

# THE SERVICE OF CONSECRATION

The Priest takes the kairos and prepares the Proskomidi. The Bishop goes to the Church in which the Holy Relics have been placed. There he vests in all his hierarchical vestments and gives the blessing.

**DEACON**            Master, Bless.

**ARCHBISHOP**

Blessed is our God, always now and forever, and unto the ages of ages.

**READER**            Amen.

## **Psalm 142**

O Lord, Hear my prayer, give ear to my supplication in your faithfulness; answer me in your righteousness. Do not enter into judgment with your servant, for no one living is righteous before you. For the enemy has pursued me, crushing my life to the ground, making me sit in darkness like those long dead. Therefore my spirit faints within me; my heart within me is appalled. I remember the days of old, I think about all your deeds, I meditate on the works of your hands. I stretch out my hands to you; my soul

thirsts for you like a parched land. Answer me quickly, O LORD; my spirit fails. Do not hide your face from me, or I shall be like those who go down to the Pit. Let me hear of your steadfast love in the morning, for in you I put my trust. Teach me the way I should go, for to you I lift up my soul. Save me, O LORD, from my enemies; I have fled to you for refuge. Teach me to do your will, for you are my God. Let your good spirit lead me on a level path. For your name's sake, O LORD, preserve my life. In your righteousness bring me out of trouble. In your steadfast love cut off my enemies, and destroy all my adversaries, for I am your servant.

### The Small Litany by the Deacon

Again and again in peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and protect us, O God, by your grace.

Remembering our most holy, pure, most blessed and glorious Lady, the Theotokos and Ever Virgin Mary, with all the Saints, let us commit ourselves to one another, and our whole life to Christ our God.

## ARCHBISHOP

For you are holy, O God, and to you we give glory, to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever, and unto the ages of ages.

**People** Amen.

**DEACON** Let us pray to the Lord.

**People** Lord, have mercy.

## HIERARCHICAL PRAYER

Lord our God, who are faithful in Your words and truthful in your promises, who gave your holy Martyrs the grace to fight the good fight, to finish the course of true religion and to keep the faith of the true confession, be entreated, all-holy Master, by their intercessions and give to us, your unworthy servants, the grace of a part and inheritance with them, so that, becoming imitators of them, we may be found worthy of the good things laid up for them.

Through the mercy and love for humankind of your only-begotten Son, with whom you are blessed, together with Your all-holy, good and life-giving Spirit, now and forever, and unto the ages of ages.

**People** Amen.

**Archbishop** Peace be to all.

**Deacon**

Let us bow our heads to the Lord.

**HIERARCHICAL PRAYER**

**L**ord our God, at the intercessions of our holy Lady, Mother of God, and of all your Saints, direct the works of the hands of Your unworthy servants, and make us worthy to be well-pleasing to your goodness.

**B**lessed and glorified be the power of your kingdom, of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and forever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

**After the ekphonesis the Archbishop censes the Holy Relics and then raises them with the Paten. The exodus from and procession around the Church begins in the following order: the Acolytes, the Choir, the Chanters, the Icon of the Church, the Priests from junior to senior with the senior holding the Holy Gospel, the Archbishop with the Holy Relics, followed by the entire congregation, leaving the Church completely empty.**

## Archbishop

### Grave Tone.

Holy Martyrs, who fought the good fight and received your crowns, intercede with the Lord to have mercy on our souls.

Glory to you, Christ God, the boast of Apostles, the joy of Martyrs, whose preaching was the consubstantial Trinity.

The Archbishop and the people exit the Church, and the outer doors are closed and locked. No one remains inside except for one person (priest or lay person) who will assist with the Dialogue of the Entrance. The Archbishop and the people process once around the church that is being consecrated while the following Idiomela of the Consecration are chanted.

### Tone 1. By Monk John.

Be renewed, be dedicated, O new Jerusalem; for your light has come and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. For the Father built this house; the Son established this house; the Spirit which enlightens and strengthens and sanctifies our souls.

**The same tone. By Anatolios.**

In the days of old when Solomon dedicated the temple he offered you, Lord, sacrifices of irrational beasts and whole burnt offerings, but when you were well-pleased, O Savior, to put an end to forms in order to make known the truth, the whole world began to offer bloodless sacrifices to Your glory; for you are Master of all things and by the Holy Spirit You make all things holy.

**Tone 6.**

To honor consecration stated the old law, and it is good; but indeed, what is new should be honored through consecration, for islands are dedicated to God, as Isaiah says, which are to be understood as the Churches of the nations, which have now been established and received foundation in God. Therefore, let us celebrate spiritually today's Consecration.

Glory. Both now.

**Tone 5.**

O Logos, who rest in the bosom of the Father, send down your Holy Spirit upon the Church which has been built in Your name.

When the Archbishop arrives before the main doors of the Church, he places the Holy Relics on the table that has been placed in the predetermined location before the doors. The Reader begins the reading of the Epistle after the Deacon calls the people to attend.

### Prokeimenon.

**Deacon:** Let us be attentive.

**Reader:**

The Lord is my enlightenment and my Savior, whom shall I fear?

**Verse:** The Lord is the defender of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?

**Deacon:** Wisdom.

**Reader:**

The Reading is from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Hebrews. [2:11-18]

**Deacon:** Let us be attentive.

**Reader:**

**B**rethren, he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified have all one origin. That is why he is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, "I will proclaim thy name to my brethren, in the midst of the congregation I will praise thee." And again, "I will put my trust in him." And again, "Here am I, and the children God has given me." Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same nature, that through death he might destroy him who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong bondage. For surely it is not with angels that he is concerned but with the descendants of Abraham. Therefore he had to be made like his brethren in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make expiation for the sins of the people. For because he himself has suffered and been tempted, he is able to help those who are tempted.

**Archbishop:** Peace be to You.

**Reader:** Alleluia. (3x)



**Deacon:** Wisdom. Arise. Let us hear the holy Gospel.

**Archbishop:** Peace be to all.

**People:** And to your spirit.

**Archbishop:** The Reading is from the holy Gospel according to St. Matthew. [16:13-19]

**Deacon** Let us be attentive.

**People** Glory to you, O Lord. Glory to you.

### **Archbishop**

At that time, Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do men say that the Son of man is?" And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the powers of death shall not prevail against it. I

will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

**People:** Glory to you, Lord! Glory to you!

After the gospel has been read, the Archbishop raises the Holy Relics and processes around the Church with the clergy and the people in the same order as they completed the first procession around the Church. As the second procession is made the chanters and or choir chant the 3rd Ode of the Canon of the Dedication or Agios o Theos.

**Prokeimenon.**

**Deacon:** Let us be attentive.

**Reader:**

In embroidered garments she is lead to the King.

**Verse:** Her virgin companions will be brought to you.

**Deacon:** Wisdom.

**Reader:**

The Reading is from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Hebrews. [9,1-7]

**Deacon:** Let us be attentive.

**Reader:**

**B**rethren, the first covenant had regulations for worship and an earthly sanctuary. For a tent was prepared, the outer one, in which were the lampstand and the table and the bread of the Presence; it is called the Holy Place. Behind the second curtain stood a tent called the Holy of Holies, having the golden altar of incense and the ark of the covenant covered on all sides with gold, which contained a golden urn holding the manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. Of these things we cannot now speak in detail. These preparations having thus been made, the priests go continually into the outer tent, performing their ritual duties; but into the second only the high priest goes, and he but once a year, and not without taking blood which he offers for himself and for the errors of the people.

**Archbishop:** Peace be to you.

**People:** Alleluia. (3x)

**Deacon** Wisdom. Arise. Let us hear the holy Gospel.

**Archbishop** Peace be to all.

**People** And to your spirit.

**Archbishop** The Reading is from the holy Gospel according to St. Luke [10:38-42, 11:27-28]

**Deacon** Let us be attentive.

**People** Glory to you, O Lord. Glory to you.

**Archbishop:**

At that time, Jesus entered a village; and a woman named Martha received him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to his teaching. But Martha was distracted with much serving; and she went to him and said, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her then to help me." But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things; one thing is needful. Mary has chosen the good portion, which

shall not be taken away from her." As he said this, a woman in the crowd raised her voice and said to him, "Blessed is the womb that bore you, and the breasts that you sucked!" But he said, "Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it!"

**People:** Glory to you, Lord! Glory to you!

The Archbishop raises the Holy Relics a third time and processes around the Church with the clergy and the people. The chanter and or choir chant the 6th Ode of the Canon of the Dedication.

When the Archbishop reaches the doors of the Church for the last time, he exclaims with a loud voice:

Blessed are you, Christ our God, to the ages of ages.  
Amen.

Then the following Troparion is chanted

Tone 3.

Christ God, who founded your Church on the rock of faith, direct our prayer, and accept us who cry out to you, ‘Save us, our God!’

While the above Troparion is being chanted, the Archbishop places the Holy Relics on the table and, when the Troparion is finished, then

**Deacon** Let us pray to the Lord.

**The Archbishop says the following Prayer.**

God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who are blessed to the ages, who, through the veil of His flesh, dedicated for us anew the entry into the Church of the ancestors whose names are written in heaven, where there is the pure sound of those who feast and a voice of gladness. Do you, O Master, lover of mankind, look on us sinners and your unworthy servants, who perform the Consecration of the honored Church of **N.**, as a symbol of your most holy Church, that is of our bodily tabernacle, which, through the all-praised Apostle Paul, you vouchsafed to call your temple and the members of your Christ.

**Make it firm until the consummation of the age, unshaken and glorified by You, and count us worthy**

to worship You, your only-begotten Son and your Holy Spirit, with hymns of praise and glory and with full knowledge and awe, and to be found worthy of your divine mercy, so that our prayers, which we offer to your ineffable compassion on behalf of all your People, may be acceptable to your goodness. Through the prayers of our most pure Lady, the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary.

**For** You are Holy, O God, and you rest among the Saints, and to you we ascribe glory, to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

**Deacon:** Let us pray to the Lord.

**The Archbishop says the Prayer of The Entrance.**

**Master and Lord** our God, You have established in heaven the orders and hosts of angels and archangels to minister to Your glory. Grant that the holy angels may enter with us that together we may serve and glorify Your goodness.

For to You belong all glory, honor, and worship to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

After this, the doors of the Church still being shut, the Archbishop recites the following dialogue with a priest who is standing behind the closed doors. The Archbishop raising His Hierarchical staff (Ravdos) knocks on the doors of the Church and says.

**Tone 6.**

Lift up your gates you rulers; and be lifted up you eternal gates, and the king of glory will enter.

From inside the Church and behind the closed doors the priest stands and answers.

Who is this king of glory?

The Archbishop outside replies

The Lord mighty and powerful, the Lord powerful in war. Lift up your gates you rulers; and be lifted up you eternal gates, and the king of glory will enter.

The Priest inside.

Who is this king of glory?



**The Archbishop outside replies**

The Lord mighty and powerful, the Lord powerful in war. Lift up your gates you rulers; and be lifted up you eternal gates, and the king of glory will enter.

**The Priest inside.**

**Who is this king of glory?**

**The Archbishop outside replies**

**The Lord of powers, he is the king of glory.**

At the third answer the Archbishop once again lifts the Holy Relics from the table and makes the sign of the Cross with them three times on the closed doors. And as soon as the third answer is completed, the Godparent(s) of the new Church come forward and assist the Archbishop in turning the key which will open the doors of the new Church. Once completed, the Archbishop pushes the closed doors open. When they have been opened, the Archbishop enters the Church first, with the Clergy, the Chanters, and all the people following, as the Apolytikion of Consecration is chanted.

**Tone 2.**

As the beauty of the firmament above, O Lord, you have displayed the loveliness of the holy Dwelling of your glory below. Strengthen it to age on age and accept, through the Mother of God, our prayers which are offered in it without ceasing to you, the Life and Resurrection of all.

The Archbishop and the Priests enter the Holy Sanctuary. The Holy Relics are placed in the reliquary prepared for them and Holy Myron is poured over them three times, while the

**Archbishop exclaims**

Eternal be the memory of the Founders of this holy Church.

**The chanter answer.**

May their memory be eternal.

The Archbishop, with great care, secures the Holy Relics in the silver box and deposits it in the bottom of the cavity in the center of the Altar Table, called the 'stem'. Once this is completed, the deacon calls the people to prayer.

## 2

**Deacon:** Let us pray to the Lord.

Archbishop

**FIRST PRAYER**

Lord our God, who granted glory to the Holy Martyrs who died for your sake, that their Holy Relics may be sown throughout the whole world, in your Holy Churches, and to bear fruits of healings. Do you, O Master, who are the giver of all good things, through the prayers of your Saints **N. & M.**, whose relics you have been well-pleased to be placed in your honored Church, make us worthy, that we may blamelessly offer to You in this Church the bloodless sacrifice, the Divine Liturgy. And grant us our requests that are for our salvation. May the relics of Your saints, who suffered for Your Holy Name in their lifetime, be constant reminders of Your miraculous power, which leads to our salvation.

For Yours is the Kingdom, the power and the glory, of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and forever, and unto the ages of ages.

**People:** Amen.

**Deacon:** Let us pray to the Lord.

Archbishop

**SECOND PRAYER**

Lord God, our Savior, who creates and uses all things for the salvation of humankind, accept the prayers of your unworthy servants so that we may complete, at this time with pure hearts, the Consecration of this Church, that has been erected for our salvation and Your glory in the name of Saint N., and grant that we might always have access to this Holy Altar.

For to you belong all glory, honor and worship, to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and for ever, and unto the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

And after the Amen the Archbishop places the silver box containing the Holy Relics into the cavity in the center of the Holy Altar Table where they will remain permanently and pours first some wax-mastic over the silver box, places in the cavity the names of parishioners both living and departed, and then fills the cavity with some powdered marble. Once all this has been done, wax-mastic is pour as the final layer over the marble which has filled the entire cavity and the marble or wooden slab is secured over the opening and sealed with the wax-mastic. While all

this is being done the chanter chants or recites the following:

### PSALM 144

I will extol thee, my God and King, and bless thy name forever and ever. Every day I will bless thee, and praise thy name forever and ever. Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised, and his greatness is unsearchable. One generation shall laud thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts. On the glorious splendor of thy majesty, and on thy wondrous works, I will meditate. Men shall proclaim the might of thy terrible acts, and I will declare thy greatness. They shall pour forth the fame of thy abundant goodness, and shall sing aloud of thy righteousness. The LORD is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. The LORD is good to all, and his compassion is over all that he has made. All thy works shall give thanks to thee, O LORD, and all thy saints shall bless thee! They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and tell of thy power, to make known to the sons of men thy mighty deeds, and the glorious splendor of thy kingdom. Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endures throughout all generations. The

LORD is faithful in all his words, and gracious in all his deeds. The LORD upholds all who are falling, and raises up all who are bowed down. The eyes of all look to thee, and you give to them their food in due season. You open your hand, you satisfy the desire of every living thing. The LORD is just in all his ways, and kind in all his doings. The LORD is near to all who call upon him, to all who call upon him in truth. He fulfils the desire of all who fear him, he also hears their cry, and saves them. The LORD preserves all who love him; but all the wicked he will destroy. My mouth will speak the praise of the LORD, and let all flesh bless his holy name forever and ever.

While the wax-mastic that has overflowed is being scraped up with a plastic scraper so as not to damage the Altar Table and the place, on which it flowed is being cleaned, the chanters chant or recite:

### PSALM 22

The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want; he makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters; he restores my soul. He leads me

in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of my enemies; thou anointest my head with oil, my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

The Deacon immediately brings the white garment and places it over the Archbishop's hierarchical vestments, in front from his chest to his feet, but behind from the armholes to the waist, it is brought through the two ends and tied with a belt, so that the hierarchical vestments are not visible.

Two new cloths are wrapped round his arms and also tied with a belt. While the Bishop is being dressed like this, a prayer mat is placed before the holy Doors. Some Bishops wear a long white tunic over their vestments, tied round at the wrists like a sticharion. Then he exclaims,

**The Archbishop:**

Blessed is our God, always now and forever, and unto the ages of ages.

**People.** Amen.

**Then the Deacon says:**

Again and again **on bended knees** let us pray to the Lord.

**The Archbishop, kneeling in front of the Altar Table, prays as follows:**

**G**od, without beginning and eternal, who brought all things out of nothing into being, who dwells in unapproachable light, who has heaven as your throne, and earth as your footstool, You who gave Moses the commandments and the example, and placed in Bezaleel the spirit of wisdom, and made them able to complete the Tabernacle of the Covenant, in which rules of worship were established representing the foreshadow of Your truth. You who gave Solomon breadth and greatness of heart and through him you raised up the Temple of old. Through Your Holy and all-praised Apostles you dedicated anew worship in Spirit and the grace of the true Tabernacle, and through them you planted in all the world your Holy



Churches and altars, O Lord of powers, that there might be offered to You sacred and bloodless sacrifices.

Lord, by Your will this Church has been established in the name of Saint N. for your glory, and that of your only-begotten Son and the Holy Spirit. Lord, Immortal and giver of great gifts, remember your acts of compassion and mercy, for they are from everlasting, and do not despise us, burdened as we are with a multitude of sins, do not break your covenant because of our uncleanness, but disregard our offences, give us strength and the ability by the grace and visitation of your Holy and life-giving Spirit, to accomplish without condemnation the dedication of this Church and to effect the consecration of the Altar within it, so that, praising you in it with psalms and hymns and spiritual liturgies, we may at all times magnify your compassion.

Yes, Master, Lord, God our Savior, the hope of all the ends of the earth, hear us sinners as we pray to You, and send down your all-holy, venerable and almighty Spirit and sanctify this Church. Fill it with unending light; choose it for Your dwelling; make it a tabernacle of Your glory; adorn it with Your divine

and mystical gifts of grace; set it as a haven for the storm-tossed, a place of healing for the passions, a refuge for the weak, a place that puts demons to flight. Let Your eyes be upon it day and night. Let Your ears be attentive to the supplication of those who enter it with fear of You and with devotion, and who call upon Your all-honored and Holy name. Whatever they ask of You, You will hear in heaven above, show mercy and be gracious to them. Keep this Church unshaken until the consummation of the age and declare the Altar within it to be a Holy of Holies by the power and activity of your Holy Spirit. Glorify it more than the Mercy Seat, in the ancient Temple, so that the sacred rites performed on it may reach your Holy and spiritual altar above the heavens and bring us the grace of your most Holy protection. For we trust, not in the work of our unworthy hands, but in your ineffable loving-kindness.

**Deacon:** Help us, save us, have mercy on us, **raise us up** and keep us, O God, by your grace.

**Deacon:** In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

**Deacon** For the peace from above and for the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord.

**Deacon** For the peace of the whole world, the stability of the holy Churches of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

**Deacon** For this holy house, and for those who enter it with faith, reverence and the fear of God, let us pray to the Lord.

**Deacon** For our Archbishop Demetrios., for the reverend presbyters, for the deaconate in Christ, and for all the clergy and the people, let us pray to the Lord.

**Deacon** For the work of our hands and of our brothers and sisters gathered here, let us pray to the Lord.

**Deacon** For the sanctification of this Holy Church and Altar by the presence, power and activity of the Holy Spirit, let us pray to the Lord.

**Deacon** For this parish and city, for every city and country, and for the faithful who live in them, let us pray to the Lord.

**Deacon** For those who travel by land, sea, and air, for the sick, the suffering, the captives, and for their salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

**Deacon** For our deliverance from all affliction, wrath, danger and distress, let us pray to the Lord.

**Deacon** Help us, save us, have mercy upon us, and protect us, O God, by your grace.

**Deacon** Remembering our most holy, pure, blessed and glorious Lady, the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary, with all the Saints, let us commit ourselves to one another and our whole life to Christ our God.

**Archbishop:** For you, our God, are Holy and you rest among the saints and martyrs who died for You, and to you we give glory, to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever, and unto the ages of ages.

**People:** Amen.

Then the Archbishop standing in front of the Holy Altar Table and taking the pieces of soap makes the sign of the precious Cross upon them and places them on the Holy Altar Table. A basin is then brought to the Archbishop filled with warm water.

**Deacon** Let us pray to the Lord.

The Archbishop, bowing his head, prays over the water in a low voice.

Lord our God, who sanctified the streams of the Jordan through your saving manifestation, send down the grace of your All-Holy Spirit on this altar before you, and bless us and this water for the sanctifying and completion of your Holy Altar.

**Aloud.**

For You are blessed to the ages of ages.

**People:** Amen.

After the Amen the Archbishop pours water three times on the slab of the Holy Altar Table in the sign of the Cross, saying:

In the name of the Father,

and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit,  
now and forever, and unto the ages of ages.

**People:** Amen.

And by means of the water that has been poured out, with the pieces of soap that have been put there, he wipes the table. Then he dries the Holy Altar Table with new sponges, but the column, because he cannot wipe it with his hands, he washes and dries it with a sponge. While this is being done, the chanters chant

### PSALM 83

How lovely is thy dwelling place, O LORD of hosts! My soul longs, yea, faints for the courts of the LORD; my heart and flesh sing for joy to the living God. Even the sparrow finds a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, at thy altars, O LORD of hosts, my King and my God. Blessed are those who dwell in thy house, ever singing thy praise! Blessed are the men whose strength is in thee, in whose heart are the highways to Zion. As they go through the valley of Baca they make it a place of springs; the early rain also covers it with pools. They go from strength to strength; the God of gods will be seen in Zion. O LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer; give ear, O God of Jacob! Behold our shield, O God; look upon the face of thine

anointed! For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand elsewhere. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness. For the LORD God is a sun and shield; he bestows favor and honor. No good thing does the LORD withhold from those who walk uprightly. O LORD of hosts, blessed is the man who trusts in thee!

Once the Archbishop has completely wiped and washed the Holy Altar Table. He gives glory to God, saying:

Glory to our God unto the ages.

The Clergy and the Choirs: Amen.

With the priests standing close to the Archbishop and once the antimensia have been placed on the four corners of the Holy Altar Table, the Archbishop takes a jar full of vine-water or rose-water or white wine and pours it onto the Holy Altar Table three times

making the sign of the cross, he then washes the Holy Altar Table and wipes it with the antimensia, as he chants the following:

## **PSALM 50**

**Tone 7.**

**P**urge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Fill me with joy and gladness; let the bones which thou hast broken rejoice. (3x)

This is said three times (as each pouring is conducted), then the rest of the Psalm is chanted or recited to the end.

**H**ide thy face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit. Then I will teach transgressors thy ways, and sinners will return to thee. Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation, and my tongue will sing aloud of thy deliverance. O Lord, open thou my lips, and



my mouth shall show forth thy praise. For thou hast no delight in sacrifice; were I to give a burnt offering, thou wouldst not be pleased. The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. Do good to Zion in thy good pleasure; rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, then wilt thou delight in right sacrifices, in burnt offerings and whole burnt offerings; then bulls will be offered on thy altar.

Once the Holy Altar Table has been thoroughly dried using the antiminsia, the Archbishop glorifies God, saying aloud:

Blessed is our God, always now and forever, and unto the ages of ages.

**People:** Amen.

Then the Archbishop takes a vessel filled with pure Myron, or mixed with a little olive oil, and the Deacon exclaims: Let us be attentive. The Archbishop, as he pours the Myron onto the Holy Altar Table in the form of a Cross, chants three times,

as at a Baptism, Alleluia! Each series of Alleluia is preceded by the Deacon's call to the people to attend.

### PSALMS 132

Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity! It is like the precious oil upon the head, running down upon the beard, upon the beard of Aaron, running down on the collar of his robes! It is like the dew of Hermon, which falls on the mountains of Zion! For there the LORD has commanded the blessing, life for evermore.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Both now and forever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

#### Archbishop

Glory to you, holy Trinity, our God, to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

When the Holy Altar Table has been wiped with the Antimensia in order to absorb the excess Myron, the antimensia are laid aside again by the Priests on a designated table in the sanctuary. Then at the four corners of the Holy Altar Table the four cloths with the icons, or the names, of the four Evangelists are glued with wax-mastic

The Archbishop takes what is called the 'katasarkion' (a white altar covering), which is spread out on the Holy Altar Table and the ends are tied securely to the columns beneath the Altar Table in the form of a Cross. While this is being completed the following Psalm is chanted.

### Psalm 131

Remember, O LORD, in David's favor, all the hardships he endured; how he swore to the LORD and vowed to the Mighty One of Jacob, "I will not enter my house or get into my bed; I will not give sleep to my eyes or slumber to my eyelids, until I find a place for the LORD, a dwelling place for the Mighty One of Jacob." Lo, we heard of it in Eph'rathah, we found it in the fields of Ja'ar. "Let us go to his dwelling place; let us worship at his footstool!" Arise, O LORD, and go to thy resting place, thou and the ark of thy might. Let thy priests

be clothed with righteousness, and let thy saints shout for joy. For thy servant David's sake do not turn away the face of thy anointed one. The LORD swore to David a sure oath from which he will not turn back: "One of the sons of your body I will set on your throne. If your sons keep my covenant and my testimonies which I shall teach them, their sons also for ever shall sit upon your throne." For the LORD has chosen Zion; he has desired it for his habitation: "This is my resting place for ever; here I will dwell, for I have desired it. I will abundantly bless her provisions; I will satisfy her poor with bread. Her priests I will clothe with salvation, and her saints will shout for joy. There I will make a horn to sprout for David; I have prepared a lamp for my anointed. His enemies I will clothe with shame, but upon himself his crown will shed its luster."

**When this is finished, the Archbishop exclaims:**

Glory to God unto the ages.

People: Amen.

After this he washes his hands in a new bucket or in the sacrarium, so that not a single drop of the Myron falls anywhere on the floor, and dries them with a new towel with great care and devotion. He then takes the outer cover, or altar-cloth of the Holy Altar Table and places it over the newly consecrated Altar Table. While this is being put on, the following Psalm is chanted or recited.

### Psalm 92

The LORD reigns; he is robed in majesty; the LORD is robed, he is girded with strength. Yea, the world is established; it shall never be moved; thy throne is established from of old; thou art from everlasting. The floods have lifted up, O LORD, the floods have lifted up their voice, the floods lift up their roaring. Mightier than the thunders of many waters, mightier than the waves of the sea, the LORD on high is mighty! Thy decrees are very sure; holiness befits thy house, O LORD, for evermore.

Once again the Archbishop exclaims:

Glory to you, holy Trinity, our God, to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

After this the Archbishop unfolds the Antimensia on the Altar Table, placing them one on top of another. Then he unfolds on them the antimention of the Church and places the sacred Gospel on top of them. The Gospel and Holy Altar Table are venerated with a kiss by the Archbishop.

Then he censes the Holy Altar Table, the Sanctuary and the whole Church. While the Archbishop is censuring, the following Psalm is said.

#### Psalm 25

Vindicate me, O LORD, for I have walked in my integrity, and I have trusted in the LORD without wavering. Prove me, O LORD, and try me; test my heart and my mind. For thy steadfast love is before my eyes,

and I walk in faithfulness to thee. I do not sit with false men, nor do I consort with dissemblers; I hate the company of evildoers, and I will not sit with the wicked. I wash my hands in innocence, and go about thy altar, O LORD, singing aloud a song of thanksgiving, and telling all thy wondrous deeds. O LORD, I love the habitation of thy house, and the place where thy glory dwells. Sweep me not away

with sinners, nor my life with bloodthirsty men, men in whose hands are evil devices, and whose right hands are full of bribes. But as for me, I walk in my integrity; redeem me, and be gracious to me. My foot stands on level ground; in the great congregation I will bless the LORD.

After censuring, the Archbishop, carrying a reed to the tip of which has been bound a sponge dipped in holy Chrism, draws the monogram of Christ in the apse of the Sanctuary, on the four columns and on the lintel of the door of the Church on the inside.

A oil lit Kandili with oil already in it is given to the Archbishop to light.

After this he removes the Savano and glorifies God, exclaiming:

Glory to the holy, almighty and life-giving Trinity, always, now and forever, and to the ages of ages.

**People:** Amen.

## The Deacon does the small litany

Again and again in peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Help us, save us, have mercy upon us, and protect us,  
O God, by your grace.

Remembering our most holy, pure, blessed and  
glorious Lady, the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary,  
with all the Saints, let us commit ourselves and one  
another and our whole life to Christ our God.

**Archbishop** For to you belong all glory, honor,  
and worship, to the Father, and to the Son and to the  
Holy Spirit, now and forever, and unto the ages of  
ages.

**People** Amen.

**Deacon** Let us pray to the Lord.

**Archbishop with a loud voice the following prayer,**

**L**ord our God, Maker of heaven and earth, with  
ineffable wisdom you founded your holy Church and  
established on earth the order of Priesthood as an  
antitype of the angelic Ministry in heaven. Accept us



now also, bountiful Master, as we pray, not because we are worthy to ask for such great things, but that your surpassing loving-kindness may be revealed. For you have never ceased to bestow your blessings in countless ways upon Your creation, but made the summit of your gifts the Coming of your Only-begotten Son. He appeared on earth and made the light of salvation shine for those in darkness, he offered himself as a sacrifice for us, and became the whole world's expiation, making us sharers in his own resurrection. He ascended into heaven, and as He promised, He adorned His Disciples and Apostles with power from above, that is the Holy, venerable, and almighty Spirit, which proceeds from you, God and Father, by which also the Disciples became mighty in deeds and words.

**T**hey imparted baptism as adoption into sonship. They erected Churches, founded Altars, and laid down the rules and laws of Priesthood. Holding fast to their tradition, we sinners fall down before you, the eternal God, and we prayer to You, O Compassionate One: Fill this Church, which has been built to sing your praise, with your glory, and declare this Altar here to be a Holy of Holies, so that we, as we stand before it, as before the dread throne of Your Kingdom, may worship You without condemnation,

offering up supplications for ourselves and for all Your people and offering to Your loving-kindness a bloodless sacrifice, for pardon of sins voluntary and involuntary, guidance in life, the establishment of a pure manner of life, and the fulfillment of all justice.

**F**or blessed is your all-holy Name, of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and forever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

**Archbishop:** Peace be to all.

**Deacon:** Let us bow our heads to the Lord.

**The Archbishop recites the following prayer,**  
**We** thank you, Lord our God, that the grace which you poured out on your holy Apostles and our venerable Fathers, you have deemed to extend even to us sinners and Your unprofitable servants. Therefore we ask you, most merciful Master: Fill this Altar with glory, sanctification and grace, so that the bloodless sacrifices offered to you upon it may be

changed into the immaculate Body and precious Blood of your Only-begotten Son, our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ, for the salvation of all your people and of our unworthiness.

**F**or you are our God, and to you we give glory, to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

**Deacon:** Let us depart in peace.

Let us pray to the Lord.

**Archbishop:** For you are Holy, our God, and to you we ascribe glory, to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever

**Deacon:** And unto the ages of ages.

**People:** Amen.

The Divine Liturgy continues from this point forward as it would on any given Sunday. The Trisagion is chanted, the readings and so on.

