

The Services of Holy Baptism of the Orthodox Church



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The Services of Holy Baptism of the Orthodox Church 2

**HOLY ASCENSION
ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN MISSION**

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This project is still in draft and continues as a work-in-progress.

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As many as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. (Galatians 3: 27)

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Prayers at the Making of a Catechumen

The first, preparatory part of the Mystery of Baptism is performed in the entrance of the church called the Narthex. From ancient days until the present, the people preparing for baptism were called catechumens. This preparatory period, *catechesis*, in the early Church lasted for up to 3 years, during which time the candidates studied the Christian Faith and God's commandments. They were allowed to attend certain church services by standing in the narthex only, and had to leave at the Deacon's exclamation, "All Catechumens depart." In the first part of Baptism, the Making of a Catechumen, the Priest reads prayers of exorcism, in which he asks God to free the Catechumen from all evil influences. The Catechumen then solemnly renounces the Devil, confesses their faith in Jesus Christ and reads The Creed. The Priest then lightly blows three times into the face of the Catechumen, makes the sign of the cross over their chest and lays his hands on their head, reading the following prayers.

Standing in the Narthex, the Priest vested with White Epitrachelion breathes thrice in the Face of the Catechumen, and signs the Catechumen thrice upon the Forehead and Chest; and he lays his hand upon the Catechumen's Head, saying:

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

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Priest: In Your Name, Lord, God of truth, and in the Name of Your Only-begotten Son, and of Your Holy Spirit, I lay my hand upon Your servant, **NAME OF CATECHUMEN**, who has been counted worthy to run to Your holy Name, and to be protected under the shelter of Your wings. Remove far from him/her the ancient delusion, and fill him/her with the Faith that is in You, and with hope and love, that he/she may understand that You alone are the true God, with Your Only-begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and Your All-Holy Spirit. Enable him/her to walk according to Your commandments, and to observe those things which are acceptable to You; for, if a man does these things, he will find life in them. Inscribe him/her in Your Book of Life, and unite him/her to the flock of Your inheritance. May Your holy Name be glorified in him/her, together with that of Your Beloved Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, and of Your Lifegiving Spirit. Let Your eyes always look on him/her with mercy, and let Your ears attend to the voice of his/her supplication. Let him/her rejoice in the works of his/her hands, and in all his/her generation, that he/she may give praise to You, worshipping and glorifying Your great and exalted Name, and may always praise You all the days of his/her life.

Priest: For all the powers of heaven praise You, and to You we send up glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

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People: Amen.

The First Exorcism

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: The Lord forbids you, devil, He who came into the world and made His dwelling among men, that He might throw down your tyranny and rescue men; He who upon the Tree triumphed over the adverse powers when the sun was darkened, and the earth was shaken, and the tombs were opened, and the bodies of the Saints arose; He who by death destroyed death, and overthrew him who held the power of death, that is, you, O devil. I forbid you by God, Who has revealed the Tree of Life, Who also has established the Cherubim and the flaming sword turning round about to guard it. Be forbidden! For I forbid you by Him who walks upon the waves of the sea as though on dry land, and Who forbids the storms of the winds; Whose glance dries up the deeps, and Whose order makes the mountains melt away. For it is God Himself who now forbids you through us. Be afraid, be gone, and depart from this creature, and do not return again, neither hide yourself in him/her, nor encounter him/her, nor influence him/her, either in the night, or in the day, or in the morning, or at noon; but get away to your own Tartarus, until the appointed Day of Judgment. Fear God, Who sits on the Cherubim and looks upon the deeps, before Whom tremble

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Angels, Archangels, Thrones, Dominions, Principalities, Authorities, Powers, the many-eyed Cherubim, and the six-winged Seraphim; Whom heaven and earth fear, the sea and all that is in them. Be gone, and depart from the sealed, newly-elect soldier of Christ our God! For I forbid you by Him who rides upon the wings of the winds, Who makes His Angels spirits, and His servants a flaming fire. Be gone, and depart from this creature, with all your powers and your angels.

Priest: For glorified is the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

The Second Exorcism

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: O God, the holy, the awesome, and the glorious, Who, in all His works and power, is incomprehensible and unsearchable, Who Himself has foreordained for you the punishment of eternal torment, through us, His unworthy servant, commands you, and all your cooperating hosts, to depart from him/her who has been newly-sealed in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, our true God. I forbid you, therefore, all-evil, impure, foul, abominable, and alien spirit, by the power of Jesus Christ, Who has all power, both in the heavens and on earth, Who said to the deaf and dumb demon, "Get out of the man, and do not enter into him

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anymore. (Matthew 9: 25)” Depart! Know the vainness of your power, which had no power even over pigs. Remember Him who commanded you, at your request, to enter into the herd of swine. Fear God, at Whose command the earth was established upon the water; Who has founded heaven, and has fixed the mountains with a line and the valleys with a measure; Who has set the sand as a border for the sea, and has made a firm path in the raging water; Who touches the mountains and they smoke; Who covers Himself with light as with a garment; Who has stretched out the heaven as a curtain; Who covers His upper-chambers with waters; Who has established the earth on its foundations, so that it will not be moved to the ages of ages; Who summons up the water of the sea and pours it out upon the face of the earth. Be gone, and depart from him/her who is being prepared for holy Illumination. I forbid you by the saving Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by His precious Body and Blood, and by His fearful Coming-again; for He will come and will not delay, to judge all the earth; and He will punish you and your cooperating horde in the fiery Gehenna, consigning you to outer darkness, where the worm does not cease and the fire is not quenched.

Priest: For Christ our God is the dominion, together with the Father and the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

The Third Exorcism

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

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Priest: O Lord of Sabaoth, the God of Israel, Who heals every sickness and every wound: Look down upon Your servant, search out and try him/her, and drive away from him/her every action of the devil. Forbid the unclean spirits, and expel them, and cleanse the work of Your hand; and, exercising Your sharp action, speedily crush down Satan under his/her feet; and give him/her victory over him and over his unclean spirits; that, having obtained mercy from You, he/she may be counted worthy of Your immortal and heavenly Mysteries, and may give glory to You: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages. Amen.

The Fourth Exorcism

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: O Master, the Lord Who is, Who has created man in Your image and according to Your likeness, and gave him the power of eternal life, and when he had fallen through sin did not despise him, but provided, through the incarnation of Your Christ, for the salvation of the world: Deliver this Your creature out of bondage from the enemy, receive him/her into Your Heavenly Kingdom. Open his/her noetic eyes, so that the light of Your Gospel may shine in him/her. Join to his/her life an Angel of light, who may rescue him/her from every trap of the enemy, from encounter with the evil one, from the demon of noon-day, and from evil illusions.

The Breathings

The Priest breathes, crosswise form, upon his (her) Mouth, Brow and Breast, saying this three times:

Priest: Drive out from him/her every evil and unclean spirit hiding and lurking in his/her heart (x3)

Priest: The spirit of error, the spirit of evil, the spirit of idolatry, and of all covetousness; the spirit of lying and of all uncleanness, which operates according to the instruction of the devil. And make him/her a rational sheep in the holy flock of Your Christ, an honorable member of Your Church, a son/daughter and heir of Your Kingdom, that, having lived according to Your commandments, and having preserved the seal unbroken, and preserving the garment undefiled, he/she may receive the blessedness of the Saints in Your Kingdom.

Priest: Through the grace and compassion and love for mankind of Your Only-begotten Son, with whom You are blessed, together with Your Most-holy, Good, and Lifegiving Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

The Renunciation of Satan

The Catechumen is disrobed and barefoot. The Priest turns the Catechumen and Sponsor to the West. The Catechumen (if infant, then the Sponsor on behalf of infant) lifts up their Arms.

Priest: Do you renounce Satan and all his works and all his angels and all his service and all his pride?

Catechumen: I renounce them.

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Catechumen: I renounce them.

Priest: Do you renounce Satan and all his works and all his angels and all his service and all his pride?

Catechumen: I renounce them.

Priest: Have you renounced Satan?

Catechumen: I have renounced him.

Priest: Have you renounced Satan?

Catechumen: I have renounced him.

Priest: Have you renounced Satan?

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Catechumen: I have renounced him.

Priest: Blow upon him, and spit upon him.

The Uniting to Christ

The Priest turns the Catechumen and Sponsor to the East, with Hands down.

Priest: Do you unite yourself to Christ?

Catechumen: I unite myself.

Priest: Do you unite yourself to Christ?

Catechumen: I unite myself.

Priest: Do you unite yourself to Christ?

Catechumen: I unite myself.

Priest: Have you united yourself to Christ?

Catechumen: I have united myself.

The Confession of Faith

Priest: Do you believe in Him?

Catechumen: I believe in Him as King and God.

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth, and of all things visible and invisible.

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And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Only-begotten, begotten of the Father before all ages; Light of Light, true God of true 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 the heavens, and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and became man;

And was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered, and was buried;

And arose again on the third day according to the Scriptures;

And ascended into the heavens, and sits at the right hand of the Father;

And shall come again, with glory, to judge both the living and the dead; whose Kingdom shall have no end.

And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of life; who proceeds from the Father; who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified; who spoke by the prophets.

In One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church.

I confess one baptism for the remission of sins.

I look for the resurrection of the dead,

and the life of the age to come. Amen.

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Priest: Have you united yourself to Christ?

Catechumen: I have united myself.

Priest: Have you united yourself to Christ?

Catechumen: I have united myself.

Priest: Have you united yourself to Christ?

Catechumen: I have united myself.

Priest: Bow yourself also before Him.

Catechumen: I bow myself to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, the Trinity one in essence and undivided.

Priest: Blessed is God, Who desires that all men should be saved, and should come to a knowledge of the Truth, now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

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Priest: O Master, Lord our God, call Your servant, *N*, to Your holy Illumination, and count him/her worthy of this great grace of Your holy Baptism. Put off from him/her the old man, and renew him/her for eternal life; and fill him/her with the power of Your Holy Spirit, in the unity of Your Christ, that he/she may be no longer a child of the body, but a child of Your Kingdom. Through the goodwill and grace of Your Only-begotten Son, with whom You are blessed, together with Your Most-holy, Good, and Lifegiving Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.



The Service of Holy Illumination

The Priest vests himself with White Phelonion and Cuffs, and all Candles are lit. Censing thrice around the Font. Bowing, the Deacon says:

Deacon: Bless, Master.

Priest: Blessed is the Kingdom, of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

During Paschaltide we chant here Christ is risen.

Clergy: Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life. (x 3)

The Great Litany (Litany of Peace)

Deacon (1): In peace let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord have mercy.

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

People: Lord have mercy.

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

People: Lord have mercy.

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

People: Lord have mercy.

Deacon: For our great lord and father, His Holiness, Patriarch N.; for our lord the Most Reverend Metropolitan N., First Hierarchy of the Russian Church Abroad; for our lord the Most Reverend (Archbishop or Bishop N.); for the venerable priesthood, the diaconate in Christ, for all the clergy and people, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord have mercy.

Deacon: That this water may be sanctified by the power, operation and descent of the Holy Spirit, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That there may be sent down into it the grace of redemption, the blessing of Jordan, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That there may come upon this water the purifying operation of the supersubstantial Trinity, let us pray to the Lord.

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People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That we may be illumined by the Illumination of Understanding and godliness through the descent of the Holy Spirit, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That this water may reveal and avert every counsel of enemies, both visible and invisible, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That he/she who will be baptised in it may be made worthy of the incorruptible Kingdom, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For him/her who now comes to holy Illumination, and for his/her salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That she/he may be made a son/daughter of light, and an heir of eternal good things, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

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Deacon: That he/she may be planted with, and become a partaker of the death and resurrection of Christ our God, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That he/she may preserve the garment of Baptism, and the pledge of the Spirit undefiled and blameless in the fearful Day of Christ our God, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That this water may be for him/her the bath of regeneration, for the forgiveness of sins, and as a garment of incorruption, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That the Lord God may hear the voice of our supplication, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That He will deliver him/her from all tribulation, wrath, and necessity, let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and protect us, O God, by Your grace.

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People: Lord, have mercy.

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

People: To You O Lord.

While the Deacon is saying the Litany of Peace, the Priest reads the following prayer **silently**:

Priest: O Deeply-compassionate and merciful God, Who tests the hearts and reins, and alone knows the secrets of men (for nothing is not revealed before You, but all things are naked and revealed before Your eyes), You Who knows all things concerning me, do not regard me with loathing, neither turn away Your face from me; and do not consider my transgressions at this present hour, You Who overlooks the sins of men that they may repent. And wash me from the defilement of my body, and from the stain of my soul, and sanctify me totally by Your all-effective, invisible power, and by Your spiritual right hand, so that, proclaiming freedom to others, and offering this Divine Service in the perfect faith, of Your unutterable love toward mankind, I myself may not be condemned as a servant of sin. Master, Who alone is good and loves mankind, let me not be turned back humbled; but send to me power from above, and strengthen me for the impending service of Your great and most heavenly Mystery, and form the image of Your Christ in him/her, who is about to be born again through my wretchedness. And build him/her up on the foundation of Your Apostles and Prophets, so that he/she may not be cast down. But plant him/her as a planting of truth in Your Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church, that he/she not be plucked out, so that, as piety increases through him/her, he/she may glorify Your all-holy Name, of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages. Amen.

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Then the Priest says this Prayer in a **loud voice**:

Priest: Great are You, O Lord, and wondrous are Your works, and no word will suffice to praise Your miracles. (x3)

For by Your will, You have brought all things into existence from nothingness, by Your strength You uphold creation, and by Your providence You order the world. From four elements You have formed creation; You have crowned the course of the year with four seasons. All the rational powers tremble before You. The sun hymns You. The moon glorifies You. The stars meet together before You. The light obeys You. The deeps shudder before You. The springs of water serve You. You have stretched out the heavens as a curtain. You have established the earth upon the waters. You have bordered the sea with sand. You have spilled out the air for breathing. The Angelic Powers serve You. The choirs of Archangels worship You. The many-eyed Cherubim and the six-winged Seraphim, standing and flying around You, cover themselves with fear at Your unapproachable glory. For You who are God and who are inexpressible, without origin, and indescribable, came down upon earth, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of man. For You, Master, for the sake of Your tender mercy, could not endure to behold the race of men tormented by the devil; but You came and saved us. We confess Your grace. We proclaim Your mercy. We do not conceal Your benevolent acts. You have liberated the nature of our race. You sanctified the virginal womb by Your nativity. All creation sings the praises of You Who has revealed Yourself. For You, our God, have revealed Yourself upon earth, and have dwelt among men. You sanctified the streams of Jordan, sending down from heaven Your Holy Spirit, and crushed the heads of the dragons that lurked in it.

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Therefore, King, who loves mankind, come now through the descent of Your Holy Spirit, and sanctify this water. (x3)

And give it the grace of redemption, the blessing of Jordan. Make it a fountain of incorruption, a gift of sanctification, a loosing of sins, a healing of sicknesses, a destruction of demons, unapproachable by hostile powers, filled with angelic power. Let those who take counsel together against Your creature flee far from it. For I have called upon Your Name, Lord, which is wonderful and glorious, and terrible to adversaries.

The Sanctification of the Baptismal Waters

The Priest signs the water thrice with the Sign of the Cross, dipping his fingers in it. And, breathing upon it, he says:

Priest: Let all hostile powers be crushed beneath the sign of the image of Your Cross. (x3)

We pray to You, Lord, let every aerial and invisible phantom withdraw itself from us, and do not let a demon of darkness conceal itself in this water, neither let an evil spirit, bringing darkening of intentions and rebelliousness of thought, descend into it with him/her who is about to be baptised. But, Master of all, show this water to be water of redemption, water of sanctification, a cleansing of flesh and spirit, a loosing of bonds, remission of sins, an illumination of soul, a bath of regeneration, a renewal of the Spirit, a gift of sonship, a garment of incorruption, a fountain of life. For You have said, Lord, "Wash, and be clean; put away evil from your souls." You have bestowed upon us from above a new birth through

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water and the Spirit. Therefore, reveal Yourself, Lord, in this water, and grant that he/she who is to be baptised may be transformed in it for the putting away of the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and for the putting on of the new, which is renewed according to the image of Him who created him/her, that, being planted in the likeness of Your death through Baptism, he/she may become a partaker of Your Resurrection; and, preserving the gift of Your Holy Spirit, and increasing the deposit of grace, he/she may receive the prize of his/her high calling, and be numbered with the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven, in You, our God and Lord, Jesus Christ.

For to You is due glory, dominion, honor and worship, together with Your Father who is without beginning, and Your Most-holy, Good and Lifegiving Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

Priest: Peace be to all.

People: And to your spirit.

Deacon: Bow your heads to the Lord.

People: To You, O Lord.

The Blessing of the Oil of Gladness

The Priest breathes thrice upon the vessel containing the Oil, and signs this thrice with the Sign of the Cross, as it is held by the Deacon. The Deacon says to him:

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: O Master, Lord God of our fathers, Who sent to those who were in the ark of Noah a dove bearing a twig of olive in its mouth as a sign of reconciliation and salvation from the Flood, and in the same manner foreshadowed the mystery of grace, and Who has provided the fruit of the olive for the fulfilling of Your Holy Mysteries, and has filled those who were under the law with the Holy Spirit, and perfected those who are under grace: bless also this oil by the power, and operation, and descent of Your Holy Spirit, that it may become an anointing of incorruption, a shield of righteousness, a renewal of soul and body, a driving away of every diabolical action, for the removal of all evils from those who are anointed with it in Faith, or who are partakers of it to Your glory, and to that of Your All-holy, Good, and Lifegiving Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

Anointing Baptismal Waters with Oil of Gladness

Deacon: Let us attend.

The Priest, singing Alleluia thrice with the people, makes three Signs of the Cross with the Oil in the water. Then he exclaims:

Priest: Blessed is God, who illumines and sanctifies every man who comes into the world, now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

Anointing Catechumen with Oil of Gladness

This anointing with oil denotes the catechumen's healing from infirmities of soul.

The Catechumen who is to be baptised is brought forward. The Priest takes of the Oil with two fingers, and makes the sign of the Cross upon his (her) Forehead and Chest, and between his (her) Shoulders, saying:

Priest: The servant of God, *N*, is anointed with the Oil of Gladness, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

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The Priest signs his (her) Chest and between the Shoulders. On the Chest, saying:

Priest: For the healing of soul and body.

On the Ears:

Priest: For the hearing of Faith.

On the Hands:

Priest: Your hands have made me and fashioned me.

On the Feet:

Priest: That he/she may walk in the path of Your commandments.

The Triple Immersion

Baptism is performed through immersion into water. The Greek word "*baptizo*" means "immersion." The baptism of a eunuch by Apostle Philip is described in Acts (8: 38): "*So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him. Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away.*" The triple immersion into water is accompanied by the utterance of the words, "The servant of God is baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit," in accordance with the command of Christ Himself (Matthew 28: 19). This was the way baptism was performed in the ancient Church, as mentioned in the Epistle of the Apostle Barnabas.

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When the Priest has anointed the whole Body, he baptises him (her), holding him (her) upright and looking towards the East, saying:

Priest: The servant of God, *N*, is baptised in the Name of the Father. Amen.

And of the Son. Amen.

And of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

An adult enters and exits the Font on their own, although the Priest immerses him (her) with his own hand thrice.

After each immersion, customarily the Sponsors repeat after the Priest, "Amen." After the third "Amen" the Priest, without the Sponsors, pronounces: Now and ever, and to the ages of ages. Amen. He gives the infant to the Sponsor, who, at this time, holds forward, on outstretched hands a "robe"—a pure piece of cloth, spread out on both hands.

Psalm 31

After the Baptism, the Priest washes his hands,
chanting with the people Psalm 31.

All:

Blessed are those whose transgressions are forgiven, /
and whose sins are covered. /
Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord does not take into
account, /
and in whose mouth there is no deceit. /
Because I kept silent, my bones grew old from my groaning all
the day long; /
for day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; /
I became miserable when the thorn pierced me. /
I made known my sin, and I did not hide my transgression; /
I said, "I will confess my transgression to the Lord," /
and You forgave the ungodliness of my sin. /
For this cause, everyone who is holy will pray to Him in a well-
fitted time; /
surely they will not draw near to Him in a flood of many
waters. /
You are my refuge from the oppression of those who surround
me; /
O my exceeding joy, redeem me from those who encircle me. /
"I will give you understanding, and I will teach you in the way
you should walk; /
I will fix My eyes on you. /
Do not be like the horse and the mule, /
which have no understanding; /
you squeeze their jaws with bit and bridle, /
lest they come near you." /
Many are the scourges of the sinner, /
but he who hopes in the Lord, mercy shall encircle him. /

Be glad in the Lord and rejoice greatly, O righteous ones, // and boast, all you upright in heart. (x 3)

The Robe of Righteousness & Neck Cross

The white baptismal garment symbolises purity of soul.

Putting his/her (white) robe and neck Cross upon him/her, the Priest says:

Priest: The servant of God, *N*, is clothed with the robe of righteousness, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Troparion is chanted in TONE 8:

People: Give to me a shining robe, O You Who clothes Yourself with light as with a garment, // O greatly-merciful Christ our God.

The Service of Holy Chrismation

When he has put the garment on him (her), the Priest prays, saying this:

Priest: Blessed are You, Lord God Almighty, Fountain of good things, Sun of righteousness, Who shines the light of salvation on them that are in darkness, through the manifestation of Your Only-begotten Son, and our God, and Who grants to us who are unworthy blessed cleansing in Holy Water, and divine sanctification in lifegiving Anointing, and Who now are well-pleased for Your newly-illuminated servant to be born again through water and the Spirit, and Who grants to him/her remission of sins, both voluntary and involuntary: Master, Compassionate King of All, grant him/her also the seal of Your Holy, All-powerful, and Worshipped Spirit, and the Communion of the holy Body and precious Blood of Your Christ. Keep him/her in Your sanctification; confirm him/her in the Orthodox Faith; rescue him/her from the evil one and all his devices; and preserve his/her soul in purity and righteousness, through the saving fear of You, that, in every deed and word, being acceptable to You; he/she may become a son/daughter and heir of Your heavenly Kingdom.

With a loud voice:

Priest: For You are our God, the God of mercy and salvation, and to You we send up glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

***Anointing the Newly-Illumined
with Holy Myrrh (Chrism)***

After the Prayer, the Priest anoints the one who has been baptised with the holy Chrism, making the sign of the Cross: On the Forehead, and on the Eyes, and the Nostrils, and the Lips, and on both Ears, and the Chest, and the Hands, and the Feet, saying, each time:

Priest: The seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit.

The newly-baptised (or their sponsor if the neophyte is an infant) responds each time with:

Neophyte: Amen.

The Triple Circumambulation

This procession in a circle denotes the unbreakable union of the newly-baptized person with Christ, and also that they become like Him. The newly-illumined takes their first steps in the Orthodox Church and in their journey in the Orthodox Faith as full members of the Church.

Then the Priest, accompanied by the Sponsor and the infant, makes a circular procession thrice around the Font. The Sponsor carries a Candle in his/her hands, if the newly-baptised is an infant; if the newly-baptised be an adult, he/she carries the Candle.

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And all chant:

All: As many as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. (Galatians 3: 27)
Alleluia. (x3)

Prokeimenon of the Epistle

Deacon: Let us attend.

Priest: Peace be to all.

Reader: And to your spirit.

Deacon: Wisdom.

Reader: The Prokeimenon in the Third Tone: The Lord is my Light and my Savior; Whom then shall I fear? (Psalm 26:1)

People: The Lord is my Light and my Savior; Whom, then, shall I fear? (Ps 26:1)

Reader: The Lord is the Defender of my life; of whom then shall I be afraid? (Ps 26:1)

People: The Lord is my Light and my Savior; Whom, then, shall I fear?

Reader: The Lord is my Light and my Savior.

People: Whom, then, shall I fear?

The Epistle

Deacon: Wisdom.

Reader: The Reading from the Epistle of the Holy Apostle Paul to the Romans.

Deacon: Let us attend.

Reader: Brethren, as many of us as were baptised into Jesus Christ were baptised into His death. Therefore we were buried with Him by baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should begin to walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, so will we also be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this: that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that from now on we should not serve sin. For he who is dead is free from sin. Now if we are dead with Christ, we believe that we will also live with Him, knowing that Christ being raised from the dead will die no more; death no longer has possession of Him. For in that He died, He died to sin once; but in that He lives, He lives for God. Therefore you also must be dead indeed to sin, but alive for God through Jesus Christ our Lord. (*Pericope 91:- Romans 6: 3 - 11*)

Priest: Peace be to you.

Reader: And to your spirit.

The Alleluiarion of the Gospel (Tone 3)

Deacon: Wisdom.

Reader: Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia.

People: Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia.

The Gospel

Deacon: Wisdom. Arise. Let us listen to the Holy Gospel.

Priest: Peace be to all.

People: And to your spirit.

Priest: The Reading is from the Holy Gospel according to Saint Matthew.

People: Glory to You, O Lord, glory to You.

Deacon: Let us attend.

The Priest reads the Gospel over the bowed Head of the newly-baptised:

Priest: At that time, the eleven disciples went into Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus appointed them. And having seen Him, they worshipped Him; but some doubted. And Jesus approached and spoke to them, saying, "All authority is given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything that I

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have commanded you; and behold, I am with you always even until the end of the age.” Amen. (Pericope 116:- Matthew 28: 16 - 20)

People: Glory to You, O Lord, glory to You.

The Ablution & Tonsure on the Eighth Day

On the eighth day after Baptism (but in modern practice immediately after the Gospel), the one who has been baptized is brought again to the church for ablu­tion.

The Priest looses his (her) garment and belt, saying these Prayers:

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

First Prayer

Priest: You Who by holy Baptism have granted forgiveness of sins to Your servant, and has bestowed upon him/her a life of regeneration: Master and Lord, be pleased that the light of Your presence may shine in his/her heart to the ages of ages. Keep the shield of his/her faith undefamed by enemies. Preserve for him/her the garment of incorruption, which he/she has put on, pure and undefiled, preserving unbroken in him/her the spiritual seal by Your grace. And be merciful to him/her and to us, according to the multitude of Your compassions.

For blessed and glorified is Your all-honorable and majestic Name, of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

A Second Prayer

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: O Master, Lord our God, Who, through the font, bestow heavenly Illumination upon those who are baptised, Who has regenerated Your newly-illuminated servant by water and the Spirit, and has granted to him/her forgiveness of his/her voluntary and involuntary sins: lay upon him/her Your mighty hand, and keep him/her in the power of Your goodness. Preserve his/her pledge inviolate, and count him/her worthy of eternal life, and of Your favor.

For You are our sanctification, and to You we send up glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

Priest: Peace be to all.

People: And to Your spirit.

Deacon: Bow your heads to the Lord.

People: To You, O Lord.

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Priest: He/she who has put on You, (Christ, and our God), bows also his/her head with us, to You. Protect him/her that he/she may live as an undefeated warrior against those who bear vain enmity against him/her and us, and by Your crown of incorruption show us all to be champions, even to the end.

For Yours it is to have mercy and to save, and to You we send up glory, together with Your Father Who is without beginning, and Your All-holy, Good, and Lifegiving Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

The Priest dips the sponge in pure water, and sprinkles the one who has been baptized saying:

Priest: You are justified. You are illumined. You are sanctified. You are washed: in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the Spirit of our God.

The Priest with the sponge, washes and wipes the Face, Head, Chest and the rest of the newly-illumined one, saying:

Priest: You are baptised. You are illumined. You are anointed with Chrism. You are sanctified. You are washed: in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

Prayer at the Tonsure of Hair

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: O Master, Lord our God, Who honors man with Your image, fashioning him with a rational soul and a beautiful body (that the body might serve the rational soul); for You set the head in superiority, and endowed it with the greater number of the senses, which, nevertheless, do not impede one another; and You covered the head with hair that it not be injured by the changes of the weather, and, according to need, joined together all its members, that by all of them it may give thanks to You, the Great Artisan: Master, Who, by Your chosen vessel, the Apostle Paul, has commanded us to do all things to Your glory, bless Your servant, **N.**, who has come to make the first offering by the cutting of the hair of his/her head, and with him/her, his/her Sponsor; and grant to them all that they may exercise themselves in Your law, and do those things that are acceptable to You.

For You are a merciful God who loves mankind, and to You we send up glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

Priest: Peace be to all.

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People: And to Your spirit.

Deacon: Bow your heads to the Lord.

People: To You, O Lord.

Priest: O Lord our God, Who, through the fullness of the baptismal font, has, by Your goodness, sanctified those who believe in You: bless the **child (newly-baptised—if an adult)** here present, and may Your blessing come down upon his/her head. And just as You blessed King David through the Prophet Samuel, so also bless the head of Your servant, **N**, by the hand of me, a sinner, visiting him/her with Your Holy Spirit, that he/she may increase to maturity, and in the grey hairs of old age may send up glory to You, and may see the good things of Jerusalem all the days of his/her life. For to You are due all glory, honor and worship: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

The Baptismal Tonsure

The cutting of the hair signifies a person's submission to God. It is the newly-illuminated's first offering to God of themselves.

Priest: The servant of God, **N**, is shorn: in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

The Augmented Litany

Deacon: Have mercy upon us, O God, according to Your great mercy, we pray to You: hear us and have mercy.

People: Lord, have mercy. (x3)

Deacon: Again we pray for our great lord and father, His Holiness, Patriarch *N.*; for our lord the Most Reverend Metropolitan *N.*, First Hierarchy of the Russian Church Abroad; for our lord the Most Reverend (Archbishop or Bishop *N.*, **whose diocese it is**) and all our brethren in Christ.

People: Lord, have mercy. (x3)

Deacon: Again we pray for mercy, life, peace, health, salvation and forgiveness of sins for the servant of God, **NAME OF SPONSOR(S)**, the Sponsor, and for the newly-illuminated, **NAME OF NEOPHYTE**.

People: Lord, have mercy. (x3)

Priest: For You are a merciful God who loves mankind, and to You we send up glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

The Dismissal

Priest: Glory to You, O Christ our God, our Hope, glory to You.

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

Lord, have mercy. (x3)

Father, bless.

Priest: May He Who accepted to be baptized by John in the Jordan for our salvation, Christ our True God, through the prayers of His All-pure Mother, by the power of the precious and lifegiving Cross, of the holy glorious and all-praised Apostles, of Saint, ***N (of the newly-baptized)***, and of all the Saints, have mercy on and save us for You are good and the Lover of mankind.

People: Amen.

Many Years

Deacon: A prosperous and peaceful life, health and salvation, and good success in all things, grant, Lord, to Your servants, the newly-illuminated *N*, and the Sponsor *N*, and preserve them for many years.

All: Many years! (*x3*)

MOTHERS & INFANTS

Prayers on the First Day after a Woman has Given Birth to a Child

Having received the call for the reading of the Prayers for the woman who has given birth, the Priest, taking with him Epitrachelion and Cross, goes to the home or hospital in which the birth has occurred. The priest positions himself near the bed, and prays towards to the Icon of Christ.

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: O Master, Lord Almighty, Who heals every sickness and every weakness: Heal also this Your servant, *NAME OF MOTHER*, who today has given birth, and raise her from her bed on which she lies. For, according to the words of the Prophet David, in sins we were conceived, and all are defiled before You. Preserve her and this child to which she has given birth. Cover her with the shelter of Your wings from this day until her final end, through the prayers of the All-Holy Theotokos and all the Saints. For You are blessed to the ages of ages. Amen.

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: O Master, Lord our God, Who was born of our All-Holy Sovereign Lady, the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary; Who, as an infant, lay in a

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manger and was carried as a little child: Have mercy on this, Your servant who has given birth today to this child. Forgive all her transgressions, both voluntary and involuntary, and protect her from every oppression of the devil. Preserve the infant who was born of her, from every spell, from every cruel thing, from every storm of adversity, and from evil spirits, whether of the day or of the night. Guard this woman under Your mighty hand and grant her a speedy recovery, and purify her from uncleanness, and heal her sufferings. Grant health and strength of soul and body, and surround her with bright and radiant angels; and preserve her from every approach of invisible spirits, from sickness and infirmity, from jealousy and envy, and from the evil eye. And have mercy on her and on the infant, according to Your great mercy, and cleanse her from bodily uncleanness and the various afflictions of her womb. And by Your quick mercy lead her to recovery in her humbled body. Grant that the infant who has been born of her may worship in the earthly temple which You have prepared for the glorification of Your holy Name. For to You is due all glory, honor, and worship: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

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Priest:

O Lord our God, Who was well-pleased to come down from the heavens and be born of the Holy Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary, for the salvation of us sinners, Who knows the frailty of human nature: According to the multitude of Your compassions, forgive Your servant, *NAME OF MOTHER*, who has given birth today. For You have said Lord, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it." Therefore, we Your servants pray, and having boldness on account of Your forbearing love for mankind, with fear we cry out to the Kingdom of Your holy Name: Look down from heaven and behold the feebleness of us who are condemned, and forgive this, Your servant, *NAME OF MOTHER*, and the whole household into which this infant has been born, and all who have touched her, and all here present; forgive all of them, as You are a good God who loves mankind.; for You alone have the power to forgive sins; through the prayers of the All-Holy Theotokos and of all Your Saints. Amen.

Prayers at the Naming of a Child on the Eighth Day of Birth

It is not forbidden to say these prayers before the eighth day. They may even be read on the first day.

If this is done, then the priest hears the desire of the parents concerning the name they wish to give the infant (or the name given by the parents, or the Priest himself, in honor of the Saint whose memory is appointed for the eighth day of birth).

The name given to the infant must be a “Christian” name, that of a Saint of the Orthodox Church. This saint becomes that person's heavenly patron. Everyone should know the life of his or her patron saint and partake of Holy Communion on that saint's day.¹

Out of veneration for the name of Jesus and the All-Holy Virgin Theotokos, the name is not given in their honor, that is, the name “Jesus” is not given to anyone; the name “Mary” can be given in honor of the holy women Mary of Egypt, Mary Magdalene, and so on, but not in honor of the Theotokos. Also, it is not appropriate to give a name to the newly-born that is obscure or difficult to pronounce.

It is necessary to take care that the choosing of the name for one being prepared for Baptism not be taken lightly, unwisely and not founded on some sort of prejudice, superstition or frivolity. Certain people sometimes fear certain names, because according to their understanding, the name is “lucky” or “unlucky;” other people come across certain names for their

1 Bishop Alexander Mileant, Baptism & Chrismation: The Beginning of a New Life. Missionary Leaflet #23 Holy Trinity Orthodox Mission, La Canada, Calif, USA. 2001

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children that are unseemly, and it is necessary to reveal to parishioners what the designation of the name of a Saint signifies, and why it is given to the infant at Baptism.

Good sense necessitates that one name not be given to many children in one family, that is, that the same name be given to a newly-born infant that has been the name of a previous child or children who are now deceased.

On the Eight Day of birth, the infant is brought to the church; the one holding the infant stands before the entrance (western) doors of the church.

Priest: Blessed is our God, always, now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

Reader: Amen.

Heavenly King, Comforter, Spirit of Truth, present everywhere and filling all things, Treasury of good things and Giver of life: Come and dwell in us, and cleanse us of all impurity, and save our souls, O Good One.

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. (x3)

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

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All Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, blot out our sins. Master, pardon our iniquities. Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for Your name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. (x3)

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

Our Father in the Heavens, hallowed be Your Name. Your Kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

Priest: For Yours 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 to the ages of ages.

Reader: Amen.

Lord, have mercy. (x 12)

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

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O come, let us worship God our King.

O come, let us worship and fall down before Christ our King and God.

O come, let us worship and fall down before Christ Himself, our King and God.

Then the Dismissal Troparion of the Day or that of the Saint(s) of the church.

The Priest makes the Sign of the Cross over the forehead, lips, and chest of the infant, and says this Prayer:

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: O Lord our God, we entreat You, and we supplicate You, that the Light of Your presence be signed on this, Your servant, *NAME OF INFANT*, and that the Cross of Your Only-begotten Son be signed in his (her) heart and understanding, so that he (she) may flee from the vanity of the world and from every trap of the enemy, and may follow after Your commandments. Grant Lord that Your holy name may remain unrejected by him (her), and that, in due time, he (she) may be joined to Your Holy Church, and that he (she) may be perfected by the awesome Mysteries of Your Christ, so that, having lived according to Your commandments, and having preserved the seal

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unbroken, he (she) may receive the blessedness of the Elect in Your Kingdom: By the grace and love for mankind of Your Only-begotten Son, with Whom You are blessed, together with Your All-holy, Good and Lifegiving Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

Then the Priest takes the infant in his arms, stands before the doors of the church, or before an Icon of the All-holy Theotokos, and makes the Sign of the Cross, saying:

Priest: Rejoice, Virgin Theotokos, full of grace, for from You shone forth the Sun of Righteousness, Christ our God, illumining those who are in darkness. Rejoice, venerable Elder Symeon, who received in your arms the Redeemer of our souls, Who grants us the Resurrection.

The Dismissal

Priest: Glory to You, Christ God, our hope, glory to You.

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

Lord, have mercy. (x3)

Father bless.

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Priest: May He Who accepted to be carried in the arms of the righteous Symeon for our salvation, Christ our True God, through the prayers of his All-pure Mother, and of all His Saints, save us and have mercy on us, as He is good and loves mankind.

People: Amen.

**Prayers for a Woman
on the Fortieth Day of Childbirth**

On the Fortieth Day the child is again brought to the temple to be churched, that is, to make a beginning of being brought to Church.

The child is carried by the mother, who already being cleansed and washed, stands before the entrance (western) doors.

The Priest, having vested himself with Epitrachelion, begins:

Priest: Blessed is our God, always, now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

Reader: Amen.

Heavenly King, Comforter, Spirit of Truth, present everywhere, filling all things, Treasury of good things and Giver of life: Come and dwell in us, and cleanse us of all impurity, and save our souls, O Good One.

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. (x3)

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

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All Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, blot out our sins. Master, pardon our iniquities. Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for Your name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. (x3)

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

Our Father in the Heavens, hallowed be Your Name. Your Kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

Priest: For Yours 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 to the ages of ages.

Reader: Amen.

Lord, have mercy. (x 12)

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

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O come, let us worship God our King.

O come, let us worship and fall down before Christ our King and God.

O come, let us worship and fall down before Christ Himself, our King and God.

Then the Dismissal Troparion of the Day or that of the Saint(s) of the church.

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

Doxasticon

In the tone of the Troparion

People: Through the prayers of all the Saints and the Theotokos, grant us Your peace Lord, and have mercy on us, for only You are compassionate.

Then bending down his head to the mother, as she stands with the infant, the Priest makes the Sign of the Cross over them; and touching the infant's head, he says the Prayer:

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: O Lord Almighty, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who by Your word have created all nature, both reason-endowed men and irrational animals, and have brought all things from nothingness into existence, we pray and entreat

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You: You have saved this Your servant, *NAME OF MOTHER*, by Your will. Purify her, therefore, from every sin and from every defilement as she now draws near to Your holy Church; and let her be counted worthy to partake, uncondemned, of Your Holy Mysteries.

If the infant has reposed, the Prayer is read only up to this point, including the following exclamation:

Priest: For You are a good God who loves mankind, and to You we send up glory, to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

If the infant is alive, the exclamation is not said, but the following is added:

Priest: Bless this child which has been born of her. Increase him (her); sanctify him (her); enlighten him (her); make him (her) chaste; and endow him (her) with good understanding. For You have brought him (her) into being, and have shown him (her) the physical light, and have appointed him (her) in due time to be counted worthy of spiritual light, and that he (she) may be numbered among Your holy flock, through Your Only-begotten Son with Whom You are blessed, together with Your All-holy, Good and Lifegiving Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

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People: Amen.

Priest: Peace be to all.

People: And to your spirit.

Deacon: Bow your heads to the Lord.

People: To You, Lord.

Prayer for the Mother of the Child

Priest: O Lord our God, Who came for the salvation of the human race, come also upon Your servant, *NAME OF MOTHER*, and count her worthy, through the prayers of Your honorable Priest(monk), of entrance into the temple of Your glory. Wash away her bodily and spiritual uncleanness, in the completion of the forty days. Make her worthy also of the Communion of Your precious Body and Blood.

For sanctified and glorified is Your all-honorable and majestic Name, of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

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If the mother has come without the infant, then at the conclusion of these prayers, the Priest goes into the Sanctuary, saying:

Priest: Now let Your servant depart in peace, Master, according to Your word, for my eyes have seen Your salvation, which You have prepared before the face of all peoples: a light of revelation for the Gentiles, and the glory of Your people Israel.

The Priest brings out the Cross from the Altar; the mother goes with him as far as the Ambon and makes three bows; after this the Priest pronounces the Small Dismissal and offers the Cross for kissing.

Prayers for the Child

In the Narthex of the Church, the Priest makes the Sign of the Cross on the head of the infant:

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: O Lord our God, Who on the fortieth day was brought as an infant into the Temple, according to the Law, by Mary the Bride Unwedded and Your holy Mother; and was carried in the arms of the righteous Symeon: Omnipotent Master, bless this infant that has been presented, that he (she) may appear before You, the Creator of All; and increase him (her) in every work that is good and well-pleasing to You, driving away from him (her) every adverse power by the sign of the likeness of Your Cross, for You are He

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who preserves infants, Lord, that being counted worthy of holy Baptism, he (she) may receive the portion of the Elect of Your Kingdom, being preserved with us by the grace of the Holy, Consubstantial and Undivided Trinity. For to You is due all glory, thanksgiving and worship, together with Your Father Who is without beginning, and Your All-holy, Good and Lifegiving Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

Priest: Peace be to all.

People: And to your spirit.

Deacon: Bow your heads to the Lord.

People: To You, Lord.

Priest: O God the Father Almighty, Who, by Your mighty-voiced Prophet Isaiah, has foretold to us the incarnation from a Virgin of Your Only-begotten Son and our God, Who, in these latter days, by Your good pleasure and the cooperation of the Holy Spirit, for the salvation of us men, through immeasurable loving-kindness has willed to become an infant of her; and, according to the custom of Your holy Law, after the fulfillment of the days of purification, allowed Yourself to be brought into the

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Sanctuary, being Yourself the true Lawgiver, and willed to be carried in the arms of the righteous Symeon, of which we have recognized this mystery through the prototype in the aforementioned Prophet, revealed by the coal in the tongs, and of which we the faithful also have an imitation by Grace. Lord Who guards infants, bless this child, together with his (her) parents and his (her) sponsors, and count him (her) worthy, in due season, of the new birth through water and the Spirit; number him (her) with Your holy flock of rational sheep, who are called by the name of Your Christ. For You are He who dwells above, and regards those below, and to You we send up glory, to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

If the infant is baptized, the Priest performs the Churching; but if not, he does this after the Baptism. He then says the Dismissal here.

The Churching of the Child

The Priest takes the child and makes with him (her) the Sign of the Cross before the Narthex Doors (Royal Doors), saying:

Priest: The servant of God, *NAME OF CHILD*, is churched: In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The Priest brings the child into the Nave, saying:

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Priest: He (she) enters into Your house, he (she) worships towards Your holy temple.

The Priest goes to the middle of the church saying:

Priest: The servant of God, *NAME OF CHILD*, is churched: In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. In the middle of the church will he (she) chant praises to You.

The Priest brings the child before the Holy Doors, saying:

Priest: The servant of God, *NAME OF CHILD*, is churched: In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

If the child is male, the Priest brings him into the Sanctuary through the South Door and around the Altar via the High Place. At the High Place (the East side of the Altar) the Priest bows the infant to the Holy Table, as a sign of veneration to the Altar, and then, having placed the infant by one of the Icons in the Sanctuary, near the Table of Oblation, he takes him out of the Sanctuary and places him on the Ambon (but if female, the Priest does not bring her into the Sanctuary, only as far as the Holy Doors, then sets her face towards one of the Icons near the Holy Doors, and then places her on the Ambon), saying:

Priest: Now let Your servant depart in peace, Master, according to Your word, for my eyes have seen Your salvation, which You have prepared before the face of all peoples: a light of revelation for the Gentiles, and the glory of Your people Israel.

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After this, the Priest lays the child before the Holy Doors, and there the mother, having made three bows, takes the child up, and departs. The Priest makes the customary Dismissal.

The Dismissal

Priest: Glory to You, O Christ God, our hope, glory to You.

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

Lord, have mercy. (x3)

Father bless.

Priest: May He Who accepted to be carried in the arms of the righteous Symeon for our salvation, Christ our True God, through the prayers of his most-pure Mother, of our Father among the saints, John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople; and of all His Saints, have mercy on us and save us, for He is good and loves mankind.

People: Amen.

Appendix 1

Baptism of Infants

The baptism of an infant reflects the parents' burning desire to have their child partake of Christ's blessings as soon as possible. Having been baptized, the child starts to develop in a church environment. For the child, the church is its familial home.

The practice of baptizing infants is quite ancient, dating back to Apostolic times, and has its beginnings in Christ's words: "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven" (Matthew 19: 14).

The Apostles' writings contain many examples of whole families being baptized: The house of the jailer, the house of Stephen (1 Corinthians 1: 16). Nowhere is it mentioned that infants were excluded. In their sermons to the faithful, the Holy Fathers of the Church insisted on the baptism of infants. St Gregory the Theologian had this to say to Christian mothers: "Do you have an infant? Do not allow its corruption to be strengthened through time; let the child be blessed in infancy and consecrated to the Holy Spirit from its youth. Because of your weak nature are you afraid of the seal ... O faint-hearted mother of little faith? But Anna, even before giving birth, promised Samuel to God, and, soon after his birth, consecrated and brought him up to be a priest, unafraid of human frailties but having faith in God."

At the same time, it is essential that those who bring infants to be baptized understand the responsibility they have taken on, for the upbringing of the child in the Faith and in Christian

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good deeds. We find these directives in the book, *On the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, attributed to St Dionysius the Areopagite, (who lived in the time of the Apostle Paul and was the first bishop of Athens) a holy father highly regarded by the Church: "Our teachers saw fit to allow the baptism of infants under the holy conditions that the natural parents entrust them to one of the faithful, who in turn would thoroughly instruct the child in spiritual matters, and would subsequently be concerned about the child, like a father sent from above, and a guardian of the baby's eternal salvation. It is the promise of that person (who undertakes to guide the child toward pious living) which prompts the hierarch to pronounce the words of the renunciation of the Devil and the sacred confession of faith."

Appendix 2

About Godparents or Sponsors

The Godparents of the newly baptized child or adult act as his or her spiritual parents. They are given the responsibility for their spiritual development. They pray for him or her, and assist with advice or help during difficult periods of his or her life. In other words, to be a Godparent is not only an honor, it is a great responsibility. During baptism, it is usual to have one Godparent of the same gender as the one being baptized. That is a Godfather for a male catechumen and a Godmother if the catechumen is female. Two Godparents, a Godfather and a Godmother are also accepted, even though one would suffice. They must be pious Orthodox Christians, as well as church-going individuals, so that they can exert a good influence on their Godchild.

Normally, they provide a cross to be worn by the newly baptized.

Appendix 3

On the Word "Baptism"

The Orthodox Church "baptises" their infants or adult catechumens. They do not "christen."

The word 'baptize' derives from 'baptizo,' the transliterated form of the Greek word βάπτειν or βαπτίζω.

In an historical context, it means, "to dip, plunge, or immerse," something entirely, e.g., into water.

In the Orthodox Church, a person is baptised (immersed in Holy Water) in the name of the Holy Trinity: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Christ Himself commanded this as recorded in the Gospel of St Matthew 28: 19, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit..."

Christening is a non-Orthodox naming ceremony first referenced in the 14th century. It is a Protestant/Western term which some well-meaning Orthodox Christians have unfortunately appropriated (and inaccurately at that). The words "Christen/Christening" specifically mean to initiate someone in the name of Christ, not the Holy Trinity.

The Orthodox Church initiates their faithful not just in the name of Christ, but all 3 persons of the Holy Trinity. Technically people are "triadised" (or "trinitised" as opposed to being "christened") at their baptism. The basis of all Orthodox Christian beliefs is grounded in God the Holy Trinity. It is

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therefore especially significant in the Sacrament of Holy Baptism and why Orthodox Christians must not refer to this Divine Service as “christening.” The Orthodox Church is not Christomonist. Christomonism is the non-Orthodox belief which elevates Christ above the other 2 persons of the Holy Trinity and can (in some non-Orthodox traditions) exalt the person of Christ alone to the exclusion of the other 2 persons of the Holy Trinity altogether.

Appendix 4

Baptism Checklist

The following items are provided by the **Sponsor (Godparent)**:

Baptismal Cross (& Chain)

According to tradition, the baptismal cross must be an Orthodox Cross. Just a plain cross without the crucified corpus. Crucifixes are acceptable as long as the feet are individually nailed, not one on top of the other.



Crucifix with feet separately nailed



Plain Cross

Baptismal Tunic

A White Tunic/Robe with a Cross embroidered on the back.



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Baptismal Candle

1 Large Baptismal Candle

This should not be a taper or a used candle. It must be thicker and longer than an ordinary taper. The catechumen who will be baptised will keep this candle forever.



Towels

1 White Hand Towel (A face towel)

1 Large White Bath Towel

1 Large White Sheet (if it is an infant baptism. This is not needed if it is an adult baptism)

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Oil

1 Small Bottle of Olive Oil

Feel free to decant oil into a decorative bottle, or just bring as it is. Make sure that the bottle opening is free of encumbrances so that the priest can easily insert an anointing brush into the bottle or to dab his fingers with oil.

Any leftover oil after the baptism is given as an offering to the church for their oil lamps...etc.



*Bottle opening to be free
of any obstructions*

Honourarium

A donation is usually given for the use of venue (e.g. church and hall) and the venue's utilities (water, electricity...etc).

The following items are to be supplied by the Catechumen:

Change of Underclothes

When it comes time for the catechumen to be immersed 3 times in the font, the catechumen should wear at least a t-shirt and shorts on top of their underclothes.

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Once the newly-illuminated emerges for the final time from the baptismal waters, they will go to the back room or rest room to dry themselves and change into dry clothes.

Sources

Based on the edition of Divine Services offered by Fr John Whiteford and accessible at: <http://saintjonah.org/services/>

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