

## Worship in the Orthodox Church – Part 1

By Rev. Fr. Thomas Fitzgerald

*Come, let us worship God our King.*

*Come, let us worship and fall down before Christ our King and our God.*

*Come, let us worship and fall down before Christ Himself, our King and our God.*

This invitation marks the beginning of each day for the Orthodox Church. It comes from the office of Vespers, and it expresses the attitude which is at the heart of Orthodoxy. The Worship of God - the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, - is fundamental to the life and spirit of the Orthodox Church.

Since Worship is so important to Orthodoxy, the best introduction to the Orthodox Church is for the non-Orthodox to attend the Divine Liturgy or the celebration of one of the major Sacraments. At first, the visitor may be overwhelmed by the music and the ceremonies, but it is in Worship that the distinctive flavor, rich traditions, and living faith of Orthodoxy are truly experienced.

### Dimensions Of Worship

Worship is an experience which involved the entire Church. When each of us comes together for Worship, we do so as members of a Church which transcends the boundaries of society, of time and of space. Although we gather at a particular moment and at a particular place, our actions reach beyond the parish, into the very Kingdom of God. We worship in the company of both the living and the departed faithful.

There are two dimensions to Orthodox Worship which are reflected throughout the many Services of the Church. First, Worship is a manifestation of God's presence and action in the midst of His people. It is God who gathers His scattered people together, and it is He who reveals Himself as we enter into His presence. The Worship of the Orthodox Church very vividly expresses the truth that God dwells among His people and that we are created to share in His life.

Second, Worship is our corporate response of thanksgiving to the presence of God and a remembrance of His saving actions - especially the Life, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Orthodox Worship is centered upon God. He has acted in history, and He continues to act through the Holy Spirit. We are mindful of His actions and we respond to His love with praise and thanksgiving. In so doing we come closer to God.

### Expressions of Worship

Worship in the Orthodox Church is expressed in four principal ways:

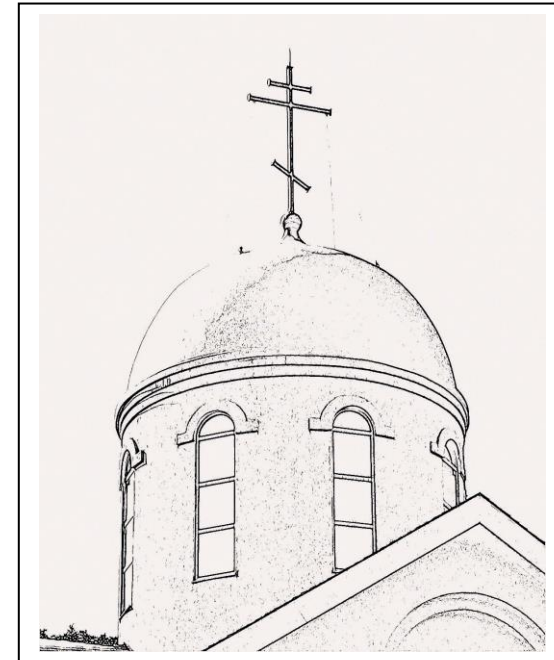
*The Eucharist*, which is the most important worship experience of Orthodoxy. Eucharist means thanksgiving and is known in the Orthodox Church as the Divine Liturgy.

*The Sacraments*, which affirm God's presence and action in the important events of our Christian lives. All the major Sacraments are closely related to the Eucharist. These are: Baptism, Chrismation, Confession, Marriage, Holy Orders, and Anointing of the sick.

*Special Services and Blessings*, which also affirm God's presence and action in all the events, needs and tasks of our life.

*The Daily Offices*, which are the services of public prayer which occur throughout the day. The most important are Matins, which is the morning prayer of the Church, and Vespers, which is the evening prayer of the Church.

WEEKLY



BULLETIN

*Today is the beginning of our salvation, the revelation of the eternal mystery. The Son of God becomes the Son of the Virgin as Gabriel announces the coming of Grace. Together with him let us cry to the Theotokos: Rejoice O Full of Grace, the Lord is with you!*

*Troparion of the Annunciation to the Theotokos*

## ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF THE ANNUNCIATION

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Very Rev. Fr. Paul Kucynda, *Retired Attached Priest*

Rev. Fr. Michael Pejovic, *Attached Priest*

Matthew Petrides, *Senior Warden*

Matushka Mary Buletza-Breton, *Choir Director*

September 17, 2023

## FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

### Afterfeast of the Elevation of the Cross. Sunday after Elevation.

*Tone 6. Martyr Sophia, and her three daughters: Faith (Vera), Hope (Nadézhdá), and Love (Liubóv', Charity), at Rome (ca. 137). Martyrs Theodota at Nicæa (ca. 230). Martyr Agathocleia (ca. 230). 156 Martyrs of Palestine, including Bishops Peleus and Nilus, the Presbyter Zeno, the Noblemen Paternuthius and Elias, and others (ca. 310).*

#### Today's Readings:

*Epistle:* 2 Corinthians 4:6-15 and Galatians 2:16-20

*Gospel:* Matthew 22:35-46 and Mark 8:34-9:1

#### Upcoming Service Schedule:

Today – 9:00am Divine Liturgy

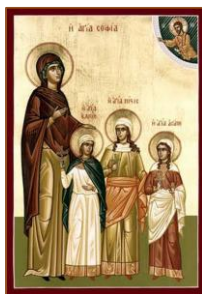
Saturday – 6:00pm Great Vespers

Sunday – 9:00am Divine Liturgy

#### Next Sunday's Readings:

*Epistle:* 2 Corinthians 6:1-10 and Romans 8:28-39

*Gospel:* Luke 5:1-11 and Luke 21:12-19



*Martyr Sophia and her three daughters.*

***Please pray for vocations to the Holy Priesthood!***

*The Distinguished Diocesan Benefactors program is an essential vehicle for funding the activities and programs of our diocese. Please consider participating in the program. More information is available at the diocesan website at [www.nynjoca.org](http://www.nynjoca.org).*

### Special Prayers

We pray for **all** our parish family members, but we pray especially for those who are ill and afflicted. Among them are **Victorianne Vessio, Mary Herelick, Zoran Pejovic, Ingrid Kopec, Betty James, Manya Shark, Deryl Tczap, Mary Tczap, George Stavrou, Margaret Makara, Dennis & Ann Marie Gahr, Michael Getmanov, Alan Diaz, Mary Ann Sivilic, Ellen Norman, and Lori Ratushnuk.**

We are happy that you have joined us for worship today and hope that you will join us for Coffee Hour after the veneration of the Cross. **The reception of the Holy Eucharist** is only for baptized members of the Orthodox Church who have prepared with prayer, fasting, and periodic confession. You are encouraged to receive the blessed bread that is offered at the end of the service and which may also be offered to you by one of your neighbors during Communion.

## Annunciations

**TODAY** - Welcome to the visitors who have joined us today.

**TODAY** – Please join us for **Coffee Hour** after the Divine Liturgy. **Team #2** has Coffee Hour responsibilities today.

**TODAY** – **Congratulations** to the clergy and faithful of **Orthodox Church of the Holy Cross in Medford, NJ**. The parish celebrates its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary on this day.

**THIS SATURDAY** – We will be **setting up the Parish Hall and the grounds** for the Ethnic Fair and Gift Auction. **Everyone is invited** to come help with this effort. Please contact **Matt Petrides** for specific details. Some set-up will also be taking place on **Friday**.

**THIS SUNDAY** is the date of the **Parish Ethnic Fair and Gift Auction**. Please invite friends and family members to the event that will take place from **12noon to 6:00pm**.

**THIS SUNDAY**- There will be **NO COFFEE HOUR** due to the preparations needed for the Ethnic Fair. The **Coffee Hour team schedule** will resume on Sunday, October 1 with **Team #3** in charge.

**THIS SUNDAY** – Those who will be **working in the kitchen and in the food serving area** will meet at 11:30am for an **organizational meeting** prior to the event.

We are also accepting **financial donations** to help **cover the costs** of the Ethnic Fair and Gift Auction. See Tara Paxton if you wish to make a donation.

**Orthodox Youth & Young Adult Ministries (OYM)** was created by the Assembly of Orthodox Bishops to help parishes, priests, parents, and other caring adults help young people find joy in the Orthodox faith by encountering Christ, embodying the Church, and engaging the world in His name. September 24, 2023 has been designated as Orthodox Youth & Young Adult Ministry Awareness Sunday. We invite everyone to learn about OYM's ministry, sign up for their newsletter, and consider supporting them by visiting [www.TheOYM.org](http://www.TheOYM.org).

### ***MANY YEARS***

#### **Birthdays**

Thursday – Christina Pasick

Saturday – Sophia Medina

#### **Wedding Anniversaries**

Friday – Steven & Natalie May (#38)

*Keep up on OCA news by visiting [www.oca.org](http://www.oca.org), diocesan news by visiting [www.nynjoca.org](http://www.nynjoca.org), and parish news by visiting [www.oca-brick.org](http://www.oca-brick.org).*