

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Holy Father (Master), bless.

Priest: May Christ our true God Who was Baptized in the Jordan by John for our salvation, through the intercessions of His all-pure and all-blameless Mother; by the power of the precious and life-giving Cross; through the protection of the heavenly bodiless powers; through the supplications of the honorable, glorious, prophet, forerunner and Baptist John; of the holy and all-praiseworthy Apostles; of the holy, glorious and triumphant martyrs; of our venerable and God-bearing fathers; **(of the patron Saint)**; of the holy and righteous ancestors of God, Joachim and Anna; of Saints **(Names)** whom we commemorate, and of all the saints: have mercy upon us and save us, for He is a good and merciful God Who loves mankind.

*Through the prayers of our holy fathers, Lord Jesus Christ have mercy on us and save us.

Reader: Amen.

The parents approach the front of the church, where the godparent hands the infant to them.

**From Pascha until its leave-taking (the Wednesday before the Ascension):*

Priest: Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and to those in the tombs He has granted life.

Reader: Truly the Lord is risen.



Priest: The servant of God (**Name**) receives the Body and Blood of Christ for remission of sins and eternal life. Amen.

Final Litany

The Reader responds "Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy."

Priest: Have mercy on us, O God, according to Your great mercy; we pray to You, hear us and have mercy.

Again we pray for mercy, life, peace, health, salvation, visitation, forgiveness, and remission of sins of the servant of God, (**Name**) the newly-Baptized, the sponsor(s), the parents, relatives, and all those who have gathered here to take part in this Holy Mystery.

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.

Reader: Amen.

Dismissal

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

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

Priest: Whosoever will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. (*Mark 8:34*)

Holy Communion

The Priest prepares to give Communion to the newly-Baptized, saying:

Priest: I believe, O Lord, and I confess that You are truly the Christ, the Son of the living God, Who came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the first.

Moreover, I believe that this is Your most-pure Body, and that this is Your precious Blood; wherefore, I pray to You: have mercy on me, and forgive me my transgressions, voluntary and involuntary, whether in word or deed, in knowledge and ignorance.

And make me worthy to partake of Your most-pure Mysteries without condemnation, unto the remission of sins and life everlasting. Amen.

Of Your Mystical Supper, O Son of God, receive me today as a communicant; for I will not speak of the Mystery to Your enemies; nor will I give You a kiss, as did Judas, but like the thief I confess You: Remember me, O Lord, in Your kingdom!

The Priest gives Communion to the newly-Baptized, saying:

Why Do We Baptize Infants?

There are many detailed theological reasons for the practice of infant baptism in the Orthodox Church. Unfortunately space prevents us from going into great detail. We will attempt to give the casual observer, who may be visiting for the first time in an Orthodox Church, a brief overview of our teaching on infant baptism.

- The teaching is the same for all Orthodox Christians be they Greek, Russian, Romanian, Serbian, Palestinian, Syrian, Bulgarian, etc.; the theology is the same for all.

- First let us state what the Orthodox Church *does not* believe: we do not believe in the western (Roman Catholic/Protestant) view of the *age of reason*. There is no scripture or tradition to back this idea up. This idea of maturity is solely based on the age of a person. Some people could be 50 and still have not matured. If we say that "the age of reason" is an age when we can understand God and His mysteries, then we would be putting our selves on the same level as God. To say that a person must reach the age of reason and believe in Christ before he may be baptized is to make God's grace in some way dependent on man's intelligence. But God's grace is not dependent on any act of ours, intellectual or otherwise; it is a pure gift of His love.

- None of the above is what we teach in the Orthodox Church - for us it is about the *Incarnation of Jesus Christ*, the second person of the Holy Trinity, who was both fully God and Man and *was born out of the womb* of the Virgin Mary by the power of the Holy Spirit for the salvation of mankind.

- Christ comes for our salvation at every moment of our existence - thus He comes for the zygote, the fetus, the baby in the womb, the baby newly born, the infant, the toddler, the child, the young person, the

teenager, the person in their 20's and 30's, the middle aged, the aged. He comes for us at all stages of our lives.

- For Orthodox Christians, Christ is always with us, and we participate in His mysteries no matter what our age. It does not depend on us understanding the unknowable. We baptize infants because Christ entered time through the womb, and for every stage of our life, and we thus are born again in water and the spirit at baptism, and withhold it from no one who seeks it for themselves or their children.

This gives you a brief over view of our teaching. The following questions are given so that if you are seeking more answers, these questions might interest you further in investigating the Orthodox Christian Church. Please feel free to ask the Priest any questions you might have:

- If infant baptism is a later invention, when did it begin and who began it? Where did it originate?
- Why are there no protests against the validity of infant baptism from anyone in the early Church?
- Where is anything found in Scripture that expressly forbids the baptism of infants or children?
- How is it that God established a covenantal, corporate relationship with the tribes of Israel in the Old Testament, but some interpret the New Testament as abolishing the faith of an entire household, with the father at its head, in favor of a solely individualistic faith?
- Where does Scripture prescribe any age for baptism?
- Even if there were a special age when someone's faith reached "maturity," how could one discern that? Doesn't faith always mature? When is faith

Send down upon **(him/her)** Your Holy Spirit, that as **(he/she)** grows in body and spirit and attains the gray hairs of venerable old age, **(he/she)** may ever glorify Your name, and behold the blessings of Jerusalem all the days of **(his/her)** life.

For to You is due all honor, glory, and worship: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

Reader: Amen.

The Tonsure

The Priest tonsures the newly-Baptized at the four points of the head, saying:*

Priest: The servant of God **(Name)** is tonsured in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Bestowal of the Cross

It is customary at this point to present the newly-Baptized with a Cross. As the Sponsor places it around the neck of the newly-Baptized, he says:

* The shearing of the hair signifies that the newly baptized person has dedicated himself to the service of God, and to obedience; because the cutting of the hair has always been the symbol of submission and servitude. It is also symbolical of the scriptural offering of the first-fruits.

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.

Reader: Amen.

Priest: Peace be with all.

Reader: And with your spirit.

Deacon: Let us bow our heads to the Lord.

Reader: To You, O Lord.

Second Prayer

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

Reader: *Lord*, have mercy.

The Priest places his hand on the head of the newly-Baptized, and says:

Priest: O Lord our God, through the fullness of the baptismal font, You have sanctified with Your goodness those who believe in You. Bless this newly-Baptized person, and let Your blessing descend upon (**his/her**) head.

And as You blessed David the King by the hand of Your prophet Samuel, bless now also the head of Your servant (**Name**), by the hand of me a sinner.

mature enough for baptism and when is it not? Who can judge?

- Where in Scripture does it say that children are free from the effects of the Fall simply because they are not old enough to believe? (Even creation is under the curse of mankind's fall - Romans 8:19-21).
- What about the many Biblical meanings and early Christian understandings of baptism other than the one defining it as a visible sign of inward repentance, meanings such as the sacrament of regeneration (Titus 3:5), a grafting into the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:13), a passage from the reign of Satan into Christ's authority (Romans 6:17), the expression of the manifestation of God (Luke 3:21,22), an admission into God's covenant (Colossians 2:11), the Lord's act of adoption and our putting on of Christ (Galatians 3:26,27)? Why should these things be taken away from the small child of a Christian family?
- If it was the norm to baptize children at a later age, why is there no evidence in Scripture or early Church history of instruction given to parents on how to help their adolescent children prepare for baptism?
- If it is granted that baptism is for the remission of sins, why would the Church ever want to give baptism to infants if there were nothing in the infants which needed remission? Would not the grace of baptism, in this context, seem superfluous?
- In essence, laying aside all the polemics and prejudices and academic intricacies, what Scriptural principle is being violated if a child is baptized and matures in his faith?

Responsibilities of Godparents

Godparents will need to make sure the following is available for the Baptism (please check with Priest):

- A large white towel
- Two white hand towels
- One bar of Ivory soap
- One small bottle of pure olive oil
- A gold cross with chain
- One white sheet
- An all white baptismal gown/suit
- One large white decorated candle

Even more important, is the spiritual guidance the Godparent must provide for the infant following baptism. The Godparent must be a member in good standing of the Orthodox Faith, as they are about to undertake a very serious role. The godparents reject Satan and accept Christ on behalf of the child, with the understanding that he or she has the responsibility to mentor the child to accept Christ for his or herself. The godparents are responsible for the soul of the child, and must be willing to pray for the child daily, be an active participant in the child's life, and instruct him in the Holy Orthodox Faith.

Ecclesiastical rules require that the person who wishes to sponsor a candidate for Baptism must be an Orthodox Christian in good standing, and a supporting member of an Orthodox parish. A person may not serve as a godparent if his or her marriage has not been blessed by the Church or, if civilly divorced, he or she has not been granted an ecclesiastical divorce, or for any other reason he or she is not in communion with the Orthodox Church. The spiritual bond and relationship between godparents and their godchildren is to be highly regarded, and marriage between them is prohibited.

Rite of Tonsure First Prayer

Priest: Let us pray to the Lord.

Reader: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: O Master, Lord our God, You honored man with Your own image, You fashioned him from a rational soul and a beautiful body, inasmuch as the body serves the rational soul.

You have placed the head on the highest point of man, and endowed it with the most vital senses to function there without impeding one another. You also covered the head with hair for beauty and for protection from the weather.

You have joined together all the members of the human body in a useful and harmonious manner, so that for all of them man may give thanks to You, Who are the great Fashioner.

Through Your chosen vessel, the Apostle Paul, O Master, You gave us a commandment that we should do all things to Your glory.

Bless Your servant (**Name**), who came to make a first offering from the hair of (**his/her**) head. Also bless (**his/her**) sponsor(s), and grant that they will meditate on Your Law, and do all those things which are well-pleasing to You.

Reader: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: **(He/she)** who has put on You, O Christ our God, bows **(his/her)** head, together with us, to You O Lord. Protect **(him/her)** to remain an invincible warrior in every attack of evil against **(him/her)** and us. And make us all, O Lord, to be victorious even to the end, through Your incorruptible crown.

For it is Yours to show mercy and to save, 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.

Reader: Amen.

The Ablution

The Priest loosens the belt and garment of the one newly-Baptized, joins the ends of these together, dips them in clean water, and sprinkles him, saying:

Priest: You are justified, you are illumined!

The Priest dips a new sponge (or clean cloth) in clean water, and wipes away the Holy Chrism from the head, chest, etc. of the newly-Baptized, saying:

Priest: You have become righteous! You are illumined!

You have been Baptized! You are illumined!

You have been anointed with Chrism! You are sanctified!

And now you are washed in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

The Godparent should be able to recite the Creed (in English or Greek). For at least three consecutive Sundays following the Baptism, the Godparent should bring the newly baptized child to receive Holy Communion. They should also bring the Baptismal candle (lit prior to receiving Communion).



The Order for the Mystery of Holy Baptism

Preparation:

The baptismal font, filled with water, is placed in the center of the Temple, and a small table (Anti-Altar) is placed immediately behind it or at the side nearby. On the table are the following items:

- a. *Three lit candles, if these are not on the baptismal font.*
- b. *The Holy Gospel.*
- c. *A bottle of olive oil.*
- d. *The container of Holy Chrism.*
- e. *Scissors.*
- f. *The new white garment.*
- g. *Candles for the procession.*
- h. *Soap, small hand towel, and a pitcher of clean water for the washing of hands.*

Prayer for the Priest

If there is no Deacon available to assist the Priest, it is appropriate for the Priest to read the Prayer for the Priest in the Altar before he begins the service.

Priest: O compassionate and merciful God, You examine the hearts and innermost thoughts;

*The three tapers typify the Holy Trinity, in whose name Baptism is administered. The sponsor also holds a taper, to signify their faith in the illumination which the Holy Sacrament confers upon the soul of the person baptized: that the baptized person passes from darkness into light, and becomes a child of the light. For this reason, also, Baptism is called "Illumination."

Second Prayer

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

Reader: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: O Master, Lord God, You provide heavenly illumination upon those who are baptized through the font. You have regenerated Your newly-enlightened servant by water and the Spirit, and have granted **(him/her)** remission of **(his/her)** voluntary and involuntary sins.

Place Your almighty hand upon **(him/her)**, and preserve **(him/her)** with the power of Your goodness. Maintain the pledge of the Spirit inviolate, and make **(him/her)** worthy of eternal life, a life pleasing to You.

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.

Reader: Amen.

Priest: Peace be with all.

Reader: And with your spirit.

Deacon: Let us bow our heads to the Lord.

Reader: To You, O Lord.

Third Prayer

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. 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, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age.” Amen.

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

Rite of Ablution

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

Reader: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: Through holy Baptism You have given Your servant **(Name)**, remission of sins, and bestowed upon **(him/her)** a life of regeneration. Be pleased, Master and Lord, to continually illumine **(his/her)** heart with the light of Your countenance. Keep the shield of **(his/her)** faith unassailed by the enemy. Preserve pure and spotless the garment of incorruption with which You have covered **(him/her)**. Uphold the seal of the Spirit unbroken in **(him/her)** by Your grace, and show mercy to **(him/her)** and to us, according to the multitude of Your compassion.

For blessed and glorified is Your most-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.

Reader: Amen.

You alone know the secrets of men, for there is nothing that remains hidden to Your eyes,

But everything is utterly naked and opened to You; and You also know all things concerning me.

Regard me not with loathing, nor turn Your face from me, but overlook my iniquities at this time, for You remit the sins of those who repent,

And cleanse my body of vileness and my soul from every stain.

Sanctify all of me thoroughly by the power of Your invisible and spiritual right hand,

So that I may not be an untried slave to sin, as I proclaim and provide liberty to others in this Mystery of Baptism.

Indeed, this liberty comes through faith and is itself dependent upon Your ineffable love for mankind.

Lord God, You Who alone are good and full of love for mankind, let me not turn away in utter humiliation and shame.

Give me strength from on high and empower me to administer Your impending Mystery.

Create the image of Your Christ in **(him/her)** who is about to be born again through my unworthy ministry.

Build **(him/her)** firmly upon the foundation of Your Apostles and Prophets, that **(he/she)** may not be distracted and overthrown by evil.

Implant **(him/her)** firmly, as a plant of truth, in Your one, holy, catholic, and Apostolic Church, that **(he/she)** may not be plucked out.

Grant, O God, that as **(he/she)** grows in godliness, Your all-holy name will be glorified also through **(him/her)**:

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

The Making of a Catechumen

The Priest, vested in exorasson, epitrachelion, and felonion, stands in the narthex facing West. The Candidate is brought forth by the Sponsor(s) and they stand before the Priest facing East. Traditionally, the Candidate stands barefoot and clad in a single white garment.

The Priest breathes upon the Candidate's face and blesses him, making the sign of the Cross on his forehead and chest three times, saying:

Priest: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit (3).

Reader: Amen. (3)

The Priest then intones:

in a resurrection like His. We know that our old self was crucified with Him so that the sinful body might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. For he who has died is freed from sin. But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him. For we know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over Him. The death He died He died to sin, once for all, but the life He lives He lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Priest: Peace be with you, the reader.

Reader: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel **Matthew 28:16-20**

Priest: Wisdom, rise! Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Peace be with all.

Reader: And with Your spirit.

Priest: The reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Reader: Glory to You, Lord, glory to You.

Priest: AT THAT TIME: The eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. And when they saw Him they worshipped Him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, "All

Have put on Christ for evermore. Alleluia

Ὅσοι εἰς Χριστὸν ἐβαπτίσθητε, •
Χριστὸν ἐνεδύσασθε. Ἀλληλοῦᾶ.

Epistle
Romans 6:3-11

Priest: Let us be attentive.

Reader: The Lord is my Light and my Savior;
whom then shall I fear?

The Lord is the Defender of my life; of
whom then shall I be afraid?

Priest: Wisdom!

Reader: The reading from the Epistle of Paul to the
Romans.

Priest: Let us be attentive.

Reader: BRETHREN: Do you not know that all of
us who have been Baptized into Christ
Jesus were Baptized into His death? We
were buried therefore with Him by Baptism
into death, so that as Christ was raised from
the dead by the glory of the Father, we too
might walk in newness of life. For if we
have been united with Him in a death like
His, we shall certainly be united with Him

The circle typifies eternity. Therefore the triple circling of the font
with lighted tapers signifies that the newly baptized (illuminated) per-
son has entered into eternal union with Christ, the Light of the world.

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

Reader: Amen.

**The Priest places his hand on the Candidate's head and
says:**

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

Reader: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: In Your name, O Lord God of truth, and in the
name of Your only-begotten Son, and in the
name of Your Holy Spirit,

I lay my hand upon Your (**servant/handmaid**)
(**NAME**), who has been found worthy to flee
to Your holy name, and to take refuge under
the shelter of Your wings.

Remove (**his/her**) former delusion far from
(**him/her**), and fill (**him/her**) with the faith,
hope and love which are in You;

That (**he/she**) may know You to be the only
true God, with Your only-begotten Son, our
Lord Jesus Christ, and with Your Holy Spirit.

Enable (**him/her**) to walk in all Your
commandments, and to fulfill those things
which are well-pleasing to You;

For it is in doing the will of God that man finds
life.

Inscribe (**him/her**) in Your book of life, and
unite (**him/her**) to the flock of Your
inheritance.

That Your holy name may be glorified in **(him/her)**, together with that of Your beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and of Your life-creating Spirit.

Let Your eyes, O God, ever regard **(him/her)** with mercy, and may Your ears attend to the voice of **(his/her)** prayer.

Make **(him/her)** to rejoice in the works of **(his/her)** hands, and in all of **(his/her)** generation;

That **(he/she)** may give thanks to You, worshipping and glorifying Your great and exalted name,

And that **(he/she)** may praise You continually all the days of **(his/her)** life.

For every power in heaven sings praises to You, O God, and Yours is 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.

First Exorcism

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

Reader: Lord, have mercy

Priest: The Lord puts you under banishment, O devil! He Who came into the world, and dwelt among men that He might overthrow your tyranny and liberate mankind;

Chrismation

The Priest anoints the newly-Baptized with Holy Chrism making the sign of the Cross on the forehead, eyes, nose, mouth, ears, chest, hands, and feet, saying each time:*

Priest: The seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit, Amen. (*Witnesses* - Seal.)

Procession Around the Baptismal Font

The Priest takes the censer, and leads the newly-Baptized and his Sponsor around the baptismal font three times as they sing:

Priest: Those who have been baptized in Christ • have put on Christ for evermore. Alleluia.

Ἅοσοι εἰς Χριστὸν ἐβαπτίσθητε, •
Χριστὸν ἐνεδύσασθε. Ἀλληλουῖα.

Those who have been baptized in Christ • have put on Christ for evermore. Alleluia

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

* Anointment with the holy Chrism is a Sacrament whereby the recipient, through the anointing of various parts of the body in the name of the Holy Spirit, receives the gifts of the Holy Spirit, to rear and strengthen him in the spiritual life, and to render him strong, firm and invincible in faith, in love and hope; in boldness, that without fear he may confess before all men the name of Christ: that he may grow in all virtues, free himself from the Evil One and all his guile, and preserve his soul in purity and righteousness (I John 2:20; 2 Cor. 1:21-22). After anointment with the Holy Chrism, the child is a member of Christ's Church, and receives the holy Communion.

You have given to us, unworthy as we are, the blessed purification of Holy Baptism and the divine sanctification of Holy Chrismation.

You were also gracious to regenerate Your newly-illumined servant by water and the Spirit, and to grant **(him/her)** the remission of voluntary and involuntary sins.

Grant **(him/her)** also, O Master, compassionate King of kings, the seal of the gift of Your holy and almighty and adored Spirit, and the Communion of the holy Body and the precious Blood of Your Christ.

Keep **(him/her)** in Your sanctification. Confirm **(him/her)** in the Orthodox faith. Deliver **(him/her)** from the evil one, and all his crafty actions.

Through the saving fear of You, O God, preserve **(his/her)** soul in purity and uprightness, that **(he/she)** may please You in every deed and word, and that **(he/she)** may be a **(son/daughter)** and heir of Your heavenly kingdom.\

For You are our God, the God Who shows mercy and saves, 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.

Reader: Amen.

He Who on the tree did triumph over the adverse powers, when the sun was darkened, and the earth quaked, and graves were opened, and the bodies of the saints arose;

He Who by death annihilated death, and put an end to him who had dominion over death, that is you, the devil.

I charge you, O devil, by the power of God Who has revealed the tree of life and has arrayed the Cherubim and the flaming sword turning in all directions to guard it.

I charge you to be banned! You are banned, depart!

For I charge you by Him Who walked upon the surface of the sea as if it were dry land;

Who commanded the tempests of the winds to be calm;

Whose glance dries up the deep abysses;

And Whose threat melts mountains.

This very same almighty God, through us, now commands you: be frightened, be gone, and depart from this person, and do not return,

Neither conceal yourself in **(him/her)**, nor seek to meet **(him/her)**, nor to influence **(him/her)**, either by night or by day, in the morning or at noonday,

But depart from here to your own infernal place, until the ordained great Day of Judgment.

Fear God Who is enthroned upon the Cherubim and overlooks the abysses of His creation.

Before Him all the orders of Angels – Angels, Archangels, Thrones, Dominions, Principalities, Authorities, Powers, the many-eyed Cherubim, and the six-winged Seraphim – stand in fearful awe;

Heaven and earth, the sea, and everything that they contain tremble before Him.

Begone! Depart from this newly-enlisted soldier of Christ our God.

For I charge you by Him Who rides upon the wings of the wind, and makes the very winds His messengers and the flaming fires His servants.

Begone and depart from this creation of God together with all your power and evil spirits.

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.

Reader: Amen.

The child may then be dressed in his baptismal garment - however it is very helpful to the priest to not place the shoes or hat on the child until after the Chrismation & Tonsure.

As the child is being dressed, the Reader joyfully sings the following hymn:

Reader: Grant to me a robe of light,
O most merciful Christ our God
You Who clothe Yourself with light
As You would with a garment.

Χιτώνα μοι παράσχου φετεινόν
ὁ ἀναβαλόμενος φῶς ὡς ἱμάτιον,
πολύελεε Χριστέ,
ὁ Θεὸς ἡμῶν.

Grant to me a robe of light,
O most merciful Christ our God
You Who clothe Yourself with light
As You would with a garment.

Holy Chrismation

After vesting the newly-Baptized, the Priest reads the following prayer:

Priest: Let us pray to the Lord.

Reader: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: Blessed are You, O Lord God almighty, the Source of all good things, the Sun of righteousness, bringing the light of salvation to those in darkness through the appearance of Your only-begotten Son and our God.

Blessed is the man to whom the Lord does not impute sin,
 and in whose mouth there is no guile.
 Because I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my
 crying all the day long. For day and night
 Your hand was heavy upon me, I was reduced
 to misery while the thorn stuck fast in me.
 I have acknowledged my iniquity, and I have not hidden
 my sin. I said: I will confess my iniquities
 before the Lord against myself. And You
 forgave the ungodliness of my heart.
 Because of this everyone who is holy shall pray to You in
 a seasonable time; moreover, in a flood of
 many waters they shall not come near to him.
 You are my Refuge from the affliction which surrounds
 me; O my Rejoicing, deliver me from those
 who have encircled me.
 I will instruct you and teach you in the way you shall go; I
 will fix My eyes upon you. Do not be as the
 horse or as the mule which have no
 understanding; whose jaws you must hold with
 bit and bridle, lest they come near to you.
 Many are the scourges of the sinner, but mercy shall
 encircle him who hopes in the Lord. Be glad
 in the Lord, and rejoice, you righteous; and
 glory, all you who are upright of heart.

Vesting of the Newly-Baptized

After being Baptized, the Candidate is vested in a new white garment; a child, however, is held in a clean lined sheet held in the arms of the Sponsor, as the priest holds his new white garment over him, saying:

Priest: The (servant/handmaid) of God (name), is vested in the garment of light, righteousness, and incorruptibility, in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Second Exorcism

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

Reader: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: God Who is holy, awesome and glorious, Who in all His mighty works is inscrutable and incomprehensible,

Who has foreordained for you, O devil, the punishment of eternal torment;

He, through us, His unworthy servants, commands you and all your cohort powers to stand off from this person who has been newly-sealed in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, our true God.

I charge you, therefore, most devious, impure, vile, loathsome, and alien spirit, by the power of Jesus Christ,

Who has all power both in heaven and on earth, Who commanded the deaf and dumb demon to come out of the man and to never again enter into him:

Depart! Acknowledge the vanity of your power which does not have authority even over swine! Remember Him Who commanded you, at your request, to enter the herd of swine.

Fear God, by Whose decree the earth is supported upon the waters;

Who created the heavens, and has established the mountains with a plumb-line, and the valleys with a yoke;

Who placed the sand as a boundary for the sea,
and marked a safe path upon the stormy
waters;

Who touches the mountains and they smoke;
Who is clothed with light as with a garment;

Who spread out the heavens like a curtain;
Who supports His chambers in the waters;

Who set the earth on its sure foundation so that
it shall never be shaken;

Who draws the water of the sea and pours it
upon the face of the whole earth.

Go out and depart, O devil, from **(him/her)**
who is being prepared for Holy Illumination.

I charge you by the redeeming Passion of our
Lord Jesus Christ, and by His precious Body
and Blood, and by His fearful Second Coming.

For He shall come upon the clouds; He shall
indeed come and will not tarry, to judge the
whole earth.

And He will condemn you, O devil, and all
your cohorts, to the Gehenna of fire, leaving
you in utter darkness, where the devouring
worm and the fire of torment never cease.

For all the power belongs to Christ our God,
together with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

Reader: Amen.

The Triple Immersion of Holy Baptism

*After the Candidate has been anointed over his whole
body, the Priest Baptizes him, holding him erect and
facing the East, immersing him in the water of the
baptismal font while saying:*

Priest: The **(servant/handmaid)** of God, **(name)**, is
Baptized in the name of the Father, Amen.
(First Immersion)

And of the Son, Amen. *(Second Immersion)*

And of the Holy Spirit. Amen. *(Third
Immersion)*

Following each immersion the Priest raises him up again.

*(At this point, it is helpful to the priest if the godparents
and parents do not dress the child, but simply diaper him
and place him in a clean white towel or blanket, held in
the arms of the Sponsor.)*

*After the Baptism, the Reader joyfully sings the following
Psalm verse:*

Reader: Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven,
and whose sins are covered. (Psalm 31:1)

Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose
sins are covered.

Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose
sins are covered.

*The Reader may then read the remaining verses of Psalm
31:*

Blessed is God Who illumines and sanctifies every one who comes into the world, now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

Reader: Amen.

Anointing

The Priest takes the container of oil, and instructs the Sponsor(s) to cup his hands in the form of a Cross. He then pours oil into his hands, places the container aside, and dips his finger in the oil to anoint the catechumen, saying:*

Forehead – The servant of God, (**name**), is anointed with the oil of gladness in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Breast and back – For the healing of soul and body.

Ears – For the hearing of faith.

Feet – That (**he/she**) may walk in the path of the commandments of the Lord.

Hands – Your hands, O Lord, have made me and fashioned me. (*Psalm 118:73*)

The godparent then pours the remainder of the oil over the child.

* This is called “the oil of gladness” because the person baptized is thereby engrafted into the good olive-tree, Jesus Christ, having been, as it were, a branch wrested from a wild olive-tree.

Third Exorcism

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

Reader: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: O Lord God of Sabaoth, O God of Israel, Who heals every disease and infirmity:

Look down upon Your (**servant/handmaid**). Call out, search out, and banish from (**him/her**) every operation of the devil.

Rebuke and banish the evil spirits, and purify the works of Your hands, by using Your penetrating power to quickly crush down Satan under (**his/her**) feet.

Grant (**him/her**) victory over Satan and his evil spirits, that, having obtained mercy from you, (**he/she**) may be vouchsafed worthy to partake of Your immortal and heavenly Mysteries,

And to sing praises of glory to You, O God: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

Reader: Amen.

Prayers of Deliverance for the Catechumen

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

Reader: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: You Who are, O Lord God, Who created man in Your own image and likeness,

Who bestowed upon him the power of life eternal; and Who after his fall through sin, did not despise Your fallen creation,

But provided salvation for the world through the incarnation of Your Christ:

O God, deliver also this Your creature from the bondage of the enemy,

Receive **(him/her)** into Your heavenly kingdom. Open the eyes of **(his/her)** understanding, that the light of Your Gospel may shine brightly in **(him/her)**.

Yoke to **(his/her)** life an angel of light to deliver **(him/her)** from every attack of the adversary;

From evil encounters, from the demon of noonday, and from evil visions.

The Priest breathes upon the Candidate's forehead, mouth, and chest three times, saying:

Priest: Expel from **(him/her)** every evil and impure spirit which hides and lurks in **(his/her)** heart. (3)

Expel from **(him/her)** the spirit of delusion, the spirit of deceit, the spirit of idolatry and the spirit of every lustful desire,

The spirit of falsehood and of every uncleanness which operates through the prompting of the devil.

Who provided the fruit of the olive tree for the fulfillment of Your holy Mysteries;

And Who fulfilled those who were under the Law with Your Holy Spirit, thereby perfecting those who are under grace:

You the same Lord bless also this oil with the power, energy, and descent of Your Holy Spirit.

Make this oil to be an anointing of incorruptibility, an armor of righteousness,

A renewal of soul and body, an averting of every demonic assault, a deliverance from all types of evil for all those who shall be anointed with it in faith, or who are partakers of it;

To Your glory, and the glory of Your only-begotten Son, and of Your all-holy, good, and life-creating Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages. Amen.

The Priest pours some of the oil in the water, making the sign of the Cross three times, saying:

Priest: Let us be attentive! Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

Πρόσομεν! Ἀλληλούϊα, Ἀλληλούϊα, Ἀλληλούϊα.

Let us be attentive! Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

For to You is due all glory, power, honor and worship, together with Your unoriginate co-eternal Father, and Your all-holy, good, and life-creating Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

Reader: Amen.

Blessing of the Oil

Priest: Peace be with all.

Reader: And with your spirit.

Deacon: Let us bow our heads to the Lord.

Reader: To You, O Lord.

As the Deacon (or the Sponsor) holds the container of olive oil, the Priest breathes upon it three times and makes the sign of the Cross over it. The Priest then reads the following Prayer:

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

Reader: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: O Master, Lord God of our fathers, Who sent the dove with a twig of olive in its beak to those who were in the ark of Noah as a token of reconciliation and of salvation from the flood,

And thereby as the foreshadowing of the mystery of grace;

And make **(him/her)**, O God, a rational sheep in the holy flock of Your Christ, an honorable member of Your Church,

A **(son/daughter)** of light and an heir of Your kingdom.

That having lived in accordance with Your commandments, and preserving inviolate the seal, and keeping **(his/her)** garment of righteousness undefiled,

(He/she) may receive the blessedness of the saints in Your kingdom.

Through the grace, mercy, and love for mankind of Your only-begotten Son, with Whom You are blessed, together with Your all-holy, good and life-creating Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

Reader: Amen.

Renunciation of Satan

The Priest turns the Candidate with hands upraised toward the West; if the Candidate is a child, the Sponsor (s) hold him facing toward the West. The Priest goes around to face the Candidate (or Sponsor), and questions him:

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

Candidate/Sponsor: I do renounce him.

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

Candidate/Sponsor: I do renounce him.

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

Candidate/Sponsor: I do renounce him.

Priest: Have you renounced Satan?

Candidate/Sponsor: I have renounced him.

Priest: Have you renounced Satan?

Candidate/Sponsor: I have renounced him.

Priest: Have you renounced Satan?

Candidate/Sponsor: I have renounced him.

The Priest directs the Candidate (or Sponsor):

Priest: Then breathe and spit upon him.

*The doors are opened, and the Candidate (or Sponsor) breathes and spits upon Satan in utter contempt and denunciation of him.**

The Priest then turns the Candidate and Sponsor(s) toward the east, and himself goes around to face them.

* From the east proceeds light. From the west comes darkness; and Satan, who is darkness, and whom the Catechumen must renounce, has his dominion there.

the loosening of bonds, the remission of sins, the illumination of the soul, the laver of regeneration,

the renewal of the spirit, the gift of adoption to sonship, the garment of incorruptibility, and the fountain of life.

For You have said, O Lord: “Wash, and be clean; put away evil from your souls!” You have bestowed upon us from on high a new birth through water and the Spirit.

Wherefore, O Lord, manifest Yourself in this water, and grant that **(he/she)** who is Baptized therein may be transformed,

That **(he/she)** may put away from **(him/her)** the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts,

And put on the new man, and be renewed according to the image of Him Who created **(him/her)**.

May **(he/she)** be planted through Baptism, in the likeness of Your death, O Lord, that **(he/she)** may, in like manner, be a partaker of Your resurrection.

And having preserved the gift of Your Holy Spirit, and having increased the measure of grace committed to **(him/her)**

May **(he/she)** receive the prize of **(his/her)** high calling, and be numbered with the first-born whose names are written in heaven, in You, our God and Lord, Jesus Christ.

Let those who would ensnare Your creature flee far from it; for we have called upon Your name, O Lord, and it is wondrous and glorious, and terrible to adversaries.

The Priest again blesses the water by tracing the sign of the Cross in it and by breathing upon it three times, saying:

Priest: Let all adverse powers be crushed beneath the sign and image of Your Cross.

Reader: Amen.

Priest: Συντριβήτωσαν ὑπὸ τῆν σημείωσιν τοῦ τύπου τοῦ τιμίου Σταυροῦ Σου, πάσαι αἱ ἐναντία δυνάμεις.

Reader: Ἀμήν.

Priest: Let all adverse powers be crushed beneath the sign and image of Your Cross.

Reader: Amen.

Priest: We pray to You, O Lord, that unseen demons may withdraw from us and from this water.

Let no demon of darkness conceal himself in this water; neither let any evil spirit that instills darkening of intentions and rebelliousness of thought descend into it with **(him/her)** who is about to be Baptized.

But rather, we pray to You, O God and Master of all, manifest this water to be the water of redemption, the water of sanctification, the purification of flesh and spirit,

The Priest then questions the Candidate (or Sponsor):

Union with Christ

Priest: Do you unite yourself to Christ?

Candidate/Sponsor: I do unite myself to Christ.

Priest: Do you unite yourself to Christ?

Candidate/Sponsor: I do unite myself to Christ.

Priest: Do you unite yourself to Christ?

Candidate/Sponsor: I do unite myself to Christ.

Priest: Have you united yourself to Christ?

Candidate/Sponsor: I have united myself to Christ.

Priest: Have you united yourself to Christ?

Candidate/Sponsor: I have united myself to Christ.

Priest: Have you united yourself to Christ?

Candidate/Sponsor: I have united myself to Christ.

Priest: Do you believe in Him?

Candidate/Sponsor: I believe in Him as King and God.

I believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible;

And in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all ages;

Light of Light, true God of true God, begotten, not created, of one essence with the Father, through Whom all things were made;
 Who for us and for our salvation came down from the heavens and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and became man;
 Crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, He suffered and was buried;
 Rising on the third day according to the Scriptures, And ascending into the heavens, He is seated at the right hand of the Father;
 And coming again in glory to judge the living and the dead, His kingdom shall have no end;
 And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of life, Who proceeds from the Father, Who together with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, Who spoke through the prophets;
 In one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church;
 I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins;
 I expect the resurrection of the dead;
 And the life of the age to come. Amen.

After the Confession of Faith, the Priest questions the Candidate (or Sponsor):

Priest: Have you united yourself to Christ?

Candidate/Sponsor: I have united myself to Christ.

Priest: Have you united yourself to Christ?

Candidate/Sponsor: I have united myself to Christ.

Priest: Have you united yourself to Christ?

Candidate/Sponsor: I have united myself to Christ.

You sanctified the streams of Jordan, sending down from heaven Your Holy Spirit, and You crushed the heads of those dragons that lurked there.

The Priest blesses the water by tracing the sign of the Cross three times with his hand.

Priest: Αὐτός οὖν φιλόανθρωπε Βασιλεῦ πάρεσο καὶ νῦν, διὰ τῆς ἐπιφοιτήσεως τοῦ Ἁγίου Σου Πνεύματος, καὶ ἀγίασον τὸ ὕδωρ τοῦτο.

Reader: Ἀμήν.

Priest: Wherefore, O King Who loves mankind, come also now through the descent of Your Holy Spirit, and sanctify this water.

Reader: Amen.

Priest: Wherefore, O King Who loves mankind, come also now through the descent of Your Holy Spirit, and sanctify this water.

Reader: Amen.

Priest: Grant this water the grace of redemption, and the blessing of the Jordan. Make it a fountain of incorruption, a gift of sanctification,

the absolution of sins, a remedy of ailments, the complete destruction of demons, unassailable by hostile powers, filled with angelic might.

The light obeys You, the deeps tremble before You, the springs are subject to You.

You have stretched out the heaven as if it were a curtain; You have established the earth upon the waters; You have compassed the sea with sand;

You have poured out air for breathing. The angelic hosts serve You; the choirs of Archangels worship You; the many-eyed Cherubim and the six-winged Seraphim veil their faces in fear before Your unapproachable glory, as they stand round about and fly.

For You, Who are God inexpressible, without beginning and ineffable, came down upon earth, and took on the form of a servant, and were made in the likeness of man.

Because of the tender compassion of Your mercy, O Master, You could not endure to see mankind oppressed by the devil,

But You came and saved us. We confess Your grace, we proclaim Your mercy, we do not conceal Your benevolence.

You have liberated mankind of our mortal nature. By Your birth You sanctified a virgin womb.

All creation magnifies You Who reveal Yourself. Or You, O our God, have appeared on earth, and have dwelt among men.

Priest: Then bow and worship Him.

Candidate/Sponsor: I bow and worship the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, the undivided and consubstantial Holy Trinity.

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

Reader: Amen.

Prayer of Illumination

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord.

Reader: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: O Master, Lord our God, call Your servant **(Name)**, to Your holy Illumination, and make **(him/her)** worthy to receive this great and gracious gift of Your Holy Baptism.

Remove from **(him/her)** the old self, and renew **(him/her)** for life eternal.

Fill **(him/her)** with the power of Your Holy Spirit, and unite **(him/her)** with Your Christ, that **(he/she)** may be no longer a child of the body, but a child of Your Kingdom.

Through the good will and grace of Your only-begotten Son, with Whom You are blessed, together with Your all-holy, good and life-creating Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

Reader: Amen.

The Priest leads the Candidate and Sponsor(s) into the Temple, and has them stand to the right before the baptismal font, facing East.

The Priest enters the Holy of Holies and puts on white vestments while the candles are being lit. He then takes the censer and censens around the baptismal font.

Troparia

The following hymns may be chanted during the entrance, as well as during the vesting and censuring:

Apolitikion of the Presentation, Tone 1

Reader: Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos, and full of grace;
The Sun of righteousness has dawned from you, Christ our God,
Enlightening those in darkness.
You, too, may now rejoice, O righteous elder Simeon,
For in your arms you have received the Savior of our souls,
Who also gives us the holy resurrection.

Apolitikion of Theophany, Tone 1

Reader: When you, O Lord, were baptized in the Jordan river,
The worship of the Holy Trinity was manifested,
For the voice of the Father bore witness to You,
Calling You His beloved Son;
And the Spirit in the form of a dove,
Confirmed the sureness of these words.
You Who appeared, O Christ God, and have enlightened the world,
Glory to You!

Blessing of the Baptismal Water

There is no exclamation at the end of the Litany, but the Priest says:

Priest: Great are You, O Lord, and marvelous are Your works, and there is no word which suffices to hymn Your wonders.

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

Priest: Μέγας εἶ Κύριε καὶ θαυμαστά τὰ ἔργα Σου, καὶ οὐδεὶς λόγος ἐξαρκέσει πρὸς ὕμνον τῶν θαυμασίων σου.

Reader: Δόξα σοι Κύριε, δοξα σοι.

Priest: Great are You, O Lord, and marvelous are Your works, and there is no word which suffices to hymn Your wonders.

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

Priest: For You, O Lord, willed to bring into being all things which before did not exist; by Your might You uphold creation, and by Your providence You order the world.

When You harmoniously joined together the universe out of four elements, You crowned the cycle of the year with four seasons.

Before You tremble all noetic powers. The sun praises You, the moon glorifies You, the stars meet together before Your presence.

Deacon: That this water may be for **(him/her)** a bath of regeneration unto the remission of sins, and a garment of incorruptibility, let us pray to the Lord.

Reader: Lord, have mercy.

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

Reader: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For **(his/her)** and for our deliverance from all tribulation, wrath, danger, and necessity, let us pray to the Lord.

Reader: Lord, have mercy.

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

Remembering our all-holy, pure, most-blessed, and 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.

Reader: To You, O Lord.

The Candidate may be led away to undress for the Baptism at this point.

The font represents the divine womb in which the child receives a second birth as a child of God. As the priest blesses the water in the font, he adds a small amount of olive oil. The fruit of the olive tree has been a symbol of peace and reconciliation between God and humans since a dove brought an olive branch to Noah.

Kontakion of Theophany, Tone 4

Reader: You have appeared today, to all the world;
And Your light, O Lord, has shined upon us.
In this knowledge we praise You.
You have come, You have appeared:
You are the Light unapproachable.

Priest: Through the prayers of our holy fathers, Lord Jesus Christ have mercy on us and save us.

Reader: Amen.

THE MYSTERIES OF HOLY BAPTISM AND CHRISMATION

The candles on the baptismal font are lit, and the Priest stands directly in front of the font facing East. The catechumen and Sponsor(s) stand to the right of the Priest, also facing East. The Priest reaches over the font, lifts up the Holy Gospel, and intones:

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.

Reader: Amen.

Litany for Holy Baptism

Deacon: In peace let us pray to the Lord.

Reader: Lord, have mercy.

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

Reader: Lord, have mercy.

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.

Reader: Lord, have mercy.

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

Reader: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For our *Hierarch* (**Name**), the honorable presbyters, the diaconate in Christ, and for all the clergy and the laity, let us pray to the Lord.

Reader: Lord, have mercy.

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

Reader: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That the grace of redemption and the blessing of Jordan be sent upon this water, let us pray to the Lord.

Reader: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That the purifying energy of the super-essential Trinity may be sent down upon this water, let us pray to the Lord.

Reader: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That we may be enlightened by the light of knowledge and piety, through the descent of the Holy Spirit, let us pray to the Lord.

Reader: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That this water may become effectual in averting every attack from visible and invisible enemies, let us pray to the Lord.

Reader: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That (**he/she**) who is Baptized in this water may be made worthy of the incorruptible kingdom of God, let us pray to the Lord.

Reader: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: For (**him/her**) who is now approaching to receive holy Illumination, and for (**his/her**) salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

Reader: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That (**he/she**) may prove (**himself/herself**) a (**son/daughter**) of light, and an heir of eternal good things, let us pray to the Lord.

Reader: Lord, have mercy.

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

Reader: Lord, have mercy.

Deacon: That (**he/she**) may protect and keep the garment of Baptism and the pledge of the Holy Spirit spotless and undefiled until the dreadful day of Christ our God, let us pray to the Lord.

Reader: Lord, have mercy.