

THE EUCHARISTIC LITURGY

is, above all else, a meal at which God's People are nourished with the Body and Blood of Christ.

- While the **Cherubic Hymn** is being sung, our gifts of bread and wine are brought to the altar during the **Great Entrance**. We are invited to "lay aside all earthly cares" so that "we may receive the King of all."
- **The Peace** is our affirmation of Christ's presence as we praise the Trinity "with one mind and one heart."
- **The Creed** is the proclamation of our common faith in the Trinity, preparing us for
- **the Eucharist Canon**, which recounts the institution of the Eucharist, the death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ, and our joyful anticipation of His Second Coming.
- During the **Consecration**, we call upon the Holy Spirit to change our gifts of bread and wine into the very Body and Blood of Christ while recalling all for whom our gifts are offered.
- After acknowledging God as our Heavenly Father through the **Lord's Prayer**, the priest raises the Body of Christ for all to see, testifying to the Lord's holiness.
- **The reception of the Eucharist** brings us to the climax of the Liturgy. Through Christ's Body and Blood, we are united with Him and "taste the fountain of immortality." We are then invited to
- **depart in peace, in the name of the Lord**, in order to publicly witness to that which God has shared with us during the Divine Liturgy;
- pray for salvation and guidance during the **closing prayer**, recited in our midst by the priest; and
- respond to the **Lord's blessing** by venerating the holy cross.

COMING TO TERMS

The word **EUCHARIST** is derived from the Greek word *eucharisto*, which means "thank you." The Eucharist is also referred to as **COMMUNION**, a combination of the words *common* and *union*. Hence, the Eucharist puts us into a **common union** with God Himself.

BEFORE RECEIVING THE EUCHARIST...

We should strive to receive the Body and Blood of Christ at every Divine Liturgy, yet we should **prepare ourselves** beforehand by

- **acknowledging our sinfulness** while sincerely **desiring God's forgiveness**;
- **being reconciled** with those who have sinned against us and against whom we have sinned;
- **seeking God's guidance** in making essential changes in our lives; and
- **reserving the evening before** for meditation, prayer and fasting.

Your Father Confessor will be more than happy to assist you in determining guidelines in preparation for the reception of the Eucharist.

With full confidence let us partake of the Body and Blood of Christ...so that by partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ you might become united in body and blood with Him. By having His Body and Blood distributed through our members, we become Christ-bearers and thus, according to the blessed Peter, we become partakers of the divine nature.

—Saint Cyril of Jerusalem



THE LITURGY IN OUR LIVES

The end of every Divine Liturgy prepares us for the beginning of the next! If we *live* and *apply* all that has been experienced in our public worship, *our lives become an inseparable part of the Liturgy* and *the Liturgy becomes an inseparable part of our lives*. Having placed ourselves in the very presence of God, we are no longer children of this world but **inheritors of the Kingdom of God** and recipients of everlasting life.