

Who Celebrates the Divine Liturgy & Where do They Celebrate?

Theme

Who

Bless, Master

Christ the Master

The Servants of the Lord

Concelebration

Where

The Kingdom of God

The Cross and the Gospel

The Holy Trinity

Outline

Text

Scripture References¹

Matthew 18.20

1 Corinthians 2.6–8

Hebrews 8.1–2

Quote

When Thou didst fulfill Thy dispensation for our sakes, uniting the terrestrials with the celestials, Thou didst ascend in glory, O Christ our God, inseparable in space, but constant without separation, and crying unto Thy beloved, I am with you, and no one shall be against you.

—Hymn for the Ascension

It is because through the Incarnation of the Lord that humanity first learned God was three Persons, and the Mystery which is being performed is centered in the Incarnation of the Lord, so that from the very beginning of the Divine Liturgy, the Trinity must shine forth and be proclaimed.

—St Nicholas Cabasilas on why the opening Blessing glorifies the threefold nature of God and not his unity.

¹ References from the Greek Bible; differing Hebrew Bible references are noted in parentheses.

The Opening Proclamation

Lifting his orarion [stole] with the three fingers of his right hand, the deacon says aloud:

Deacon: Bless, Master.

The priest kisses the Gospel Book, lifts it with both hands, and lowers it, making with it the sign of the cross over the antiminsion [altar cloth] and saying with the fear of God:

Priest: Blessed is the kingdom of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit,
now and ever and unto ages of ages.

People: Amen.

The priest replaces the Gospel Book on the antiminsion.

Scriptures

Matthew 18.20 ESV

For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them.

1 Corinthians 2.6–8 ESV

Yet among the mature we do impart wisdom, although it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to pass away. But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. None of the rulers of this age² understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

1 Corinthians 3.9 ESV

For we are God's fellow workers³. You are God's field, God's building.

Ephesians 5.15–21 ESV

Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.

Hebrews 8.1–2 ESV

Now the point in what we are saying is this: we have such a high priest, one who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, a minister⁴ in the holy places, in the true tent that the Lord set up, not man.

Hebrews 12.22–24 ESV

But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, and to the church⁵ of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

² Not the flesh and blood rulers, but the demonic powers behind the thrones. See Daniel 10.13 & 20, also Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28.

³ We get the word 'synergy' (working together) from this Greek word.

⁴ The Greek word here is λειτουργός, liturgist.

⁵ Footnote reading of ESV. Main text uses 'assembly'. Both translate Greek ἐκκλησία.