

READINGS FROM THE **SERVICE OF THE CONSECRATION**

READING #1 — *before the Holy Relics in the Altar*

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.

READING #2 — *during the first circle around the Church*

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.

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.

READING #3 — *the Gospel reading after the 1st time around*

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." (Matthew 16:13-19)

READING #4 — *the Gospel reading after the 2nd time around*

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!" (Luke 10:38-42; 11:27-28)

READING #5 — *prayer after the 3rd time around*

"Make it [this Church] 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."

READING #6 — *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.

READING #7 — *the knocking on the doors (like Holy Pascha)*

The Archbishop raising His Hierarchical staff (Ravdos) knocks on the doors of the Church and says:

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 asks:

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. The doors are unlocked, and everyone processes into the Church.

(Note: this dialogue comes from the second half of Psalm 23, and was written by King David.)

READING #8 — *As oil is poured three times on the Holy Altar*

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. (Psalm 132)

READING #9 — As the Holy Altar is enrobed

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. (Psalm 92)