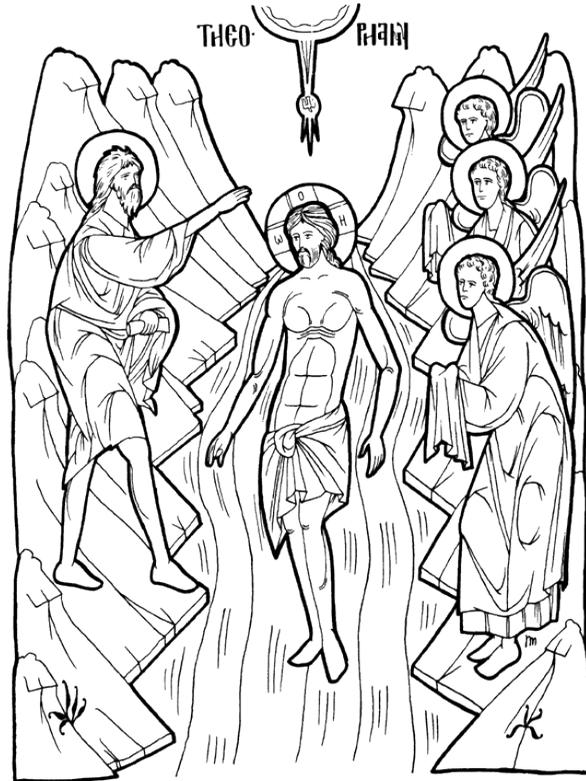


THE ORDER OF HOLY CHRISMATION



with the Divine Liturgy



THE THREE MYSTERIES OF INITIATION

Initiation into Christ and his Church is a threefold mystery of Baptism, Chrismation, & Eucharist.

Baptism

Baptism was the beginning of entry into the Church. It is like a death, burial, & rebirth in Christ, washing away all sins and illumining the baptized person with the grace and power of the Holy Spirit.

Chrismation

In the Byzantine tradition, chrismation ordinarily follows baptism immediately. When this has not happened for any reason, the chrismation is celebrated later.

In holy chrismation, the baptized person receives the Holy Spirit. It is like an ordination of the laity. The Greek word for chrismation (*chrisma*) means anointing. One anointed with *chrisma* becomes *Christos* (that is, the anointed one), which is the meaning of the name Christ. Thus, by this sacrament we are made Christians or “other Christs.” According to our belief, every baptized lay person is ordained into the one priesthood of Jesus Christ by this holy mystery and becomes an ambassador for Christ in this world.

Holy Communion

Holy Communion is then given to the newly chrismated person. We complete our initiation into the body of Christ by eating his body and drinking his blood in the holy eucharist, as he commanded. The holy eucharist provides nourishment for the spiritual life.

In the early Church, Baptism and Chrismation were not administered in the nave of the church, but in a separate edifice called the baptisterion. Following chrismation, the newly baptized, wearing their white robes and carrying candles, were led by the clergy to the church for the celebration of the Eucharist. This is the origin of the circular procession with the newly chrismated before they are given Holy Communion.



SYMBOLISM & TRADITIONS

As with all sacraments, each action and component holds symbolic meaning, with a basis in ancient traditions.



- **The Sponsors (Godparents).** The use of Sponsors dates back to Christian persecution by the pagans. Sponsors were provided to instruct children in the faith in the event that the parents were martyred.
- **The Clothing.** The person to be chrismated is dressed in new white clothes – representative of their baptismal robes – to signify the purity of the soul washed from sin, as well as the garment of light man wore before the Fall.
- **The Candles.** The threefold mystery of initiation is sometimes called Illumination. These are the sacraments of entrance into light. In the early Church, the baptismal candle was lit in the Church for major life events, such as marriage, and was lit as death approached as well. It is fittingly lit for the chrismation. The candle is also a symbol of the perseverance of the baptized soul until Christ's return
- **Chrismation.** The Priest anoints the baptized person with the Holy Chrism (blessed oil, with a number of aromatic substances symbolizing the grace-bestowing gifts of the Holy Spirit.) The Priest anoints crosswise the child's forehead, eyes, nostrils, mouth, ears, breast, hands and feet.
- **Procession.** The Priest leads the newly chrismated person and sponsors three times around the tetrapod. This circular dance reflects a belief that the angels in heaven are expressing their joy. A tradition states that at this moment a guardian angel is assigned to the child.
- **The Holy Eucharist.** Following Baptism and Chrismation, the neophyte becomes a full member of the Church and receives the sacrament of Holy Communion.

PREPARATORY NOTES

It is fitting for Holy Chrismation to be celebrated in the church and, if possible, with Divine Liturgy. The Priest who celebrates the Mystery and the Sponsors present at it prepare by fasting, for the holiness and majesty of the Mystery demands this.

It is assumed that the person was given a Christian name at Baptism. If not, the one to be chrismated may take a Christian name he or she desires.

On a small table, the Priest (or Deacon) places a Cross, Gospel, and appurtenances related to the Mystery of Chrismation (vessels containing the Chrism, an anointing brush, and perhaps a sponge and scissors).



The faithful stand when the preparatory rites are completed and the great incensation of the church takes place. Then the clergy quietly say the prayers before commencing the Divine Liturgy at the tetrapod where the Chrismation will take place.

THE MYSTERY OF CHRISMATION

If the mystery of chrismation is celebrated separately from baptism for any reason, the following order is to be followed. The candidate should be dressed in plain, white, loose-fitting clothing with head uncovered and bare feet. The clergy are fully vested in white.

Deacon: Reverend Father, give the blessing!

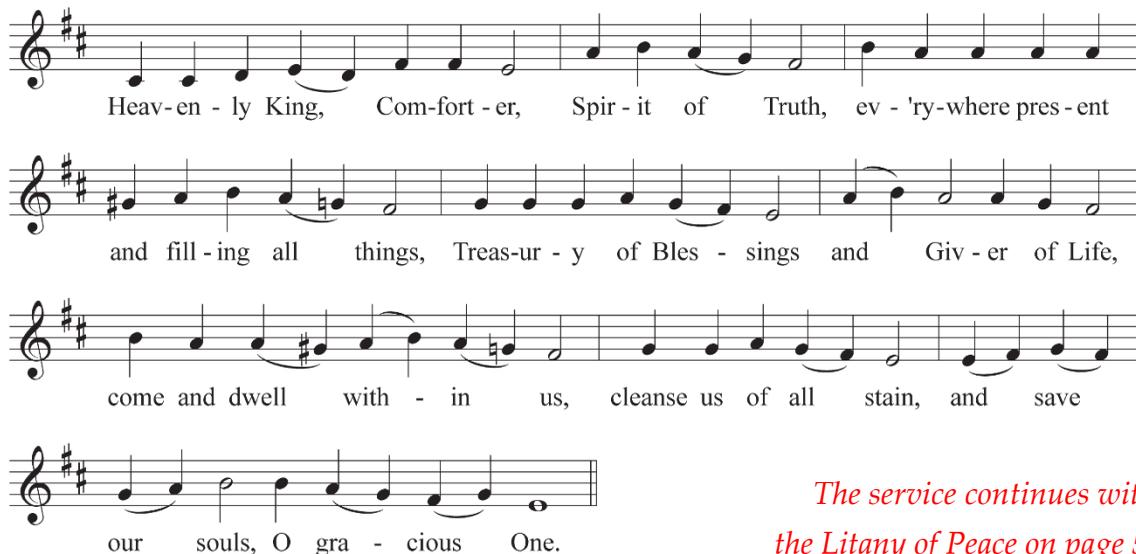
Priest: Blessed is the kingdom of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever and forever.

Response: Amen.

Then, from Pentecost until Pascha, we sing:

Special Hymn:

Tone 6 Samohlasen



Heav-en - ly King, Com-fort - er, Spir - it of Truth, ev - 'ry-where pres - ent
and fill - ing all things, Treas - ur - y of Bles - sings and Giv - er of Life,
come and dwell with - in us, cleanse us of all stain, and save
our souls, O gra - cious One.

*The service continues with
the Litany of Peace on page 5.*

However, from Pascha until Ascension, we sing:

Christ is ris - en from the dead! By death he tram - pled Death;
and to those in the tombs he grant - ed life. *(Three times)*

Litany of Peace

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

Response: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For peace from on high and for the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord. **R.**

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

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

Deacon: For our holy father (*Name*), Pope of Rome, let us pray to the Lord. **R.**

Deacon: For our most reverend Metropolitan (*Name*), for our God-loving Bishop (*Name*), for the venerable priesthood, the diaconate in Christ, and all the clergy and people, let us pray to the Lord. **R.**

Deacon: For our government and for all in the service of our country, let us pray to the Lord. **R.**

Deacon: That by the anointing with this all-holy, saving and perfecting chrism the (newly) enlightened servant(s) of God (*Name[s]*) may be given divine power to conquer and overcome all the hostile deceits of the devil and the assaults of the flesh and the world, let us pray to the Lord. **R.**

Deacon: That by the anointing with this most holy chrism and by the power, action, grace and descent of the Holy Spirit, (he-she-they) may become (a) brave and victorious witness(es) of Christ our God, let us pray to the Lord. **R.**

Deacon: That by the anointing with this most holy chrism, (he-she-they) may be firm, strong and steadfast in true faith, love and hope all the days of (his-her-their) (life-lives), let us pray to the Lord. **R.**

Deacon: That by the anointing with this most holy chrism, (he-she-they) may be given the grace to profess the Name of Christ our God before all people without fear of shame, and to be always ready to accept suffering for His sake with love, let us pray to the Lord. **R.**

Deacon: That by the anointing with this most holy chrism, (he-she-they) may grow in all virtues and grow in the commandments of Christ our God, let us pray to the Lord. **R.**

Deacon: That by the anointing with this most holy chrism, and the power, action, grace and descent of the Holy Spirit, (he-she-they) may grow to complete maturity in the fullness of Christ, let us pray to the Lord. **R.**

Deacon: That we be delivered from all affliction, wrath, and need, let us pray to the Lord. **R.**

Deacon: Protect us, save us, have mercy on us, and preserve us, O God, by Your grace. **R.**

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

Response: To You, O Lord.

Chrismation

A lighted candle may be given to the candidate, or to the sponsor, and the priest says the prayer of holy chrismation:

Priest: Blessed are You, Lord, God, Ruler of all, Source of all good things, Sun of Righteousness. You have raised up a light of salvation for those in darkness, through the manifestation of Your only-begotten Son and our God. Though we are unworthy, You have given us a blessed cleansing in holy water and a divine sanctification through holy anointing. Now, to Your newly enlightened servant(s), You have been pleased to give new birth by water and the Spirit, for the forgiveness of (his-her-their) sins, whether committed willingly or unwillingly. Therefore, O Master and gracious King of all, grant (him-her-them) also the seal of the gift of Your holy, almighty and adorable Spirit, and the communion of the holy Body and precious Blood of Your Christ. Keep (him-her-them) in Your holiness, strengthen (him-her-them) in the true faith, and deliver (him-her-them) from the evil one and all his deceitful ways. Keep (him-her-them) in purity and righteousness by a fear of You that brings salvation, that (he-she-they) may please You in (his-her-their) every word and deed and become (a) (son(s)-(and)-daughter(s)) and (an) heir(s) of Your heavenly kingdom.

For You are our God, a God of mercy and salvation, and we give glory to You, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and ever and forever.

Response: Amen.

After this prayer, the priest anoints the previously baptized person(s) with holy chrism, making the sign of the cross on the forehead, eyes, nostrils, mouth, ears, breast, hands and feet, saying:

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

After the Chrismation¹:

Small Litany

During the Small Litany, the priest quietly prays the Prayer of the Trisagion.

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

Response: Lord, have mercy

Deacon: Protect us, save us, have mercy on us, and preserve us, O God, by your grace.

Response: Lord, have mercy

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

Response: To You, Lord.

Celebrant: For you are holy, our God, and we give glory to you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and ever

Deacon: And forever.

Response: Amen.

¹ *The Order of Holy Baptism & Holy Chrismation.* (Parma, 1994), 81.

Then the Priest places his epitrachelion on the newly chrismated person or sponsor and leads them in a circular procession three times around the tetrapod. The newly chrismated person or the sponsor carries the candle.

And all sing three times:

All you who have been bap-tized in-to Christ Have been clothed
with Christ. Al-le-lu - - - ia! *fine* *recitando* Glo - ry to the Father,
and to the Son, and to the Ho - ly Spi - rit, now and ever and
for - ev - er. A - men. Have been clothed with Christ.
Al-le-lu - - - ia! *da capo al fine*

The Priest and Deacon enter the altar.

Deacon: Let us be attentive!

Priest: +Peace be to all.

Deacon: Wisdom! Be attentive!

The faithful sing the Prokeimenon. The reader chants the verse

Deacon: Reverend Father, bless the proclaimer of the Gospel of the holy apostle and evangelist Matthew.

Blessing him, the priest says:

Priest: May God, through the prayers of the holy, glorious, and illustrious apostle and evangelist Matthew, grant that you proclaim the word with great power for the fulfillment of the Gospel of his beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

Deacon: Amen.

And the priest hands the gospel book to the deacon. The deacon, bowing, takes the holy gospel book, and goes to the ambon or some other designated place for the reading of the Gospel.

Note that Matthew 28:16-20 is always read at a Liturgy that is celebrated with baptism, even on Sunday, except for feasts of our Lord or the Theotokos and the Sundays between Pascha and All Saints.

Priest: Wisdom! Let us stand and listen to the holy Gospel. +Peace be to all.

Response: And to your spirit.

The priest returns to the altar.

Deacon: A reading from the holy Gospel according to Saint Matthew.

Response: Glory to you, O Lord, glory to you.

Priest: Let us be attentive!

The deacon reads Matthew 28:16-20 (The 1st Resurrection Gospel).

On significant days, the deacon may also read another Gospel.

Response: Glory to you, O Lord, glory to you.

Homily

Litany of Fervent Supplication

Deacon: Let us all say with our whole soul and with our whole mind, let us say:

Response: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: O Lord almighty, God of our fathers, we pray your, hear and have mercy.

Response: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Have mercy on us, O God, according to your great mercy, we pray you, hear and have mercy.

Response: Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Again we pray for our holy father (*Name*), Pope of Rome, and for our most reverend Metropolitan (*Name*), for our God-loving Bishop (*Name*), for those who serve and have served in this holy church, for our spiritual fathers and for all our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Response: Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: Again we pray for our government and for all in the service of our country.

Response: Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: We also pray for the newly enlightened servant(s) of God (*Name(s)*), that (he-she-they) be protected in the pure profession of faith, in all holiness and in the fulfillment of the commandments of Christ all the days of (his-her-they) life.

Response: Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Priest: Again we pray for the people here present who await your great and abundant mercy, for those who show us mercy, and for all Christians of the true faith.

Response: Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Priest: For You are a merciful and loving God and we give glory to You, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and ever and forever.

Response: Amen.

The Divine Liturgy continues with the Cherubikon, found on pages 42-48 of the Divine Liturgy book.²

At Holy Communion, the newly-enlightened and their sponsors are the first to receive after the priest and deacon.

At the Dismissal of the Divine Liturgy (pp. 89-90), the priest begins:

Priest: May Christ our true God, who for our salvation deigned to be baptized by John in the Jordan...

² *The Divine Liturgies of Our Holy Fathers John Chrysostom and Basil the Great: Responses and Hymns Set to the Carpathian Plainchant* (Pittsburgh: Byzantine Catholic Metropolitan Church *Sui Juris* of Pittsburgh, U.S.A., 2006), 42-48.