

REVISED

CHOIR NOTES FOR AN HIERARCHICAL DIVINE LITURGY

Preserve, O Lord, our master and chief priest = Ton dhespotin kai archierea imon
Many years, master = Eis polla eti, dhespota

The Blessing for Church Service and the Tonsuring of Taper-bearers and Readers take place at Vespers (immediately following St Simeon's Prayer).

Ordination of Subdeacons take place at Orthros (immediately after the Holy God of the Great Doxology).

Elevations take place during the Little Entrance at Divine Liturgy ((immediately before "Wisdom. Stand upright."))

1. Following the first verse of the Praises *Let everything that hath breath ...* during Orthros, the bishop descends from the throne for Kairon as the choir sings very slowly *Preserve, O Lord, our master and chief priest*; it must be timed so that the singing of *Many years, master* at the end of the hymn coincides with the moment at the end of Kairon when the bishop turns and blesses the congregation.¹ Then the Praises continue with *Praise ye him all his angels ...*² The verses on the Praises are to be chanted slowly (perhaps even repeated) in order to give the bishop sufficient time to vest; do not proceed to the *Glory* until you are certain that the bishop and clergy are ready to exit the holy place.³

2. Prior to the singing of the *Both now ...* at the end of the Praises, the chanting comes to a full stop. The bishop exits the sanctuary through the holy doors and blesses the congregation while the choir sings *Many years, master* (once). Once the bishop is at his place (at the throne or the center of the solea) he will bless the singers who then proceed to chant the *Both now ...* and what follows through the Great Doxology.⁴

3. When, during the Litany of Peace at the beginning of the Divine Liturgy, the bishop is commemorated by name, the choir quickly and softly sings *Many years, master*

¹ A reliable "cue" that the bishop will soon turn and bless the congregation is that he replaces upon his head the epanokalymavkhon (the black clerical hat with monastic veil) which he removes for a prayer near the end of Kairon and then replaces upon his head at the end of the prayer.

² Often the bishop will say Kairon and enter the sanctuary to vest without this formality. You must check with him ahead of time to see how and when he will say Kairon.

³ A reliable "cue" that they are ready to exit the holy place is that the curtain and/or holy doors will be opened.

⁴ If there is not a "split" *Glory ... Both now ...* at the end of the Praises, the bishop exits the sanctuary before the *Glory ...* It is usual, but not prescribed, for the bishop to chant the Great Doxology antiphonally with the chanters. Again, check with the bishop about this ahead of time.

(once – IN THE SAME PITCH AS ‘LORD, HAVE MERCY’). At the end of that petition the choir sings *Lord, have mercy* as usual.⁵

4. When, during the singing of the Eisodikon by the bishop and clergy, the choir sings *Many years, master* (once – IN THE SAME PITCH AS THE EISODIKON) at the moment the bishop begins to bless with the dikirion and trikirion. The choir repeats the refrain *Save us, O Son of God* after the bishop enters the sanctuary and before he sings the first apolytikion. Then all the other apolytikia are sung by the choir. It is usual for the bishop and clergy to sing the kontakion.

5. The *Holy God* sequence is sung as outlined in The Liturgikon (pp.486-488). If the choir will use wording other than that found in The Liturgikon please advise the bishop ahead of time.

6. When the bishop gives the peace before the reading of the Gospel, the choir responds *And to thy spirit* as usual.

7. At the conclusion of the reading of the Gospel, the choir sings the usual *Glory to thee, O Lord, glory to thee* as usual followed by *Many years, master* as the bishop blesses.

8. At the conclusion of the Cherubic Hymn, the choir sings *Many years, master* (once – IN THE SAME PITCH AS THE CHERUBIC HYMN) while the bishop blesses the congregation; then the Litany of Supplication is done.

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Note that if there is to be an ordination to the holy priesthood it takes place before the Litany of Supplication; in that event this singing of *Many years, master* is delayed and the following order is observed:

- a. As the candidate is led three times around the holy table, the choir sings the three troparia *Ye holy martyrs; Glory to thee, O Christ God; and O Isaiah*.⁶
- b. After the bishop says *The grace divine ... all-holy Spirit may come upon him* the choir sings a triple *Lord, have mercy*. Then the choir sings softly and repeatedly *Lord, have mercy* while a priest or deacon inaudibly says an expanded Litany of Peace.
- c. To the bishop's **SECOND** exclamation *For blessed and glorified...ages of ages* the choir responds *Amen*.
- d. After each proclamation of *Axios-He is worthy-Moustabiq* by the bishop and congregation, the choir sings the same as the newly-ordained priest is vested.

⁵ Note that in most instances during divine services both the Metropolitan Archbishop and the Diocesan Bishop are commemorated; at *Among the first ...* the Bishop remembers only the Metropolitan Archbishop and then the priests remember only the Bishop.

⁶ Note that the order in which these three troparia is sung is different from the order in which they are sung at a wedding.

- e. After the newly-ordained priest is fully vested, the choir sings *Many years, master* (once) while the bishop blesses the people.
- f. Then the Litany of Supplication is done and the Liturgy continues as usual.

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9. When the bishop gives the peace before the saying of the Creed, the choir responds *And to thy spirit* as usual.

10. At *Let us love one another* the choir slowly sings *I will love thee, O Lord, my strength* rather than *Father, Son and Holy Spirit* during the Kiss of Peace by the clergy.⁷

11. When, during the Anaphora, the bishop says *Among the first* the choir responds *Amen*. Then, when the priests say *Among the first* the choir responds *And of all mankind*; but if a deacon is serving, the choir responds *Amen* to both the bishop and the priests, and then, when the deacon says *And for those who offer these precious and holy gifts ... and of all mankind* the choir responds *And of all mankind*.

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Note that if there is to be an ordination to the holy diaconate it takes place immediately after the bishop blesses the congregation saying *And the mercies of our great God and Savior...* and the choir responds *And with thy spirit*. Then the following order is observed:

- a. As the candidate is led three times around the holy table, the choir sings the three troparia *Ye holy martyrs; Glory to thee, O Christ God;* and *O Isaiah*.⁸
- b. After the bishop says *The grace divine ... all-holy Spirit may come upon him* the choir sings a triple *Lord, have mercy*. Then the choir sings softly and repeatedly *Lord, have mercy* while a priest or deacon inaudibly says an expanded Litany of Peace.
- c. To the bishop's SECOND exclamation *For thou art our God ... ages of ages* the choir responds *Amen*.
- d. After each proclamation of *Axios-He is worthy-Moustabiq* by the bishop and congregation, the choir sings the same as the newly-ordained deacon is vested.
- e. After the newly-ordained deacon is fully vested, the choir sings *Many years, master* (once) and the bishop blesses the people.
- f. Then the litany before the *Our Father* is done.

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12. When the bishop has concluded the dismissal at the end of the Divine Liturgy, the choir slowly and softly sings *Preserve, O Lord, our master and chief priest ...*

⁷ This should be done at any Divine Liturgy which is served by more than one priest or bishop.

⁸ Note that the order in which these three troparia is sung is different from the order in which they are sung at a wedding.

13. When, after the dismissal, the priest says *Through the prayers of our holy master...* the choir responds *Amen*.