



prior of church of Nativity of
the Most Holy Mother of God of the
Rimsky-Korsakov Sanktpetersburg
State Conservatory, lecturer —
arch-priest Vitaliy Golovatenko

BASICS OF EASTERN ORTHODOX LITURGICS THE CHRISTIAN WORSHIP IN RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

REFERENCE MATERIALS

0. The Christian liturgics. From *leiturgia* to the *Divine Liturgy*

Liturgics — the science of worship.

The Latin term *liturgica* (as a scientific discipline) was introduced in the 16th century by Georg Cassander in his work *LITURGICA, de ritu et ordine Dominicæ cœnæ celebrandæ. Köln, 1558*. Georg Cassander (1512—1566) — Flemish humanist and theologian.

The origin of the term: *ancient Greek* ἡ ΛΕΙΤΟΥΡΓΙΑ [leiturgia] = 1) τὸ λεῖτον [léiton] — ‘society’+ 2) τὸ ἔργον [érgon] — ‘deed’, ‘activity’ (from ἐργάζομαι [ergázomai] — ‘do’; ‘create’, ‘achieve’); the verb λειτουργέω — ‘do public and social duties’. Thus, literally ἡ λειτουργία means ‘public activity’.

The word *leiturgia* also had a wider meaning — ‘state service’ (the public service); and the religious sense — ‘service’, ‘respect’.

It is in its last sense that the word and its derivatives entered Christian practice, and the word λειτουργέω began to mean ‘to carry out church service’.

Today, the word *liturgia* (the liturgy) means in the widest sense ‘church service’ (for example, in the western Christian tradition, *liturgia horarum*, the liturgy [*i.e.* service] of the Hours — the general name of church services which should be carried out daily over the course of the day, with the exception of the Mass). In this context this word is written with a small letter: **liturgy**.

In the narrower sense, this word means the most important service of the Christian Church — the Divine Liturgy (Communion service): *Greek* ἡ Θεία Λειτουργία (ἡ Θεία Εὐχαριστία), *Latin* Missa Divina. — In this case the word is written with a capital letter: **Liturgy**.

NB! In Christian religious tradition, the word *liturgy* has preserved its original meaning — ‘general affair’, as every church service is ultimately not a **private affair** of one person or even one church community, but the **affair of the entire Church**, as at every service we give our joint, common prayers for **our entire Church and our entire world**, acting as part of a common whole.

RECOMMENDED LITERATURE:

- *Aleksandr Men', archpriest*: «**Tainstvo, slovo i obraz. Bogosluzhenie Vostochnoi Tserkvi**» (Mystery, word and image. Service of the Eastern Church). Leningrad, 1991 and other editions

 - *Boris Vozdvizhensky*: «**Pravoslavnoe bogosluzhenie. Putevoditel**» (Orthodox Service: A Guide). Moscow: «Eksmo», 2008

 - *N. Antonov, priest*: «**Khram Bozhy**» (Church of God)

 - *Archbishop Averky (Taushev)*: «**Liturgics**», Holy Trinity Monastery, Jordanville, NY [+ *Bibliography!*] —
http://www.holytrinitymission.org/books/english/liturgics_averky_e.htm#_Toc104768249

 - *Archpriest D. Sokolof*: «**A Manual of Divine Services**», Holy Trinity Monastery, Jordanville, NY —
http://www.holytrinitymission.org/books/english/manual_services_sokolov.htm

 - *Nikolai (Kozhukharov), bishop of Makariopol*: «**Vvedenie v liturgiku**» (Introduction to Liturgics). Moscow, 1997 — *reference material for everyone interested in liturgical and church service issues*

 - *Prot. Constantine Nikolsky*: «**A Manual for the Study of the Ustav of Orthodox Church Worship**»

 - *Archim. Cyprian (Kern)*: «**Liturgics**», Living Water, 1964
-

1. From the Old Testament tabernacle to the Christian Church

For the Ancient Jewish church service and its God-revealing nature see the Biblical Book **Exodus**.

The 40-year path of Israel to the promised land. The **camp** (*also* encampment) of **Israel**, ἡ παρεμβολή Ἰσραήλ.

OLD TESTAMENT TABERNACLE

The first temple — ἡ σκηνή τοῦ μαρτυρίου [skené tu martyriú], the **Tabernacle of testimony**, the camp temple of ancient Jews. Ἡ σκηνή [skené] — ‘canopy tent’ (*Hebrew* יִשְׁמִשְׁכָּן — ‘abode’, ‘place of residency’).

Organization of the Old Testament Tabernacle:

1. τὰ ἅγια ἁγίων [ta hágia hagíon] — the **Holy of Holies** (the Most Holy *Place*)
2. τὰ ἅγια [ta hágia] — the **Holy Place**
3. ἡ αὐλή (τῆ σκηνῆ) — the **outer courtyard**

NB! Subsequently, all the important elements of planning and images of the holy utensils of the Tabernacle were moved to plans of Jewish synagogues, and also Christian churches.

THE OLD TEMPLE AND THE NEW TEMPLE

In accordance with the divine revelation organization of the Old Testament Tabernacle, the **Christian church**, ὁ χριστιανικὸς ναός, also consists of three parts:

1. τὸ Ἱερατεῖον/τὸ Ἱερόν Βῆμα — the **Sanctuary** (the **Altar**), in the western Christian tradition — *presbyterion*;
2. ὁ ναός — the **naos** (the temple);
3. ὁ νάρθηξ — the **narthex** (the vestibule of temple).

THE FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCHES

After the Old Testament Tabernacle and the Temple of Jerusalem, sources of Christian church architecture come from the first Christian the **catacomb temple**, and also the **ancient basilica**.

The **Basilica** (*Greek* ἡ βασιλικὴ οἰκία — ‘royal house’) was a spacious public building in ancient Rome for everyday business life. Commercial talks and operations were usually held in basilicas, legal hearings were conducted etc.

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH IN RUSSIA

NARTHEX

The **narthex** is the front part of the church, the church vestibule, so to speak. Here the church store was usually located, where candles, the underwear cross, icons, books about faith and the Church were sold.

In the narthex, there was also a portable **font** or a stationary **baptistery** to perform Baptisms.

In the narthex, services for the dead and burial services were held — funerals. A special **funeral table** was placed here with the depiction of the Cross on Golgotha, with many candle holders, and sometimes with side baskets for offerings (donations) in memory of the dead. This is why is called the **kanoon** (*Greek τὸ κανοῦν* — ‘oblational basket’), and in its form it is also a type of the *Table of oblation* (Credence Table, *see bottom*).

In Christian antiquity during the service, special categories of Christians gathered in the narthex — **catechumens** (or rather audients), people who were learning the bases of the Christian doctrine and also the **repentant** (or **fallen**), who because of their heavy sins and deeds were temporarily separated during the church prayers from the **Faithful** (faithful to Christ and his teachings).

NAOS

In architecture, the middle section of the church has the Greek name of ὁ ναός, **the naos**, which means ‘dwelling’, ‘abode (of God)’.

ICONOSTASTIS

The **iconostasis**— is the visible image of the Kingdom of Heaven. *Greek τὸ εἰκονοστάσιον* — ‘*icon standing*’.

In the center of the first tier of the iconostasis (*local row or rank*) are **Holy doors**. This is the entrance to the Sanctuary (Sacred Altar) of the church. On the holy doors are: the double icon of the **Annunciation**, and also the icons of the four **Evangelists**, who gave us information about the life of Christ and His teaching. At the top of the Holy Doors is a depiction of the Cross.

To the right and left of the Holy Doors are the icons of Christ and the Mother of God. Behind the icon of Christ there is traditionally an **icon of a Saint or feast**, which the main Holy Altar of the church is dedicated to. **NB!** Thus, the personal name of the church can be learned from this icon.

On the northern and southern **diaconal** gates are paired icons of the archangels Gabriel and Michael, and sometimes the Holy Archdeacons Steven and Laurence. The first row of the iconostasis also contains icons of Saints who are especially revered in this church or this place.

The center of the second tier (*feast row*) is the icon of the **Last Supper**, which is located directly above the Royal doors. To the left and right of the icon of the Last Supper are icons of the main **12 feasts** (*in Slavic «dvunadesiatye»*).

The center of the third tier of the iconostasis (the *deisis* or *deisis row*) consists of a composition called a «**deisis**», which in Greek means ‘request’, ‘prayer’ (*Greek* ἡ δέησις), and in the distorted Slavonicized version «**deisús**». To the right and left of the Judge is the **Mother of God** and **John the Baptist**. Sometimes the deisis row also contains paired icons of archangels (Gabriel and Michael) and apostles (Peter and Paul). In large iconostases, this row may also be continued by icons of sanctifiers, martyrs and reverends.

In the center of the fourth tier (*prophet row*) is the icon of the “**Our Lady of the Sign**” with the Infant Emmanuel on her lap. The row is continued by icons of Old Testament prophets foretelling the Mother of God, foretelling in their prophecies the coming of the Savior into the world through his miraculous birth to a Virgin.

The highest, fifth tier of the iconostasis consists of the *ancestral row*. The central icon of the row is the icon of the **Old Testament Trinity**, i.e. three angels who appeared to Abraham by the Oak of Mambre, as a prophecy of the future reverence by Christians for the One Triune God – the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. The image of the Sacred Trinity is surrounded by icons of Old Testament patriarchs and righteous men.

Above the iconostasis is a depiction of the **Holy Cross**, the main Christian symbol of the salvation of the world and an image of the sufferings on the cross and death of Christ, our Savior, and for our sins before God.

THE SPACE OF THE NAOS

The frescos and icons on the walls of the church continue and supplement the rows of the iconostasis. Particularly revered, ancient and miracle-working icons are held in **ktivots** or kiots (*from Greek* ὁ κιβωτός – ‘box’), and in memorial or feast days they are placed on high stands – «**analoï**» in the center of the church for closer, more personal contact with the saints.

In front of the icons, **candles** are lit, which are a visible image of the prayer to the saint depicted on the icon. The light of the candle flame serves to enlighten the spirit and purify the soul, and its warmth helps to make our prayer warmer and more sincere.

Candles in the church are placed on special church candle-holders – **holders of many candles**. Furthermore, are lit **lampads** or oil lamps (*Greek* ἡ λαμπάς – ‘lamp’).

The largest church lamp which hangs below the dome in the center of the church is called the **panikadilo** (*panikandilo* would be more correct), which in Greek literally means ‘all-candle’, ‘complete-candle’ (*from Greek* πᾶς – ‘all’, ‘entire’ and *Latin* candela – ‘candle’). A panikandilo with candles in a circle is called a **khoros** (*Greek* ὁ χορός – *here*: ‘troop’, ‘round dance’).

At certain moments of the service, the clergy also performs a special ritual action: the **burning incense** (or incensing, *Slavic* «kazhdenie»). Its roots go back to the incensing in the Old Testament tabernacle established by God. For the incensing in Christian

churches, the **censer**, is used — a portable metallic vessel for smoldering **wood charcoal**, on which an aromatic wood tar is placed — the **incense** (or labdanum). Its fragrance symbolizes the beneficence of the Holy Spirit, and the censer smoke (*in Slavic* «**kadilo**») the cloud of the glory of God, the image of God's presence in His people. In carrying out the incensing, the clergy fumes certain items, icons, and also everyone who serves them, sings to them and prays to them. Sometimes the «kadilo» (censer) is the name given to the censer itself, but this use of words is illiterate: it is refuted by numerous according texts from Scripture and holy tradition. For example: *Let my prayer be directed like incense before you* (Psalm 141: 2).

During the service, the church choir sings (*in Slavic* «lik»). According to tradition and theology, it is justified for not one but two choirs to sing in church, which respond to each other — the right and left. The places for the choir in the church are called, the choir-place (*Greek* ὁ κληρος — 'lot'). They are located at a certain elevation by the right and left sides of the iconostasis. In some churches, the choir is located in the western part of the naos, on a high platform above the entrance from the narthex to the church (on **choirs**). This is the western Christian tradition, which is justified by the fact that choral singing is accompanied by the organ, which is also usually on the choirs.

From the right to left choir place, along the entire iconostasis, an elevated platform extends — the **solea** (*from Greek* τὸ σόλιον = *Latin* solea, from *solum* — 'even place', 'base'; 'floor'). This elevation also extends behind the iconostasis, right up to the eastern wall of the church. Thus, the solea is a high floor, the foundation of the iconostasis and the entire Altar section of the church.

The middle section of the solea protrudes forward in a wide semi-circle. This is the **amvon** (*Greek* ὁ ἄμβων — 'projection', 'elevation') — the central place of the church service in the naos. Here clergyman say prayers for all to hear, read the Gospel, preach sermons, and from here the bless those praying.

In cathedrals, in the center of the naos there is a square dais — the **bishop's amvon**. During the church service, the **cathedra** is placed on it (*Greek* ἡ καθέδρα — 'seat'). On this amvon, the bishop wears church service clothes, and then, singing appropriate hymns, and accompanied by the clergymen concelebrating, he proceeds ceremoniously through the Royal Doors to the Altar.

SANCTUARY (SACRED ALTAR)

In the middle of the iconostatis are the Royal Doors — the entrance to the Holiest of Holies of the Christian church — the **Sanctuary** or **Sacred Altar** (*Latin* altarium, from *altaria* — 'altar top designed for burning offerings'). This is the east and most elevated part of the church.

In the center of the Altar part (sometimes at a certain elevation) is the **Holy Table** — the main object of worship of the church, where the supreme Holy Eucharist at the Divine Liturgy is performed. It is a cube with sides from 1 to 1.5 m., made of wooden boards (sometimes of marble or silver slabs) and draped in a special Altar-cloth.

In the special decorated box, the **sacrarium** (the tabernacle), are the **Holy Sacraments** — parts of the Eucharistic Body of Christ, soaked in His Blood. They are necessary for communion for gravely ill and dying Christians who cannot come to the church. To bring the Holy Sacraments to the beds of the weak, there is a small box — the **ostensorium** (the pyx). And before the sacrarium, as a sign of respect to the Relics contained in it, an eternal light is placed.

On the Holy Table are also the **Holy Gospel** and **Holy Cross**. They are therefore called the communion Holy Gospel and Cross.

Also on the Holy Table is the holy sudarium, which is called the **antimension** (*Greek* ἀντί — ‘instead of’ and *Latin* mensa — ‘table’; literally ‘instead of the Holy Table’), into which a piece of relics of the holy martyr is sewn.

Behind the Holy Table (or in the east part of the end of it) in Russian churches the **seven-branched candelabrum** is traditionally placed — a holder with seven oil lamps or candles.

To the left of the Sacred Altar is the **Prothesis** (the Credence Table, Table of oblation). In its form and manufacture it resembles the Holy Table, but is smaller. The **Proskomidia** is carried out on the Prothesis (*Greek* ἡ προσκομιδή — ‘bringing’). This is the name of the preliminary holy ritual at the Divine Liturgy to prepare the bread and wine for the subsequent performance of the Eucharist on the Holy Table. Sacred vessels are placed on the Prothesis: **diskos** (*Greek* ὁ δίσκος — ‘dish’), a dish for bread on a high stand, and **potir** (*Greek* τὸ ποτήριον — ‘cup’) or the **Sacred Cup** for wine.

The easternmost part of the Sacred Altar is called the High Place, («Gornee Mesto», from *Slav.* gorny — ‘highest’, ‘elevated above everything’). This is the place of the invisible throne of Christ himself as the King of Glory. In cathedrals the **cathedra** (seat) is placed on the High Place for the bishop as the representative of Christ in the earthly church. To the left and right of the cathedra, there are benches for the clergymen conducting the service with the bishop.

SIDE-CHAPEL

Besides the main Altar, the church may have one or two additional Altars, each one with its Holy Table, iconostasis and church space. These internal small churches in Russia are called «**pridely**», the side-chapels («pridel» from *Slav.* pridelati — ‘to build/add on’). Each of these side-chapels, during the consecration of the Holy Table in its Altar, receives its own personal name.

2. Procedure of conducting the worship in the Eastern Church. Service books

In order to determine the procedure, time and features of carrying out church services in Russian Orthodox Christian churches, there is a special regulation. It is consecrated by many centuries of tradition and recorded in a special book called the *Typikon* (Greek *Τυπικόν*, from *ὁ τύπος* — ‘type’, ‘sample’, ‘specimen’) or “Regulations of Church Service”, a liturgical book of rules, which contains instructions about the order of the various Eastern Orthodox Christian church services and ceremonies. At its basis is the service regulations of the Holy Lavra of Saint Sabbas in Jerusalem, which were passed in this monastery in the 6th century AD.

In accordance with the *Typikon*, there are three time cycles of church service connected in calendar and liturgical time: **daily**, **weekly** and **yearly**. The daily cycle determines the time and type of services during the day and night, the weekly cycle determines the features of church service depending on the day of the week, and the yearly cycle depending on the calendar day of a certain month of the year.

THE DAILY CYCLE

Services of the daily cycle are determined and named according to the time of the day.

NB! For Christians, the service day starts in the evening. This tradition goes back to the Old Testament Jewish service, where it was based on the well-known refrain from the book of Genesis in the description of the creation of the world: „And it was evening, and it was morning: the first day“ (the second one, the third one *etc.* — Genesis: 1).

Thus, the daily cycle of the service is opened by the **vespers**. Usually, the vespers begin when the sun sets, after 6 p.m. local time.

The vespers are followed by the **apodeipnon** or **compline** (in literal translation from Slavic «povecherie», i.e. the service «after the supper»).

At midnight, the **midnight service** begins

At the end of the night, after dawn (around 3 a.m.) are the **matins** or **orthros**.

This is followed by the **hours**: the **prime** (around 6 a.m.), the **tierce** (around 9 a.m.), the **sext** (around midday) and the **nones** (around 3 p.m.).

After the nones, the vespers of the next service day begin.

The main service of the daily cycle is the Divine Liturgy, carried out between the services of the sext and the nones, i.e. (according to regulations) after midday. This is probably why it has a technical term in Russian church tradition «Obednya» (compare with “**Mass**”, *Latin* Missa).

In special cases, the *Typicon* allows several services to be combined in one. For example, before Sundays and feast days, the nones, the vespers and the matins, and also the prime are combined in the **all-night vigil** (the night service *or* vespers-and-matins).

Praying readings and singing, and also the sequence of carrying out services of the daily cycle are laid out in a liturgical book called the **Horologion**.

THE WEEKLY CYCLE

Each liturgical day of the week is dedicated to remembrance or one of the important Christian events, or the memory of a saint.

The service week in Slavic is called «**sedmitsa**» (after the *seven* days in the week). **NB!** It starts on Sunday. In its turn, Sunday in Slavic is called «**nedelya**» (from the expression «*ne delati*», i.e. not to work on this day because of the holiday).

Thus, the first day of the church week is dedicated to the main event in the history of the Christian church — the Bright Resurrection of Christ, the Pascha of the Lord (the Easter). The entire service of this day (which starts on the Saturday evening of the special vespers — Sunday) is filled with joyful Sunday singing. The Sunday vespers are combined with the Sunday matins into the Sunday all-night vigil — one of the most ceremonial and festive services.

The second day of the liturgical week is **Monday** («ponedelnik» literally “after Sunday” in Slavic, on the analogue of «po-vecherie»). It is dedicated to the bodiless heavenly Powers. This name means the bodiless higher spiritual beings — angels.

The third day of the service week, **Tuesday**, is dedicated to the memory of the great and last prophet, St. John the Baptist (St John the Precursor).

On the fourth day of the week, **Wednesday**, the Church remembers in prayer the sad event of, the betrayal of Judas. Also on this day, songs are head dedicated to, the Cross of the Lord, i.e. the sufferings of Jesus Christ on the cross. This is why Wednesday is traditionally a fast day, in the Christian calendar, i.e. the day of refraining from pleasures and other types of excess. The very name of this day, «sreda», came from its position in the church week — in the *middle* of the seven days.

The fifth day is **Thursday**: the memory of the holy apostles and St. Nicholas, and also all the *Sanctifiers* of the Church of Christ. (A *Sanctifier* or *holy Hierarch* is a bishop who has earned holiness before God, i.e. become holy in his Christian deeds — good deeds, love and charity.)

The sixth day, **Friday**, is the second fast day of the week. It is dedicated to the remembrance of the event that is tragic for all of Christianity — the Crucifixion, and his Death on the Cross for the life of our world.

Saturday (the seventh day of the church week) is a special day on the service calendar. This is the eve of Sunday, the next on the list, the *Eight Day*, a mysterious eschatological moment which according to theological understanding is the Day of Christ, the image of the great coming Age of the Future, the era of the Kingdom of Heaven. From early Christian times, this day is special, the day of the memory of the future bliss for all of those faithful to Christ, when at the end of the earthly life they are united with Him and His Kingdom. This is why on Saturday the church remembers all Saints, shining forth in their deeds for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven and who make up the Heavenly

Church. At the same time, Saturday is a day of the Commemoration of the Faithful Departed Day of all (dead) Christians: our parents, grandparents, relatives, friends, close ones... — everyone who is no longer with us, but whom we expect to meet in the future age of the Kingdom of Heaven. Because of this, services on Saturday are especially ceremonial.

Songs in honor of the greatest of all woman — the Mother of God and the Virgin Mary — are sung every day and at each service, but the **theotokion** (a type of hymn in praise of the Virgin Mary) is especially profound on Sunday, Wednesday and Friday.

SYSTEM OF OCTOECHOS

The **octoechos** (*Slav.* osmoglasie, *Greek* ὁ ὀκτώηχος), is a musical system of eight modes or tones. This is a system of eight melodic subsystems. Each of the eight tones is a special melodic modus (model) for singing poetic church texts. At the same time, a strict sequence of tones in the eight-week cycle was established. For the entire first week (from Saturday vespers to the nones of the next Saturday inclusive), singing of the first tone was performed, for the entire second week singing of the second tone was performed etc., until the last, eighth tone. Then the week of the eighth tone was followed by the first tone — and so on throughout the year. This long period of eight weeks — from the week of the first to the week of the eighth tone was later called, the «pillar» (*Slav.* «stolp»). There are a total of six of these periods (pillars) in a year.

Collections of songs of all eight tones were over time compiled in a book called the **Octoechos** (in Graeco-Byzantine tradition, the Parakletiké). In this book, songs for the eight weeks of the pillar of the Octoechos were contained for the **daily** and **weekly cycles** of service.

THE YEARLY CYCLE OF SERVICE

The yearly cycle of service consists of three calendar cycles:

1. the “solar” cycle. Also called the “unmovable” cycle. Each liturgical day is fixed to a certain date of the **solar calendar**, which remains unchanged, immovable. For example, the Nativity of Jesus Christ always corresponds to the 25th of December according to the new style or the 7th of January according to the old style. Prayer readings and singings, and also a sequence of performing the service during the days of the “solar” cycle are laid out in the liturgical book called the **Menaion**;
2. the “easter lunar” cycle. Another name is the “moveable” cycle. Each liturgical day is calculated from the Sunday of Holy Pascha, which in its turn is calculated according to the **lunar calendar**. Service days of this cycle (i.e. Lenten, Paschal periods) are fixed to certain days of the week not connected with the days of the solar calendar. For example, the Ascension of the Lord will always fall on Thursday, the 40th day from the first day of Easter, and its calendar date will change from year to year, moving from one date to another. Services of the “easter lunar cycle” are contained in the books the **Triodion** (*Slav.* Lenten Triodion), and the **Pentecostarion** (*Slav.* Flowery Triodion);

3. “pillar” cycle of the Octoechos (see above). Also “movable” (depending on the “easter lunar” cycle), as the beginning of systematic singing of the Octoechos at the service is also connected with the day of Easter. As we said above, singing for the days of this cycle is set down in the book the **Octoechos**.

NB! Throughout the year, these three cycles cross over, interact, supplement and enrich the memorial dates when they coincide. For example, the feast of the “solar”, “immovable” cycle, the Annunciation of the Most Holy Mother of God, often coincides with Lenten, which is part of the “easter lunar”, “moveable” cycle. These types of coincidences and indications concerning the special features of the service in these cases are indicated in detail in the universal regulator of church services, in the Typicon.

CHURCH FEASTS

In accordance with the church calendar, the **Menology**, the church year (*Slav.* «leto») does not start on 1 January, like the secular year, but on 1 September by the old style or 14 September by the new style. This is a feast day, and in Slavic it is called «*novoletie*», the Church New Year.

According to the regulations of the Typicon, all church feast days are united into hierarchical groups in accordance with the degree of their importance and magnitude in the church year.

Three types of feasts are distinguished in each group:

1. **Feasts of the Lord** (feasts in honor of Our Lord Jesus Christ);
2. **Feasts of the Mother of God;**
3. **Feasts of the Saints.**

Then, in accordance with yearly calendar cycles (“unmovable” and “moveable”), feasts are also divided into **immovable** and **moveable** according to the dates of the solar calendar.

Feast groups (from highest to lowest):

- **The Bright Resurrection of Christ, the Pascha (Easter)** —
“The Feast of feasts and the Ceremony of ceremonies” —
 the head of all feasts and the greatest feast of the lord (outside the groups).
 in Sunday (the *moveable*);

I. THE TWELVE GREAT FEASTS —
the invariable cycle of 12 feasts of the Lord and feasts of the Mother of God
(in calendar order, by new/old style)

1	8/21 September	the Nativity of the Most Holy Mother of God	<i>Feast of the Mother of God</i>
2	14/27 September	the Elevation of the Cross of the Lord	<i>Feast of the Lord</i>
3	21 November/ 4 December	the Entry into the Temple of the Most Holy Mother of God	<i>Feast of the Mother of God</i>
4	25 December/ 7 January	the Nativity of our Lord God Jesus Christ	<i>Feast of the Lord</i>
5	6/19 January	the Baptism of our Lord Jesus Christ (the Theophany)	<i>Feast of the Lord</i>
6	2/15 February	the Meeting of our Lord Jesus Christ in the Temple	<i>Feast of the Mother of God</i>
7	25 March/ 7 April	the Annunciation of the Most Holy Mother of God	<i>Feast of the Mother of God</i>
8	Sunday (the <i>moveable</i>)	the Entry of the Lord into Jerusalem (Palm Sunday)	<i>Feast of the Lord</i>
9	Thursday (the <i>moveable</i>)	the Ascension of Lord	<i>Feast of the Lord</i>
10	Sunday (the <i>moveable</i>)	Trinity Sunday. Pentecost	<i>Feast of the Lord</i>
11	6/19 August	the Transfiguration of our Lord Jesus Christ	<i>Feast of the Lord</i>
12	15/28 August	the Dormition of the Most Holy Mother of God	<i>Feast of the Mother of God</i>

II. THE GREAT FEASTS —

A varying feast cycle which changes its contents depending on local church tradition
(in calendar order, by old/new styles)

1/14 September	Church New Year	<i>Feast of the Lord</i>
26 September/ 9 October	the Repose of the Apostle and Evangelist John the Theologian	<i>Feast of the Saint</i>
1/14 October	the Protection of the Most Holy Mother of God	<i>Feast of the Mother of God</i>
6/19 December	St. Nicholas the Wonderworker, archbishop	<i>Feast of the Saint</i>
1/14 January	the Circumcision of Lord, and St. Basil the Great, archbishop	<i>Feast of the Lord</i>
8/21 May	Apostle and Evangelist John the Theologian	<i>Feast of the Saint</i>

9/22 May	Translation of the relics of St. Nicholas the Wonderworker from Myra to Bari	<i>Feast of the Saint</i>
Monday (the <i>moveable</i>)	Day Of the Holy Spirit (Whit Monday)	<i>Feast of the Lord</i>
24 June/ 7 July	the Nativity of John the Baptist	<i>Feast of the Saint</i>
29 June/ 12 July	the Leaders of the Apostles: Peter and Paul	<i>Feast of the Saint</i>
29 August/ 11 September	the Beheading of John the Baptist	<i>Feast of the Saint</i>

III. THE MIDDLE FEASTS

IV. THE LESSER FEASTS

The last two groups of feasts, in accordance with the regulations of the Typicon, are distinguished by services that are less festive and ceremonial. For example, during days of **lesser feasts** the all-night vigil is not kept etc.

3. Performers of the church service — priesthood and church officers of the Russian Orthodox Church

CLERICS AND LAICS, MONKS AND NON-MONKS, CHURCH CLERGY

Christians are God's chosen people, so from Christian antiquity we have called ourselves by the Greek word **laics**, laymen (*Greek* ὁ λαϊκός, from ὁ λαός — 'people'), i.e. seculars.

In those distant times officers of the Church of Christ were chosen by lot. It was thought that God Himself should choose officers from the people laying claim to the position. After the particular type of service in the church was chosen, it was this position that was considered to be the main activity of the chosen person, and his destiny. Thus, a laic becomes a member of the clergy, a **cleric** (*Greek* ὁ κληρικός), a clergyman, i.e. churchman.

In the 2nd–3rd centuries AD, a special institution was established in the Christian church — the monkhood. The word monk comes from the Greek μοναχός — 'alone'. It was originally thought that a monk should not take part in the public worship — he should pray alone, work and restrain himself. Furthermore, in accordance with the original monkish principles, a monk was not supposed to take on the burden of church work, so as not to fall into the temptation of having power over people. Nevertheless, at the end of the 5th century (AD 491), the Patriarch of Jerusalem, Sallust, by special request of the Jerusalem monks ordered monk Sabbas to be the head of all the monasteries of Palestine, and he became known as *Sabbas the Sanctified*.

Since this time, clerics have been divided into monks and non-monks. In Russia, clerics from the non-monks are called the secular clergy, and clerics from the monks are called the regular clergy.

NB! Finally, the entire clergy, in relation to the worship service, consists of two important categories of clerics or the priesthood:

1. direct and independent performers of the church service are the **priesthood**. This category consists of the order of bishops and the order of priests;
2. their assistants in doing the service are the **church officers**. This includes the order of deacons, subdeacons, singers (cantors), readers (lectors), and others.

HIERARCHY OF THE HOLY ORDERS OF THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

The three levels of the Holy Orders — the **bishop**, the **priest** and the **deacon** — arose and formed in the earliest apostolic period of the Christian Church (1st century AD). Information about this is contained in the New Testament Book of Acts, and also in the apostolic Epistles.

EPISCOPACY

The episcopacy is an assembly of representatives of the first, **highest rank** of the clergy in the Christian church.

The **bishop** (from Greek *ὁ ἐπίσκοπος* — ‘overseer’, ‘supervisor’) is the overseer, head and spiritual mentor for a large society of Christians, the representative of Christ and His Church; the first, most important and independent performer of the church service — all church services and all rituals, including the ordination, and also the imposition of hands of the deacon, subdeacon and reader.

The episcopacy has its own inner hierarchy, in which bishops who remain equal among themselves by the blessing of the bishop service differ in their orders, which depend on personal achievements and the importance of the territory they control (from one of the church dioceses to one of the autocephalous churches).

The **diocese** (Greek *ἡ ἐπαρχία* — ‘region’, ‘province’) is an administrative territorial unit within the church area under the control of the eparchial (diocesan) bishop.

The **Autocephalous Church** (from Greek *αὐτός* — ‘self’ and *ἡ κεφαλή* — ‘head’) is an independent (literally “self-headed”) Church that enjoys total canonical and administrative independence and elects its own primates and bishops.

At present, all bishops of the Eastern Christian church are **monks**. They are selected and ordained strictly from **monk-priests**.

<i>rank</i>	<i>etymology</i> (Greek)	<i>position</i>	<i>title/form of address</i>
the bishop	ὁ ἐπίσκοπος — ‘supervisor’	the chief of diocese	the Right Reverend/ <i>Your Grace</i>
the archbishop	ἀρχι-, <i>prefix</i> — ‘senior’ + ὁ ἐπίσκοπος (<i>see above</i>)	the merited chief of archdiocese	the Most Reverend/ <i>Your Eminence</i>
the metropolitan	ἡ μητρόπολις — ‘main city’, ‘capital’	the chief of metropolitanate	the Most Reverend/ <i>Your Eminence</i>
the patriarch	ὁ πατριάρχης — ‘founder, patriarch	the chief of Autocephalous Church	the Most Holy/ <i>Your Holiness</i>

PRESBYTERATE

The presbyterate is made up of representatives of the second, **middle rank** of the clergy in the Christian church. The **presbyter** is the apostolic name of the priest (from Greek *ὁ πρεσβύτερος* — ‘senior’).

The priest is a performer of the service who depends on the bishop. Through the ordination, i.e. through the Priest Ordinance, the priest receives from the bishop the

blessing and powers to carry out all services and rituals (apart from the Priest Ordinance), and also to be a teacher of the faith and a spiritual tutor of Christians entrusted to him by God.

In the Eastern Christian Church, a priest can be a monk (the regular clergy), or married (the secular clergy). The clergy is also possible for unmarried bachelors. These priests are called *celibate*, i.e. they give a vow not to marry. Celibate priests are also part of the secular clergy, as they are not monks.

The presbyterate also has its inner hierarchy, in which priests who are equal among themselves by blessing in the clergy are distinguished by their orders, which depend on their personal achievements and position held.

<i>rank</i>	<i>non-monk /monk</i>	<i>etymology (Greek)</i>	<i>position</i>	<i>title/form of address</i>
<i>Slav.</i> «ierey» the priest	non-monk	ὁ ἱερεὺς — 'priest'	the parish priest	Reverend/ <i>Your Reverence</i>
hieromonk, the monk-priest	monk	ἱερο-, <i>prefix</i> — 'holy-' + μοναχός — 'single'	the monastic priest	Reverend/ <i>Your Reverence</i>
<i>Slav.</i> «protoierey» the arch-priest	non-monk	πρῶτος — 'first' + ὁ ἱερεὺς (<i>see above</i>)	the prior of parish, priest leader	Very Reverend/ <i>Your Very Reverence</i>
the hegumen	monk	from ὁ ἡγεμῶν — 'leader', 'tutor'	a prior of monastery	Very Reverend/ <i>Your Very Reverence</i>
the archimandrite	monk	from ἀρχι-, <i>prefix</i> — 'senior' + ἡ μάνδρα — the flock	a prior of a large monastery (the Laura); superior monk	Very Reverend/ <i>Your Very Reverence</i>

DEACONRY

The deaconry is made up of representatives of third, **lower rank** of the clergy. Essentially, the **deacon** (*Greek* ὁ διάκονος — 'servant', 'attendant'), is a higher church officer, as he is not the actual person who performs the service. During the imposition of hands, the deacon receives the blessing from the bishop only to help church officers in the services and mysteries they perform. He is in charge of all the church officers who help the priests during the service. The deacon leads the prayer supplications on behalf of all those praying (the ektenia, litany), reads the Apostles and the Evangelists and other service texts, and is also in charge of the lower church ranks (singers, readers, Altar-officers) and all those praying, ensuring the correct order at church services.

Like the priests, the deacons may be married (non-monks) or monks, and also unmarried (celibate deacons).

<i>rank</i>	<i>non-monk/ monk</i>	<i>etymology</i> (Greek.)	<i>position</i>
the deacon	non-monk	ὁ διάκονος — ‘servant’, ‘attendant’	the parish deacon
the hierodeacon, monk-deacon	monk	ἱερο-, <i>prefix</i> — ‘holy-’ + ὁ διάκονος (see above)	the monastic deacon
the protodeacon	non-monk	πρωτός — ‘first’ + ὁ διάκονος (see above)	the chief deacon
the archdeacon	monk	ἀρχι-, <i>prefix</i> — ‘senior’ + ὁ διάκονος (see above)	the chief monk-deacon

CHURCH OFFICERS

Church officers or minor orders, read and sing at the church services and provide “technical” assistance during the worship.

<i>rank</i>	<i>etymology</i> (Greek)	<i>duties</i>
the subdeacon	ὁ ὑπο-διάκονος — ‘lower church officer’	the assistant deacon
the reader (the lector)	— — —	reading at the service
the singer (the cantor)	— — —	singing at the service
<i>Slav.</i> «ponomár» the sacristan, sexton	ὁ παραμονάριος — ‘constantly present’ (at the church)	assisting the deacon at the Altar (lighting the incense), lighting lamps, tidying the church
the bell-ringer	— — —	ringing the bell

4. Chant at the church worship

Church chant is the soul of divine service.

Both in oral, and in written Russian church tradition till now have remained phraseological units: „to sing the Liturgy“, „to sing the public prayer“, „to chant the burial service (a rank of burial service deceased)“, etc., and also capacious and bright expression „the churches of God are standing without chant“ (i.e. there is no worship in those churches). From here it is clear that for Russian consciousness **‘to make divine service’** means first of all **‘to sing’** — to eulogise the Creator by church chanting.

But how it is necessary to praise God by singing? What should be church singing?..

The brotherly, church prayer is a spirit of divine service, church singing is soul of divine service in the Church body.

The purpose of a church prayer is the communication with God.

The goal of church chant — to bring our common, brotherly prayers to the Heaven. St. Augustine said once: *Quis cantat, bis orat* — „Who sings, prays twice“ (a variant: *Qui bene cantat, bis orat* — „He who sings well, prays twice“).

„A time for singing, time for prayer!“ — with such words the waking monk, bypassing the monastic cells, and invited brotherhood to the church for morning divine service.

Church *prayerful* chant...; *spiritual* chant — communicated to the Spirit of God and addressed to the spirit of the person...; *spirit-bearing* chant — containing gifts of the Holy Spirit in itself; *spirit-moving* chant — moving spirit of the person on spiritual feats...

However, in the end of 17th century elements of secular culture actively took roots into church culture, therefore occurred so-called *secularisation of church art*. So our church iconography gradually turned to religious painting, our temples were constructed and reconstructed on samples of the West European architecture models, and our liturgic chant became concert or opera singing...

Creating the Man by His own image and likeness, the Creator made a higher thinking creature who turned upwards, to the Founder and the Father — Greek *ὁ ἀνθρώπος*, ‘the person’ = *ἀνά*, ‘upwards’ + *τρέπω*, ‘to turn, convert’. According to the plan of One-in-Trinity God, the humanbeing also has been created threeunited, in three parts — in the unity of spirit, soul and a body (the body or flesh has been created from ashes terrestrial or “clay”, i.e. from a prime and primitive material substance). Thus he has been turned to God by the higher form — area of human spirit. The spirit has been urged to dominate over the soul, and the soul — over the body.

[See more in detail: *St. archbishop Luke (Voyno-Yasenetsky)*. The Spirit, the Soul and the Body. *Vladimir Lossky*. Orthodox theology: an introduction.]

In 18th–19th centuries in religious life of Russia and in its liturgical culture under the influence of West Christian culture appeared a substitution of spirituality by hearfulness

(emotionality). The **church symbol** — a sign and reflexion of the higher, heavenly reality — has been replaced by a **religious illustration**, and Christian symbolics by pictorialism and decorativism. And here instead of strict temples magnificent palaces are erected, instead of canonical icons on their walls there are pictures in the gilt frames, and instead of spiritual church chanting soulful choir concerts and opera arias sounded there... And the beauty of church disappears, giving way to a secular prettiness. And artistic realisation of culture of divine service is defined not by ancient and eternal canons, but by passing categories of a fashion, art taste and style...

Examples: two variants of the hymn *Praise the Name of God* in the music of two styles — «opera» and traditional Russian church style.

 —1. *I. Smirnov.* „Praise the name of the Lord“. The Metropolitan choir of Kiev-Pechersk Lavra. Conductor M. Litvinenko, soloist A. Nagornaja.

 —2. *P. Chesnokov.* „Praise the name of the Lord“, the Znamenny chant (harmonisation). The choir of the Moscow Sretensky monastery.

So, what should be church chant to become truly church one — prayful, spirit-bearing and spirit-moving?

In ancient Russian monuments there are, for example, such definitions: *osmoglásnoe* (octomodal, on eight modes/tones of Octoechos), *edinoglásnoe* (monophony), *dobroglásnoe* (performing with good voices), *stepénnoe* (unhasting), *chínnoe* (harmonious and ordered), *nemiatézhnoe* (quiet, without passions), *krásnoe* (beautiful, fine), *blagolépnoe* (in good taste), and also *ustávnnoe* (according to the liturgical order, that is in accordance with the Typicon, *Slav.* «Ustav», instructions).

To these requirements on Old Russian representations extremely corresponds the Znamenny singing or **Znamenny chant**. The word “znamya” in Old Slavonic means “sign” and in a music context ‘a singing mark’ or ‘note’ (the last word, by the way, in Latin *nota* also means ‘sign’ or ‘mark’). These signs («znaména») were written above the lines of the poetic texts of the liturgical chants.

The researchers have come to a conclusion that ancient chant notations were born from signs and notes, which the singers in ancient times used to mark the liturgical texts for correct and expressive reading. It was special kind of a sing-song ritual singing — the art of **ecphonetics** — from Greek ἐκ-φωνέω — ‘exclaim’, ‘declare’, and also ‘to pronounce distinctly’ (the words). Ecphonic marks helped the singers to put grammatical and logical stress, showed the beginning and the end of the sentence of the poetic lines (*versus*), marked the culminations of the long and short phrases, as well as the rise and fall of the intonation. The marks were written both above and below the grammatical text as well as between the words...

For the ancient composers of church chants (*Greek melurgs*, the creators of melodies) the text was more important than the melody. In accordance with the well-known evangelic sentence „in the beginning was the Word“, in church chant the primary is the word, and the secondary is the melody. Originally music in church was supposed to vocalize the prayer text correctly, to carry the exact and correct meaning of the text, and interpret it intonationally and melodically.

Znamenny chant is the keeper of the church word, and one of the best musical interpreters of its meaning.

Example: the ancient chant of the Christian church in the znamenny singing — is the vesper hymn of tone 2 in the praise of the Theotokos. Its author is St. John of Damascus. This hymn is called the *dogmatikon*, as its poetic text contains the eternal dogmata about Our Lady and the Christ, Who born from her — the Son of God and our Saviour.

 — A. Kastalsky. **The Theotokion Dogmatikon, tone 2**, Znamenny chant (two-voice harmonization). The choir of the Moscow Sretensky monastery.
