



Rubrics for the Divine Liturgy of St. James

The Divine Liturgy of St. James the Brother of God is the first apostolic liturgy. The liturgies of St. John Chrysostom and St. Basil the Great were based on it and replaced it, according to St. Nicodemus the Hagiorite.¹ Today, it is celebrated only on October 23rd, the feast day of St. James.

The music for the hymn “Only-begotten Son” (page 126), the responses of the petitions (“Lord, have mercy”) (pages 88-123), the Thrice-holy Hymn (pages 183-197), and the “Alleluia” (pages 210-218) following the epistle reading are identical to those used in the Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom.

Between the epistle and gospel readings, there is a set of petitions intoned by the deacon. The response for each petition is “Lord, have mercy,” except for the final petition, which has the response “Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.” After the gospel reading, the deacon intones another set of petitions. The response to the first five petitions is a single “Lord, have mercy,” the response to the next six is “Grant this, O Lord,” and the response to the final petition of the deacon is “To You, O Lord.” The cherubic hymn for the Divine Liturgy of St. James is the cherubic hymn of Holy Saturday: “Let All Mortal Flesh” (see page 297).

After the creed and the deacon’s petitions: “Let us love one another with a holy kiss... Let us bow our heads unto the Lord,” the priest chants the hymn: “O magnify the Lord with me...” (see page 625) Immediately thereafter, the choir responds with the hymn: “The Holy Spirit shall come upon you...” (see page 625).

The responses for the anaphora are identical to the anaphora in the liturgy of St. John Chrysostom (see pages 303-367), with the difference that there are eighteen petitions with the response, “Lord, have mercy” and then one petition with the response, “Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.” preceding the petitions “Through the compassions..., Peace be unto all..., Let us stand well...,” etc.

¹ Vid. *The Rudder*, p. xxvii. St. Nicodemus the Hagiorite probably relied on the validity of a treatise (PG 45:849-852) attributed to St. Proclus (d. 446). Later scholars, however, (e.g., Swainson, C.A., *The Greek Liturgies*, Cambridge 1884, and Brightman, F.E., *Liturgies Eastern and Western I, Eastern Liturgies*, Oxford, 1896) question the validity of these statements and ascribe that treatise to a much later writer. Moreover, they believe that the Liturgy of St. James developed independently of and simultaneously with the other liturgies. (See also Φουντούλη, Ἰωάννου Μ., *Ἀπαντήσεις εἰς Λειτουργικὰς Ἀπορίας*, Τόμος Δ', Ἀποστολικὴ Διακονία, Ἀθήνα, 1994, σελ. 49-50, and Conomos, Dimitri E., *Byzantine Trisagia and Cheroubika of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries*, pp. 13-18.)

At the consecration of the Holy Gifts, the deacon intones the petition “We believe and confess.” Then, instead of chanting “We hymn You...,” the choir chants the hymn: “We proclaim Your death...” (see page 626). The priest then chants the hymn: “For Your people...” (see page 626), and the choir responds by repeating three times the hymn: “Have mercy on us...” (see page 626).

While the priest reads the long prayer “We offer unto You, O Master...,” the choir quietly repeats many times the hymn: “Remember them, O Lord our God” (see page 627). When the priest completes that prayer, he intones the petition: “Especially our all-holy, immaculate, most blessed...,” and the choir chants the hymn “Remember them...” for the last time with a different melody (see page 628).

After the petition “Grant unto us and them...,” the choir chants the hymn: “Pardon, remit, and forgive...” (see page 629).

Following the deacon’s petition: “In the peace of Christ let us chant unto the Lord,” the clergy receive communion. According to Athonite rubrics, at this point in the liturgy (whether it be the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom, St. Basil the Great, St. James, or the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts), the reader reads the pre-communion prayers: “I believe, O Lord, and I confess...,” “Behold, I approach...,” “Receive me today...,” “Tremble, O man...,” “You have smitten me...,” “Into the splendor...,” “O man-befriending Master...,” and again “Receive me today...” The reader then reads Psalms 33 (“I will bless the Lord...”) and 144 (“I will exalt You...”). After the reader has completed these two psalms, the choir chants the communion hymn from the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts: “O taste and see...” (see pages 613-617).

While the faithful receive communion, the choir repeats the hymn: “Receive me today...” (see pages 534-543).

After the faithful have received communion, the choir chants the hymn: “Fill my mouth with Your praise...” (see page 631).

According to Athonite rubrics, at the end of every liturgy in which the faithful received communion, the reader reads the thanksgiving prayers for holy communion while the priest distributes the antidoron.

