



August 2, 2008

Protocol 08-18

The Reverend Priests, Deacons, and Monastics,
The Respected Chanters, Choir Directors, and Choir Members, and
The Pious Faithful of
the Holy Metropolis of Denver

Beloved in the Lord,

At the Liturgical services of the Orthodox Church the local Body of Christ, the parish of the faithful Orthodox Christians, assembles to receive grace from God in word and sacrament, and offer to Him worship, praise, and thanksgiving.

One characteristic of the Orthodox Christianity is its absolutely unchanging faith which is one, holy, catholic, and apostolic. Its liturgical practices reflect this unchanging reality, although they have over history embraced the local flavor of peoples, nations, and ethnicities throughout the world.

Orthodox Christians therefore worship God in customary ways that become very intimate and personal to each one. In our diverse and multiethnic American society, the very beautiful tradition of repeating the Lord's Prayer in the different languages of those present at the Divine Liturgy is an important way of recognizing this cultural intimacy of prayer.

At the same time, there is, and must be, a typical, or normative, manner of celebrating the services within this Metropolis and throughout the Archdiocese. The faithful must feel comfortable from parish to parish, whether they visit them during local feast days or on their own vacation and business travel.

I am therefore addressing this protocol specifically to the Proistamenoï (pastors), chanters, and choir directors to establish and/or reaffirm certain norms for the divine services celebrated in this Metropolis.

General:

a. First and foremost: *the Divine Services – and especially the Divine Liturgy – are never "performed" by the priest nor by the choir nor psalti on behalf of those "in attendance."* The Divine Liturgy is not entertainment for an audience, but rather it is for the spiritual uplifting of those who actively participate in it.

b. Second, and equally preeminent: *the Divine Services are participatory for all who are present* Proistamenoï, chanters, and choir directors must keep in mind that the services are structured in such a way as to allow the parishioners to participate, as

they wish. Chanters and choirs exist to lead, assist, and support the faithful in the worship services.

c. As a corollary to these points, the melodies of the responses and hymns should be standard, simple, and accessible to the faithful. There is, of course, the proper place for those with more musical training and practice to chant certain major hymns and anthems to provide greater beauty and for the spiritual edification of those present.

d. The English text for all petitions, exclamations and prayers is to be exactly as promulgated in the Ieratikon issued to all clergy of this Metropolis as an enclosure to my Protocol 08-17, dated August 1, 2008.

e. The responses by the chanter and choir are likewise exactly as promulgated in the same Ieratikon issued as an enclosure to Protocol 08-17, dated August 1, 2008. I am asking the Metropolis of Denver Church Music Federation to prepare the necessary adjustments to the choir music for certain hymns which the parishioners could easily sing..

f. The response to the petition in the Litanies, "*Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and protect us, O God, by Your grace,*" is "*Lord, have mercy;*" it is not "*Amen.*" This applies to Vespers, Matins, the Liturgy, etc.

g. The Trisagion ("*Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us*"):

(1) Whenever the Trisagion Hymn is sung, the phrase "*Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal*" is always to be repeated three times, *followed* by "*Glory..., now and ever..., Holy Immortal have mercy on us*", and again once more: "*Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.*"

(2) It is theologically incorrect to sing it only twice before "*Glory..., now and ever... etc.*"

(3) The Trisagion is always to be sung as "*Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.*"

(4) It is incorrect to sing or say such things as "*Holy is God, Holy and Mighty ... etc.*" This is strictly forbidden especially because it weakens the concept of God as the Trinity

h. The rubrics for censuring are covered in my Teleturgical Encyclical 2, dated January 31, 2001.

i. The rubrics for the wearing of the kalymavxion (and epikalymavxion or veil) are covered in my Teleturgical Encyclical 20, dated July 31, 2008.

j. In our tradition the Beautiful Gate and curtain is opened before the beginning of a service, and is not closed until after the Dismissal. There is no opening and closing of doors and curtains, except as separately described in the rubrics for the Presanctified Divine Liturgy during Great Lent. We do not follow the monastic Typikon or the Slavic liturgical practice in our parishes.

k. In accordance with the decision of the Eparchial Synod, all prayers are designated to be "*Recited by the Priest.*" The distinctions of "*Silently,*" "*Quietly,*" and "*In a low voice,*" have been suppressed. By directing the Priest to "*Recite*" the prayers, it is understood that he is allowed the pastoral freedom to say them loud enough so that the faithful can hear them if he deems this to be appropriate in his own parish. He may likewise, also for pastoral reasons, recite certain prayers "*Inaudibly.*"

l. All Gospels at all services, Sacraments, and Liturgies are read by the Celebrant (First Priest), except at the Divine Liturgy where it is read by the First Deacon or by the most Junior Priest.

m. In accordance with the decision of the Eparchial Synod, at no time during the Divine Liturgy does the Chanter or Choir ever respond "*Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Holy Master/Father, bless.*" to any exclamation.

Vespers:

n. Vespers in our liturgical tradition does not begin with the Trisagion Prayers. Rather it begins with the priest exclaiming "*Blessed is our God ...*," and the chanter immediately responding "*Amen. Come let us worship, etc. ...*"

o. Psalm 103, any Old Testament readings, and the Evening Prayer ("*Make us worthy, Lord, to be kept this evening without sin ...*") are read by the Chanter, unless the bishop presides.

p. If a Hierarch is presiding, he reads Psalm 103, the Old Testament readings, and the Hymn of Simeon the God-Bearer ("*Lord, now let your servant depart ...*"), not the Chanter or the Priest.

Matins:

q. Only the Senior Priest (and up to two Deacons) celebrate (or participate) in Matins.

r. Matins is celebrated by the Priest who is first in seniority; the Proskomide is done by the Priest second in seniority.

s. After the Second Priest makes his commemorations at the Proskomide, any other concelebrant clergy approach the Prothesis and make their commemorations. The Senior Priest then completes the Proskomide and covers the Gifts; at a hierarchical

Liturgy the Hierarch commemorates the names, assisted by the Priest, completes the Proskomide, and covers the Gifts.

t. Matins begins with the priest exclaiming "*Blessed is our God ...*," and the chanter responding "*Amen.*" The Priest then says "*Glory to You, O God, Glory to You. Heavenly King Comforter ...*," and the Chanter says "Holy God, etc."

u. The Deacon first participates in Matins at the petitions preparatory for the Matins Gospel. All petitions and prayers prior to this point in Matins are recited by the First Priest.

v. The Sunday (Eothinon) Gospel is read from the south side of the Holy altar. All other Matins Gospels are read facing the people.

w. The First Priest censes during the Great Doxology.

x. The final two Litanies, Prayer, and Dismissal of Matins are read quietly by the Priest (and concelebrants) after the censing, while the Great Doxology is being sung.

y. If there are concelebrant priests, they stand before the Holy Altar, after the dismissal of Matins and make three reverences (saying "*Glory to God ..., Lord open my lips ...*"), venerate the Gospel and altar, and then make three more reverences before returning to their respective places at the north and south sides of the Altar.

z. A Chrismation may be done between the end of the Great Doxology and the Troparion ("*Today salvation ...*"). It may *not* be done during the Divine Liturgy. The Mystery of Chrismation, like any other (except for Ordination) is done *outside* the Divine Liturgy.

aa. No Artoklasia or other service is to take place at the end of Matins. The Artoklasia and Mnymosynon/Trisagion Services are to be done at the end of the Divine Liturgy; an Artoklasia may be done during Great Vespers. Although the Artoklasia may be done at the end of Matins in the Church of Greece, this is not our practice in parishes under the Ecumenical Patriarchate in the United States.

Divine Liturgy:

bb. At the Divine Liturgy the First and Second Antiphons are to be sung with the prescribed Sunday, daily, or festal Psalm verses. The National Forum of Church Musicians has published these for the use of Chanters and Choirs. It is not enough to simply sing "*Through the intercessions ...*," or "*Save us O Son of God ...*" alone without the Psalm verses.

cc. The Epistle Reading is done as follows:

(1) Facing the Altar, the Reader intones the first verse of the Prokeimenon.

(2) The Deacon, or Junior Priest, says "*Let us be attentive.*"

(3) The Reader intones the second verse of the Prokeimenon.

(4) The Deacon, or Junior Priest, says "*Wisdom!*"

(5) The Reader turns, faces the congregation, and intones "*The Reading ...*"

(6) The Deacon, or Junior Priest, says "*Let us be attentive.*"

(7) The Reader *intones* the Epistle. When he is finished, he receives a blessing from the Celebrant.

dd. The First Deacon censes the Holy Gospel as the First Priest quietly reads the prayer. "*You have shined within our hearts ...*" Whether the Deacon or Priest censes, only the Gospel is censed.

ee. The Homily should normally be delivered following the Gospel.

ff. In accordance with the decision of the Eparchial Synod, the petitions following the Gospel, including those for the Catechumens, are cited in the Typical text of the Liturgy, but are never to be intoned by either the Priest or the Deacon unless specifically directed to do so by a Hierarchy.

gg. The Second Litany of the Faithful ("*Again and again ..., Help us, save us ...*") is intoned by the Deacon or the First Priest. After reading the Prayer, "*Again and oftentimes ...*," the Deacon or First Priest says "*Wisdom!*" and the First Priest exclaims the ekphonesis, "*That always being protected ...*" This is not always done in other Metropolises, however it is a good introduction after the homily leading into the Cherubic Hymn.

hh. At the Great Entrance, the exclamation is only: "*May the Lord God remember all of you in His Kingdom, always; now and ever and to the ages of ages.*" No other commemoration is made by any clergyman, except by the Hierarchy at a Hierarchical Liturgy. The exclamation may be repeated, especially in other languages, at the discretion of the Proistamenos or Celebrant.

ii. If a Deacon is serving, the dialogue between him and the Celebrant is done after placing the Gifts on the Altar and censing them, prior to the Deacon exiting the Holy of Holies.

jj. If there are concelebrant Priests, it had been the custom to sing "*I will love You, Lord, my Strength ...*" instead of "*Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Trinity One in essence and inseparable.*" In accordance with the decision of the Eparchial Synod this is no longer to be done.

(1) At all times, in every Liturgy, "*Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Trinity ...*" is to be sung. It may be repeated while the concelebrant clergy venerate the Holy Gifts and greet one another with the Kiss of Peace.

kk. In accordance with the decision of the Eparchial Synod the Kiss of Peace is to be exchanged exclusively by the concelebrant clergy, and is not to be encouraged for the faithful.

ll. The Second Deacon raises the Asterisk over the Holy Gifts as the Celebrant intones, "*Singing the victorious hymn, shouting out, proclaiming, and saying.*"

mm. The Celebrant raises the Holy Gifts as he intones "*Your own of Your own, we offer to You in all, and for all.*" The Gifts are not raised by a Deacon

nn. After the Celebrant intones "*Your own of Your own ...*," the Chanter or Choir sings "*We praise You ...*" while the Celebrant quietly reads the words of consecration. The Consecration Prayer is not read audibly nor does the congregation recite the "*Amens*" which are said only by the Deacon and Priest(s).

oo. During the Megalynarion the Celebrant censes the Gifts, then gives the censer to the Deacon who stands behind the Holy Altar and makes commemorations of those who are deceased from the names submitted for the Oblation.

pp. In accordance with the decision of the Eparchial Synod, after the blessing, "*And the mercies of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ will be with all of you,*" the Deacon or Priest recites only the five following petitions:

(1) *Having commemorated all the saints, again and again in peace let us pray to the Lord.*

(2) *For the Precious Gifts offered and sanctified, let us pray to the Lord.*

(3) *That our God Who loves mankind, Who has received them at His holy, and supra-heavenly, and noetic altar as a sweet spiritual fragrance, may in return send down upon us the Divine Grace and the gift of the Holy Spirit, let us pray.*

(4) *For our deliverance from all tribulation, wrath, danger, and necessity, let us pray to the Lord.*

(5) *Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and protect us, O God, by Your grace.*

qq. The six petitions, beginning with "*That the whole day may be perfect, holy, peaceful, and sinless ...*," are not to be intoned by either the Priest or the Deacon — unless specifically directed to do so by a Hierarch, which is the custom usually only at the ordination of a Deacon.

rr. At the discretion of the Proistamenos or Celebrant, the Lord's Prayer may be repeated in as many languages as may be appropriate to the congregation.

ss. After the elevation, when the Celebrant exclaims, "*Holy things for the holy*," the Chanter or Choir sings "*One is Holy ...*," followed by the appointed Koinonikon. The Koinonikon should be sung repeatedly until the Deacon (or Priest) is ready to proclaim "*With the fear of God ...*," and distribute Holy Communion.

tt. After singing the Koinonikon the faithful who are to receive Holy Communion should read the Communion Prayers quietly to themselves, concluding by repeating "*Of Your Mystical Supper ...*" The prayers should not be read aloud simply because some in the congregation do not plan to receive and the reading of the prayers out loud is not logical or appropriate.

uu. Concelebrant clergy receive Holy Communion as follows:

(1) If a Hierarch is Communing the clergy: The clergy approach the Hierarch from the south side of the Holy Altar, receive the Body from him, walk counterclockwise to the east side of (behind) the Altar, consume the Body there, walk counterclockwise to the north side, approach the Hierarch, receive from the Cup, walk past the Hierarch (counterclockwise), and resume their positions.

(2) If there is no Hierarch: The concelebrants approach from the north side of the Altar; after the Celebrant has received both the Body and Blood, each Priest individually receives Holy Communion, taking both the Body and the Cup, and leaves the Altar moving in a counterclockwise direction; the Junior Priest communes the Deacon(s).

vv. Non-celebrating Clergy receive Holy Communion in exactly the same manner, but following the Celebrant/Concelebrating Clergy. The order is: Concelebrant Priests, Participating Deacons, non-celebrating Priests, and finally non-participating Deacons.

ww. During the distribution of Holy Communion to the faithful, the Chanter or Choir should sing one of the following as appropriate and as directed by the Proistamenos:

(1) "*Of Your Mystical Supper ...*" during much of the year.

(2) "*Body of Christ ...*" during the Paschal season.

(3) The appointed Koinonikon of the Feastday or season.

xx. After the distribution of Holy Communion, and the exclamation by the Celebrant, "... *now and ever ...*," the Chanter shall read the prayer "*Let our mouths be filled with Your praise ...*"

yy. The response to the exclamation "*Let us depart in peace. Let us pray to the Lord.*" is simply "Lord, have mercy." The Priest then reads the *Prayer Behind the Ambon*.

zz. If a Memorial Service (Mnymosynon), Trisagion, or Artoklasia is to be celebrated on a Sunday, it is done immediately after the Chanter or Choir finishes singing "*Blessed be the name ...*" The Liturgy then concludes with the customary Dismissal. If both a Mnymosynon/Trisagion and an Artoklasia are to be celebrated, the Mnymosynon/Trisagion is done first and the Artoklasia is done last.

aaa. The response to the exclamation "*Let us pray to the Lord.*" is simply "Lord, have mercy." The Priest then intones "*The blessing of the Lord and His mercy come upon you ...*"

bbb. The Dismissal is as follows:

(1) "*Glory to You, O God, glory to You.*"

(2) Note: Neither the Chanter nor the Choir sings "*Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Holy Master, bless.*"

(3) "*May (He Who is risen from the dead,) Christ our true God through the intercessions ...*"

(4) The Chanter or Choir with the congregation sings "*The one who blesses us ...*" as the Celebrant reads the Dismissal.

ccc. After the Celebrant intones, "*Through the prayers of our holy fathers ...*" and the Chanter or Choir responds, "Amen.," the Celebrant blesses the faithful saying, "*The Holy Trinity protect all of you.*"

I ask that you print this Protocol in the Parish bulletins *and* newsletters. It may be done in several installments as you deem appropriate. The forty-six pastoral directions I am issuing to you above are not suggestions or recommendations, but together with the instructions contained in my Teleturgical Encyclicals and related Protocols are given to establish standards and uniformity among the parishes of this Metropolis.

With Paternal Blessings,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Metropolitan Isaiah of Denver". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

✠ Metropolitan Isaiah of Denver

TO BE PRINTED IN ALL PARISH BULLETINS AND NEWS LETTERS