

SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY PROCESSION

After the Divine Liturgy before the blessing of antidoron, the clergy and people form a procession with the Holy Icons and Relics around the inside and outside of the church while singing the two following hymns:

Tone 2 Troparion *(Sunday of Orthodoxy)*

We venerate Your most pure image, O Good One;
and ask forgiveness of our transgressions, O Christ our God.
Of Your good will You were pleased to ascend the cross in the flesh
and deliver Your creatures from bondage to the Enemy.
Therefore with thankfulness we cry aloud to You:
“You have filled all with joy, O our Savior,//
for You alone have come to save the world.”

Tone 2 *(from the Lenten Triodion)*

Advancing from false doctrine to true faith,
illumined with the light of knowledge,
let us clap our hands and offer grateful praise to God in song!
With due honor let us venerate the holy icons of Christ,
of the all-pure Virgin, and of all the saints,
depicted on walls or panels or sacred vessels,
rejecting the godless teaching of the heretics!
For as Saint Basil says:
“The honor shown to the image passes to its prototype.”
By the prayers of Your pure Mother and of all the saints,//
we beseech You, O Christ our God, to grant us great mercy!



SYNODICON OF ORTHODOXY

A yearly thanksgiving is due to God on account of that day when we recovered the Church of God, with the demonstration of the dogmas of true religion and the overthrowing of the blasphemies of wickedness. The Deacon or Priest proclaims the Synodicon, and the choir and people respond as indicated in bold.

Following prophetic sayings, yielding to apostolic exhortations, and standing on the foundation of the accounts in the Gospels, we make festival on this day of dedication. For Isaias says that the islands will be dedicated^[1] to God, meaning, [by the islands,] the churches from the nations and, by churches, not splendid church buildings, but the fullness of those who perform acts of reverence in them and worship the divine with hymns and praises. The Apostle recommends the same thing, when he commands us to walk in newness of life^[2], and—by saying that if anyone is in Christ he is a new creation^[3]—to be renewed.

Then there are the words of the Lord, which are to be taken prophetically: It was, he said, the feast of the dedication in Jerusalem, and it was winter.^[4] [By winter is signified] either the spiritual [winter], according to which the nation of the Jews stirred up storms of bloodthirstiness and trouble against the Saviour of us all, or that which affects the bodily senses when the air changes to being icy-cold.

For there was a winter with us—along hard winter, and not just a fleeting season— one of great wickedness, spewing out savagery, but now there has blossomed forth for us the first of seasons, the spring of the graces of God, in which we have gathered together to make a thank-offering to God, a harvest of good works; or, to express it rather in the words of the psalm: Summer and spring, you have made them, remember this.^[5]

For the enemies who reproach the Lord and utterly dishonour the holy veneration of him in holy icons, raising and puffing themselves up through their blasphemies: the Lord of wonders will tear them to shreds, and dash to the earth the insolence of their apostasy.

He does not disregard the voice of those who cry to Him, Remember, O Lord, the reproach of your servants, the reproach of many nations that I bore in my bosom, with which your enemies reproached you, O Lord, with which they reproached the exchange of your Christ.^[6]

For the 'exchange of Christ' means those who have been redeemed by his death and have believed in him, through the preaching of the words and the depictions in images. For it is in this way that the great work of the Economy, accomplished through the cross and the sufferings he endured and the wonders he worked both before and after the cross, is made known to those who have been saved. And the imitation of his suffering passes over to the Apostle and then to the martyrs, and comes down, through them, to the confessors and the ascetics.

This reproach, with which the enemies of the Lord reproached, with which they reproached the exchange of his Christ,^[7] our God has born in mind. His heart is full of consolation, and he is inclined by the prayers of his mother, and the apostles, and all the saints. For they also shared the insolence shown towards him, and with him were set at naught in the icons, so that, just as they shared with him the suffering in the flesh, so in a similar fashion they shared with him in the insolence offered to the icons.

Now God has at last made clear what he has willed today, and has done a second time what he accomplished earlier. For earlier, after the passage of many years when the holy icons suffered contempt and dishonour, he turned back piety to himself. Now, a second time, after a brief period of thirty years' wickedness, he has restored to our unworthy selves freedom from vexation, the redemption of those who grieve, the renewed proclamation of piety, the assurance of the veneration of icons, and the feast that bears to us all these saving gifts.

For in the icons we see the Master's sufferings for our sake, the cross, the tomb, Hades slain and despoiled, the martyrs' combats, their crowns, salvation itself, which the judge of the combat and giver of the prize and the crowns has accomplished in the midst of the earth. Today we make festival on this holy day, and making merry together and rejoicing in prayers and litanies, we cry out in psalms and songs.

Who is a great God like our God? You are our God, who alone does great wonders.^[8]

For you mock those who despise your glory, and show those who dare boldly to set themselves against your icon to be cowardly and put them to flight. But there is thanksgiving to God, and the sovereign trophy against the antagonists in these matters; yet another statement and detailed indictment makes clear the contests and struggles [that have taken place] against those who fight against the icons.

As we stand in possession of the spiritual Jerusalem, in a certain place of rest after the passage through the desert, in imitation of Moses, or rather as obedient to a divine command, we set up a pillar made out of great stones, ready to be written on, it is right and fitting that we should inscribe in the hearts of the brothers the blessings that are due to those who kept the law and the curses which the lawless have brought upon themselves. Therefore we say:

1. Those who confess the incarnate presence of God the Word by word, by mouth, in the heart and the mind, by writing and in icons:

May their memory be eternal!

2. Those who know the difference in essences of the one and the same hypostasis of Christ attribute to it properties both created and uncreated, visible and invisible, capable of suffering and beyond suffering, circumscribed and uncircumscribed; they ascribe to the divine essence uncreatedness and the rest, while they acknowledge in the human nature the other qualities, including being circumscribed, and affirm all this both in word and in images:

May their memory be eternal!

3. Those who, believing and proclaiming, preach the words of the Gospel in writings, and the deeds in forms, to gather together in a single duty that includes both proclamation through words, and sure confirmation of the truth through icons:

May their memory be eternal!

4. Those who sanctify their lips by the word, and then those who hear them through the word, knowing and preaching that as the eyes of those who see are sanctified by the sacred icons, so the mind is led to the knowledge of God, just as it is through consecrated churches, and sacred vessels and other holy treasures:

May their memory be eternal!

5. Those who know that the rod and the tablets, the ark and the lamp, and the table, and the altar depicted in advance and prefigured the All-holy Virgin, Mary, the Mother of God; and also that these things prefigured her, and she did not become them, for the maiden was and remained after giving birth to God a virgin, and therefore the maiden is to be depicted in images rather than foreshadowed in types:

May their memory be eternal!

6. Those who know and accept and believe the prophetic visions, as the Divine himself gave them shape and form, which the chorus of prophets behold and explain; and who, strengthened by the written and unwritten tradition of the Apostles, continuing to the Fathers, therefore express holy things in images and honour them:

May their memory be eternal!

7. Those who understand Moses, who said, Be attentive to yourselves that on that day, when the Lord God spoke on the mount Horeb, you heard the sound of words, but you saw no likeness,^[9] and know how to answer rightly, that if we see something, we truly see, as the son of thunder taught us, he who was from the beginning, whom we heard, whom we saw, whom we beheld with our own eyes, and our hands touched, concerning the word of life,^[10] and to these we bear witness; and again, as the other disciples of the Word, we ate with him and drank with him, not only before his passion, but also after the passion and the resurrection;^[11] those who are able to distinguish the precepts in the law from the teaching of grace, and see that he is invisible in the former, but seen and touched in the latter, and that therefore what has been seen and touched is to be depicted in icons and worshipped:

May their memory be eternal!

As the Prophets saw, as the Apostles taught, as the Church has received, as the Teachers express in dogma, as the inhabited world understands together with them, as grace illumines, as the truth makes clear, as error has been banished, as wisdom makes bold to declare, as Christ has assured, so we think, so we speak, so we preach, honouring Christ our true God, and his Saints, in words, in writings, in thoughts, in sacrifices, in churches, in icons, worshipping and revering the One as God and Lord, and honouring them because of their common Lord as those who are close to him and serve him, and making to them relative veneration.

This is the faith of the Apostles; this is the faith of the Fathers; this is the faith of the Orthodox; this faith makes fast the inhabited world. These preachers of true religion, we praise as brothers and as those we long to have as our fathers, to the glory and honour of the true religion for which they struggled, and say:

Germanus, Tarasius, Nicephorus and Methodius, truly high priests of God, who taught orthodoxy and fought for it:

May their memory be eternal!

Ignatius, Photius, Stephen, Antony, and Nicolas, the most holy and orthodox Patriarchs:

May their memory be eternal!

On everything that has been written or spoken against the holy Patriarchs Germanus, Tarasius, Nicephorus and Methodius, Ignatius, Photius, Nicephorus, Antony and Nicolas:

Anathema!

On every innovation and action contrary to the tradition of the Church, and the teaching and pattern of the holy and celebrated Fathers, or anything that shall be done after this:

Anathema!

Euthymius, Theophilus and Aimilianus, the celebrated confessors and archbishops:

May their memory be eternal!

Theophylact, Peter, Michael and Joseph, the blessed metropolitans:

May their memory be eternal!

John, Nicolas and George, the thrice-blest confessors, and archbishops, and all the bishops who thought like them:

May their memory be eternal!

Theodore, the all-holy abbot of the Studites:

May his memory be eternal!

Isaac the wonderworker, and the most prophetic Joannikios:

May their memory be eternal!

Hilarion the most holy archimandrite, and abbot of the Dalmata monastery:

May his memory be eternal!

Symeon, the most holy stylite:

May his memory be eternal!

These blessings have passed down from them to us, as from fathers to sons who are zealous for their piety, and curses overwhelm the parricides, who disdain the master's commands.

Therefore, we, as the community of piety, publicly inflict on them the curse which they have brought on themselves.

On those who accept with their reason the incarnate economy of God the Word, but will not allow that this can be beheld through images, and therefore affect to receive our salvation in words, but deny it in reality:

Anathema!

On those who wickedly make play with the word 'uncircumscribed' and therefore refuse to depict in images Christ, our true God, who likewise shared our flesh and blood,^[12] and therefore show themselves to be fantasiasts:

Anathema!

On those who admit, even against their will, the prophetic visions, but will not accept the making of images of what they saw—O wonder!—even before the Incarnation of the Word, but emptily say that the incomprehensible and unseen essence itself was seen by those who beheld it, or conclude that these things make manifest images, figures and forms of the truth to those who see them, but will not accept that the Word become man, and his sufferings for our sake, may be depicted in icons:

Anathema!

On those who hear and understand the Lord saying, If you believed Moses, you would have believed me,^[13] and the rest, and Moses saying, The Lord our God will raise up for you from your brothers a prophet like me,^[14] and then say that the prophet is received, but that they will not represent the grace of the prophet and the salvation he brought for the whole world through images,, even though he was seen and lived among men and women, and cured sufferings and sickness with mighty acts of healing, and was crucified, and buried, and rose again, and did and suffered all this for our sake; on those who will not accept that these works of salvation, accomplished for the whole world, may be seen in icons, nor honoured and venerated in them:

Anathema!

On those who remain in the icon-fighting heresy, or rather the Christ-fighting apostasy, and neither wish to be led to their salvation through the Mosaic legislation, nor choose to live piously in accordance with apostolic teaching, nor are persuaded to turn from their error by the advice and exhortations of the Fathers, nor are abashed by the harmony of every part of the ecumenical Church of God, but once and for all have subjected themselves to the lot of the Jews and the pagans[lit: Greeks]; for immediately they have uttered blasphemies against the Archetype, and have not blushed to dare to make the image of the archetype identical with the archetype himself. On those, therefore, who have heedlessly accepted this error, and have stuffed their ears against very divine word and spiritual teaching, as they are already putrefied, and cut themselves off from the common body of the Church:

Anathema!

Anastasius, Constantine and Nicetas, those who started off the Isaurian heresies, unholy men and leaders to ruin:

Anathema!

Theodotus, Antony and John, procurers one for another of vices, and false successors of impiety:

Anathema!

Paul who turned back to Saul, and Theodorus called Gastes, and Stephen the Molutes, as well as Theodore Krithinus, and Louloudios the lion, and anyone who is like them in uttering impiety, to whatever category of clergy or any other honour or way of life they belong; on all these who continue in their impiety:

Anathema!

To all the heretics: Anathema!

Those who apply the sayings of the divine Scripture that are directed against idols to the august icons of Christ our God and his saints:

Anathema!

Those who share the opinion of those who mock and dishonour the august icons:

Anathema!

Those who say that Christians treat the icons like gods:

Anathema!

Those who say that another, apart from Christ our God, delivered us from the error of idols

Anathema!

Those who dare to say that the Catholic Church has accepted idols, thus overthrowing the whole mystery and mocking the faith of Christians

Anathema!
MANY YEARS TO THE BASILEIS!

God will protect their might. God will give their kingdom peace.
Heavenly King, protect those on earth!
Michael, our orthodox Basileus, and Theodora, his holy mother:

May their memory be eternal!

Basil and Constantine, Leo and Alexander, Christopher, and Romanos, Nicephorus, and John, Basil, and Constantine, Romanos, Michael, Constantine, Michael and Isaakios, who have all changed the earthly kingdom for the heavenly one:

May their memory be eternal!

Eudocia and Theophano, Theodora and Helen, Theophano and Theodora, Zoe and Theodora, most orthodox Augustae:

May their memory be eternal!

Germanos, Tarasios, Nikephoros, and Methodios, the renowned and blessed patriarchs:

May their memory be eternal!

Ignatios, Photios, Stephen and Antony, Nicolas and Euthymios, Stephen, Trypho, Theophylact and Antony, Polyeuctus, Nicolas, Sisinius, Sergios, Eustathios, the Orthodox Patriarchs:

May their memory be eternal!

The Holy Trinity has glorified them. By their contests and struggles and teachings for the sake of true religion to the point of death, we entreat God that we may be guided and strengthened and beg that we may be shown to be imitators of their inspired way of life until the end, by the pities and grace of the great and first high-priest Christ, our true God; at the intercessions of our most-glorious Lady, Mother of God and Ever-Virgin Mary, of the god-like Angels and all the Saints.

Amen.

[1] Isaias 41:1.

[2] Romans 6:4.

[3] 2 Corinthians 5:17.

[4] John 10:22.

[5] Psalm 73:17-18.

[6] Psalm 88:51-52.

[7] Psalm 88:52.

[8] Psalm 76:14-15.

[9] Psalm 4:15.

[10] 1 John 1:1.

[11] Acts 10:41.

[12] Cf. Hebrews 2:14.

[13] John 5:46.

[14] Deuteronomy 18:15; cf. Acts 3:22.