Prayer Booklet



for

Morning Prayers

at

The Saint Constantine School

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Introduction

To all Saint Constantine faculty, parents, students and visitors,

Greetings in the Name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

My name is Deacon Timothy Rask—Chaplain and Campus Spiritual Director here at the Saint Constantine School. I serve as Deacon at Saint Joseph Orthodox Church in Houston, and my own children have been enrolled as students at the Saint Constantine School for the past 7 years. Having participated in the life of the school as a parent, it is a great joy for me now to serve as Chaplain.

The Saint Constantine School is a Classical School in the Eastern Orthodox Christian tradition. In alignment with our mission to help our students grow in wisdom, virtue and joy, we begin every morning together in prayer.

Prayer unites us in the recognition of our need for God's blessing and protection. It reinforces the value of daily spiritual discipline in our lives and establishes a peaceful and worshipful tone for each day.

Since many of our faculty and students come from other Christian backgrounds and are not familiar with the Orthodox prayer rule, this booklet is intended to provide an overview of what we pray, as well as basic information about the structure of an Orthodox prayer rule, with definitions of terms that may not be familiar to everyone.

I hope this booklet will be useful, informative, and edifying for all of us as we join our hearts in prayer at the beginning of each day.

Deacon Timothy Rask

"He who loves the Lord is ever mindful of Him and the thought of God begets prayer... The soul that loves the Lord cannot help praying, for she is drawn to Him by the grace she has come to know in prayer."

- St. Silouan the Athonite

MORNING PRAYERS

FOR

ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS

PRIEST: Blessed is our God, always, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

ALL: Amen.

PRIEST: Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

O HEAVENLY KING, Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, who art everywhere present and fillest all things; the Treasury of good things and Giver of life: come and abide in us, and cleanse us from every stain, and save our souls, O Good One.

ALL: Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. (Thrice)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen. All-holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, cleanse us from our sins. Master, pardon our iniquities. Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for thy name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. (Thrice)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

OUR FATHER, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name; thy kingdom come; thy 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 Thine 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 unto ages of ages.

ALL: Amen.

The Symbol of Faith (Nicene Creed)

ALL: I BELIEVE in one God, the Father almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Only-begotten, begotten of the Father before all worlds; Light of Light, Very God of Very God, begotten not made; of one essence with the Father, by whom all things were made. Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered and was buried; and the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures; and ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father; and He shall come again with glory to judge the living and the dead, Whose kingdom shall have no end. And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life, Who proceedeth from the Father, Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, Who spake by the Prophets. And I believe in One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins. I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

A Prayer of St. Philaret of Moscow

PRIEST: O Lord, grant us thy peace to greet all that this day is to bring. Grant us the grace to surrender ourselves completely to thy holy will. In every hour of this day instruct and guide us in all things. Whatever tidings we may receive in this day, teach us to accept with tranquility, in the firm belief that thy holy will governs all. Govern thou our thoughts and feelings in all that we do and say. When unforeseen events occur, let us not forget that all are sent by thee. Teach us to behave sincerely and reasonably towards everyone, that we may bring confusion and sorrow to no one. Bestow on us, O Lord, strength to endure the fatigue of the day, and to bear our part in its events. Guide thou our will. Teach us to pray. Pray thou thyself within us.

ALL: Amen.

The Gospel Reading

PRIEST: And that we may be accounted worthy to hear the holy gospel, let us beseech the Lord our God.

ALL: Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

PRIEST: Wisdom. Stand upright. Let us hear the holy gospel. Peace be to all.

ALL: And to thy spirit.

PRIEST: The reading from the holy gospel according to N.

ALL: Glory to thee, O Lord, glory to thee.

PRIEST: Let us attend.

[The Reading of the Gospel]

ALL: Glory to thee, O Lord, glory to thee.

The Ektenia

PRIEST: Have mercy on us, O God, according to thy great mercy, we pray thee, hearken and have mercy.

Response to all petitions: Lord, have mercy, Lord, have mercy, Lord, have mercy.

PRIEST: Again we pray for all pious and Orthodox Christians.

PRIEST: Again we pray for our Metropolitan Saba, and all our brotherhood in Christ.

PRIEST: Again we pray for mercy, life, peace, health, salvation and visitation and pardon and forgiveness of sins for the servants of God, NN., and all Orthodox Christians of true worship, who live and dwell in this community.

PRIEST: Again we pray for the blessed and ever-memorable founders of this school, NN., and all of our fathers and brethren, the Orthodox departed this life before us, who here and in all the world lie asleep in the Lord.

PRIEST: For thou art a merciful God and lovest mankind, and unto thee we ascribe glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

ALL: Amen.

PRIEST: It is truly meet and right to bless thee, O Theotokos, who art ever blessed and all-blameless and the Mother of our God. More honorable than the cherubim and more glorious beyond compare than the seraphim, thou who without stain bearest God the Word, and art truly Theotokos, we magnify thee.

[*May sing song of the day or festal season.*]

ALL SING: Constantine, who is thine Apostle among kings, O Lord, having beheld with his own eyes the sign of thy cross in heaven, and like Paul having accepted thy call not from man entrusted the reigning city to thy hands delivering it with safety for all time by the intercessions of the Theotokos, O thou who art alone the Lover of mankind.

Dismissal

PRIEST: Glory to thee, O Christ our God and our hope, glory to thee.

ALL: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen. Lord, have mercy. Father, bless. (Thrice)

PRIEST: May Christ our true God, through the intercessions of His all-immaculate and all blameless Holy Mother; of the Right-Believing Sovereign Constantine, Equal-to-the-Apostles, patron of our school, of the holy and righteous ancestors of God, Joachim and Anna; of [saint of the day] whom we commemorate today and of all Thy saints: have mercy upon us and save us, forasmuch as He is good and lovest mankind.

Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us and save us.

ALL: Amen.

Led by a Deacon

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

ALL: Amen.

DEACON: Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

O HEAVENLY KING, Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, who art everywhere present and fillest all things; the Treasury of good things and Giver of life: come and abide in us, and cleanse us from every stain, and save our souls, O Good One.

ALL: Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. (Thrice)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen. All-holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, cleanse us from our sins. Master, pardon our iniquities. Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for thy name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. (Thrice)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

OUR FATHER, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name; thy kingdom come; thy 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 the evil one.

Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us and save us.

ALL: Amen.

The Symbol of Faith (Nicene Creed)

ALL: I BELIEVE in one God, the Father almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Only-begotten, begotten of the Father before all worlds; Light of Light, Very God of Very God, begotten not made; of one essence with the Father, by whom all things were made. Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered and was buried; and the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures; and ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father; and He shall come again with glory to judge the living and the dead, Whose kingdom shall have no end. And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life, Who proceedeth from the Father, Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, Who spake by the Prophets. And I believe in One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins. I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

A Prayer of St. Philaret of Moscow

DEACON: O Lord, grant us thy peace to greet all that this day is to bring. Grant us the grace to surrender ourselves completely to thy holy will. In every hour of this day instruct and guide us in all things. Whatever tidings we may receive in this day, teach us to accept with tranquility, in the firm belief that thy holy will governs all. Govern thou our thoughts and feelings in all that we do and say. When unforeseen events occur, let us not forget that all are sent by thee. Teach us to behave sincerely and reasonably towards everyone, that we may bring confusion and sorrow to no one. Bestow on us, O Lord, strength to endure the fatigue of the day, and to bear our part in its events. Guide thou our will. Teach us to pray. Pray thou thyself within us.

ALL: Amen.

The Gospel Reading

DEACON: The reading is from the holy Gospel according to N.

Standing to the side of the table, the Deacon reads the Gospel without chanting.

ALL: Amen.

The Intercessions

For the living:
DEACON: Be mindful, O Lord of our parents, our brothers and sisters, our relatives and friends, and all who are near and dear to us, (name those whom you wish to remember), and grant them mercy, life, peace, health, salvation and visitation, and pardon and remission of sins: that they may evermore praise and glorify thy holy Name.

For the departed:
DEACON: Be mindful, O Lord, of all those who have fallen asleep in the hope of resurrection unto life eternal, NN.; pardon all their transgressions both voluntary and involuntary, whether in word, or deed, or thought.

ALL: Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Remember us, O Lord, when thou Comest in Thy kingdom.
Remember us, O Master, when Thou comest in Thy kingdom
Remember us, O Holy One, when Thou comest in Thy kingdom

ALL SING: It is truly meet and right to bless thee, O Theotokos, who art ever blessed and all-blameless and the Mother of our God. More honorable than the cherubim and more glorious beyond compare than the seraphim, thou who without stain bearest God the Word, and art truly Theotokos, we magnify thee.

[May sing song of the day or festal season.]

ALL SING: Constantine, who is thine Apostle among kings, O Lord, having beheld with his own eyes the sign of thy cross in heaven, and like Paul having accepted thy call not from man entrusted the reigning city to thy hands delivering it with safety for all time by the intercessions of the Theotokos, O thou who art alone the Lover of mankind.

Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us and save us.

ALL: Amen.

Led by a Reader or Layperson

When no clergy are present, prayers should be led by an Orthodox Christian—if possible, by a tonsured Reader. The Leader stands to the side, not in front of the table or icon.

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

ALL: Amen.

LEADER: Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

O HEAVENLY KING, Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, who art everywhere present and fillest all things; the Treasury of good things and Giver of life: come and abide in us, and cleanse us from every stain, and save our souls, O Good One.

ALL: Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. (Thrice)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen. All-holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, cleanse us from our sins. Master, pardon our iniquities. Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for thy name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. (Thrice)

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OUR FATHER, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name; thy kingdom come; thy 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.

ALL: Amen.

The Symbol of Faith (Nicene Creed)

ALL: I BELIEVE in one God, the Father almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Only-begotten, begotten of the Father before all worlds; Light of Light, Very God of Very God, begotten not made; of one essence with the Father, by whom all things were made. Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered and was buried; and the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures; and ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father; and He shall come again with glory to judge the living and the dead, Whose kingdom shall have no end. And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life, Who proceedeth from the Father, Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, Who spake by the Prophets. And I believe in One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins. I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

A Prayer of St. Philaret of Moscow

LEADER: O Lord, grant us thy peace to greet all that this day is to bring. Grant us the grace to surrender ourselves completely to thy holy will. In every hour of this day instruct and guide us in all things. Whatever tidings we may receive in this day, teach us to accept with tranquility, in the firm belief that thy holy will governs all. Govern thou our thoughts and feelings in all that we do and say. When unforeseen events occur, let us not forget that all are sent by thee. Teach us to behave sincerely and reasonably towards everyone, that we may bring confusion and sorrow to no one. Bestow on us, O Lord, strength to endure the fatigue of the day, and to bear our part in its events. Guide thou our will. Teach us to pray. Pray thou thyself within us.

ALL: Amen.

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[May sing song of the day or festal season.]

ALL SING: Constantine, who is thine Apostle among kings, O Lord, having beheld with his own eyes the sign of thy cross in heaven, and like Paul having accepted thy call not from man entrusted the reigning city to thy hands delivering it with safety for all time by the intercessions of the Theotokos, O thou who art alone the Lover of mankind.

Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us and save us.

ALL: Amen.

PRIEST: Blessed is our God, always, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

ALL: Amen.

PRIEST: Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

O HEAVENLY KING, Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, who art everywhere present and fillest all things; the Treasury of good things and Giver of life: come and abide in us, and cleanse us from every stain, and save our souls, O Good One.

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Lord, have mercy. (Thrice)

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OUR FATHER, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name; thy kingdom come; thy 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 Thine 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 unto ages of ages.

ALL: Amen.

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ALL: I BELIEVE in one God, the Father almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Only-begotten, begotten of the Father before all worlds; Light of Light, Very God of Very God, begotten not made; of one essence with the Father, by whom all things were made. Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered and was buried; and the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures; and ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father; and He shall come again with glory to judge the living and the dead, Whose kingdom shall have no end. And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life, Who proceedeth from the Father, Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, Who spake by the Prophets. And I believe in One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins. I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

A Prayer of St. Philaret of Moscow

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ALL: Amen.

PRIEST: Have mercy on us, O God, according to thy great mercy, we pray thee, hearken and have mercy.

Response to all petitions: Lord, have mercy, Lord, have mercy, Lord, have mercy

PRIEST: Again we pray for all pious and Orthodox Christians.

PRIEST: Again we pray for our Metropolitan Saba, and all our brotherhood in Christ.

PRIEST: Again we pray for mercy, life, peace, health, salvation and visitation and pardon and forgiveness of sins for the servants of God, NN., and all Orthodox Christians of true worship, who live and dwell in this community.

PRIEST: Again we pray for the blessed and ever-memorable founders of this school, NN., and all of our fathers and brethren, the Orthodox departed this life before us, who here and in all the world lie asleep in the Lord.

PRIEST: For thou art a merciful God and lovest mankind, and unto thee we ascribe glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

ALL: Amen.

PRIEST: It is truly meet and right to bless thee, O Theotokos, who art ever blessed and all-blameless and the Mother of our God. More honorable than the cherubim and more glorious beyond compare than the seraphim, thou who without stain bearest God the Word, and art truly Theotokos, we magnify thee.

[May sing song of the day or festal season.]

ALL SING: Constantine, who is thine Apostle among kings, O Lord, having beheld with his own eyes the sign of thy cross in heaven, and like Paul having accepted thy call not from man entrusted the reigning city to thy hands delivering it with safety for all time by the intercessions of the Theotokos, O thou who art alone the Lover of mankind.

Prayer of St. Ephraim the Syrian

LEADER: O Lord and Master of my life, take from me the spirit of sloth, meddling, lust of power, and idle talk. (Prostration)

But give rather the spirit of chastity, humility, patience and love to thy servant. (Prostration)

Yea, O Lord and King, grant me to see my own sins and not to judge my brother; for blessed art Thou unto ages of ages. Amen.
(Prostration)

Dismissal

PRIEST: Glory to thee, O Christ our God and our hope, glory to thee.

ALL: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen. Lord, have mercy. Father, bless. (Thrice)

PRIEST: May Christ our true God, through the intercessions of His all-immaculate and all blameless Holy Mother; of the Right-Believing Sovereign Constantine, Equal-to-the-Apostles, patron of our school, of the holy and righteous ancestors of God, Joachim and Anna; of [saint of the day] whom we commemorate today and of all Thy saints: have mercy upon us and save us, forasmuch as He is good and lovest mankind. Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us and save us.

ALL: Amen.

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

ALL: Amen.

DEACON: Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

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Lord, have mercy. (Thrice)

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ALL: Amen.

The Intercessions

For the living:
DEACON: Be mindful, O Lord of our parents, our brothers and sisters, our relatives and friends, and all who are near and dear to us, (name those whom you wish to remember), and grant them mercy, life, peace, health, salvation and visitation, and pardon and remission of sins: that they may evermore praise and glorify they holy Name.

For the departed:
DEACON: Be mindful, O Lord, of all those who have fallen asleep in the hope of resurrection unto life eternal, NN.; pardon all their transgressions both voluntary and involuntary, whether in word, or deed, or thought.

ALL: Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Remember us, O Lord, when thou Comest in Thy kingdom.
Remember us, O Master, when Thou comest in Thy kingdom
Remember us, O Holy One, when Thou comest in Thy kingdom

ALL SING: It is truly meet and right to bless thee, O Theotokos, who art ever blessed and all-blameless and the Mother of our God. More honorable than the cherubim and more glorious beyond compare than the seraphim, thou who without stain bearest God the Word, and art truly Theotokos, we magnify thee.

[May sing song of the day or festal season.]

ALL SING: Constantine, who is thine Apostle among kings, O Lord, having beheld with his own eyes the sign of thy cross in heaven, and like Paul having accepted thy call not from man entrusted the reigning city to thy hands delivering it with safety for all time by the intercessions of the Theotokos, O thou who art alone the Lover of mankind.

DEACON: O Lord and Master of my life, take from me the spirit of sloth, meddling, lust of power, and idle talk. (Prostration)

But give rather the spirit of chastity, humility, patience and love to thy servant. (Prostration)

Yea, O Lord and King, grant me to see my own sins and not to judge my brother; for blessed art Thou unto ages of ages. Amen. (Prostration)

Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us and save us.

ALL: Amen.

Led by a Reader or Layperson

When no clergy are present, prayers should be led by an Orthodox Christian—if possible, by a tonsured Reader. The Leader stands to the side, not in front of the table or icon.

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

ALL: Amen.

LEADER: Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee.

O HEAVENLY KING, Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, who art everywhere present and fillest all things; the Treasury of good things and Giver of life: come and abide in us, and cleanse us from every stain, and save our souls, O Good One.

ALL: Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. (Thrice)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen. All-holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, cleanse us from our sins. Master, pardon our iniquities. Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for thy name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. (Thrice)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

OUR FATHER, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name; thy kingdom come; thy 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.

ALL: Amen.

The Symbol of Faith (Nicene Creed)

ALL: I BELIEVE in one God, the Father almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Only-begotten, begotten of the Father before all worlds; Light of Light, Very God of Very God, begotten not made; of one essence with the Father, by whom all things were made. Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered and was buried; and the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures; and ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father; and He shall come again with glory to judge the living and the dead, Whose kingdom shall have no end. And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life, Who proceedeth from the Father, Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, Who spake by the Prophets. And I believe in One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins. I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

A Prayer of St. Philaret of Moscow

LEADER: O Lord, grant us thy peace to greet all that this day is to bring. Grant us the grace to surrender ourselves completely to thy holy will. In every hour of this day instruct and guide us in all things. Whatever tidings we may receive in this day, teach us to accept with tranquility, in the firm belief that thy holy will governs all. Govern thou our thoughts and feelings in all that we do and say. When unforeseen events occur, let us not forget that all are sent by thee. Teach us to behave sincerely and reasonably towards everyone, that we may bring confusion and sorrow to no one. Bestow on us, O Lord, strength to endure the fatigue of the day, and to bear our part in its events. Guide thou our will. Teach us to pray. Pray thou thyself within us.

ALL: Amen.

LEADER: It is truly meet and right to bless thee, O Theotokos, who art ever blessed and all-blameless and the Mother of our God. More honorable than the cherubim and more glorious beyond compare than the seraphim, thou who without stain bearest God the Word, and art truly Theotokos, we magnify thee.

[May sing song of the day or festal season.]

ALL SING: Constantine, who is thine Apostle among kings, O Lord, having beheld with his own eyes the sign of thy cross in heaven, and like Paul having accepted thy call not from man entrusted the reigning city to thy hands delivering it with safety for all time by the intercessions of the Theotokos, O thou who art alone the Lover of mankind.

Prayer of St. Ephraim the Syrian

LEADER: O Lord and Master of my life, take from me the spirit of sloth, meddling, lust of power, and idle talk. (Prostration)

But give rather the spirit of chastity, humility, patience and love to thy servant. (Prostration)

Yea, O Lord and King, grant me to see my own sins and not to judge my brother; for blessed art Thou unto ages of ages. Amen.
(Prostration)

Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us and save us.

ALL: Amen.

THE PASCHAL HOURS

Led by a Priest

From Great and Holy Pascha until the Feast of Pentecost, the introductory prayers, "Glory to thee O God, Glory to thee, O Heavenly King, Comforter..." are not said.

From Great and Holy Pascha until its leave-taking on the eve of the Feast of Ascension we say, "Christ is risen from the dead," in place of, "Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal," and in place of, "O come let us worship and fall down..."

PRIEST: Blessed is our God always, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

ALL: Amen.

PRIEST: Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs... (1X)

ALL: ...bestowing life!

ALL: Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life! (2X)

PRIEST: In that we have beheld the resurrection of Christ, let us bow down before the Holy Lord Jesus, the only sinless one. Thy cross do we adore, O Christ, and Thy Holy Resurrection we praise and glorify, for Thou art our God, and we know none other beside Thee; we call upon Thy Name. O come all ye faithful, let us adore Christ's Holy Resurrection. For lo, through the Cross is joy come into all the world. Ever blessing the Lord, let us sing His Resurrection: for in that He endured the Cross for us, He hath destroyed death by death. (3X)

PRIEST: When they who were with Mary came, anticipating the dawn, and found the stone rolled away from the sepulcher, they heard from the Angel: Why seek ye among the dead, as though He were mortal man, Him Who abideth in everlasting light? Behold the grave-clothes. Go quickly and proclaim to the world that the Lord is risen, and hath put death to death. For He is the Son of God, Who saveth the race of man.

PRIEST: Though Thou didst descend into the grave, O Immortal One, yet didst Thou destroy the power of Hades, and didst arise as victor, O Christ God, calling to the myrrh-bearing women, Rejoice, and giving peace unto Thine Apostles, O Thou Who dost grant resurrection to the fallen.

PRIEST: In the grave with the body but in Hades with the soul as God; in paradise with the thief, and on the throne with the Father and the Holy Spirit wast Thou, O Christ, filling all things, Thyself uncircumscribed.

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

As life-bearing, as more splendid than paradise and more radiant than any royal chamber, O Christ, is shown forth from Thy tomb the fountain of our Resurrection.

Lord have mercy. (40X)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

More honorable than the Cherubim, and more glorious beyond compare than the Seraphim, thou who without corruption didst bear God the Word and art truly Theotokos: we magnify thee.

PRIEST: Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs... (1X)

ALL: ...bestowing life!

ALL: Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life! (2X)

PRIEST: Through the prayers of our holy fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy upon us and save us. Amen.

PRIEST: Christ is Risen!

ALL: Indeed He is Risen!

THE PASCHAL HOURS

Led by a Deacon, Reader, or Layperson

When no clergy are present, prayers should be led by an Orthodox Christian—if possible, by a tonsured Reader. The Leader stands to the side, not in front of the table or icon.

From Great and Holy Pascha until the Feast of Pentecost, the introductory prayers, "Glory to thee O God, Glory to thee, O Heavenly King, Comforter..." are not said.

From Great and Holy Pascha until its leave-taking on the eve of the Feast of Ascension we say, "Christ is risen from the dead," in place of, "Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal," and in place of, "O come let us worship and fall down..."

ALL: Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life! (3X)

LEADER: In that we have beheld the resurrection of Christ, let us bow down before the Holy Lord Jesus, the only sinless one. Thy cross do we adore, O Christ, and Thy Holy Resurrection we praise and glorify, for Thou art our God, and we know none other beside Thee; we call upon Thy Name. O come all ye faithful, let us adore Christ's Holy Resurrection. For lo, through the Cross is joy come into all the world. Ever blessing the Lord, let us sing His Resurrection: for in that He endured the Cross for us, He hath destroyed death by death. (3X)

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LEADER: Though Thou didst descend into the grave, O Immortal One, yet didst Thou destroy the power of Hades, and didst arise as victor, O Christ God, calling to the myrrh-bearing women, Rejoice, and giving peace unto Thine Apostles, O Thou Who dost grant resurrection to the fallen.

LEADER: In the grave with the body but in Hades with the soul as God; in paradise with the thief, and on the throne with the Father and the Holy Spirit wast Thou, O Christ, filling all things, Thyself uncircumscribed.

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

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More honorable than the Cherubim, and more glorious beyond compare than the Seraphim, thou who without corruption didst bear God the Word and art truly Theotokos: we magnify thee.

ALL: Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life! (3X)

LEADER: Through the prayers of our holy father, O Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy upon us and save us. Amen.

LEADER: Christ is Risen!

ALL: Indeed He is Risen!

PRIEST: Blessed is our God, always, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

ALL: Amen.

PRIEST: Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life!

ALL: Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life! (2X)

ALL: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen. All-holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, cleanse us from our sins. Master, pardon our iniquities. Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for thy name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. (Thrice)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

OUR FATHER, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name; thy kingdom come; thy 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 Thine 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 unto ages of ages.

ALL: Amen.

The Symbol of Faith (Nicene Creed)

ALL: I BELIEVE in one God, the Father almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Only-begotten, begotten of the Father before all worlds; Light of Light, Very God of Very God, begotten not made; of one essence with the Father, by whom all things were made. Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered and was buried; and the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures; and ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father; and He shall come again with glory to judge the living and the dead, Whose kingdom shall have no end. And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life, Who proceedeth from the Father, Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, Who spake by the Prophets. And I believe in One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins. I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

A Prayer of St. Philaret of Moscow

PRIEST: O Lord, grant us thy peace to greet all that this day is to bring. Grant us the grace to surrender ourselves completely to thy holy will. In every hour of this day instruct and guide us in all things. Whatever tidings we may receive in this day, teach us to accept with tranquility, in the firm belief that thy holy will governs all. Govern thou our thoughts and feelings in all that we do and say. When unforeseen events occur, let us not forget that all are sent by thee. Teach us to behave sincerely and reasonably towards everyone, that we may bring confusion and sorrow to no one. Bestow on us, O Lord, strength to endure the fatigue of the day, and to bear our part in its events. Guide thou our will. Teach us to pray. Pray thou thyself within us.

ALL: Amen.

The Gospel Reading

PRIEST: And that we may be accounted worthy to hear the holy gospel, let us beseech the Lord our God.

ALL: Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

PRIEST: Wisdom. Stand upright. Let us hear the holy gospel. Peace be to all.

ALL: And to thy spirit.

PRIEST: The reading from the holy gospel according to N.

ALL: Glory to thee, O Lord, glory to thee.

PRIEST: Let us attend.

[The Reading of the Gospel]

ALL: Glory to thee, O Lord, glory to thee.

The Ektenia

PRIEST: Have mercy on us, O God, according to thy great mercy, we pray thee, hearken and have mercy.

Response to all petitions: Lord, have mercy, Lord, have mercy, Lord, have mercy

PRIEST: Again we pray for all pious and Orthodox Christians.

PRIEST: Again we pray for our Metropolitan Saba, and all our brotherhood in Christ.

PRIEST: Again we pray for mercy, life, peace, health, salvation and visitation and pardon and forgiveness of sins for the servants of God, NN., and all Orthodox Christians of true worship, who live and dwell in this community.

PRIEST: Again we pray for the blessed and ever-memorable founders of this school, NN., and all of our fathers and brethren, the Orthodox departed this life before us, who here and in all the world lie asleep in the Lord.

PRIEST: For thou art a merciful God and lovest mankind, and unto thee we ascribe glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

ALL: Amen.

PRIEST: It is truly meet and right to bless thee, O Theotokos, who art ever blessed and all-blameless and the Mother of our God. More honorable than the cherubim and more glorious beyond compare than the seraphim, thou who without stain bearest God the Word, and art truly Theotokos, we magnify thee.

[May sing song of the day or festal season.]

ALL SING: Constantine, who is thine Apostle among kings, O Lord, having beheld with his own eyes the sign of thy cross in heaven, and like Paul having accepted thy call not from man entrusted the reigning city to thy hands delivering it with safety for all time by the intercessions of the Theotokos, O thou who art alone the Lover of mankind.

Dismissal

PRIEST: Glory to thee, O Christ our God and our hope, glory to thee.

ALL: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen. Lord, have mercy. Father, bless. (Thrice)

PRIEST: May Christ our true God, through the intercessions of His all-immaculate and all blameless Holy Mother; of the Right-Believing Sovereign Constantine, Equal-to-the-Apostles, patron of our school, of the holy and righteous ancestors of God, Joachim and Anna; of [saint of the day] whom we commemorate today and of all Thy saints: have mercy upon us and save us, forasmuch as He is good and lovest mankind. Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs...

ALL: ...bestowing life!

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

ALL: Amen.

DEACON: Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life!

ALL: Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life! (2X)

ALL: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen. All-holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, cleanse us from our sins. Master, pardon our iniquities. Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for thy name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. (Thrice)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

OUR FATHER, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name; thy kingdom come; thy 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 the evil one.

Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us and save us.

ALL: Amen.

The Symbol of Faith (Nicene Creed)

ALL: I BELIEVE in one God, the Father almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Only-begotten, begotten of the Father before all worlds; Light of Light, Very God of Very God, begotten not made; of one essence with the Father, by whom all things were made. Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered and was buried; and the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures; and ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father; and He shall come again with glory to judge the living and the dead, Whose kingdom shall have no end. And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life, Who proceedeth from the Father, Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, Who spake by the Prophets. And I believe in One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins. I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

A Prayer of St. Philaret of Moscow

DEACON: O Lord, grant us thy peace to greet all that this day is to bring. Grant us the grace to surrender ourselves completely to thy holy will. In every hour of this day instruct and guide us in all things. Whatever tidings we may receive in this day, teach us to accept with tranquility, in the firm belief that thy holy will governs all. Govern thou our thoughts and feelings in all that we do and say. When unforeseen events occur, let us not forget that all are sent by thee. Teach us to behave sincerely and reasonably towards everyone, that we may bring confusion and sorrow to no one. Bestow on us, O Lord, strength to endure the fatigue of the day, and to bear our part in its events. Guide thou our will. Teach us to pray. Pray thou thyself within us.

ALL: Amen.

The Gospel Reading

DEACON: The reading is from the holy Gospel according to N.

Standing to the side of the table, the Deacon reads the Gospel without chanting.

ALL: Amen.

The Intercessions

For the living:
DEACON: Be mindful, O Lord of our parents, our brothers and sisters, our relatives and friends, and all who are near and dear to us, (name those whom you wish to remember), and grant them mercy, life, peace, health, salvation and visitation, and pardon and remission of sins: that they may evermore praise and glorify thy holy Name.

For the departed:
DEACON: Be mindful, O Lord, of all those who have fallen asleep in the hope of resurrection unto life eternal, NN.; pardon all their transgressions both voluntary and involuntary, whether in word, or deed, or thought.

ALL: Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Remember us, O Lord, when thou Comest in Thy kingdom.
Remember us, O Master, when Thou comest in Thy kingdom
Remember us, O Holy One, when Thou comest in Thy kingdom

ALL SING: It is truly meet and right to bless thee, O Theotokos, who art ever blessed and all-blameless and the Mother of our God. More honorable than the cherubim and more glorious beyond compare than the seraphim, thou who without stain bearest God the Word, and art truly Theotokos, we magnify thee.

[May sing song of the day or festal season.]

ALL SING: Constantine, who is thine Apostle among kings, O Lord, having beheld with his own eyes the sign of thy cross in heaven, and like Paul having accepted thy call not from man entrusted the reigning city to thy hands delivering it with safety for all time by the intercessions of the Theotokos, O thou who art alone the Lover of mankind.

DEACON: Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs...

ALL: ...bestowing life! Amen.

Led by a Reader or Layperson

When no clergy are present, prayers should be led by an Orthodox Christian—if possible, by a tonsured Reader. The Leader stands to the side, not in front of the table or icon.

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

ALL: Amen.

LEADER: Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life!

ALL: Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life! (2X)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen. All-holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, cleanse us from our sins. Master, pardon our iniquities. Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for thy name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. (Thrice)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now, and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

OUR FATHER, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name; thy kingdom come; thy 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.

ALL: Amen.

The Symbol of Faith (Nicene Creed)

ALL: I BELIEVE in one God, the Father almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Onlybegotten, begotten of the Father before all worlds; Light of Light, Very God of Very God, begotten not made; of one essence with the Father, by whom all things were made. Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered and was buried; and the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures; and ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father; and He shall come again with glory to judge the living and the dead, Whose kingdom shall have no end. And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life, Who proceedeth from the Father, Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, Who spake by the Prophets. And I believe in One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins. I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

A Prayer of St. Philaret of Moscow

LEADER: O Lord, grant us thy peace to greet all that this day is to bring. Grant us the grace to surrender ourselves completely to thy holy will. In every hour of this day instruct and guide us in all things. Whatever tidings we may receive in this day, teach us to accept with tranquility, in the firm belief that thy holy will governs all. Govern thou our thoughts and feelings in all that we do and say. When unforeseen events occur, let us not forget that all are sent by thee. Teach us to behave sincerely and reasonably towards everyone, that we may bring confusion and sorrow to no one. Bestow on us, O Lord, strength to endure the fatigue of the day, and to bear our part in its events. Guide thou our will. Teach us to pray. Pray thou thyself within us.

ALL: Amen.

LEADER: It is truly meet and right to bless thee, O Theotokos, who art ever blessed and all-blameless and the Mother of our God. More honorable than the cherubim and more glorious beyond compare than the seraphim, thou who without stain bearest God the Word, and art truly Theotokos, we magnify thee.

[*May sing song of the day or festal season.*]

ALL SING: Constantine, who is thine Apostle among kings, O Lord, having beheld with his own eyes the sign of thy cross in heaven, and like Paul having accepted thy call not from man entrusted the reigning city to thy hands delivering it with safety for all time by the intercessions of the Theotokos, O thou who art alone the Lover of mankind.

Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life!

Nativity of the Theotokos - September 8

Thy nativity, O Theotokos, hath proclaimed joy to the whole universe; for from thee did shine forth the Sun of justice, Christ our God, annulling the curse, and bestowing the blessing, abolishing death and granting us life everlasting.

Elevation of the Cross - September 14

O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance, granting to Thy people victory over all their enemies, and by the power of Thy Cross preserving Thy commonwealth.

Entry of the Theotokos into the Temple - November 21

Today the Virgin is the foreshadowing of the pleasure of God, and the beginning of the preaching of the salvation of mankind. Thou hast appeared in the Temple of God openly and hast gone before, preaching Christ to all. Let us shout with one thrilling voice, saying: Rejoice, O thou who art the fulfillment of the Creator's dispensation.

Nativity of Christ - Decmeber 25

Thy Nativity, O Christ our God, has shone to the world the Light of wisdom! For by it those who worshiped the stars, were taught by a star to adore Thee, the Sun of Righteousness, and to know Thee the Orient from on High. O Lord, glory to Thee.

Theophany - January 6

When Thou, O Lord, wast baptized in the Jordan, worship of the Trinity wast made manifest; for the voice of the Father bore witness to Thee, calling Thee His beloved Son. And the Spirit in the likeness of a dove confirmed the truth of His word. O Christ our God, Who hast appeared and enlightened the world, glory to Thee.

Presentation of the Lord in the Temple - February 2

Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos, full of grace, for from thee arose the Sun of justice, Christ our God, lighting those who are in darkness. Rejoice and be glad, O righteous elder, carrying in thine arms the Deliverer of our souls, Who granteth us Resurrection.

Annunciation - March 25

Today is the beginning of our salvation, and the manifestation of the mystery from the ages; for the Son of God becometh the Son of the Virgin, and Gabriel proclaimeth grace. Wherefore, do we shout with him to the Theotokos: Hail, O full of grace! The Lord is with thee.

Palm Sunday - Variable Date

As by baptism we were buried with Thee, O Christ our God, so by Thy Resurrection we were deemed worthy of immortal life; and praising Thee, we cry: Hosanna in the highest; blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord.

Great and Holy Pascha - Variable Date

Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life!

Ascension - Variable Date

Thou hast ascended in glory, O Christ our God, and gladdened Thy Disciples with the promise of the Holy Spirit, making them confident through the blessing that Thou art the Son of God, and Deliverer of the world.

Pentecost - Variable Date

Blessed art Thou, O Christ our God, Who hast revealed the fishermen as most wise, having sent upon them the Holy Spirit, and through them Thou hast fished the universe, O Lover of mankind, glory to Thee.

Transfiguration - August 6

When, O Christ our God, Thou wast transfigured on the mountain, Thou didst reveal Thy glory to Thy Disciples in proportion as they could bear it. Let Thine everlasting light also enlighten us sinners, through the intercessions of the Theotokos. O Thou Bestower of light, glory to Thee.

Dormition of the Theotokos - August 15

In thy birth-giving, O Theotokos, thou didst keep and preserve virginity; and in thy falling-asleep thou hast not forsaken the world; for thou wast translated into life, being the Mother of Life. Wherefore, by thine intercessions, deliver our souls from death

Liturgical Cycles

Orthodox prayers follow an annual liturgical cycle. For the sake of simplicity, this booklet is structured around 3 major periods of time: Outside of Lent, During Lent, and During the Paschal Season.

The way we pray will change during each of the above liturgical seasons, in order to reflect the appropriate disposition for that period of time.

The period we are labelling, 'Outside of Lent,' includes everything from the feast of the Ascension through the beginning of Lent in the following year. Lent includes the 40 days prior to Holy Week. The Paschal Season includes Pascha (Easter), and the 39 days that follow it.

The term, 'Outside of Lent,' is a generalization. Numerous feasts of the Church occur during this time, with their respective mini-cycles of fasting and feasting. Each of these has its own short hymns that we can insert into the normal daily prayer rule as appropriate for the feast.

During Lent, the appropriate disposition is humility and repentance. It is a serious time of preparation for Holy Week. During this time we abstain from meat, fish, eggs, dairy, wine and olive oil, and in the local parishes, services are increased.

The Paschal Season is a time of celebration as we rejoice in the resurrection of Christ. Our prayer rule changes during this time to reflect the joy of the season.

The Sign of the Cross

We can make the sign of the cross anytime we like, but we especially do so when we mention the Holy Trinity or the Glory of God. The Orthodox custom is to touch the index and middle fingers with the thumb, forming a group of 3, in reference to the Holy Trinity. We make the sign of the cross by touching the center of the forehead, then the stomach, then the right shoulder, then the left.

Prostrations and Bows

We make bows called, 'metania,' frequently during our daily prayers. Metania are made by first making the sign of the cross, then allowing the hand to drop while bowing. We do this 3 times when saying the ancient 'thrice holy' hymn (Trisagion in Greek)—"Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, Have mercy on us."

In the context of school prayers, we would only make full prostrations during the Lenten season, while saying the prayer of St. Ephrem the Syrian.

Veneration of Icons

We utilize icons in prayer as a connecting link between us and the person depicted in the icon. Knowing that we are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses (Heb 12:1), the departed saints in Heaven, who are observing us and praying for us—we ask for their intercessions, and fellowship with them as co-participants in the life of Christ. As St. Basil the Great said in the 4th century:

> *"Wherefore also I honour and kiss the features of their images, inasmuch as they have been handed down from the holy apostles, and are not forbidden, but are in all our churches."*
>
> - Letter 360

The Orthodox Church is structured according to the ancient hierarchical pattern for clergy—Bishops, Priests and Deacons. A deacon can do nothing without the blessing of a priest or bishop, and a priest can do nothing without the blessing of a bishop.

As a result, the prayer rule will be conducted in a slightly different way depending on who is leading. If a priest is leading, he has permission to do things that a deacon does not have permission to do on his own, and when a deacon is leading, he has permission to do things that a layperson does not have permission to do on their own. This accounts for some of the differences you may notice from day to day.



The Saint Constantine School