

The Service of Baptism

The Priest enters the Altar and arrays himself in white vestments. While the candles are being lit, he takes up the Censer, goes to the Font, and censes round about. And giving up the Censer, he makes a bow.

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

In peace let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord have mercy.

After each petition: Lord have mercy.

For the peace from above; for the salvation of our souls; let us pray to the Lord.

For the peace of the whole world; for the stability of the holy Churches of God, and for the union of all; let us pray to the Lord.

For this holy House, and for them that with faith, reverence, and the fear of God enter therein; let us pray to the Lord.

For our great lord and father, Patriarch (Name), for the venerable Priesthood, the Diaconate in Christ; for all the Clergy, and for all the people; let us pray to the Lord.

That this water may be hallowed by the might, and operation, and descent of the Holy Spirit; let us pray to the Lord.

That there may be sent down upon it the Grace of Redemption, the blessing of the Jordan; let us pray to the Lord.

That there may come down upon this water the cleansing operation of the Supersubstantial Trinity; let us pray to the Lord.

That we may be illumined with the Light of Knowledge and Piety through the descent of the Holy Spirit; let us pray to the Lord.

That this water may prove effectual for the averting of every plot of visible and invisible enemies; let us pray to the Lord.

That he (she) that is about to be baptized herein may become worthy of the incorruptible Kingdom; let us pray to the Lord.

That he (she) that now comes to holy Illumination, and for his (her) salvation; let us pray to the Lord.

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That he (she) may prove to be a child of Light, and an inheritor of eternal blessings; let us pray to the Lord.

That he (she) may grow in, and become a partaker of the Death and Resurrection of Christ our God; let us pray to the Lord.

That he (she) may preserve the garment of Baptism, and the earnest of the Spirit undefiled and blameless in the terrible Day of Christ our God; let us pray to the Lord.

That this water may be for him (her) a laver of Regeneration unto the remission of sins, and a garment of incorruption; let us pray to the Lord.

That the Lord may listen to the voice of our prayer; let us pray to the Lord. That He may deliver him (her) and us from tribulation, wrath, danger, and necessity; let us pray to the Lord.

Help us; save us; have mercy on us; and keep us, O God, by Your Grace. Calling to remembrance our all-holy, pure, exceedingly blessed glorious Lady Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary, with all the Saints; let us commend ourselves and one another and all our life to Christ our God.

Priest: (inaudibly) Let us pray to the Lord. O compassionate and merciful God, Who tries the heart and reigns, and Who alone knows the secrets of men, for no deed is secret in Your sight, but all things are exposed and naked in Your eyesight: do You Yourself, Who perceives that which concerns me, neither turn away Your face from me, but overlook my offenses in this hour, O You that overlook the sins of men that they repent.

Wash away the defilement of my body and the stain of my soul. Sanctify me wholly by Your all-effectual, invisible might, and by Your spiritual right hand, lest, by preaching liberty to others, and offering this in the perfect faith of Your unspeakable love for humankind, I may be condemned as a servant of sin. Nay, Sovereign Master that alone are good and loving, let me not be turned away humbled and shamed, but send forth to me power from on high, and strengthen me for the ministration of this Your present, great, and most heavenly Mystery.

(Aloud) Form the Image of Your Christ in him (her) who is about to be born again through my humility. Build him (her) on the foundation of Your Apostles and Prophets. Cast him (her) not down, but plant him (her) as a plant of truth in Your Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church. Pluck him (her) not out, that, by his (her) advancing in piety, by the same may be glorified 1 Your Most Holy Name, of Father, and of Son, and of Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and to the ages of ages. Amen.

The Blessing of the Water

The Priest reads aloud:

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Great are You, O Lord, and wondrous are Your works, and no word will suffice to hymn Your wonders.(3) For by Your Will have You out of nothingness brought all things into being and by Your power sustain all creation and by Your Providence direct the world. You from the four elements have formed creation and have crowned the cycle of the year with the four seasons; all the spiritual powers tremble before You; the sun praises You; the moon glorifies You; the stars in their courses meet with You; the Light hearkens unto You; the depths shudder at Your presence; the springs of water serve You; You have stretched out the Heavens as a curtain; You have founded the earth upon the waters; You have bounded the sea with sand; You have poured forth the air for breathing; the angelic Powers minister unto You; the Choirs of Archangels worship before You; the many-eyed Cherubim and the six-winged Seraphim, as they stand and fly around You, veil themselves with fear of Your unapproachable Glory; for You, being boundless and beginningless and unutterable, did come down on earth, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; for You O Master, through the tenderness of Your Mercy, could not endure the race of men tormented by the devil, but You did come and saved us.

We confess Your Grace; we proclaim Your beneficence; we do not hide Your Mercy; You have set at liberty the generations of our nature; You did hallow the virginal Womb by Your Birth; all creation praises You, Who did manifest Yourself, for You were seen upon the earth, and did sojourn with men. You hallowed the streams of Jordan, sending down from the Heavens Your Holy Spirit, and crushed the heads of dragons that lurked therein.

DO YOU YOURSELF, O LOVING KING, BE PRESENT NOW ALSO THROUGH THE DESCENT OF YOUR HOLY SPIRIT AND SANCTIFY THIS WATER (3).

And give to 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 might; and let them that take counsel together against Your creature flee there from, for I have called upon Your Name, O Lord, which is wonderful, and glorious, and terrible unto adversaries.

And he signs the water thrice, dipping his fingers in it; and breathing upon it, he says:

LET ALL ADVERSE POWERS BE CRUSHED BENEATH THE SIGN OF YOUR MOST PRECIOUS CROSS (3).

We pray You, O Lord, let every airy and invisible specter withdraw itself from us, and let not a demon of darkness conceal himself in this water; neither let an evil spirit, bringing obscurity of purpose and rebellious thoughts, descend into it with him (her) that is about to be baptized.

But do You, O Master of All, declare this water to be water of redemption, water of sanctification, a cleansing of flesh and spirit, a loosing of bonds, a forgiveness of sins, an

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illumination of soul, a laver of regeneration, a renewal of the spirit, a gift of sonship, a garment of incorruption, a fountain of life. For You have said, O Lord: "Wash, and be clean; put away evil from your souls."

You have bestowed upon us regeneration from on high by water and the spirit. Manifest Yourself, O Lord, in this water, and grant that he (she) that is to be baptized may be transformed therein to the putting away of the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and to the putting on of the new, which is renewed according to the Image of Him that created him (her).

That, being planted in the likeness of Your death through Baptism, he (she) may become a sharer of Your Resurrection; and, preserving the Gift of Your Holy Spirit, and increasing the deposit of Grace, he (she) may attain unto prize of his (her) high calling, and accounted among the number of the first-born, whose names are written in Heaven, in You our God and Lord Jesus Christ, to Whom be all Glory and Might, together with Your Eternal Father and with Your All; Holy, Good, and Life; creating Spirit, both now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

Priest: Peace be to all.

Choir: And to your spirit.

Priest: Let us bow our heads before the Lord.

Choir: To You, O Lord.

The Priest breathes thrice upon the Oil and signs it thrice.

Priest: Let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord have mercy.

The Blessing of the Oil

Sovereign Lord and Master, God of our Fathers, Who did send to them in the Ark of Noah a dove bearing a twig of olive in its beak as a sign of reconciliation and salvation from the Flood, and through these things prefigured the Mystery of Grace; and thereby have filled them that were under the Law with the Holy Spirit, and perfected them that are under Grace: do You Yourself bless this Oil by the power (+) and operation (+) and descent of the Holy Spirit (+) that it may become an anointing of incorruption, a shield of righteousness, a renewal of soul and body, and averting of every operation of the devil, to the removal of all evils from them that are anointed with it in faith, or that are partakers of it.

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To Your Glory, and to that of Your Only-Begotten Son, and of Your All; Holy, Good, and Life; creating Spirit, both now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

Priest: Let us attend.

The Priest, singing Alleluia thrice with the People, makes three Crosses with the Oil upon the water. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Blessed is God that enlightens and sanctifies every man that comes into the world, both now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

The Priest makes the Sign of the Cross on the forehead of the one to be baptized, saying:

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, both now and ever, and to the ages of ages. Amen.

And he signs his (her) breast and between his (her) shoulders, saying: For healing of soul and body.

And on the ears, saying: For the hearing of Faith.

And on the feet, saying: That he (she) may walk in the paths of Your commandments.

And on the hands, saying: Your hands have made me, and fashioned me.

The Baptizing

When he has anointed the whole body, the Priest baptizes him (her), holding him (her) upright, and looking towards the East, says:

The servant of God (Name) is baptized in the Name of the Father. Amen. And of the Son, Amen. And of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

At each invocation the Priest immerses him (her) and raises him (her) up again. After the baptizing, the Priest clothes the newly-baptized in a white garment, saying:

Clothed is the servant of God (Name) with the garment of righteousness, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Psalm 31

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Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man whom the Lord imputes not sin, and in whose mouth there is no guile. Because I have kept silence, my bones waxed old through my crying all the day long. For day and night Your hand was heavy on me. I was turned into lowliness while the thorn was fastened in me. My sin I have acknowledged, and my iniquity I have not hid. I said, "I will confess against myself my sin unto the Lord." And You forgave the ungodliness of my heart. For this shall everyone who is holy pray to You in a seasonable time; moreover in a flood of many waters shall the billows not come nigh to him.

For You are my refuge from the tribulation which surrounds me. O my rejoicing, deliver me from them that have encircled me. The Lord says: "I will give you understanding, and will teach you in this My way which you shall go; I will fix My eyes on you. Be not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding. With bit and bridle would you bind their jaws; lest they come near to you." Many are the scourges of the sinner, but with mercy shall I encircle them that hope on the Lord. Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, you righteous; and shout for joy, all you that are upright of heart.

Priest: Let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord have mercy.

The Prayer of Chrismation

Blessed are You, Lord God Almighty, Fountain of Blessings, Sun of Righteousness, Who made to shine forth for those in darkness a light of salvation through the manifestation of Your Only-Begotten Son and our God, granting unto us, though we are unworthy, blessed cleansing in Holy Water, and divine sanctification in the Life; effecting Anointing; Who now also has been well-pleased to regenerate this Your servant newly illuminated through Water and Spirit, giving him (her) forgiveness of his (her) voluntary and involuntary sins: do You Yourself, Sovereign Master, Compassionate King of All, bestow upon him (her) also the Seal of Your omnipotent and adorable Holy Spirit, and the Communion of the Holy Body and Most 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 devices; preserve his (her) soul, through Your saving fear, in purity and righteousness, that in every work and word, being acceptable before You, he (she) may become a child and heir of Your heavenly Kingdom.

For You are our God, the God of Mercy and Salvation, and to You do we send up Glory, to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

And after the Prayer of Chrismation, the Priest chrismates the baptized and he makes on the person the Sign of the Cross with the Holy Chrism, on the forehead, the eyes, the

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nostrils, the mouth, the ears, the breast, the hands, and the feet. At each anointing and sealing, he says:

THE SEAL OF THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, AMEN.

All respond: Seal!

The Troparion, in Tone 8: Grant unto me a robe of light, for You clothe Yourself in light, O most-merciful Christ our God.

Then the Priest, together with the Godparent and the newly-baptized person, goes around around the Font three times; and for each of the three rounds the Choir sings:

As many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. Alleluia.

Glory ... Both now...

As many... Alleluia.

Priest: Let us attend.

Reader: The Prokeimenon in the third tone. The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom then shall I fear? The Lord is the Protector of my life; of whom then shall I be afraid?

Priest: Wisdom!

The Epistle

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

Priest: Let us attend.

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 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. (Rom. 6:3-11)

Priest: Peace be to you that read.

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Reader: And to your spirit.

Choir: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Priest: Wisdom! Let us attend! Let us hear the Holy Gospel. Peace be to all (+).

Choir: And with your spirit.

The Gospel

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

Choir: Glory to You, O Lord; Glory to You.

Priest: Let us attend.

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 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 to you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age. Amen. (Matt. 28:16-20)

Choir: Glory to You, O Lord; Glory to You.

Washing off the Chrism

Priest: Peace be to all.

Choir: And with your spirit.

Priest: Let us bow our heads before the Lord.

Choir: To You, O Lord.

Priest: Let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord have mercy.

Priest: You that through Holy Baptism have granted forgiveness of sins to this Your servant, bestowing on him (her) a life of regeneration: do You Yourself, Sovereign Master and Lord, be pleased that the Light of Your countenance evermore shine in his (her) heart; maintain the shield of his (her) faith against the plotting of enemies; preserve in him (her) the garment of incorruption, which he (she) has put on undefiled and unstained; preserve in him (her) the Seal of Your Grace, being gracious unto us, and unto

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him (her) according to the multitude of Your compassions, for glorified and blessed is Your all-honorable and majestic Name: of Father, and of Son, and of Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

Priest: Let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord have mercy.

Priest: Sovereign Master and Lord our God, Who through the baptismal Font bestows heavenly Illumination to them that are baptized; Who has regenerated this Your servant bestowing upon him (her) forgiveness of his (her) voluntary and involuntary sins; do You lay upon him (her) Your mighty hand, and guard him (her) in the power of Your goodness. Preserve unspotted his (her) pledge of Faith in You. Account him (her) worthy of Life everlasting and Your good favor. For You are our sanctification and to You do we send up all Glory; to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

Priest: Peace be to all.

Choir: And to your spirit.

Priest: Let us bow our heads before the Lord.

Choir: To You, O Lord.

Priest: Let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord have mercy.

Priest: He (She) that has put on You, O Christ, with us bows his (her) head unto You; ever protect him (her) a warrior invincible against them who vainly raise up enmity against him (her), or, as might be, against us; and by Your Crown of Incorruption at the last declare us all to be the victorious ones. For Yours it is to have mercy and to save, and unto You, as to Your Eternal Father and Your All-Holy, Good, and Life; creating Spirit, do we send up all Glory, both now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

Taking a new sponge dipped in water, the Priest wipes the newly-baptized person's head, the breast, and the rest, saying:

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You are baptized; you are illuminated; you are anointed with the Holy Chrism, you are hallowed; you are washed clean, in the Name of Father, and of Son, and of Holy Spirit. Amen.

The Tonsure

Priest: Let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord have mercy.

Priest: Sovereign Master and Lord our God, Who honored man with Your own Image, providing him with reason; endowed soul and comely body, that the body might serve the reason; endowed soul; for You did set his head on high, and therein planted the greater number of the senses, which impede not one another, covering the head that it might not be injured by the changes of the weather, and did fit all the members serviceably thereunto, that by all it might render thanks unto You, the excellent Artist; do You Yourself, O Sovereign Master, Who by the Vessel of Your Election, Paul the Apostle, to do all things unto Your Glory, bless (+) this Your servant (Name), who is come now to make offering the firstlings of hair shorn from his (her) head; and bless his (her) Sponsor (+); granting them in all things to be diligent followers of Your Law, and to do all those things that are well pleasing unto You, for a merciful and loving God are You, and to You do we send up all Glory, to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

Priest: Peace be to all.

Choir: And to your spirit.

Priest: Let us bow our heads before the Lord.

Choir: To You, O Lord.

Priest: Let us pray to the Lord.

Choir: Lord have mercy.

The Priest lays his right hand upon the head of the newly-baptized and prays:

O Lord our God, Who through the fulfillment of the baptismal Font have, by Your Goodness, sanctified them that believe in You: (+) do You bless this child here present, and may Your blessings come down upon his (her) head; as You did bless the head of Your servant David the King through the Prophet Samuel, (+) so also bless the head of this servant (Name), through the hand of me, the unworthy Priest, visiting him (her) with Your Holy Spirit, that as he (she) goes forward to the prime of his (her) years, and the

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gray hairs of old age, he (she) may send up Glory to You, beholding 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, both now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

The Priest cuts his (her) hair in the form of a Cross, snipping off four locks of hair, front, back, and over each ear, cross-fashion, saying:

The servant of God (Name) is tonsured in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Choir: Amen.

Priest: Have mercy on us, O God, according to Your great mercy. We beseech You, listen, and have mercy.

Choir: Lord have mercy.

Priest: Again let us pray for mercy, life, peace, health, and salvation for the servants of God, the newly illumined (Name), the Godparents, and all those who have come here together for this holy Sacrament. For You are a merciful and loving God, and to You do we send up all Glory, to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever, and to the ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

Dismissal

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

Choir: 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; Lord have mercy; Lord have mercy. Master, bid the blessing.

Priest: He Who deigned to be baptized in the Jordan by John for our salvation, Christ our true God; through the intercessions of Its all; pure Mother, of the holy and glorious prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John, of the holy, glorious all; praiseworthy Apostles, (Name of Saint whose name the child has received), and of all the Saints; have mercy and save us as our good and loving Lord. Through the prayers of our holy Fathers...

Choir: Amen.