

but had not yet fully entered into the Church, the temple of the faithful. Having listened to the Word of God and the homily at the Divine Liturgy, the catechumens were obliged to leave the church after the prayer of the church community for them—the Litany for the Catechumens.

64 The Catechumenate initiated the stage during which catechumens familiarized themselves with the faith and prepared for Baptism. Before the actual Baptism, the status of catechumens was changed to "those being enlightened" [i.e., the stage of Illumination]. During pre-baptismal catechesis, they were taught the Symbol of Faith and the Lord's Prayer, the "Our Father." The pre-baptismal catechesis culminated in a *catechetical instruction* delivered by the bishop himself.

65 Baptism immerses a person into the mystery of Christ's Death and Resurrection. It is the beginning of initiation into the mysteries (in Greek, *mystagogia*). Having become a participant in the Death and Resurrection of Christ, the newly baptized person is sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit in Chrismation, and in the Eucharist, receives the food of eternal life.

66 In our tradition, Christian sacramental initiation is expressed also in spatial terms. Baptism begins in the narthex or baptistery, Chrismation takes place in the nave or temple of the faithful, and Holy Communion at the threshold of the sanctuary. The newly baptized are clothed in bright garments (in Ukrainian, *kryzhmo*), which in the early Church were worn throughout all of Bright Week. These garments signify the joy of life in Christ and the expectation of the fullness of one's encounter with God at the second coming of Christ.

4. Environment in which Faith is Transmitted: Family, Nation, and Church

67 The primary context in which faith is transmitted is the family. Parents form their children in the faith by the example of their lives and the words of their prayer. In teaching the Gospel and witnessing to it, parents become the first catechists for their children. As they raise children in a Christian manner, parents create in their family a special atmosphere, one of common prayer before icons and the observance of Sundays and feast days.

68 From a young age, children enter into the spiritual life. This life is built on prayer, hearing the Word of God, and receiving Holy Communion. As they grow into maturity, with the assistance of their parents, children grow in the grace of the Mystery of Baptism. They learn to

overcome evil and do what is good. For children, the inheritance of faith received from their parents is a token of assurance of eternal life. The godly life of godparents and extended family members also plays an important role in a child's maturing in the faith. Christian family customs establish in children a Christian perspective on human birth and death, the formation of families and familial relationships, and they develop a sense of belonging within a church community and one's people.

- 69 Every nation is a community, with its own historical memory, earthly homeland, and struggle for well-being and perfection. It was to the nations that Christ sent his apostles: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you" (*Mt* 28:19-20). The Christianization of the nations depends upon the gradual formation of a Christian worldview and structuring of life. The Christian culture of a given nation is a means for transmitting the faith from one generation to the next. It nurtures within a nation a love for God, for one's earthly homeland, sacrificial service for the sake of its well-being, and an honest attitude towards work; it strengthens bonds within families, among relatives, and in society. The mutual permeation of the Gospel and the culture of a people is expressed in the self-governance of a Church.
- 70 The Church, one and at the same time diverse, is a prefigurement of the family of nations, who are all equal and yet different. To all nations, the Church proclaims the way of salvation: "And undoubtedly the preaching of the Church is true and steadfast, in which one and the same way of salvation is shown throughout the world."⁴⁸ In her ministry for the salvation of all nations, the Church draws her strength from the contemplation of the Most Holy Trinity, the divine community of the Persons of the one God. She extends the invitation:

Come, O you peoples, let us worship the Godhead of three Persons ... Holy God, who created all things through the Son, with the cooperation of the Holy Spirit. Holy and Mighty, through whom we have known the Father, and through whom the Holy Spirit came into the world. Holy and Immortal, Comforting Spirit, who proceeds from the Father and rests in the Son. O Holy Trinity, glory be to you! ⁴⁹ .

⁴⁸ IRENAEUS OF LYONS, *Against Heresies*, V, 20, 1: PG 7, 1177.

⁴⁹ *Floral Triodion*, Pentecost, Vespers, Final Sticheron at Psalm 140.