holy resurrection orthodox church

architectural thesis 1975-1976

c.a.p. - b.s.u.

victor c. chodora
philosophy & objectives
spaces & their requirements
relationships
site & financing
philosophy & objectives
THE CROSS

The Russian Orthodox Cross is very distinctive because it includes the lower bar (foot rest) at a diagonal, and an upper bar. The lower symbolizes the part played by the two thieves crucified with Christ. The thief on the right repented, thus the raised right side. The thief on the left side blasphemed Christ, thus was condemned and the lowered left side of the bar represents that, the extra cross bar at the top represents the inscription board which read "This is Jesus the King of the Jews" which was written in Greek, Latin & Hebrew.

THE START

Russian Orthodoxy got it's start in the city of Kiev in 987. That was the year in which Tsar Vladimir was baptised, and ordered all his subjects to become baptized. Russian Orthodoxy was at first only a branch of Greek Orthodoxy until the fall of Constantinople. After the fall of Constantinople, Tsar Ivan III took control over the Church. The rulers of Russia kept control of the church making many reforms. The Russian Orthodox Church exist today in Russia, but is forced to declare Soviet Communism as their supreme authority. The Russian Orthodox Church outside Russia has it's head in the Metropolitan Anastasius of New York City, and it is free of Communist domination.

BASIC BELIEFS

Orthodox missionaries first goal was to translate the Holy Book into the native language.
Tradition in Orthodox Church is dynamic & a living experience of the Holy Spirit in the present.
Only the Church has the authority to interpret the Bible, and the followers accept and understand the Bible by the Churches interpretation.
The Russian Orthodox Church has seven sacraments or Sacred Mysteries, they are:

- **Baptism**, which requires no permanent place in the church. A small font is usually brought out of storage into the church for the service.
- **Confirmation** (Christmation), this also has no special design considerations. This is done in the front of the church between the sanctuary & seating.
- **Eucharist** (Communion), this sacrament is done in the area immediately in front of the pulpit. Babies and small children are brought forward to receive communion.
- **Confession**, this sacrament requires the penitent stand in front of a small desk on which the Book of the Gospel & the Cross are placed. The Priest stands at the penitent's side and acts as a consultant rather than a judge.

HOLY RESURRECTION ORTHODOX CHURCH
Holy Unction, is a sacrament done at the sick person's house. It is very rarely done in church. If it is it requires no special design considerations. Ordination, this sacrament will most likely not be applicable to a church of my size. The sacrament needs no special design considerations, it is usually done within the nave of the church.

Marriage, is better known as crowning in Eastern Church. Most of this sacrament is carried out in the middle of the church. The bride and bridegroom are solemnly led to the middle of the church by the Priest where the crowning takes place. After the reading of the Epistle and the Gospel and the recitation of the Lord's Prayer the bride and bridegroom drink wine from the same cup, then the Priest leads them by the hand three times around the pulpit.

The Orthodox Church considers itself visible and invisible. The idea of the visible is from it's founder who became flesh and established the Church. The invisible part is for it's Lord, which is it's communion with Him by faith. Major emphasis is given to the Incarnation the Divinity of Christ.

CHURCH GOVERNMENT

The Head of the Church is Christ, but the clergy are His representatives of the Church on Earth. The ranking is as follows:

- Priest have authority over their local Synod.
- Bishops have authority over a diocese or geographical area.
- The Ecumenical Council is the highest visible authority. This is a full meeting of all Bishops of all Orthodox communities.
- Deacons are assistants to the Bishops of Priest during services and sacraments.

The bishops of the Orthodox Church are of equals among themselves, but hold rank according to years of service. The older Bishops are called Archbishops and Metropolitans. Patriarch is the highest rank of Priesthood. Deacons and Priest can be married, but Bishops and high ranks cannot be married.

PREVIOUS BUILDINGS

The churches in the past have had domed roofs known as cupolas. The cupola and the cross of the Russian Cross on top are representative of Christ being Head of the Church.
The building is orientated on an East-West axis. The altar looks toward the East, where the first Christain Church originated. At the Western end the entrance is located.

As a rule the Eastern Orthodox Church does not allow the use of an organ.

THE CONGREGATION

The congregation of the Holy Resurrection Church got its start in 1970. The congregation consists of approximately 40 families with an average of 4 people per family. These families are of middle to upper middle income level and live in the northwestern suburbs of the Chicago Metropolitan area. The size of the congregation has remained fairly constant over the last few years. A valid reason for the lack of growth, is the lack of a building of its own. The Church has been using the cafeteria of a high school every Sunday morning for the past 5 years.

The congregation is a fairly young one. The major portion of the adults are in their early 30's, are married and have children. The greater percentage of the children are under the age of 10.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The users of the church have certain needs and wants which they desire the building to have. These are general goals and objectives:

To have an atmosphere in which one can worship God.
To have an atmosphere in which one can learn the teachings of God.
To have a building which respects the site and the neighboring buildings.
To have a building which is easily maintained.
To have a building which is easily recognized as a House of God, in this case a Russian Orthodox Church.

HOLY RESURRECTION ORTHODOX CHURCH
THE SANCTUARY (ALTAR AREA)

The sanctuary is the space where the Divine Liturgy is conducted. It is separated from the nave by the Iconostas. Behind the Iconostas are a series of spaces which are different functions throughout the services. Listed below are the elements of the sanctuary area, and their purposes and requirement:

The Iconostas or Iconostasis, this is a screen wall which has images of Christ & The Virgin plus the more important saints painted on panels known as Icons. These Icons have a definite order to their arrangements. The Iconostas has a set of middle doors which are known by several different names; Royal Doors, Holy Gates, Middle Double Doors, or King's Doors. This set of doors can only be used by Bishops, Priests, or Deacons, and only at certain times during the liturgy.

The Altar, Holy Table or Prestol, this is a table located in the center of the sanctuary behind the Iconostas. The alter is usually made of wood, and fastened together with wooden pegs. The alter is sometimes covered by a canopy supported by 4 columns. The alter is draped with different cloths, and has the Tabernacle and the Orthodox cross on it. The altar's size is 5'-6" to 8'-0" long 28"-48" wide and 4'-6" high.

The Oblation Table, Side Table or Prothesis, this is the table used to prepare the elements to be used in the liturgy. The table is located on the left side of the sanctuary. Table size depends upon the vessels and sacred objects used on it.

5 Sacred Vessels
(1) The Paten-a small round dish on a low stand.
(2) Chalice-the cup in which the wine and water is poured.
(3) The Star-two bent strips of metal crossed over each other & put on the Paten. Represents the Star of Bethlehem.
(4) The Lance-spearshaped knife used to cut the loaf. Represents the Lance which pierced Jesus.
(5) The Spoon-to give the Holy Communion to the people.
WORK SACRISTY, this is where flowers are arranged; and it also serves as storage for altar cloths, ceremonial utensils, candles and candlesticks. This space should have enough space for a sink and storage cupboards or closets. It should have space for a min. of 3 people to work.

The Vesting Room, this is the room which the Priest, or any visiting Bishop or Deacon robes himself. There should be space for storage of vestments; which could be either flat storage or hung storage. If hung, the vestments should be placed no closer than 5 feet. There should be enough space for 2 people to robe, and have a toilet located close by.

ALTAR BOY ROBING ROOM, this space may be combined with the vesting room. It has the same requirements as does the vesting room. The only difference it should have space enough for 4 people to robe.
The nave is the main part of the church. It is where the people gather to worship. It is the space in which most of the activities at the church are conducted. The elements, the purpose and requirements of the nave are:

**Seating for worshipers.** The arrangement of the seating should provide a continuity between the congregation and the Priest. It should also unite the members of the congregation with each other.

There should be a center aisle at least 5'-0" wide to perform the marriage ceremony. Side aisles are desirable and a rear aisle is mandatory. Square foot requirements are 12 square feet per person. There should also be a minimum of 10'-0" between the 1st row of seating and the altar area. Seating should not exceed 1½ times the width.

**Choir.** The choir should not be placed in a position as to disrupt the congregation, yet should remain an integral part of the congregation. Seating requirements are the same as those for the congregation, except for a wider ledge for service books and a second shelf for permanent book storage. Choir seating should be 8-10% of the congregation.
Choir Rehearsal Room, this room could be part of the robing room. It should have the following:

- Sound control (proofing)
- Toilets nearby
- If separate from robing room, should be located nearby.

Pulpit of Ambon, this is where the Gospel is read. It is located in the area immediately in front of the Royal Doors of the Iconostasis. The confessional should be placed somewhere near the pulpit. The floor under it is usually elevated 2 to 3 steps.
- It has a sloped adjustable height.
- A width of 24"-36"
- A depth of 16"

THE NARTHEX

The Narthex is the main entrance into the church. This is also the space reserved for the catechumens and penitents. This space contains the following elements and requirements:

- The entrance should have a minimum of 2 square feet per seat of the nave.
- Coat storage should also be provided in this space.
- The confessional could be located in this area.
- Should be able to get to any part of the church from here.

CLASS ROOMS

The class rooms should provide an environment which is conducive to learning. They should be equipped with educational equipment needed for that particular age group. The class rooms can be divided into a minimum of three age groups:

Beginners & Primary, ages 0+.8 years old, requirements for them are:
- 22 square feet per student
- A toilet nearby
- Located on street level or close to it
- Tables should be provided for them

Junior Department, ages 9 to 13 years old. Requirements for them are:
- 20 square feet per student
- Assembly area & classrooms
- Tables
- Location on any level
High School Department, ages 14-17 years old. Requirements are:
13 square feet per student
Assembly & classroom
Location any level

OFFICES

The offices should be placed somewhere near the Narthex so that newcomers and people coming to do business have direct access to them. The offices in this area also makes it possible to supervise the comings and goings of visitors to the church and consists of the following:

A study for the Priest with a desk, chairs, bookshelves and maybe a file. A vault might be placed in this area, also.

A reception area & general office for a secretary to work in. It should have a desk, typing station, chairs, bookshelves, & files.

An area for any staff. This could consist of 2 desks with chairs & files & bookshelves.

The church library could also be placed somewhere within the office complex.

MEETING ROOM

The meeting room can be a multipurpose room. It might be an existing room which isn't being used. The only requirements for the meeting room are:

Has some type of table and chairs.
Can seat a minimum of 15 people.
A minimum of 10 square feet per person should be allowed.

HALL

The hall is a space which can be used for parties, wedding receptions, recreation or large congregational gatherings. It is a general purpose space for social functions. The space should meet the following requirements:

Should accommodate about 150 to 200 people.
Allow 10 square feet per person. This allows for table and chairs.
Storage for tables and chairs and other equipment.
Kitchen area should be provided.
DAY CARE CENTER (OPTIONAL-FUTURE)

This area should provide an environment in which young children (0-3) can be cared for while the parents are in church services, meetings, Sunday School, or any other church activity. The requirements are:

- 25 square feet per child
- Toilet with sink nearby
- Tables to change diapers & clean infants
- Located near the other classrooms
THE SITE

The site is located in Palatine Township, a northwestern suburb of Chicago. The site is about 500 ft. southeast of the intersection of Dundee Rd. (Illinois 68) and Quinton Rd.

The site is approx. 2 acres, with the possibility to add another acre on the east boundary of the site. The site has an 8 room ranch house with a 2½ car garage. There are also some small storage buildings on the site. The buildings are located on the western part of the site which is heavily wooded. Access to the site is off of Quinton Rd.

The area around the site is at present beginning to develop. New housing is developing west and south of the site. Development to the north is prohibited by a Forest Preserve, and to the east by a golf course & recreation center.

The site is in a location which is in general area where most of the Congregation tend to live. This with the increase of housing in the area tend to make this a fairly centrally located site.

FINANCING

The financing for the purchase of the land will come in the form of a loan. The Church has to provide 15% of the cost initially.

The new Church building will be financed from fund drives. The fund drives will be conducted in the Chicago land area by this church, and will aided by several churches in the Eastern part of the United States.
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site analysis
1st concepts
1st Concepts

The concept behind these four illustrations was to centrally locate the Narthex, Office & Meeting Spaces, and to respect the Weeping Willow.

All four of these conceptual plans were successful in centrally locating the Narthex and the Office & Meeting Areas. Two of the concepts used them as a hub to connect the spaces. The other two have more of a linear connection. The more linear the connection, the more a courtyard or atrium began to develop in the main entrance.

The element which stopped me from further development of these & other concepts, was lack of knowledge in the religion by my design critics. They didn’t know enough about the religion to understand why certain spaces relate to each other. It was at this time I decided to describe a typical Sunday Service. I also took the opportunity to describe several special services, and to follow the paths of different users for various functions.
the users' paths
TYPICAL SUNDAY (THE ADULT'S PATH)

KEY TO USERS' PATHS

- - - - - ENTRANCE PATH
- - - - - ALTERNATE PATH
- - - - - LEAVING COMPLEX
- - - - - ALTERNATE PATH
- - - - - INTER COMPLEX MOVEMENT
- - - - - ALTERNATE PATH
- - - - - SPECIAL MOVEMENTS

HOME

CAR

PARKING LOT

NARTHEX

COFFEE AREA

MEETING ROOM

HAVE

OFFICE

OUTSIDE ACTIVITY

HOLY RESURRECTION ORTHODOX CHURCH
TYPICAL SUNDAY (THE CHILD'S PATH)

HOME -> CAR

PARKING LOT -> NARThEx -> NAVE

OUTSIDE ACTIVITY

CLASSROOM

HOLY RESURRECTION ORTHODOX CHURCH
INTERVIEW WITH THE PRIEST

HOLY RESURRECTION ORTHODOX CHURCH
WEDDING SERVICE (THE PATH OF THE GUEST)
FUNDAISING EVENT (THE DONOR)

HOME

CAR

PARKING LOT

HALL

NARTHEX

OUTSIDE ACTIVITY

HOLY RESURRECTION ORTHODOX CHURCH
TRASH PICK-UP

DUMP

TRUCK

PARISH HOUSE

PARKING LOT

HALL

NARTHEX

COFFEE AREA

OFFICE

MEETING ROOM

CLASSROOM

HOLY RESURRECTION ORTHODOX CHURCH
the typical & special services
KEY FOR TYPICAL & SPECIAL SERVICES

- CROSS
- TABLE
- ALTAR
- ICONOSTAS
- ROYAL DOORS
- SOUTHERN DOOR
- NORTH DOOR
- DOTTED LINE REPRESENTS CLOSED
- PEOPLE
- PEOPLE
- CHOIR

- PRIEST
- PRIEST WITH CENSOR
- PRIEST COMMUNICATING
- DEACON
- DEACON WITH CENSOR
- DEACON COMMUNICATING
- SERVER WITH CANDLE
- READER
- READER COMMUNICATING
- PEOPLE & CHOIR
- PEOPLE & CHOIR COMMUNICATING

HOLY RESURRECTION ORTHODOX CHURCH
Vespers - Represents God's plan in the Old Testament.
- Priest and Deacon (if one in the parish) are dressed in vestments.
- Priest censes the Holy Table and the Sanctuary.
- Deacon asks the priest to give his blessing.
- Priest gives blessing and invites the people to worship, & the choir sings verses of 104th Psalm.
- During the singing the priest censes the ikons and the people, deacon accompanies him with a candle.
- The Psalm describe the beautiful world which God had created for us.
- The open doors of the Sanctuary, the lights & incense, reminds us that man hasn't taken himself completely away from God.
The Great Litany "Ektenia"

- A series of petitions (prayers) to the Lord.
- The doors are closed, reminding us of the closing of the gates to Paradise.
- Deacon stands in front of the Royal Doors to recite the great litany.
- After each petition the choir replies: "Lord, have mercy."
- The reading of the great litany before the closed Royal Doors show the needs & troubles that came to man through his disobedience.
- After the great litany the choir sings verses out of the 1st three Psalms. They express the longing for the happiness lost through sin & the hope of salvation.
- The little litany follows, deacon still standing in front of the closed Royal Doors recites the litany (only one petition.) The little litany divides the different parts of the service and is said over and over often. The Choir sings verses from the Old Testament, after the little litany, to pt. to the lament & penitence of the sinful man & his prayer for God's help. Caniticles in honour of Sunday or the festival or Saint's day are added, these are called stichera.
- The last stihera praises the Mother of God (Theotokion).
- During the singing of the stichera, the deacon censes the Holy Table, the Sanctuary, ikonostasis, and the people.
The Evening Entrance and Hymn
- Represents the vision of the coming of Christ.
- The Royal Doors are opened after the last stichera.
- The deacon and the priest come from the north door and walk over to the Royal Doors. The deacon is carrying the censer & a server walks in front with a lighted candle.
- The deacon calls out "Wisdom Stand Upright". The priest makes the sign of the blessing, then the two pass silently through the Royal Doors into the sanctuary.
  This represents the vision of the coming of Christ.
  The congregation stands up with a steadfast mind and to thank God for His mercies ("Wisdom ----")
- The Choir sings the beautiful evening hymn to Christ.
The Prokeimenon & Parcemia

- The Prokeimenon - a short verse from Psalms before the reading of the lessons or the meaning of the festival. (Royal Doors closed) by the choir.

- The Parcemia - parable - refers to the prophecies and images of the event of the festival. The reading of lessons from the Old Testament on the eve of a festival (except Sunday). This is usually done by the priest.

The Fervent & Supplication Litanies

- The fervent "increased" is called so because the choir repeats "Lord, have mercy" 3 times after each petition. The petition is usually made by the Priest.

- The supplication litany, spiritual blessing is asked for.
- After each, petition the choir replies "Grant, O Lord."
- The Holy Mother of God and the Saints are commemorated at the end of each litany; this is to remind us that the Church in heaven and earth is one, & that the Saints of God, and especially the loving Mother of Jesus are always ready to help us with our prayers.
- Stichera (canticles) in honour of the day are sung after the litanies.

End of Vespers

- show us the promise of the coming of Christ in the Old Testament, and the fulfillment of that promise.
- After the stichera of the day, the reader recites the Nunc Dimittis of St. Simeon when he saw the infant Jesus in the Temple.
- Vespers end with the glad tidings of Christ's coming birth & the Arch angel's greeting.
- The Priest then gives the blessing, (on the eve of a festival the Troparion (canticle) for the day is sung instead.)
Matins

- Begin immediately after the blessing in Vespers, they continue the symbolic story where vespers left off.
- The reader stands in front of the closed Royal Doors and repeats 3 times the Angel's song at the Birth of Christ.
- He then reads the 6 Psalms, in which man pours out his soul to God. Man seeks his forgiveness and guidance and puts his trust in Him.
- During the reading of the last 3 Psalms, the priest comes from the Sanctuary, reading to himself 12 morning prayers for God's grace.
The Great Litany; The Hymn of Praise; The "Troparion" and "Cathesma"

- After the reading of the 6-Psalms, the deacon again prays for our needs in great litany.
- The hymn of praise to the Lord follows, and the Troparion of the day is sung (by the choir) These point to the mercies granted us by Christ's coming on earth.
- Then some Psalm are read, known as cathesma (a Greek word meaning-sitting") People are allowed to sit at this time. (this part is sometimes omitted).
- During the 1st part of the Martins, the church is dimly lit & the Royal Doors are closed. This reminds us of Christ's early years on earth. This is when the people hardly knew him, but wanted Him & groped in darkness for His light to revealed.
The Polyeileion—Glorifies Christ's resurrection, or the particular festival or Saint whose day it is. It is also the most solemn, joyful & bright part of the service.

Greek word meaning—much mercy & much oil, because we praise God's mercies & in the old days all oil lamps were lit in sign of joy.

- The Royal Doors are opened after the little litany, and the church is brightly lit. The deacon comes out of the Sanctuary with lighted candle. The priest follows with the censer. The choir sings the glad verses of Psalms 135-136.
- During the singing the priest with the deacon censes the Sanctuary & ikonatasis, then walk around the church censing all the icons and the people.
- On the eve of festivals the icons of the festival or of the Saint is placed in the middle of the church on a special desk (analogion), the Priest & Deacon cense it & sing a short "exaltation" (praise) in honour of the festival or Saint. The choir repeats it.
- The people are invited to "attend" by the deacon
- The choir sings the prokeimenon of the day
- The deacon prays that we may be worthy to hear the holy Gospel & attend with "wisdom & upright" (with a sober & attentive mind)
- The priest names the evangelist, the choir sings "Glory to Thee, O Lord, glory to Thee"
- The Priest then reads the Gospel in the Sanctuary. At Sunday Matins it is always about the resurrection & Christ's appearance to his disciples.
- At Sunday Matins the book of Gospels is carried from the Sanctuary to the middle of the church for the people to kiss. (The choir meanwhile sings a hymn of praise.)
- On festivals (not Sundays) the book of Gospels is not brought out of the Sanctuary. The people kiss the icon of the festival instead. The priest stands next to it & makes the sign of the cross on the forehead of the worshippers with holy oil. (reminds us of the ancient custom, sign of joy.)
- A petition is then sung, that by the prayers of the Holy Mother of God & the Apostles our All-merciful Lord may cleanse our many sins.
- The deacon recites a prayer for the Church, people & the world, to which the choir replies, "Lord, have mercy" 12 times.
- After all the people have kissed, the book of Gospels (or the icon), it is carried into the Sanctuary & the Royal Doors are closed.
Canon - The singing & reading of the canon (Greek word meaning "rule")

- A number of sacred odes in honour of Jesus Christ, His Holy Mother & His Saints
- Each ode consists of several verses & the 1st verse of each ode is called irmos (Greek word meaning "leak")
- The irmos links up all other verses which are composed on the same pattern. (9 odes in the canon)
- The little litany is said after the 3rd, 6th & 9th odes.
- At the end of the 8th ode the deacon comes from the Sanctuary w/censer & stand before the icon of the Holy Virgin, & exclaims: "Let us magnify in song the Birth-giver of God & Mother of Light."
- The deacon then censes the icon, the ikonostasis and the people. The choir sings the Magnificat.
The Song of Praise—Series of songs of praise to God & prayers for spiritual blessings.

- The choir sings verses of Psalms 148, 149 & 150. Verses on the subject of the day are sung between.
- The last canticle of praise is in honour of the Mother of God.

The Great Hymn of Glory

- Royal Doors are open. The priest is standing before the Holy Table, exclaims: "Glory to Thee Who hath shown us the Light." (When it was an all-night vigil, these words were said at 1st light of the sun rise.)
- The people reply with "Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth, good will among men," & they sang "the great hymn of glory." to the Holy Trinity with appeals for God's mercy to all men.
The Festival Litany ("Litya")

- On the eve of big festivals (not Sunday) at vespers when the stichera of the day is sung, the Royal Doors are opened.
- The priest and deacon with lighted candle walk to the end of the church, where a special litany is recited. (A custom from the early Church when penitents & unbaptized learners stood in the narthex & could not enter the church. This allowed them to take part in the common worship for a short time.)
- The litany consists of prayers for all Christians, rulers, bishops & clergy.
- Priest & deacon then move up to the middle of the church to a small table. There are 5 small loaves & little glasses with oil, wine & wheat. The priest blesses all of these & asked that they be multiplied throughout the world, he then walks up to the chancel & gives the blessing. (This is a reminder of the blessed bread, wine & oil which the early church distributed to the people to sustain them during the all night vigil.)
Divine Liturgy

- The greatest & holiest of all the church services Liturgy, when the Sacrament of the Holy Communion is celebrated.
  (Liturgy, Greek word means public worship)
- Also known as Eucharist which means thanksgiving, because of the Holy gifts of bread & wine are offered in thanksgiving for God's love & sacrifice for the world.
- Only a bishop or priest may celebrate the liturgy. It can be said every day of the year except during the Great Lent & a few other days. It cannot be said more than once a day by the same priest or on the same alter & corporal.
- Can be celebrated at any time between dawn & midday.
- The Liturgy consist of 3 parts: Preparation (Prokomidia) Liturgy of the Learners (catechumens), the Liturgy of the Faithful.
- The Preparation is called so because the faithful brought gifts of bread & wine to God in thanks or in prayer for themselves or others, living or dead. (The deacon received the gifts.) Today the bread & wine are supplied by the priest, but the faithful may still send special loaves with names for the priest to read before the consecration of the gifts. This unites all we want to be prayed for in the holy mystery of the Eucharist.
- The Eucharist is so great & awe inspiring, such a holy mystery, that the priest who celebrate it, must prepare himself before it takes place.
- He reads a special prayer the evening before, and fast till the Liturgy is over.
- When he comes to church in the morning the priest and the deacon pray before the Royal Doors, that God would bless & strengthen them & send them grace for their service. They then kiss the icons of the Savior & His Holy Mother, and bow to the people asking forgiveness for their sins. This is done because no one can approach the Holy Communion who is not at peace with all men or who bears a grudge against anyone.
- The priest & deacon then enter the Sanctuary & put on their vestments, reciting a verse of the Psalms with each part they put on. They also wash their hands as a sign of purity.
Preparation of the Gifts

- Priest goes to the Preparation table & takes one of the 5 loaves & marks it with the sign of the cross.
- Then with the spear cuts a cubic particle & lifts it out of the bread, while reciting the words of the prophet Isaiah about Christ.
- The particle represents the suffering Savior, whose emblem in the Old Testament was the Paschal Lamb, thus the calling of this particle the Lamb.
- The Lamb is laid in middle of the paten is lightly cut crosswise.
- The priest continues cutting out particles from all five loaves. Each loaf representing a Holy figure or group of figures.
- The priest then covers the paten & chalice with the small & large veils as a symbol that the glory of God covers & makes the world beautiful, & prays that God should cover us with His grace.
- The priest censes the Gifts 3 times in memory of the wise-men who brought gifts to the newborn Saviour.
- The priest thanks God for the Sacrament of the Eucharist, and asks Him to receive the gifts.
- This ends the preparation service.
- The reader in the chancel is reading aloud the 3rd & 6th Hours, to prepare the people's minds for learning the divine Liturgy.
- The service of preparation reminds us of Christ's birth
- Different parts of the service mean different things.
  + the veils represent Jesus' swaddling clothes or his winding sheet
  + the preparation table - the cave of Bethlehem & Golgotha
  + the paten - the manger & the tomb
  + the closed door represent the time Jesus prepared to sacrifice Himself for our sins, when He lived hidden & unknown to the world He came to save.
Liturgy of the Learners (Catechumens)

- This part consists of prayers, hymns & Bible lessons. This part is so named because the penitents & those who were preparing for baptism were allowed to be present.

Beginning of the Liturgy

- Deacon stands before closed Doors & says, "Sir, give the blessing." The priest from the Sanctuary replies, "Blessed be the Kingdom of the Father, the Son, & the Holy Spirit, now and forever, world without end." The choir sings "Amen"
- The deacon recites the great litany.
The Anthem of Praise

- The singing to God anthems of praise & thanksgiving for his mercies.
- The anthems are divided into 3 parts in honour of the Holy Trinity, with the little litany inbetween.

The Little Entrance

- Royal Doors open
  The priest hands the book of Gospels to the deacon, who raises it & carries it out through the north door. The priest follows & a server with a candle walks in front.
- They stand before the Royal Doors & the priest prays secretly, while the deacon says, "Wisdom Stand Upright."
- The priest says softly, "Blessed be the entrance...."
- The deacon makes the sign of the cross with book of Gospels, and they enter the Sanctuary.
- This represents Jesus' first coming as a Teacher.