

LITURGY MAP

experience overview

1 THE OFFERTORY

The offertory begins with prayers from the book of hours, which includes psalms, a gospel reading, and personal prayers. The priest will then begin choosing the bread for today's service from the selection that was offered on behalf of the people.

2 LITURGY OF THE WORD

This part of the service focuses on readings from the New Testament Scriptures. The final reading is a passage from one of the gospels and is concluded with a sermon.

3 KISS OF PEACE
Once the deacon says, "greet one another," we begin to greet each other as a sign of love and unity.

4 THE INSTITUTION NARRATIVE

This part of the prayer is where the priest is asking the Holy Spirit to transform the bread and wine to the Body and Blood of Christ. The congregation responds, affirming their belief that this is truly happening.

5 LITANIES

Here, we are praying for many things, like the peace of the Church, the harvest, and even our chastity. Each prayer is concluded by the congregation asking God to have mercy on us.

6 COMMUNION

This is the heart of the service. Orthodox Christians partake of the Body and Blood of Christ in order to unite with Him: "Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in them." John 6:56

COMMEMORATION OF SAINTS

Here, we remember some of the saints who lived in a way that honored God, as a reminder that we should look to how they loved God and try to emulate them.



HYMNS

The ancient liturgical hymns are full of theological meaning and scriptural references. You will notice that much of the service is sung by the congregation. If you're comfortable, sing along! Participation is key to stay focused during the liturgical prayers.



SIGNING WITH THE CROSS

We sign ourselves with the cross several times during the liturgy, such as when the words "worship" or "holy" are said. This is just one physical expression of worship, but there's no set rule for when you should and shouldn't.



INCENSE

Incense represents prayers and repentance that ascend to heaven. As we smell the incense, we are reminded to offer our prayers and repentant hearts to God.



The Orthodox liturgy is a sensory worship experience. Throughout the liturgy, you will observe the various ways we express our worship. Here are some of the things you will see.

Please visit our Welcome Table after the liturgy for more information.



STANDING + SITTING

In the Orthodox tradition, the faithful stand for nearly the entire service, but don't worry; there will be times of sitting down as well. In any case, if this is too challenging in the beginning, feel free to take a seat.



GREET ONE ANOTHER

Once the deacon says, "greet one another," we are called to exchange the kiss of peace, as an opportunity to reconcile with one another just as Christ reconciled us to Himself. Don't worry; it's pretty simple. Just follow the lead of those around you!



SCARVES + SHOES

You may notice that people are taking off their shoes in church and using head scarves, especially as they approach the Eucharist. These are signs of reverence and humility, as we worship God and approach Him.



ICONS

In an Orthodox church, you may see icons of saints. We do not pray to saints, but we ask for their prayers just as you would ask a friend to pray for you. Even though the saints are not with us physically, they are very much alive and part of the Church.