

## 2) Memorial

- 377 In the Anaphora, we commemorate the salvific work of the Most Holy Trinity: the Father so loved the world that "he gave his only-begotten Son;" the Son, fulfilling the will of the Father, "gave himself for the life of the world," (emphasis added). He offers us true communion in himself through communion in his Body and Blood: "He took bread ... gave it to his holy disciples and apostles, saying: `Take, eat' ... and likewise the chalice: `Drink of it, all of you." The words of Christ "This is my Body; this is my Blood," pronounced at the Mystical Supper, show that in like manner, at each Divine Liturgy, Christ deigns to feed us with his Body and Blood. Through communion in his Body, Christ invites the Church, his Bride, to become one Body with him. He does so in order that she may enter the same unity with the Father that the Son has: "The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one" (*Jn 17:22*).
- 378 Offering us the gift of his Body and Blood, Christ leads us into the New Covenant, the alliance with God, in which the new commandment (see *jer 31:31-33*) is written on the heart: "I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another" (*Jn 13:34*). In such love is the essence of eternal life, the essence of salvation, the essence of our deification. Human beings cannot achieve this of themselves, but it is possible for those who remain in Christ: "Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them" (*Jn 6:56*).
- 379 Through the memorial of the Mystical Supper, the Church makes memorial also of "all that was done for us: the cross, the tomb, the resurrection on the third day, the Ascension into heaven, the sitting at the right hand, and the second and glorious coming." Uniting with Christ, we become participants in all his salvific deeds—whether his suffering and death, or his Resurrection and glorification; his Pascha becomes ours, and we already take part in his glory. His glory will be fully manifested on the Last Day.

## 3) Offering

- 380 The Church accepts Christ's invitation to communion in his Body and Blood. In response, she offers the gift of herself: "We offer to you, yours of your own in behalf of all and for all," (emphasis added). It is impossible to become one Body with the One who bestows such love except by offering a gift of love in return. We offer him ourselves and the entire world, even though all this belongs to him. We do so because he came

to teach us this salvific and free offering, and to enable us to offer it. This is the fulfilment of his new commandment; in this is life eternal. This is the integrated "rational [logical] worship" (in the image of Christ the Word, the Logos) that Paul speaks of: "I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual [rational] worship" (Rom 12:1). By the cross-wise uplifting of the diskos and chalice by the deacon, the Church expresses the gift of herself to God the Father through the crucified Christ. In this she proclaims the eschatological fullness of time, when Christ will bring all to God the Father (see 1 Cor 15:28).

#### *4) Invoking the Holy Spirit*

381 The prayer in which we invoke the Holy Spirit "upon us and upon these gifts" is called the epiclesis (from the Greek, meaning call upon or call down). The Holy Spirit descends on the gifts so that they may become for us "sobriety of soul, forgiveness of sins, fellowship of the Holy Spirit, fulfilment of the kingdom of heaven." In the epiclesis, "we implore the merciful God to send forth his Holy Spirit upon the offering to make the bread the Body of Christ and the wine the Blood of Christ. For whatever the Holy Spirit touches is hallowed and changed."<sup>294</sup>

382 All those who have communion in the Body of Christ become one whole, with him and among themselves: "Unite all of us, who share in this one bread and cup, with one another into the communion of the one Holy Spirit."<sup>295</sup> This is why, together with the whole Church, with the Mother of God and all the saints, we commemorate all the deceased in the hope of resurrection to eternal life. But we also commemorate all the living, along with their spiritual and bodily needs. We ask that the Lord remember them—give them life by the gift of his love,

383 We complete the holy offering with the words: "Grant that with one voice and one heart we may glorify and sing the praises of your most honoured and magnificent name, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and for ever and ever." Renewed in God's love through the reciprocal giving of ourselves, "all of us, with unveiled faces, beholding the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord, the Spirit" (2 Cor 3:18).

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<sup>294</sup> CYRIL OF JERUSALEM, *The Mystagogical Lectures*, 5,7: PG 33, 1113.

<sup>295</sup> *Liturgicon*, the Divine Liturgy of our Holy Father Basil the Great, the Anaphora.