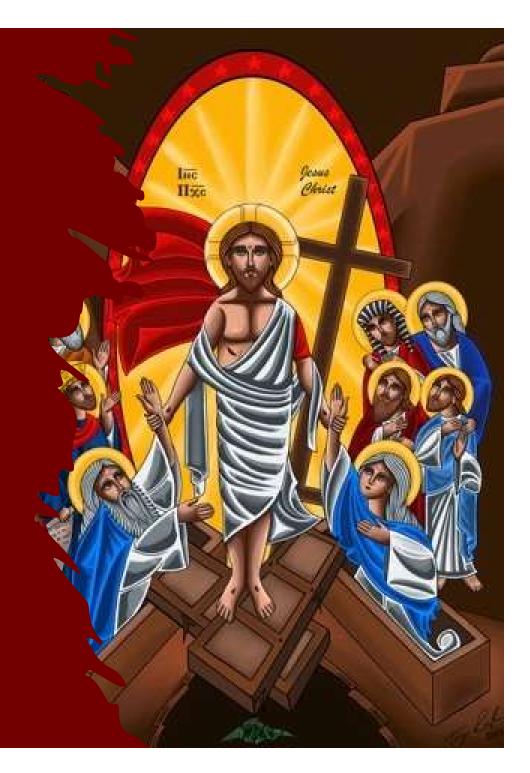
This circle indicates that the blood of the Lord was shed on behalf of the <u>whole</u> world.

The blood of the burnt offerings and the peace offerings in the Old Testament used to be sprinkled around the altar in a circular form.

The movement is counter-clockwise points that the blood is for the children of God who live pure life <u>against</u> the earthly lusts.

The priest holds the chalice and moves it from the west to the east and from the left to right. This signify that through His Blood we were transferred from:

- being aliens to God (at the west) to the paradise once more (at the east)
- being rejected (on the left) to become accepted (at the right).



The priest points to the Bread and the Chalice saying, "For every time you eat of this Bread and drink of this Cup you preach my death, confess My Resurrection and remember me till I come."

 Remembrance means the living memory rather than just remembering

Therefore, as we also commemorate His holy Passion, His Resurrection from the dead, His Ascension into the heavens, His Sitting at Your right hand, O Father... and His <u>Second Coming</u> from the heavens, awesome and full of glory...



The priest bows before the altar while saying inaudible the litany of the descent of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit descends upon the bread and the wine to change them to the body and the blood of the Lord.

## The Invocation

And we ask You, O Lord our Go —we Your sinful and unworthy

we worship You <u>by the pleasure of Your</u> <u>goodness</u>—that Your Holy Spirit may <u>descend</u>, upon us (pointing to himself),

and upon these gifts , set forth (pointing to the bread and the wine),

and <u>purify</u> them, <u>change</u> them, and <u>manifest</u> them as a sanctification of Your saints. The priest makes three quick signs of the cross as he prays: "And this Bread, He makes into His Holy Body."

#### "And this Chalice too, He makes into the precious Blood of the New Covenant." The bread has now

The bread has now become the Body of Christ and the wine has become the Blood of Christ.

# This is the moment when the bread and wine are changed!

- <u>ALL</u> now kneel and worship: "Worship God in fear and trembling!", "Worship the Lamb, the Word of God"
- say your prayers now...
- The priest can not sign on anything with the cross from that point on.
  - The Lord Christ is on the altar and be Priest, He is the one who blesses.
- If the bishop is praying:
  - the golden serpent (the sign of his bishopric) is taken away at this point as now the High Priest is present!



### The Lord Christ is now on the altar

### 3. The Litanies

After the conclusion of the sanctification of the mysteries, the priest takes the two veils on his hands and starts praying the litanies.

<u>Make us all worthy</u>, O our Master, to <u>partake</u> of Your Holies for the purification of our souls, bodies and spirits, that we become one body and one spirit, and may share the inheritance with all the saints who have pleased You ever since the beginning."

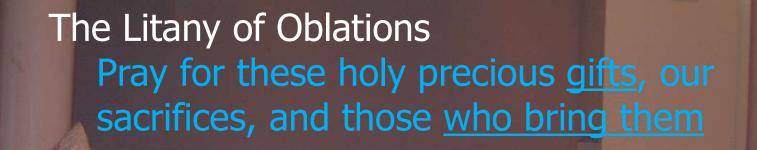
He pleads for:

- himself and the believers
- that the Lord prepares them for the partaking of His Mysteries
- for the salvation and sanctification to their souls, bodies and spirits
- in order to become one with Him, and abide in Him,
- and share an inheritance with all the saints.

Then he prays the Litanies

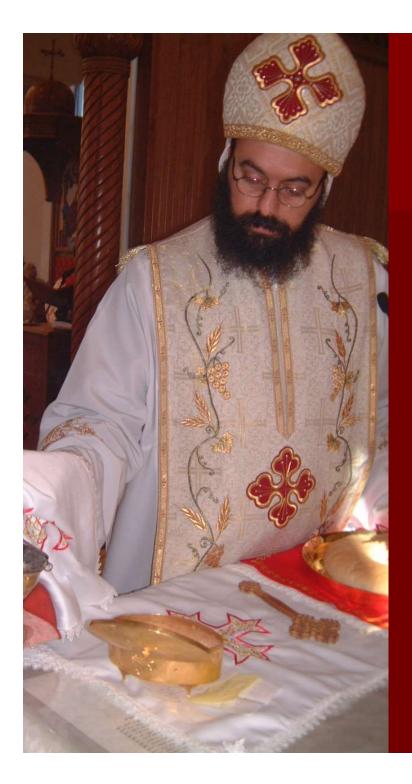
The Litany of Peace: of the church The Litany of the Fathers: Patriarch, Bishop The Litany of the Ministers: - priests, deacons, ... The Litany of Mercy: - Remember, O Lord, to have mercy upon us all The Litany of salvation of the The Litany of the Seasons: – Waters, Seeds and Fruits





## The Litanies

1. St. Basil	St. Gregory	St. Cyril
<ol> <li>Peace</li> <li>Fathers</li> <li>Ministers</li> <li>Mercy</li> <li>Salvation</li> <li>Seasons</li> </ol>	Litanies: Yes, we ask you O Christ 1. Peace 2. Fathers 3. Ministers 4. Kings (leaders)	<ol> <li>Peace</li> <li>Sick</li> <li>Travelers</li> <li>Seasons</li> <li>King (leader)         <ul> <li>Commemoration</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
7. Oblations	<ol> <li>Government officials, and soldiers</li> <li>Oblations</li> <li>Captives</li> <li>Mercy</li> </ol>	<ul> <li>6. Departed</li> <li>7. Oblations</li> <li>8. Patriarch</li> <li>9. Bishops</li> <li>10. Rest of the Orthodox</li> <li>11. Place (salvation)</li> </ul>
	(Je nai nan ) 9. Seasons Litanies: Healing for the sick	<ul> <li>12. Who are standing in this place</li> <li>13. Who asked us for prayer</li> <li>14. Priesthood</li> <li>15. Assemblies <ul> <li>Institution Narrative—</li> </ul> </li> <li>16. Mercy (Je nai nan )</li> </ul>



# 4. The Commemoration of the Saints

The priest prays the commemoration of the saints

He puts a hand of incense in the censor when praying the diptych

#### The saints represent the cloud of witnesses surrounding us.

- We remember their struggle against sin and their virtues.
- We remember that we are one church.
- The saints that are mentioned are mostly those who fought for the faith
  - "all the spirits of the righteous <u>perfected in the</u> <u>faith</u>."



- St. Mary the ever virgin, a sword had pierced through her heart, so she shared the sacrifice.
- John the forerunner and Baptist gave his head up while witnessing for the truth.
- St Mark the apostle and martyr, served until the last drop of his blood all over the streets of Alexandria.
- Saints Severus, Discorous and Athanasius defended the orthodox faith until death.
- St Peter the seal of martyrs
- The Holy fathers of the Ecumenical councils



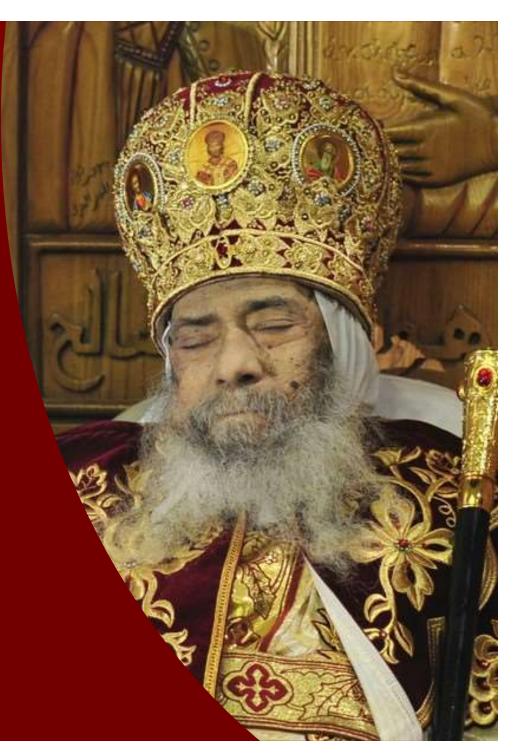


 In the liturgy of Great Thursday, the commemoration of the saints is <u>not</u> prayed

- <u>Salvation occurred on the</u>
   <u>Cross</u>
- Paradise was closed until then
- reconciliation with the heavenly had not occurred.
- On Bright Saturday, the commemoration <u>is</u> prayed.

## 5. The Diptych

- "Diptych" is a list of names of the departed that are commemorated during the Divine Liturgy.
- The sorrowful long hymn of the diptych is not to be chanted on Sunday, any of the Lord's feasts or the Holy Fifty days.
- The priest puts incense while mentioning the departed



## Why do we pray for the departed?

- The church absolves them from sins that were repented from or committed unknowingly
- As they are in the presence of God, we ask them also to pray for us. It is a fellowship of love between them and us.
- We remember their good deeds:

"But these were merciful men, whose righteousness has not been forgotten ... Their bodies are buried in peace, but their name lives forevermore ... The people will tell of their wisdom, and the congregation will show forth their praise" (Sirach 44:10,14,15)

It makes them joyful that we remember them, and they sometimes come and attend the prayers with us

# The Fraction: Introduction

The priest prays the conclusion of the diptych: "those O Lord..."

He prays: "lead-us into your kingdom...". He concludes by "lрнмн паст", and bows before the altar without signing the congregation.

- He does not turn his face away from the sacrifice
- The Lord is on the altar and <u>He</u> is the one who bless the people.

- The priest puts the two veils down on the altar and does not take them into his hands again.
- The priest prays: "Again, let us give thanks...for He also has made us worthy now to stand in this holy place... Let us also ask Hin to make us worthy of the communion..."

#### He takes the Holy Body by his right hand and put it on the palm of his left hand.



He points with his right index to the middle part "Despotikon" (The Master) of the Body while saying "the Holy Body". The congregation then kneels and says, "We worship Your Holy Body." Then he dips the tip of his right index into the chalice while saying "And the precious Blood". The congregation responds: "And Your precious Blood."

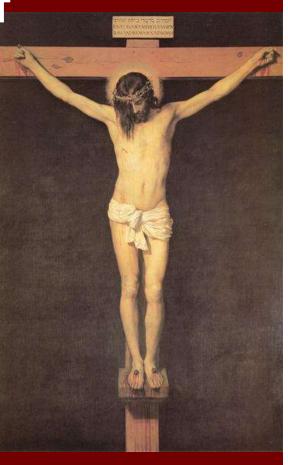


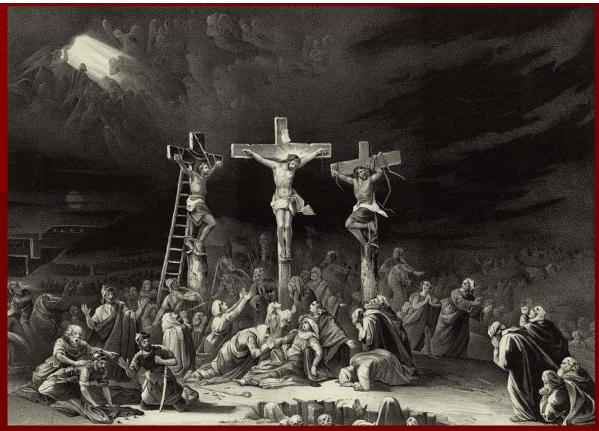
He brings the Body, which is on his left hand, closer to the Chalice and puts his index finger with the Blood on it on the *Despotikon*, and prays: "of His Christ, the Pantocrator, the Lord our God

#### He makes the sign of the cross on the Pure Body with the precious Blood.

The crossing of the Body with the Blood refers to the Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ that ran on His Body on the Cross from the nails, the crown and the spear in His Holy Body.

 Here the congregation cries out saying "Lord have mercy" because the situation represents the crucifixion of Christ and shedding His precious blood as mercy and love for the whole world.

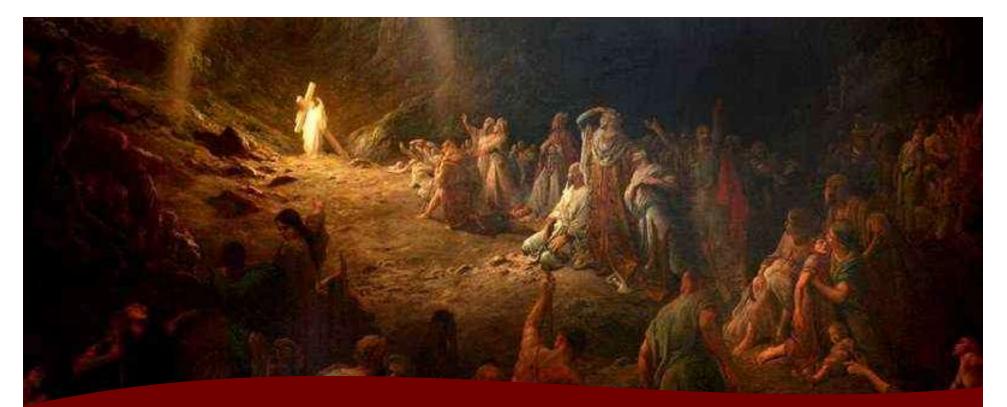




- "]phnh πacı": The priest gives the peace to the congregation at these moment when all the creation trembled:
  - the sun darkened, the earth quaked, the rocks cracked, and dead arose.

When the priest starts holding the sacraments, the deacons light the candles for the holy Body and the precious blood:

- honoring the Divine sacraments.
- Representing sacrifice: the candle gives itself to light for the others, likewise Christ, who's Body the priest is holding, has given Himself for the whole world.



 The lighted candle also reminds us of the salvation that our Lord has made on the cross for those who slept.

His soul descended into Hades to shine upon those who are sitting in the darkness and the shadow of death and to bring them back to paradise.



The priest transfers the Body from his right hand to his left:

This reminds us with what the Jews (the people of the right) have done by delivering the Lord to the hands of the gentiles (the people of the left)

## The Fraction

- The priest starts dividing the Holy Body as a symbol of the Lord's sufferings.
  - + The Fraction is a prayer of thanksgiving to God for His inexpressible gift
    - He gave us His Holy Body and precious Blood as an eternal life to those who worthily partake of them.
    - It is also a supplication that He may give purity to our hearts, souls and bodies so that we dare, in the intimacy of His Divine love, partake of them.
    - The priest may choose one of the many fraction prayers
    - General fractions (prayed any time)
      - Fractions of special occasions (feasts, fasts)

The priest breaks the right side one third and places it perpendicular to the remainder two thirds (in the shape of a

Cross).



He breaks off the top part of the portion that contains the Despotikon and puts it in the eastern part of the paten: the Head. He breaks off another portion from the lower part, puts it in the Western side of the paten: the limbs.

He takes a piece from the right side of the right portion puts it in the paten towards the right.

He puts the rest of that portion in the paten to the left.
This will make the shape of the cross.

Then he detaches the two remaining portions, proceeding from the top to the bottom and places it in the center of the paten.

 The left third of the oblation, he divides it into four parts, without separation





The priest then gathers all the divided jewels and puts them back in their place
The Body now is intact with all divisions in place as if the fraction never happened.

- Christ suffered, was crucified, and rose from the dead!
- "<u>stood</u> a Lamb as though it had been <u>slain</u>" (Rev 5)



#### Rites of the Fraction (Arabic video)



https://youtu.be/jhXKC0uUl4s

# Prayers of submissions and absolutions. (1)

- At the end of the fraction prayer, the priest asks God to "purify our bodies and souls, our eyes and minds, our thoughts and intentions, so that without fear we say 'Our Father...'. "
- The Lord's Prayer is said in an audible voice by all those in the church.
  - The Lords prayer bears all prayers and concern of the Christian soul.

# Prayers of submissions and absolutions. <sup>(2)</sup> At the end of the Lord's prayer the deacon

addresses the congregation 'Bow your heads before the Lord'.

- The congregation bow their heads only and not complete kneeling to the ground, because complete kneeling befits worship and honor to God.
- Bowing of the head only matches confession of sins in humility and therefore we, at this point are in confession with God, to forgive our sins before we are worthy of receiving Holy Communion.

#### 7. The signings before the confession The confession

- The Priest then gives the sign of peace: "Ірнин пасı"
  - the forgiveness that was granted by Jesus to the thief on the right hand side.
- The priest takes the Despotikon and raises it very high:
  - Jesus was hung on the cross.
- In a loud voice he calls the congregation for communion saying 'The Holies are for the Holy people...'
  - only the worthy should come forward to the communion.

The signings before the confession and the confession

- The priest then places the Despotikon in the Blood saying 'Blessed is the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God...'
  - 'This Body is for this Blood and this Blood is for this Body.'
  - Putting the Despotikon into the Blood and raising it, refers to the Baptism
    - in baptism is the remembrance of the Lord's death and resurrection.

He touches all the wounds of the broken body with the blood, as the Lord Christ bled from every part of His Holy Body.

He does this and prays three time: "The Holy body and the precious blood of Jesus Christ the son of our God, Amen!"



#### The Confession

Amen. Amen. I believe, I believe, I believe and <u>confess to the last breath</u>, that this is the life-giving body that your onlybegotten Son, our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ took from our lady, the lady of us all, the holy Theotokos Saint May. He made it **one** with his Divinity <u>without</u> mingling, without confusion and without alteration. He witnessed the good confession before Pontius Pilate. He gave it up for us upon the holy wood of the cross, of his own will, for us all. Truly I believe that his divinity parted not from his humanity for a single moment nor a twinkling of an eye. Given for us for salvation, remission of sins and eternal life to those who partake of him. I believe, I believe, I believe that this is so in truth. Amen.

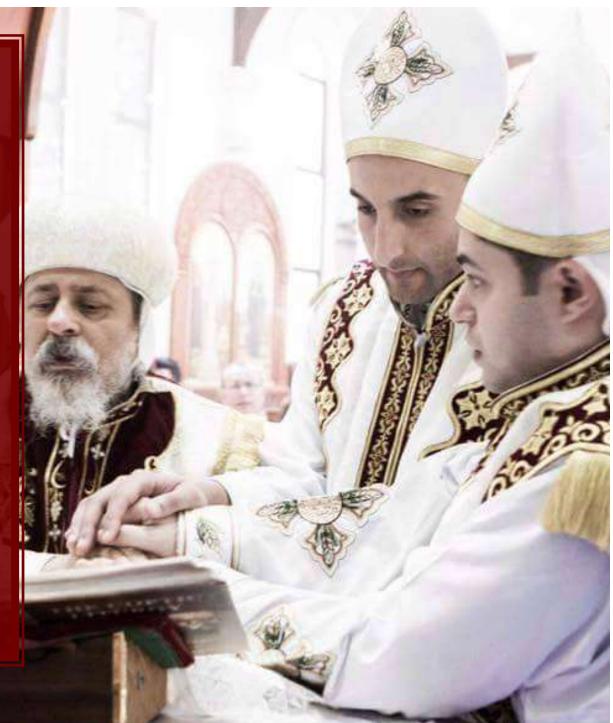


## Handing the Confession

• When a new priest is ordained, he places his hands on the hands of the Bishop.

• The Bishop recites the confession and the priest recites it after him.

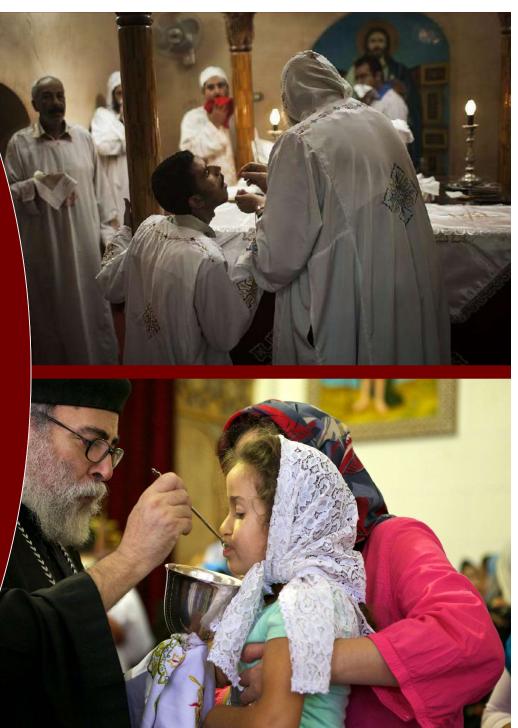
• In this way, he is handing the faith contained in the confession to the new priest



- A deacon stands opposite the priest.
- He holds a handkerchief folded in half to form a triangle, with a cross in his right hand and a candle in his left, placing it against his face.
  - He covers his face from the Glory of God present in front of him on the altar, just as the angels in heaven, cover their faces with their wings.
  - The cross symbolizes the Lord Christ who endured all the tortures on the Cross and gave Himself up on it for us
  - The candle: Sacrifice burns itself to give light to the world.
- He confesses and proclaims, on behalf of the entire congregation, that all what the priest has proclaimed in his confession.
- He then asks the congregation to pray for those participating in the sacrament so that they would be worthy of the communion so that they do not place themselves under judgement.

8. The Distribution of the Sacraments
The communion is distributed to all the believers: according to their rank.

- All believers must partake of both the Body and Blood.
- A communicant must be:
  - Member of an Eastern
     Orthodox church
  - Fasting at least 9 hours from midnight
  - Repentant and practicing regular confession
  - Participating in church fasts, if applicable.



#### The priest "presents" the body before the people twice They respond: "Blessed is He Who comes in the name of the Lord!"

This represents the first and second coming of the Lord Christ

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### Consuming the Sacrifice

- When the Body leaves the altar, and the Blood is still present at the Altar, a deacon is to kneel before the altar with a candle.
- The entire Sacrifice must be consumed nothing is to be left over:
  - "You shall let none of it remain until morning" (Exo 12:10)
- At the end of the communion, the priest makes sure no jewels "particles of the Body" are left on the tray.
- The deacon confirms this and says 'Shere Pi-Estavros' (Hail to the Holy Cross).

# Washing the vessels

- After communion, the utensi are washed and dried
- They are wrapped in a cloth, the first two corners are tied twice and the remaining two corners are been tied three times.
  - When the priest opens the cloth at the start of the liturgy, he prays "In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit" for the first three
  - and "Glory and honor, honor and glory" for the remaining two.



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### 9. The Dismissal

Releasing the Angel

- The priest the prays on a handful of water and blesses it by blowing into it.
- If there are any other priests, they blow on it as well.
- The priests leaves some water on the altar and then says "O angel of this sacrifice, rising to the Highest with hymn, remember us before the Lord so that he may forgive us our sins."
- With this, the angle departs, and the service is concluded.



The Canon is chanted: *Amen Alleluia...* The priest sprinkles water on the congregation as a blessing

> This water was present in the Sanctuary and was blessed with the prayers.





OH, CLAP YOUR HANDS, ALL YOU PEOPLES! (PS 46)



The priest Closes the veil of the sanctu ary saying:

"O LORD, KEEP THE GATES OF YOUR CHURCH OPEN BEFORE US ALL THE TIME!"

# Distributing the

 The priest distributes the ohosia Ologia (blessing)
 This is the rest of the holy bread (oblations) that was present in the liturgy outside the sanctuary.