



October 4, 2009

17TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

**LEAVE-TAKING OF THE EXALTATION OF THE PRECIOUS & LIFE-GIVING
CROSS**

RESURRECTIONAL TROPARION - TONE EIGHT:

You did descend from on high, O Merciful One! You did accept the three day burial to free us from our sufferings! O Lord, our Life and Resurrection: Glory to You!

EXALTATION OF THE CROSS TROPARION - TONE ONE:

O Lord, save Your people and bless Your inheritance. Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians over their adversaries; and by virtue of Your Cross, preserve Your habitation!

RESURRECTIONAL KONTAKION - TONE EIGHT:

By rising from the tomb You did raise the dead and resurrect Adam. Eve exults in Your Resurrection, and the world celebrates Your Rising from the dead, O greatly Merciful One!

EXALTATION OF THE CROSS KONTAKION - TONE FOUR:

As You were voluntarily lifted up on the Cross for our sake, grant mercy to those who are called by Your Name, O Christ God. Gladden all Orthodox Christians by Your Power, granting them victories over their adversaries; and may they have as Your help the weapon of peace, the invincible trophy.

HYMN TO THE THEOTOKOS (Canon Mode, TONE EIGHT):

Magnify, O my soul, the most precious Cross of the Lord.
You are the mystical Paradise, O Theotokos, in which Christ blossomed; through Him the life-bearing Wood of the Cross was planted on earth. Now, at its Exaltation, as we bow in worship before it, we magnify You!

EPISTLE & COMMENTARY

THE PROKIMENON (PSALM) IN THE 8TH TONE:

Pray and make your vows before the Lord our God!

2 Corinthians 6: 16 – 7: 1

Brethren, what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they shall be My people." Therefore: "Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean and I will receive you. I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty." Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

Galatians 2: 16-20 (Sunday after the Cross)

Brethren, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified. But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is Christ therefore a minister of sin? Certainly not! For if I build again those things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. For I through the law died to the law that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

THE ALLELUIA VERSES:

Come let us rejoice in the Lord! Let us make a joyful noise to God our Savior!

Let us come before His face with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to Him with psalms!

Epistle Commentary on 2 Corinthians 6: 16 – 7: 1

This passage of St. Paul's second letter to the Corinthians begins to lay out a method of living a pure and chaste life that is "set apart." True holiness can only be attained when all of our idols are rejected; we must have only one God! This means that the idols of darkness, of sinfulness, of self-preservation, of pride, of anger, of lust, of money, etc., must all be destroyed in order for God's promise to be fulfilled in our own bodily temple.

One must come to God through repentance with genuine sorrow in the Mystery of Confession. One must then re-unite oneself to Christ in the Mystery of Holy Communion. Then, one must live this union in the world. Yet, so often, the darkness of the soul has existed for so long that our wills are bypassed and one sins automatically. Once again, the same pattern must be repeated: repentance, confession and reunification. It does not matter how many times this pattern is revisited, so long as one continues repent and turn toward God!

GOSPEL & COMMENTARY

Matthew 15: 21-28

At that time, Jesus departed to the region of Tyre and Sidon. And behold, a woman of Canaan came from that region and cried out to Him, saying, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David! My daughter is severely demon-possessed." But He answered her not a word. And His disciples came and urged Him, saying, "Send her away, for she cries out after us." But He answered and said, "I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Then she came and worshiped Him, saying, "Lord help me!" But He answered and said, "It is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the little dogs." And she said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs eat the crumbs which fall from their masters' table." Then Jesus answered and said to her, "O woman, great is your faith! Let it be to you as you desire." And her daughter was healed from that very hour.

Mark 8: 34 - 9: 1 (Sunday after the Cross)

At that time, when Jesus had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, "Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels." And He said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you that there are some standing here who will not taste death till they see the kingdom of God present with power."

Gospel Commentary on Matthew 15: 21-28

This pericope could indicate that Christ's ministry, prior to His Passion, was only to the Jews, which is true. St. Matthew reveals evidence of this in Christ's words, when he says, "I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." And yet, when one reads the entirety of the account, this banter with the Canaanite woman is for the benefit of the disciples, not for the purpose of rejecting the Gentiles. Christ reveals this woman's profound faith, love and humility in this brief conversation with her. Her love, because she says, "Have mercy on me..." She has taken her daughter's sufferings on as her own. Her faith, because she calls Christ, "Son of David..." which is a Jewish moniker for the Messiah. Her humility, because she equates herself with a dog and accepts her position beneath the house of Israel. Christ's ultimate acceptance of this Canaanite woman points to the eventual gathering of the Gentiles into the Church after Pentecost, not as dogs, but as Children who are invited to eat at the Master's Table.

SPIRITUAL ARTICLES

Reflection from *The Prologue* for Sept. 21/Oct. 4 by St. Nikolai Velimirovic

If only we begin with the firm intention to live according to God's law, we need not be afraid of any assaults by unreasonable men. For he who truly begins to live according to God's law finds that all things done to him by men happen for his benefit, and to the glory of God. One especially need not fear being compelled to move from a place that he loves to a place that he doesn't care for. Instead of empty fear and fruitless lamentation, it is better to seek out God's intention for us. What harm did the evil actions of Joseph's brothers do to him? Did not his involuntary departure to Egypt glorify him, save his brothers from famine, and create the necessary conditions for all the wondrous things God worked through Moses in Egypt and in the wilderness? The pagans and heretics often drove Orthodox Christians into barbarian regions. What did they accomplish by that? Did they destroy Orthodoxy? No—rather, they strengthened it even more in the souls of the persecuted, and spread it among the barbarian peoples. The evil heretic Lucius exiled the glorious Macarius, with several Tabennisiot ascetics, from Egypt to a barbarian island, where the entire population worshiped idols. But by the teachings and example of these holy men, the entire populace of the island was soon baptized. That island was later renamed the "Island of Repentance."

1. The Holy Apostle Quadratus

Quadratus, one of the Seventy, was a disciple of the Great Apostles. He preached the Gospel in Athens and was at first bishop of Athens after St. Publius, and afterward bishop of Magnesia. Quadratus was highly educated in secular wisdom, and rich in the grace of the Holy Spirit. His biographer says of him: *He was as the morning star among the clouds* (Sirach 50:6). The clouds were the darkness of Hellenic paganism, without the light of piety. The Holy Apostle Quadratus, through the word of God, shone upon the Hellenes as a great light, illuminating the darkness, destroying the foul sacrifices, crushing the idols, and destroying the demonic temples by his prayer. However, darkness always hates the light, and the pagans hated holy Quadratus. First they stoned him, as once the Jews did St. Stephen. Then they threw him into prison and gave him no bread until he gave up his holy soul, and went to dwell in the Kingdom of Christ, his God.

St. Quadratus wrote an Apologia for Christianity and gave it to Emperor Hadrian. This Apologia had such an effect on the pagan emperor that he ordered that Christians not be persecuted without specific cause. St. Quadratus suffered in about the year 130. He is buried in the city of Magnesia, where he suffered.

2. The Hieromartyrs Hypatius, Bishop of Ephesus, and Andrew the Presbyter

Both Hypatius and Andrew were born in Lycia, and were friends from childhood. When they matured, both of them dedicated themselves wholeheartedly to the service of God—Hypatius as a strict monk and ascetic, and Andrew as a priest among the people and a preacher of God's word. Because of their great virtues, Hypatius was consecrated bishop of Ephesus, and Andrew was ordained a presbyter. Both suffered martyrdom under the reign of the iconoclast Emperor Leo

the Isaurian. After horrible tortures for holy Orthodoxy they were beheaded in 730, and passed from this transitory life to life eternal.

3. Saint Dimitri, Bishop of Rostov

St. Dimitri's life is celebrated on October 28, but today we commemorate the finding of his miracle-working relics in 1752.

4. The Synaxis of the Saints of the Monastery of the Kiev Caves

The blessed work of asceticism begun by the industrious and great God-pleaser Anthony grew throughout the centuries like a fruitful olive tree. The numerous saints who shone as stars in Anthony's Caves are each celebrated on their own day. Today, however, the whole assembly of them is commemorated together and called upon by the faithful for aid.

HYMN OF PRAISE

The Holy Apostle Quadratus
St. Quadratus, like the morning star,
Shone forth the light of the Holy Gospel,
Shone forth rays through the thick darkness,
And grace upon empty hearts.
Quadratus dispelled the confusion of men's thoughts,
Illumining the forebodings in men's hearts,
Illumining them with the light of Christ,
And enlightening the world with Christ's wisdom.
Unbelievers converted to the Most-high God,
And received cruel wounds for Christ.
To Hadrian, the persecutor of the Cross,
Quadratus wrote a great defense
With the eloquence and the skill of the Hellenes
And the simplicity of Christian truth.
Quadratus succeeded: the emperor was persuaded
To protect the Holy Church from evil.
O Quadratus, Christ's disciple,
Wise defender of the Holy Church,
In word and deed, you were God's servant—
With unfading glory, you are now crowned!
To you, we Christians pray fervently:
Help us, O holy Apostle!
Help us to overcome misfortunes,
And to endure all sufferings for Christ.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

For **Continual Education in Liturgy and Theology**, we recommend the following article:

<http://www.westsrbdio.org/Theology/SymbolismandRealisminOrthodoxWorship.pdf>

We will offer the same article here in sections on a weekly basis; today is Part IV & V.

Symbolism and Realism in Orthodox Worship

IV. Iconic symbolism in worship

Given that iconic symbolism in the Liturgy is, as we have seen, a matter of personal presence and not of natural presence, nature participates in it only in a secondary way and to the degree that it is hypostatized in the person. Thus place, time, matter, colors, speech, smell, hearing, etc., are used in symbolism; not, however, as the source of the symbol—the sources are always personal and historical-eschatological—but as borrowings to express the personal presence. Let us look at some examples.

The color red naturally suggests blood. It is thus natural for it to be used symbolically, for instance for clerical vestments on feasts of the martyrs. Indeed, it has become the practice in the Church of Russia to use this symbolism, and the same can be seen also among some Greek priests. Theologically, this means that the symbolism has its source in nature, not in history or in the person. It is consequently very close to pagan symbolism, and to the representation of Christ as a lamb forbidden by the Quinisext Council. The distinctions are subtle, but important. If the color white is used as a symbol of purity, then we have a symbolism which is pagan in inspiration. If it is used because that is how Christ is described at the Transfiguration, or the angels at the empty tomb, etc.—in other words, in reference to history and to persons—then the source of the symbolism is not some property of nature but a personal, historical event. But not even in this case can the color be binding, because iconic representation is not simply historical, but eschatological.

The veneration of icons, the recognition of supernatural properties in holy relics, sacred vessels and objects, and so forth can become forms of paganism, if these objects are regarded as possessing these properties in their *nature* and not in the personal presence of the saint with whom they are connected.¹ It is in consequence a dangerous view (shared

¹ “I do not venerate matter, but the Creator of matter,” John of Damascus, *op. cit.*, 1.16. Similarly Theodore the Studite, *op. cit.*, 3.4 (11): “The image is with the archetype, and with the archetype the image is present and is seen and venerated. It is not at all that the essence becomes identical, but the likeness becomes one, and in respect of the likeness there is one unified veneration toward both, *not divided according to the difference of natures*” (PG 99.433). The same Father is still clearer at other points in his *Antirrheticus*: “Nor is the nature of the icon venerated, even though the person depicted is seen in it. And yet *in respect of the identity of the hypostatic likeness*, the veneration is identical, in accordance with the single, complete similarity between the two” (3.4 (7), PG 99.432). “Inasmuch as the icon is similar to the prototype, so it partakes in all the veneration relating to the prototype; it does not take with it the material in which it is exhibited for veneration. For this is the nature of an

by many Orthodox) that the divine energies somehow reside in the nature of these sacred objects, if we do not simultaneously stress the *personal* character of the divine energies. The divine energies are always *hypostatic*, and what sanctifies is the personal presence of the saint and not the physical contact of the object with the divine energies (impersonally and in themselves). I consider that the theology of divine energies, if it is not clearly linked with that of hypostatic energies² and generally with the notion of the person, can lead straight to paganism.

But the iconic symbolism in our worship is not concerned only with things and objects. All the *movements* and *actions* in worship are also icons and imagings, together with *those who perform them*. We shall confine ourselves to the Divine Eucharist, since this is the epicenter of all worship and it is here above all that the question of symbolism is decided.

The Divine Eucharist is not just one thing, one object, the “holy things” (the precious Gifts changed into the Body and Blood of Christ). It is an action, a work, a *function* [the everyday meaning of *λειτουργία* in Greek—*Transl.*]. And this point is decisive for the notion of symbolism. All the patristic commentaries on the Divine Eucharist, from Maximus to Cavasilas, approach the Divine Eucharist as a *liturgy*, a *synaxis* and an *image*.³ In the Divine Liturgy, everyone and everything is an image of something: the church building represents the space of the Kingdom of God, with Christ the King surrounded by the saints. The bishop represents Christ seated on the throne, as he will be in his Kingdom. The priests represent the Apostles who surround the bishop Christ on the *synthronon* [σύνθρονον, a raised seat in the apse with places for the bishop and priests—*Transl.*]. The deacons represent the angels who, as “ministering spirits sent forth to serve” (Heb. 1:14), move between the people and the clergy. The people gathered together in one place and bringing the gifts (bread, wine, oil, etc.) express the scattered people of God, which in the Kingdom of God will come together around Christ and, as the crown of creation, will bring with them the whole of the material world to be sanctified and saved as well. And all this iconic symbolism is not a static tableau but a movement in time, containing within it the historical time of salvation. Thus the bishop as another Christ does not simply sit on the throne; he *comes*. His entrance into the church is a great liturgical event (though who is aware of this?⁴) because it images the coming of

icon, that it is identified with the prototype according to its likeness to it, but *differentiated* according to the principle of its essence” (3.4 (6)).

² The significance of the hypostatic character of the divine energies in the theology of St. Gregory Palamas is demonstrated in the doctoral thesis of S. Yiangezoglou, *Communion in Deification. Christology and Pneumatology in the Theology of St. Gregory Palamas* (Thessaloniki, 1995; in Greek).

³ In contrast to modern academic theology, Orthodox included, which sees as the central and virtually exclusive theme of the Divine Eucharist the Lord’s words of institution and the change in the Gifts (cf. the accurate criticisms of A. Schmemmann, *The Eucharist*, pp. 30ff.), ancient commentators on the Liturgy see the Eucharist principally as a *Synaxis* (a technical term for the Eucharist in Sts. Maximus, Germanos, Anastasios of Sinai, *et al.*), and make the *whole* of its ritual and symbolism a subject for theological examination.

⁴ Either through ignorance of the enormous significance of this matter or from ill-conceived simplicity and “humility,” some of the bishops of our Church today, when they are going to celebrate the Liturgy, do not come into the church by the main entrance where the clergy and people await them, but by the “back door” of the altar, almost unnoticed, there to vest and come out at the Great Doxology in Matins, so that they can go into the altar once again at the Little Entrance. This totally destroys the meaning of the Entrance, which for the Fathers of the

Christ into the world at both his first and his Second Coming, and his reception by the clergy and people at the entrance of the church is the reception of Christ: “Come, let us worship and fall down before Christ. . . .” All the ancient commentators on the Liturgy see the Liturgy as an image. More than all the others, St. Maximus sees everything that is performed as an image of the Kingdom. After the readings and the closing of the doors once the catechumens withdraw, everything from then on images future events of the Kingdom: the Creed represents our eternal thanksgiving for all that God has done for our salvation. The kiss of peace represents the eternal mingling of souls in the communion of the Kingdom, etc.⁵ Later commentators give greater weight to the imaging of events in Christ’s earthly life, and thus the eschatological orientation of liturgical symbolism is gradually attenuated.⁶ Nicholas Cabasilas, influenced by the climate of his age, begins already to think in scholastic terms, making the Eucharistic Anaphora an image of the sacrifice of Christ,⁷ which earlier had been placed at the Proskomide, and earlier still (Theodore of Mopsuestia)⁸ at the preparation of the Gifts before the Great Entrance. Prior to Cabasilas, Germanos of Constantinople and Theodore of Andida, especially the first,

early Church had a vital theological significance. As to the related question of the bishop’s vesting outside the altar and not entering the altar before the Little Entrance, see our comments in “The Eucharist and the Kingdom of God,” Part I, *Sourozh*, No. 58, 11.

⁵ See Maximus the Confessor, *Mystagogy*, 8ff.: “The first entry of the bishop into the holy church during the sacred synaxis is a type and image of the first coming of the Son of God, our Savior Jesus Christ, into this world through the Incarnation. After this coming, his ascent and restoration to heaven and to his throne above the heavens is figured by the entry of the bishop into the sanctuary and his ascent to the priestly throne. . . . The divine readings of the most sacred books indicate the divine and blessed wills and intentions of God All-holy. . . . The spiritual enjoyment of the divine chants signifies the vivid delight of the divine blessings. . . .” From the moment of the reading of the Gospel, which images “the end of this world,” with the dismissal of the catechumens and the closing of the doors, we find ourselves in the space of the Kingdom which is to come, where everything that is performed symbolically expresses things to come, our eschatological communion in the blessed life of the Trinity through our adoption as sons. Thus the Eucharist becomes an icon of the Kingdom of God and a foretaste of joy and gladness (cf. Acts 2:46).

⁶ For more detail see H.-J. Schultz, *The Byzantine Liturgy: Symbolic Structure and Faith Expression*, trans. Matthew J. O’Connell (New York: Pueblo Publishing Co., 1986), especially pp. 184ff.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 191.

⁸ See R. Taft’s exceptionally interesting work *The Great Entrance: A history of the transfer of gifts and other pre-anaphoral rites* (Rome: Pontificium Institutum Studiorum Orientalium, 1978), especially pp. 35ff. A point of great theological interest to come out of Taft’s study, and earlier that of Gregory Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy* (London: Dacre Press, 1945), pp. 288ff., is that in the time of Theodore of Mopsuestia (d. 428), the entrance with the Gifts images the procession with Christ *already sacrificed* (during the Preparation?), going to be buried on the Holy Table. “This will eventually lead,” Taft comments, “in the Byzantine tradition at least, to the interpretation of the Liturgy as culminating in the Resurrection from a passion or sacrifice accomplished before the Liturgy has even begun” (p.37). The theological problems posed in this case are significant. Clearly in the East, the moment of the Anaphora does not seem always to have been identified with the sacrifice on the Cross, as happened in the West (and in modern Orthodox theology). This explains why for Maximus and other Byzantine writers, the actions following the Great Entrance image events of the Resurrection and the Kingdom, and not of Golgotha. This is most likely the explanation for the popular reverence traditionally shown at the Great Entrance, at which, according to the Cherubic Hymn, we receive “the King of all.” (The reading ὑποδεξόμενοι, “about to receive,” instead of ἔχοντες, “having received,” by which many people try to solve the problem, is of little help, since we are dealing with a reception taking place *at that moment.*)

still largely echo Maximus, but the trend of iconic symbolism is clearly getting ever further away from eschatology, whether in the direction of a correspondence between the earthly and the heavenly, or toward the representation of past events, though always those of the New Testament. All these strands are somehow synthesized in the work of Symeon of Thessaloniki, who borrows from Maximus, Germanos and Theodore, composing a detailed symbolic interpretation of the church buildings, as well as the rites performed in them and the ministers performing these rituals. Symeon's works bears witness to how thoroughly iconic symbolism had permeated Orthodox liturgical life toward the end of the Byzantine era. But what remains of all this today?

V. A look at the situation today

If we take a look at the state of affairs in the Orthodox Church today, what we observe is, generally speaking, as follows:

1. The form of the Liturgy and all the services is preserved with almost complete faithfulness and exactitude. The centuries of Turkish domination were a time of conservatism. Thanks to this period, the Divine Liturgy has come down to us basically as it took shape in Byzantium. There were just some small changes, as the symbolism of the emperor's participation in worship was transferred initially to the Patriarch and then to all bishops.

2. Even from Byzantine times, changes had begun which were later consolidated and still apply regarding matters which had an indirect and destructive influence on the iconic symbolism of the Liturgy:

(a) The *skeuophylakion* [σκευοφυλάκιον, in which holy vessels and vestments were kept—*Transl.*] disappeared as a special building or compartment of the church, with the result that the bishop and the other clergy now vest inside the altar, and thus the Little Entrance with its important symbolism disappears. For the same reason, the Great Entrance has essentially been done away with too, since now everything begins in the sanctuary and comes back to the sanctuary in a circular movement. The disappearance of the Entrances destroyed the iconic symbolism, depriving it of the linear movement from history to the last times and thus reinforcing the imagery of "place" [i.e., earthly Liturgy as an image of heavenly Liturgy—*Transl.*], already present in the Areopagite and later commentators on the Liturgy.

(b) The distinction between episcopal and presbyteral Liturgies, which was marked in the earliest centuries (second-fourth centuries), disappeared (cf. already Symeon of Thessaloniki). The result was that the notion of the bishop as icon of Christ was gradually lost from the Liturgy, and the episcopal Liturgy became simply more solemn and cluttered with pointless rubrics. Together with this the *synthronon* gradually fell into disuse, and the "stall" was made into the bishop's throne; whereas even in the sixteenth century (cf. Hubert, *Archieratikon*) this was simply a seat next to the choir (cf. the term χοροστασία, lit. "standing at the choir," to denote the bishop's presence at the service) which the bishop used when he attended church at Vespers or at Matins before celebrating the Liturgy. With the loss of the *synthronon*, the iconic symbolism of the Kingdom of God in the Divine Liturgy was also lost.

3. Under the influence of the Enlightenment, which gradually ate its way into the Orthodox Church too, the iconic ontology broke down almost totally and was replaced by

rationalism and individualism. The two last are incompatible with iconic ontology, because this ontology is predicated upon relatedness and the way one thing refers to another, transcending individualism and making the person the ontological category. Thus iconic imagery became symbolism of a psychological kind, and for rationalistic thought a purely metaphorical notion. To regard the bishop as an image of Christ became pious naiveté and nonsense, since you know very well that *as an individual* he is a human being with any number of imperfections and sins; to venerate icons and relics became something like superstition and magic. So we Orthodox have come to the point of not knowing what to do with our Liturgy and our Tradition. Those who kiss the icons or the priest's hand do it out of habit, without knowing why, and under the mocking gaze of those who know better—and there are plenty of those in this Age of Enlightenment!

4. Again, under the influence of pietism, which has also corroded our Orthodox people as an offshoot of the Enlightenment, iconic ontology has been replaced by the *ontology of qualities* and the *psychology of the inner man*, with the result that liturgical symbolism is virtually useless, since the purpose of the Liturgy is not to participate in the communion of the last times, but to create moral examples useful to society or to serve the religious needs of man, who is looking for “peace,” “prayerfulness,” and so forth. The sermon is considered so important as a source of edification that it is transferred to the time of Communion, thus making havoc of the entire eschatological image presented by the Liturgy. Vestments are simplified to be more humble (“moral perfection” demands it). Simple, humble country chapels are preferred to light-filled cathedrals as being more prayerful. The apostolic and biblical readings are not chanted but read like ordinary texts, so as to become comprehensible to human reason.⁹ Episcopal liturgies are only for feasts, etc., etc. Certainly there are still people—and many of them—who love the Church's feasts and flock to celebrate them, as well as little old ladies—fortunately, there are still plenty of these too—who kiss priests' hands, touch their vestments to receive grace, kiss the icons and holy relics with a faith that is almost “magical,” and generally preserve the traditions with piety. If they do not fall victim to wily clerics, these people are the only leaven, the little leaven available to us to preserve and restore iconic symbolism, purifying it from such magical tendencies as may exist. But in order for this to happen, we theologians and clergy have to rediscover the lost meaning of iconic ontology. A

⁹ The question of whether scriptural readings in the Divine Liturgy should be chanted or simply read should not be divorced from the approach to the Divine Eucharist, eschatological or otherwise. Reading a text with a view to teaching and moral edification is radically different from reading it in a spirit of *doxology*. In the first case, the words are *grasped* and *comprehended* or “taken possession of” by human reason. In the second case, the words “broaden out” (hence the chanting) so that they “grasp” and “take possession of” human reason. It is obvious that this second sort of reading (the doxological) flies in the face of rationalism, which demands that human reason should “take possession of” the truth. It is no accident that the demands for plain reading of scriptural texts arise at a time when the ambient cultural atmosphere is rationalistic, and the Church, having lost her awareness of the eschatological nature of the Liturgy, has turned it into a vehicle for teaching and edification, which naturally obliges her to undertake innovations such as plain reading of the scriptural lessons so that they are better “understood”—transferring the sermon from after the Gospel to before communion, when the church is full (so that more people can be *taught*), and similar—not to mention the grave danger in plain reading of a subjective element creeping into the delivery. This is a danger far more serious than the one usually remarked, that of the reader showing off his musical and vocal skill to the detriment of the meaning of the text when readings are chanted. It is obvious that the Church ought to train readers in the proper way to chant the scriptural lessons, rather than proceeding to abolish this practice.

return to the Fathers without recovering the meaning of liturgical symbolism will get us nowhere; for in the Orthodox Church, the *lex credendi* has no meaning without the *lex orandi*. Only the rediscovery of iconic ontology will save us from both the paganism and the rationalism that lurk in our midst, each in its own way threatening the iconological symbolism of our Liturgy.

The End