

# CHURCH ETIQUETTE

During Liturgy, the Priest or Deacon says, "With the fear of God, and with faith and love, draw near!"

Let this be the way believers approach the Church to worship.

## WHEN YOU ARRIVE AT CHURCH:

- Remind yourself why you are here: Jesus Christ. You have an appointment every Sunday morning at 10:00am with Him, so you should not be late. Would you be late to any other appointment? Get extra rest so that you can make it to Church on time.
- Shut off all beepers, phones, and electronic devices. NO text messaging!
- As we sing in the Liturgy, "Let us lay aside all earthly care."
- When entering the Church, venerate/kiss the icon at the entrance, cross yourself in prayer, and light a candle.

## YOU MAY NOT ENTER THE CHURCH AT THE FOLLOWING PERIODS:

- During the Entrance of the Holy Gospel
- During the reading of the Epistle and the Holy Gospel
- During the Entrance of the Gifts (bread and wine)

If you arrive, during the above mentioned times, please wait in the Narthex (back) until the particular period is over.

When you enter or exit the Church, use only the side aisles. No one is to use the middle aisle at any time during the service, except for the Communion line.

## YOU SHOULD NOT BE SEATED DURING THE FOLLOWING MOMENTS:

- The singing of the Great Doxology ("Glory to Thee who has shown us the Light")
- At "Blessed is the Kingdom of the Father, Son, and of the Holy Spirit..."
- During the Entrance of the Holy Gospel
- During the reading of the Holy Gospel
- During the Entrance of the Gifts
- During the Consecration of the Gifts
- During the Creed and the Lord's Prayer ("Our Father")
- While the priest and deacon are distributing Holy Communion
- Any time the priest blesses you with his hand or the cross

## CONDUCT IN CHURCH:

It is important to keep a reverent attitude and demeanor in Church at all times.

- Be on time! The proper time to arrive is before the service begins before the bells are rung.
- Should you have an emergency and think you will be late to Church, still come, pray, and give thanks to God for all things!
- You are there to pray, so focus on the prayers and hymns of the Liturgy
- Do not cross your legs while seated; please be firm while standing
- Do not stand with your hands in your pockets or your arms crossed
- Do not chew gum; absolutely no eating or drinking
- Do not talk during the Divine Liturgy, especially during the Gospel reading and in Communion line (wait until Coffee Hour to say hello)
- If your child is being disruptive and you cannot contain him, please calmly take your child out of the Church and calm him down without disturbing others and then RETURN to the Church.

Communion is not the end of Liturgy; do not leave until Liturgy is completely over and you have kissed the cross. You may not go to the Hall during Liturgy.

## MAKING THE SIGN OF THE CROSS:

The sign of the Cross is extremely powerful due to the reminder it gives of Christ's sacrifice. Tracing the sign of the Cross on ourselves serves as the accepting of that sacrifice and the blessing to emulate it in our everyday life. Making the sign of the Cross is the reception of the blessing bestowed on you by the Bishop or the Priest. It is the pious custom of devout people to trace themselves with the sign of the cross at important parts of the Divine Liturgy. The fingers put together first touch the forehead, then the chest, then the right shoulder, and finally the left shoulder (the heart). This can only be a reminder that we should love the Lord our God with all our mind, our soul, our strength, and our heart.

## **WHEN TO MAKE THE SIGN OF THE CROSS:**

- At the beginning and end of prayers and services
  - Upon entering Church and leaving Church
  - At the mention of the “Father, Son, and Holy Spirit”
  - When offering glory or blessedness to God
  - At any prayerful invocation of God
  - When the priest exclaims “Peace be to all”
  - When the priest blesses the faithful with his hand or cross
  - When the priest exclaims “Peace be to all”
  - During the Entrance of the Holy Gospel
  - During the Trisagion Prayers or Hymn (Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy...)
- After receiving Holy Communion (after you have taken a few steps away from the chalice)

## **BOWING YOUR HEAD:**

There are certain times in the service when parishioners should bow their heads:

- When the priest exclaims “Peace be to all”
- At the exclamation “Bow your heads unto the Lord”
- When the priest blesses the faithful with his hand or cross or censer
- When the priest or deacon bows toward the people during the services
- During the Entrance of the Holy Gospel
- When the Holy Gospel is read
- During the Entrance of the Gifts
- During the Consecration of the Gifts
- When you feel you need to focus on the service as to not get distracted

## **RECEIVING HOLY COMMUNION:**

To receive Holy Communion a person should:

- Prepare by prayer, by repentance, ultimately by receiving the Sacrament of Confession
- Prepare by fasting from food and drink (except for those with medical reasons) upon rising in the morning
- Refrain from smoking or chewing gum upon rising in the morning
- Ask forgiveness of anyone you have wronged
- Offer forgiveness to anyone who has wronged you
- Approach the chalice with reverence and thanksgiving, with arms crossed or hands folded with one’s mind on Christ
- Say your name to the priest as you approach the Holy Chalice
- Tilt your head back and open your mouth as wide as you can

You should NOT receive Holy Communion if you arrive to Church after the reading of the Gospel.

## **CHURCH ATTIRE:**

Use Good Judgment! Common Sense!

We should offer Christ our “Sunday Best”, not our everyday or common wear. Our dress should always be becoming of a Christian and exemplify Christian values.

- No Jeans, No T-Shirts, No Tank-tops, No Sunglasses on head (or baseball caps)
  - No Gym Shoes, No shorts, No Sandals, No Flip-Flops
  - Dresses and skirts must fall below the knee and must be worn loosely; not tight
  - Ladies’ blouses should not be revealing and must cover the chest and shoulders
  - Excessive make-up must be avoided. Women who wear lipstick should make sure lips are dry before receiving Communion, kissing cross or the priest’s hand.
  - This attire is to be for all ages!
  - This attire is to help us realize how to respect our bodies, the Church, and to properly offer up prayer for our sins
  - This attire is to help us NOT become a distraction to others who are trying to focus themselves
- Help lead others to salvation, NOT sin.