

# the *Presbyter*



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## *President's Letter to the Presbytery*

January 17, 1996

My dear brothers in Christ:

I pray this issue of *The Presbyter* finds you and your families in good health and spirits. These past several months since our last issue of *The Presbyter* have been difficult ones for our Archdiocese. Aside from the issues surrounding the retirement of our beloved Archbishop Iakovos, to whom we owe such a tremendous debt of gratitude and respect, we also suffered the loss of other dedicated and respected clergymen and hierarchs. I speak of the sudden and tragic death of the Rev. Emmanuel Vasilakis in New York City, where he had traveled to speak on behalf of our Archdiocese; the death of a respected elder clergyman, the Rev. George Gallos; and the death of a humble servant of God, one of our Diocesan Bishops, His Grace, Bishop Philip of Atlanta. These untimely deaths bring into clear focus our own mortality and the ever increasing need to deepen our own spiritual lives in preparation for the inevitable. We are all terminal.... the only detail we cannot put our finger on is the hour. Let none of us be found unprepared and left out of the bridal chamber.

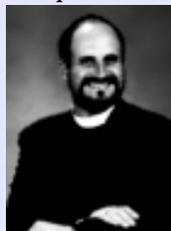
In addition to coping with the above, we must ready ourselves for the Clergy-Laity Congress which will be held in New York City this year. According to the Archbishop's communiqué announcing the Clergy-Laity Congress, this will be the last one His Eminence will preside over. I would, therefore, ask all brother priests to make a special effort to

be in New York this summer, together with their presbyteres and families. The Archdiocesan Presbyters Council, under the direction of the Rev. Paul Palesty, has planned a refreshing and inspiring program for all of us. Please watch for details in the mail and plan to be in New York until Friday of Congress week, when the clergy will have their last private meeting with His Eminence.

On behalf of the Archdiocesan Presbyters Council, I am pleased to inform you our proposal to Leadership 100 for funding of the Presbyters Council Benevolent Fund has been approved by His Eminence, Archbishop Iakovos and the Board of Trustees as a matching fund grant. Therefore, the Benevolent Fund will receive the amount of money up to \$50,000 to match what we are able to raise as a presbytery. This most important effort of assisting our brother clergy and their families when the need arises is now becoming a reality. We are indeed grateful to all of you who continue to send your donations for the Benevolent Fund.

Until we meet again, may our Lord bless your ministry in His vineyard and keep you in His care.

Rev. Christopher T. Metropulos  
President,  
Archdiocesan  
Presbyters Council  
and Pastor,  
St. Demetrios  
Church  
Ft. Lauderdale, FL



## *Ministry, Marriage and Family Life*

As a retired priest with 44 years in the ministry, the editors of *The Presbyter* asked me to offer brief advice, based on my experience, on the questions: "What should our priorities in ministry be? What did you find particularly effective in your ministry? How did you find a healthy balance for ministry and family time?"

In the following reflection, I shall concentrate on just one of the prime challenges facing the priest today: the importance of balance between ministry and family life. For a more comprehensive look at the priesthood I refer you to my recent book, *Reflections on the Priesthood*. St. John Chrysostom once said, "More stormy billows vex the soul of the priest than the gales which disturb the sea." Many of these storms in the priest's life center around his relationship with his wife and children.

## *In this Issue...*

**President's Letter to the Presbytery**

Rev. Christopher Metropulos

**Ministry, Marriage and Family Life**

Rev. Anthony Coniaris

**The Priesthood:**

**Contemporary and Classic Excerpts**

Rev. Alexander Schmemmann

**Liturgical Issues Committee Report**

Rev. Steven Tsihlis

Rev. Demetrius Dogias

Rev. Alkiviades Calivas

**Diocesan Synodes Reports**

## **EMBEZZLING TIME**

The priest who embezzles money to support the poor members of his congregation is at once dismissed and sent to prison; but the priest who embezzles time which belongs to his family in order to concern himself with the care of his congregation is considered exceptionally pious and dedicated. Each priest needs to look critically at the time he spends with his family and ask himself: "Am I embezzling time from my family? Another priest can replace me in my parish, but no one can replace me as a husband, father and priest in my own home!"

## **THE HARDEST THING IN THE WORLD**

A famous Protestant minister and professor of New Testament in Scotland, Dr. William Barclay, wrote toward the end of his life: "As I look back on more than 40 years of married life, I am astonished that the work of ministry does not destroy more minister's marriages. The minister will have the best and biggest room in his house for his study.

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### *Clergy spend their love on their parishioners*

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The minister sees less of his family than any member of his congregation does. He sees less of his children. He has to leave it to his wife to bring them up. Seldom can he have an evening out with his wife and, even when such an evening is arranged, something again and again comes to stop it. Demands to speak and lecture take him constantly away from home and, when he does come home, he is so tired that he is the worst company in the world and falls

asleep in his chair. As I come near to the end of my days, the one thing that haunts me more than anything else is that I have been so unsatisfactory a husband and a father. As the Song of Solomon (1:6) has it: "They made me a keeper of the vineyards; but my own vineyard I have not kept." When the pastoral epistles are laying down the qualifications for the presbyter, deacon and bishop, one of the unvarying demands is that "he must manage his own household well" (1 Timothy 3:4 & 3:12)—and for a minister that is the hardest thing in the world."

## **THE PARISH: A TASKMASTER**

Clergy and their spouses should be issued a warning that parish ministry is hazardous to marriage. The Rev. Roy M. Oswald says certain factors within the profession hamper a healthy marriage relationship. "Clergy spend their love on their parishioners and they get depleted," he said. "The spouse feels rejected and the rejection is so overwhelming because clergy are married to the church. A clergy spouse is up against a very alluring, tempting rival." His research shows that clergy feel their primary responsibility is to the church and their marriages are secondary.

"In essence, the pastor is having an affair with the church," said Terry Leib, who counsels clergy families and church professionals. "The spouse is angry because the pastor is never around," Leib said, "and the spouse functions as a single parent. A tremendous amount of guilt follows when the spouse asks 'How can I be angry? My spouse is doing the church's work.'"

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## *There's no time for a relationship with a family*

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"Pastors are givers—constantly in demand to meet the needs of others—and they feel guilty if they take the time for themselves or their families," said Dr. Paul W. Schubert. Some clergy put in 60 to 80 hours a week. "Seventy hours a week is seven 10-hour days," Oswald said. "With those hours, there's no time for a relationship with a family." Lieb said, "The issue of workaholicism runs through many of the cases I see. While the church does not affirm the behavior of alcoholics, it definitely does that of workaholics." No healthy relationship can thrive on neglect. One of the most neglected persons in the ministry is the clergy spouse.



## DECOMPRESSING

During the normal day, those who minister tend to build up an emotional head of steam that needs to be diffused if we are to function effectively. Some are tempted to make fun of the “cocktail hour” since it can be demonstrated that the cocktail hour is probably destructive overall. However, its motivation is valid. There are many ways to decompress without the aid of alcohol. If you like music, put on the headphones and escape for half an hour; or run, play games, coach a baseball team or do whatever helps you calm down and preserve your health and sanity.

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*A faithful priest must know how to manage his own household first*

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We create problems by not recognizing the emotional state in which most of us find ourselves between 4 and 6 o'clock in the afternoon. When a pastor comes home late in the afternoon and meets his wife, who has been home all day with the children, it is the tendency of both to immediately want to unload the burdens of the day. Unfortunately, this is not the time to unload anything. If two working spouses return home at the same time, similar situations may exist because of the needs of each and further conflicts may arise out of the competition. However you do it, it is important to learn how to calm down and how to cool off at the end of a trying day before you start communicating.

## COMMUNICATE WE MUST

But communicate we must! We must make time for it every day. If prayer, communicating with God, is important in one's spiritual life, communicating and spending time with one's wife and children is just as important for the well-being of our family, as well as our priesthood. Indeed, good family communication is an extension of prayer since it creates an environment of love and wholeness conducive to effective ministry.

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*Preserve your health and sanity*

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All of my years in the priesthood have taught me that the ingredients necessary for an effective ministry are not just prayer, study and caring for the church flock. These will all fail if we do not concentrate first on caring for our primary flock at home: our wife and children. Spending time with them, communicating, talking, going out to eat together, praying together, playing together, vacationing together is sacred time. Indeed, a faithful priest must know how to manage his own household first. And that is the hardest thing in the world. It is a task for which we will need to rely on God's wisdom and grace daily.

*Rev. Anthony Coniaris  
Pastor Emeritus,  
St. Mary's Church  
Minneapolis, MN*



## *The Priesthood* CONTEMPORARY & CLASSIC EXCERPTS

Centuries of “clericalism” (and one should not think of clericalism as a monopoly of the “hierarchical” and “liturgical” churches) have made the priest, the minister a *being apart*, a unique and specifically “sacred” vocation in the Church. This vocation is not only different from—it is indeed opposed to, all those that are “profane.” Such was, such still is the secret spring of sacerdotal psychology and training.

For centuries the clerical state was exalted as virtually a “supernatural” one and there is a slight connotation of mystical awe when a man says: “People should respect the clergy.” And if some day a science which has been long overdue—pastoral pathology—is taught in the seminaries, its first discovery might be that some “clerical vocations” are in fact rooted in a morbid desire for that “supernatural respect,” especially when the chances of a “natural” one are slim. Our secular world “respects” clergy as it respects cemeteries: both are needed, both are sacred, both are out of life.

But what both clericalism and secularism—the former being, in fact, the natural father of the latter—have made us forget is that to be *priest* is from a profound point of view, the most natural thing in the world. Man was created priest of the

world, the one who offers the world to God in a sacrifice of love and praise and who, through this eternal Eucharist, bestows the divine love upon the world. Christ is the one true priest because he is the one true and perfect man. He is the new Adam, the restoration of that which Adam failed to be. Adam failed to be the priest of the world and because of this failure, the world ceased to be the sacrament of the divine love and presence, and became “nature.”

Christ revealed the essence of the priesthood to be love and, therefore, priesthood to be the essence of life. And if there are priests in the Church, if there is a priestly vocation in it, it is precisely in order to reveal to each vocation its priestly essence, to make the whole life of all men the liturgy of the Kingdom, to reveal the Church as the royal priesthood of the redeemed world. It is, in other words, not a vocation “apart,” but the expression of love for man’s vocation as son of God and for the world as the sacrament of the Kingdom.

No one can take it upon himself to become a priest, to decide it on the basis of his own qualifications, preparation and dispositions. The vocation always comes from above—from God’s ordination and order. The priesthood reveals the humility, not the pride, of the Church, for it reveals the complete dependence of the Church on Christ’s love, that is, on his unique and perfect priesthood. It is not “priesthood” that the priest receives at his ordination, but the gift of Christ’s love, that love which made Christ the only Priest and which fills with this unique priesthood the ministry of those He sends to His people.

—*For the Life of the World*  
Father Alexander Schmemmann  
(1920-1983)



## APC LITURGICAL ISSUES COMMITTEE REPORT

*Presented at the APC meeting held in Dallas in March 1995.*

Our liturgical life is in shambles. As Father Thomas Hopko has remarked: “Our highly praised liturgical tradition is for the most part unknown and un-lived by great numbers of our people, and all too often by the official teachers and professors of our faith as well” (*All the Fullness of God*, p.186). In an article written more than 30 years ago for the *St. Vladimir’s Quarterly* entitled ‘*Orthodoxy in America: the Liturgical Problem*’, Hopko’s father-in-law, the late Father Alexander Schmemmann, offered a diagnosis of the malaise that afflicts so much of our worship even today. There is no substitute for simply reading that article and I encourage everyone genuinely interested in the quality and meaning of our worship to do so.

## *The question of text and translation*

Our parishes need adequate (ie, well-printed) and official (ie, endorsed by the synod of bishops and required of all parishes in the Archdiocese) bilingual texts of our services for the pews in order to better enable our faithful to participate in the riches of our liturgical life. At the clergy-laity congress in Chicago this past summer, I was greeted with yet another translation of the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom by a priest in the South. Currently, there are a dozen or more translations of varying quality in use throughout the Archdiocese. While I realize that as an Archdiocese we are still suffering from post 1970 clergy-laity congress syndrome, the simple fact remains that the current variety of translations of uneven quality in use is detrimental to our worship overall. The establishment of an official text, in Greek and English, of our most frequently celebrated liturgies and services (particularly Chrysostom, Basil, the Presanctified, the Memorial Service, Baptism, Marriage, the Artoclasia, the Akathist Hymn, etc.) should be the first priority of our seminary faculty, the national forum of church musicians and synod of bishops. This project should include our most commonly sung hymns: Χριστός ανέστη, the resurrection apolytikia, etc. This will take 5-10 years to accomplish if it is to be done well. Although we have a basis

from which to begin in the translations of Basil and Chrysostom, etc. offered us by Holy Cross Press as well as the work of a number of Church musicians, we cannot afford to wait any longer to refine, solidify and complete the work that has already been done. (I speak here only of our Archdiocese and leave aside the attempt at a pan-Orthodox translation of the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom undertaken some two years ago which has, so far as I know, been relegated to the dustbin.)

### *The question of Great Week*

Here again, the question of an official text in both Greek and English is of paramount importance. There are currently three texts in use by the parishes of our Archdiocese: Papadeas, and more recently, Vaporis and Contos. These three “versions” need to be examined carefully at a number of levels: consistency, quality of Greek text and English translation, rubrics, etc. Further, we as a Church need to throw open at an official level the question of how we currently celebrate Great Week. Our current practice of worship “by anticipation” throughout Holy Week is a vexing issue which Father Calivas calls “a particularly peculiar tradition which circumvents, both normal liturgical practice as well as the natural order of things” (*Holy Week and Pascha*, p.15). Is it not ludicrous for us to be singing Φώς Ιλαρόν (“now that we have come to the setting of the sun”) at 10AM on Holy Thursday morning at the vesperal or evening Liturgy of St. Basil?



Are there not services unique to Great Week, like the Washing of the Feet on Holy Thursday following the Liturgy of St. Basil, that could be revived across our Archdiocese to the benefit of our laity at a pastoral level? Clearly, there is much here that deserves discussion, debate and reform.

### *The question of reviving other ancient liturgies*

Father Calivas reminds us that “according to local custom, three other ancient liturgies are also used by the Orthodox Churches on the occasion of the feast day of the saints to which their authorship is traditionally attributed. These are the liturgies of St. James (Iakovos), the ancient liturgy of Jerusalem; St. Mark, the ancient liturgy of Alexandria; and St. Gregory the Theologian, an ancient liturgy of Cappadocia and Alexandria” (*An Introduction to the Divine Liturgy*, p.14). In my opinion, these ancient liturgies need to be revived and celebrated here in America.

There is an inadequate Greek/English text of the Liturgy of St. James that was hastily prepared by Holy Cross Press a number of years ago to celebrate Archbishop Iakovos’ 30th anniversary. This text needs to be refined and corrected, then reissued for parish use. (I would add, parenthetically, that in addition to October 23rd, it is theoretically possible to celebrate this liturgy on the Sunday after Christmas when we again remember St. James.) Professor Foundoulis of the University of Thessaloniki has provided Greek texts for St. Mark and St. Gregory which could be used, with some editing, as the basis for an English translation of these services.

### *The spirit of joy*

Given the importance of establishing texts, translations and music, the simple fact remains that liturgy is far more than any of these. Quality liturgical books always remain means rather than ends. At its most fundamental level, liturgy is indeed “the work of the people”, the most intimate facet of the Church’s living faith in Jesus Christ and a function of His life-giving Spirit within her. Sadly, in far too many of our parishes, our people no longer assemble to “work” but remain merely spectators while we—the “professionals”—do their work “for” them. As Father Schmemmann remarked: “It is not true that people do not come to Church because they have no time. One always has time for what one enjoys. People do not come to Church because they quite literally do not enjoy it and they do not enjoy it because the

very reality of joy is absent from the way we present the liturgy” (*The Liturgical Problem*, SVTQ 8 1964, p. 181). That joy must first be present in our hearts as presbyters. If it is, I believe that it will find concrete expression in the revival of a number of significant liturgical practices that we have lost or abandoned, much to our detriment:

*The kiss of peace*—according to Chrysostom, was a full kiss on the lips, men with men, women with women. This kiss was so intimate a gesture that the early Church fathers emphasize the need for it to be kept “pure”, but kept nonetheless. We today kiss everyone and on all occasions except during the liturgy.

*The so-called “silent” prayers*—particularly the anaphora, must again be read aloud and not silently by the celebrant “to himself”, for these are the prayers of the entire assembly, or, to put it better, of the Church herself. They are the heart of the liturgy.

*The prayers for catechumens*—need to be restored, at least during Lent if we are preparing catechumens for baptism and/or chrismation at Pascha, for we are a missionary Church or no Church at all.

Further, there are a host of liturgical gestures—the bowing of heads, the raising of hands, etc.—which we continue to do as leaders of worship, but which our people, relegated to the role of being spectators, no longer do. How disincarnate the prayer of our laity has become! These gestures need to be quietly, subtly encouraged in our laity over the next generation in order to restore a bodily, physical sense of participation in our worship.

There is, of course, much more to be discussed. However, I will limit this report to only three pages. My purpose in so limited a space is merely to promote discussion and debate and indicate a direction for conscious liturgical reform that reflects more fully a “λογικὴ λατρεία”, our desire to worship the Lord “in Spirit and Truth.”

*Rev. Steven Peter Tschlis*  
Chairman, Liturgical Issues Committee  
Pastor, Church of the Assumption  
Seattle, WA

*After sharing the above report with the clergy of the Diocese of San Francisco in May, 1995 Father Tschlis received the following letter:*

May 31, 1995

I read the Liturgical Issues Committee Report of the APC with much interest and would like to offer the following four comments:

1.) I agree wholeheartedly with the need for a common, approved translation of our services.

2.) I would further suggest that, in addition to a common translation, there is a need to establish a common rubric. I have served at weddings and baptisms with many priests and each one seems to have his own idiosyncrasies. I am also concerned about liturgical innovations which are unilaterally instituted by some priests in other sacraments, as well as during the services of Holy Week. Where do such “enlightenments” come from?

3.) I agree there is a need for liturgical renewal—but also in terms of having services at all! I am always amused by priests who say they don’t have many weekday celebrations of the Divine Liturgy because no one comes. Well, of course they don’t come if there are no services offered! We are in great danger of becoming a Sunday-only Church. Yet, people can be educated to come to weekday services. Over my 14 years in Sacramento, I’ve tried very hard to serve at least one weekday Liturgy every week; it isn’t always so, but it is a goal for which I strive.

4.) I am always leery of proposals such as those made in your report, specifically your suggestions that we revive other ancient liturgies and restructure the services of Holy Week along more ancient patterns. In my opinion there is a very serious question which we must ask before we step into such dangerous waters: do we do what we do now because we have been spiritually indolent and perhaps not very loyal to the liturgical forms of the Church; or, do we do what we do now because this is where the Holy Spirit has led us? You can’t just return to the past without denying the guidance of the Holy Spirit which guides us every day of every year.

Obviously, these are very serious questions which demand much discussion and even more prayer. However, there is a good sign here: the 21st century is upon us and it seems that we’re finally waking up!

*Rev. Demetrius Dogias*  
Pastor, Church of the Annunciation  
Sacramento, CA

*Fr. Tschlis response:*

July 24, 1995

Thank you for your letter of May 31st! I appreciate your comments and offer my apologies for not responding sooner. First, let me assure you that I agree, in substance, with virtually everything you have said. I agree that there is need for "liturgical renewal...in terms of having services at all!" Like you, I am not always able to meet this goal of celebrating "one weekday Liturgy every week," but it is certainly an ideal worth striving for. (Last week, I celebrated Liturgy for the feast of the Prophet Elijah; this week, I am celebrating Liturgy on Tuesday and Thursday, for the feasts of St. Anna and St. Panteleimon.) I have also found it useful to pray a variety of services around different events that I know people will attend. For example, we pray small vespers prior to each Bible study; small Compline prior to our adult study fellowship; and the 3rd, 6th and 9th hours during retreats like the one we hosted earlier this month with Bishop Kallistos Ware.

I also agree on the "need to establish a common rubric" for our services, although I am somewhat less concerned about liturgical variety in minor things, provided they are within the overall scope of our liturgical tradition. For example, there is a wide variety of rubrics in the manuscript tradition of the marriage service as it has evolved over the centuries. As a case in point, the earlier codices say

nothing of the participation of the groomsmen or maid of honor in exchanging the rings or crowns. Some of my parishioners from Cyprus inform me that there, as is the more ancient custom, it is still the priest who does these things. However, I believe we must ask serious questions about the many "western" customs that have crept into our liturgical practice all too uncritically: the procession of the bride and her father down the center aisle to the tune of the wedding march from *Lohengrin*—"Here comes the bride"—is certainly one of the most appalling and completely foreign elements of our current liturgical practice. Finally, I believe we must reconnect the sacraments of marriage and baptism to the Eucharist when and where possible pastorally.

Your question: "do we do what we do now because we have been spiritually indolent and perhaps not very loyal to the liturgical forms of the Church; or do we do what we do now because this is where the Holy Spirit has led us?" is indeed a "serious question." I am probably much more confident of the answer than you: in my opinion, we currently suffer from the worst kind of liturgical nominalism and apathy and, more often than not, we are interested only in the form rather than the content of our worship, the letter instead of the Spirit. I cannot believe that the Holy Spirit has led us to our current liturgical

decadence. However, I do agree that we "can't just return to the past" simply for the sake of returning to the past. My proposals regarding the returning of the celebration of Holy Week to its more ancient pattern, the revival of some ancient liturgies to be celebrated on the feasts of the saints associated with them, the revival of the prayers for the catechumens, etc. are a plea for a return to liturgical sanity that I believe will better enable us as a Church to face the 21st century. I only hope its true that "we're finally waking up."

As I mentioned at the end of my report, my purpose was primarily to promote discussion on these issues. I certainly don't believe that I have the final word on such matters. But this is, at least, how things seem to me. Thank you for the discussion!

*Rev. Steven Peter Tschlis  
Pastor, Church of the Assumption  
Seattle, WA*



*In November, Father Alkiviades Calivas, the professor of liturgical theology at Holy Cross, was asked to respond to the Liturgical Issues Committee report for this issue of The Presbyter. However, because of his recent appointment as president of Hellenic College/Holy Cross, he was unable to do so. In a brief letter to the editors, Father Calivas said:*

January 9, 1996

I agree with much of what is said in the Committee Report on Liturgical Issues. It is true that we have not accepted the challenges of the times in a systematic and creative way. Good translations of our liturgical texts is a case in point. Fortunately, SCOBA has appointed a pan-Orthodox liturgical commission to address this issue. The progress has been slow and full of difficulties, but—nevertheless—hopeful. The report is correct, also, about the text of the Liturgy of St. James. You will also find me in agreement—with proper considerations—about the kiss of peace, the priestly prayers (and especially the anaphora) and the petitions for the catechumens.

I thought the enclosed copy of an article on liturgical reform that I wrote—"The Penthekte Synod of 691-692 AD and Liturgical Reform"—and which was recently published in the *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* would be of interest to you. You may wish to quote parts of it for the newsletter.

*What follows is a brief excerpt from the above mentioned article by Father Calivas that appeared in the GOTR 40:1&2, 1995:*

## **THE PROCESS OF LITURGICAL REFORM**

The worship of the Church is neither a relic of the past nor a lifeless object of research. Worship is the fundamental activity of the Church. It is her faith in motion. In worship, the Church encounters the living God, while through it God is present to the Church. Through her worship the Church conveys, recommends, instills and imparts a particular vision of faith and way of life. Through dogma and prayer, the Church invites us to discover continually, and to experience and realize as well, our true and eternal mode of being.

True worship is dynamic. It develops and changes. However, authentic, effective and lasting liturgical changes do not flow out of emotional responses to a given situation, condition or crisis but are the result of genuine, commonly shared and pastorally proven needs as authenticated by the Church.

Liturgical reform is a complex process. It operates on many levels and may involve one, several or all of the elements which constitute a particular rite or service. The reform process, first of all, must be mindful of the authentic liturgical ethos of the Church and be guided by its foundational principles. Also, liturgical reform must be well-informed, orderly and systematic. Furthermore, it must retain a certain ascetical tension in relation to the Church's cultural milieu, lest she fall victim to one or another ephemeral trend. Moreover,



reform must emanate from the conviction that the liturgical assembly provides the essential means by which the members of the faith community achieve their most

authentic identity. Thus, the rule of prayer with all its varied components must not simply be admired and honored. Above all it must be loved, studied, analyzed, learned and lived. This latter activity constitutes the essence and meaning of liturgical renewal, which in turn is the mother of genuine liturgical reform.

Thus, liturgical renewal, which aims at making worship dynamic, effective and relevant in the changing and developing process of history, is of paramount importance to the Church. To facilitate the process of liturgical renewal, the Church must advance three fundamental activities. First, the critical examination of the inner meaning of worship, which applies an awareness and an appreciation of the living tradition of the Church. Second, the critical study and analysis of ritual activity and data, which implies an appreciation of the significance of rite and symbol, as well as a respect for cultural and historical situations. Third, the encouragement of liturgical creativity for a more conscious, active and deeply personal participation of the people in liturgical worship, which implies a faith community that is seriously engaged in catechesis and social outreach. This third activity is, in actuality, the goal of the other two.

The Church, therefore, through her theologians and pastors, is bound to continually probe the depths of her liturgical prayer, song, action and symbol, in order to sustain the vitality of liturgy, inform liturgical piety, improve liturgical practice and ensure both the interior and exterior participation of the faithful in worship. More importantly, the sustained analysis of the inner meaning of worship allows us to see and appreciate the connection between dogma and liturgy, liturgy and life and liturgy and social justice. In addition, we discover meanings previously overlooked; learn to give accent to those aspects and truths of the tradition which may have greater value to the present generation; provide more adequate instruction about the inherited rites; and measure the efficacy of their structures and content in the present historical and cultural context.

The invitation to examine critically the inner meanings of worship also entails a certain risk as well as a challenge. Some of our favored ideas, widely accepted notions and explanations, and familiar customs do not now or may not in the future, stand up well under the scrutiny of historical research and sound, prayerful, theological reflection. What do we do when we come up against a deficient liturgical practice, text or custom? Do we simply stay the course with an appeal to an uncertain tradition? Or, do such findings become a catalyst for the release of new power and energy in the body of the Church, for a greater appreciation of the tradition as well as a creative response to

emerging needs and circumstances through the gradual enactment of decreed, planned and carefully considered reforms?

Liturgical actions generally beg for an explanation. "Why do we say this or do that...? Lacking sufficient information, the tendency is to invent and supply the action with one or more arbitrary symbolic interpretations, which may well defy both the structural laws of liturgy and the historical evidence. Such poor interpretations tend to be "survivors" because they are often enveloped in an aura of inauthentic "mysticism" even though they cannot express adequately what they are supposed to signify. One such action is the waving of the "aer" over the eucharistic elements. The custom of raising and waving the aer over the eucharistic elements as the creed is being recited first appeared in the 15th century. The practice of holding it over the head of the presiding bishop at an episcopal liturgy appeared later, around the 17th century. The custom, however, has a long history and may have first appeared as early as the 6th century in Syria. Initially, the practice may have served the same function as the liturgical fans, which were waved over the eucharistic gifts in order to keep insects away. Today, the most often quoted symbolic interpretation of the waving of the aer has to do with the resurrection of Christ. The aer is said to represent the great stone which covered the Tomb and was rolled away at the time of the Resurrection. However, such an interpretation is unrelated to the text of the Divine Liturgy.

## ***ENCOURAGING THE ACTIVE PARTICIPATION OF PEOPLE IN WORSHIP***

Each parish is responsible for providing suitable and effective liturgical experiences capable of inducing the inner and exterior involvement of the faithful. Worship is most attractive when it is performed with faith and is characterized by simplicity, beauty, clarity, directness, solemnity and joyful dignity.

Many factors contribute to the creation of a healthy liturgical environment and meaningful experience. An inspired priestly celebration and a coherent and persuasive homily are basic factors. The reading of Scripture lessons and other liturgical texts with care and conviction is another. The graceful and dignified performance of liturgical actions is also important. The prayerful attentiveness of the congregation and its ability to respond gracefully with voice and bodily posture is another. The quality of liturgical singing is fundamental.





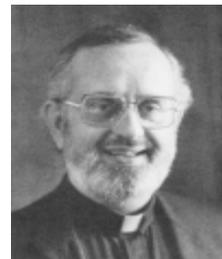
People love to sing. Songs fill our lives. They intensify speech, heighten action and evoke memories. Because singing is so central to the liturgical tradition of the Orthodox Church, we are obliged to pay special attention to the quality of our liturgical music and singing. Therefore, we have an obligation to both train and secure the services of qualified and competent chanters and music directors. More importantly, we must recognize the need and find the ways to return to the assembled worshippers their ministry of song. True worship is an act which involves the whole Body of Christ. Worship is a work of the whole people of God, clergy and laity alike. The whole Church celebrates the divine services and mysteries. No one is a mere spectator. The revival of the roles and the redefinition of the functions of historically grounded and useful institutions (such as the male and female diaconate and the so-called minor orders) will help increase our appreciation of the communal nature of public worship and our awareness of the varied gifts and talents of the members of the faith community.

## **CONCLUSION**

Liturgical forms, structures and patterns, like old habits and favored articles of clothing, are not easily discarded or abandoned. They grow on us and become part of our life experiences. Therefore, I am aware that simply talking about liturgical changes and innovations is sufficient to cause feelings of distress in some people and arouse the deep displeasure of others.

However, the liturgical tradition we so honor, respect and love was never fixed. The structures, patterns and forms of our worship have been evolving gradually through the centuries. Some changes have even been planned and decreed. The quest for the inner meaning of worship, the critical analysis of the received tradition and the search for new forms and fresh approaches to liturgical involvement are not irreverent endeavors. They are, rather, signs of a community committed to the faith and to the incarnation of the authentic living tradition of the Church in the circumstances and realities of the present age.

*The Rev. Alkiviades Calivas  
President,  
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# DIOCESAN SYNDESMOS REPORTS

## DIOCESE OF SAN FRANCISCO

Four new priests were welcomed to the diocese this past year. The Rev. Demetri Tsigas was ordained to the priesthood by His Grace, Bishop Anthony on July 5th, 1995 at the Holy Trinity Church in Portland, OR and assigned to that parish as the assistant to his classmate (class of '86), the Rev. James Retelas. The Rev. Timothy Pavlatos was ordained to the priesthood by His Grace, Bishop Anthony on September 24th, 1995 at the Holy Trinity Cathedral in Phoenix, AZ and assigned as the assistant to the Rev. Theo Anastas at the Cathedral. In the fall, the Rev. Kosta Petrogeorge was assigned as an assistant priest to the Rev. Spencer Kezios at the St. Nicholas Church in Northridge, CA; and the Rev. Chris Webb was assigned as the assistant priest to the Rev. John Asimakopoulos at the St. Nicholas Church in San Jose, CA.

The annual Priest's Institute held at the St. Nicholas Ranch this past November highlighted the theme of stewardship with presentations by the Rev. Constantine Sitaras, the director of national stewardship at the Archdiocese, and the Rev. Anthony Coniaris, the author of many books, including one on stewardship. Following the Priest's Institute, there was a retreat for the younger clergy of the diocese (those with 10 years of service or less) led by the diocesan chancellor, Archimandrite Meletios Webber.

This past December the Rev. Steven Tsichlis, on behalf of the Clergy Syndesmos of the diocese, presented over \$28,000 to Hellenic College/Holy Cross School of Theology for the continued construction of much needed married student housing on the campus.

Congratulations are offered to the chancellor of our diocese, Archimandrite Meletios Webber, who recently celebrated the 20th anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood with a dinner that benefited the Prophet Elias Church in Santa Cruz, CA.

His Grace, Bishop Anthony celebrated the cutting of the Vasilopeta with the clergy of the diocese and their families at three different locations shortly after the New Year began: on January 4th, with the clergy of northern California at the Diocesan House in San Francisco; on January 8th with the clergy of southern California in Los Angeles; and on January 11th, with the clergy of Oregon and Washington at the home of the Rev. Anthony and Presbyteria Sophronia Tomaras;

His Grace, Bishop Anthony, together with some 800 clergy and faithful from throughout the diocese, celebrated the opening of a new monastery bearing the name of his patron saint—St. Anthony the Great—this past January 17th near Florence, AZ, a small town in the desert between Phoenix and Tucson. There are currently eleven monks and the abbot of the monastery is the priestmonk Paisios of the Philotheou Monastery on Mt. Athos.

*Submitted by the  
Rev. George Stephanides  
Pastor, St. Paul's Church  
Irvine, CA*

*Editors*

## *Recommendation*

Now that we have entered the period of the Great Fast and the celebration of Pascha is only a few weeks away, the editors of *The Presbyter* recommend "a listening" to the paschal music of EIKONA to all of our brothers.

EIKONA is a music ministry comprised of Presbyteras Marika Brown and Stacey Dorrance, together with their sister Chrysanthy Therianos. Some of you may remember their performance at the 1994 Clergy-Laity Congress in Chicago. Their most recent recording, titled "Come Receive the Light," provides text in English and music for the Orthros service of Holy Pascha. Translated, compiled and transcribed by Fathers Peter Avgeropoulos (Hamilton, Ontario, Canada) and John Heropoulos (Greenlawn, NY), this recording also includes vocals by Father Christopher Metropoulos (Fort Lauderdale, FL) who serves as the priest and Father Jordan Brown (Dallas, TX) who serves as the reader. This recording is available on both cassette (\$11) and CD (\$15) from Chrysanthy Therianos, 529 NW 143rd Street, Edmond, OK 73013. All proceeds from sales of tapes go to EIKONA. For more information please call (405)-755-6734.

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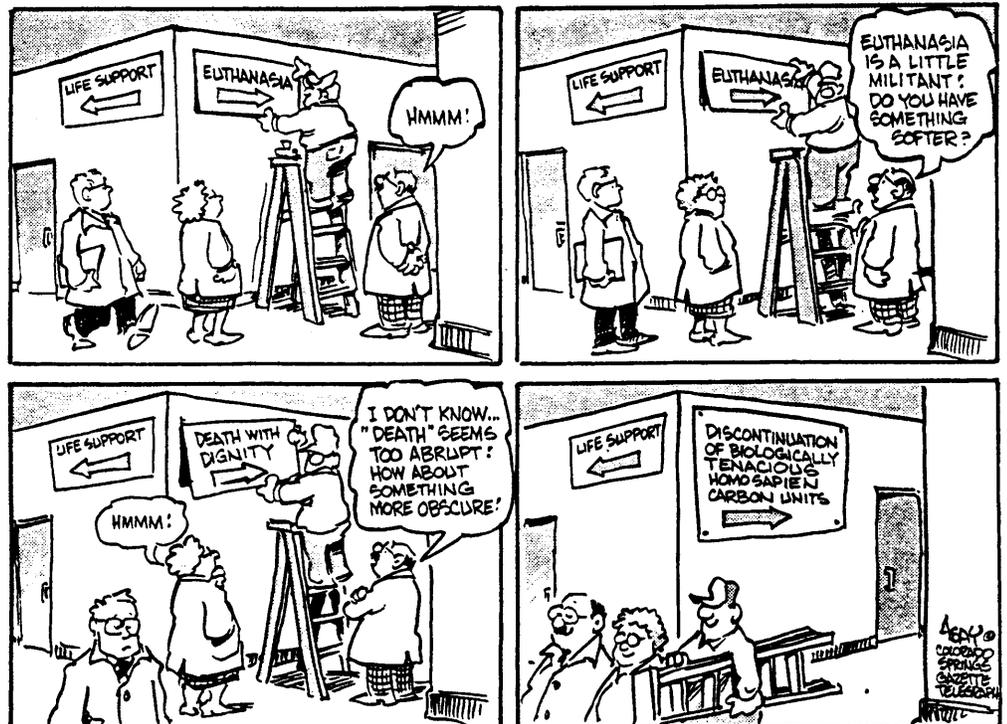
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You know how to discern the face of the sky,  
but you cannot discern the signs of the times.

—Matthew 16:3