

her unfailing intercession for humankind before her Son are expressed in the feast of the Protection of the Mother of God (October 1/14). In the Dormition, the Mother of God was bodily taken up to heaven. However, she left us her precious relics—her robe and her sash—as "a powerful safeguard"⁴¹⁰ for her faithful children. These relics are venerated in the feasts of the Placing of the Precious Robe of Our Most Holy Lady in the Church at Blachernae in Constantinople (July 2/15) and the Placing of the Precious Sash (August 31/September 13).

577 The Church also professes the Paschal mystery in the feasts of her saints, who suffered with Christ and with him were glorified. The Church offers the example of the lives of the saints to the faithful for imitation, in order to bring all to the Father through Christ in the Holy Spirit.⁴¹¹ The liturgical commemoration of saints is effected in the services and in the veneration of their icons and their relics. The date of the veneration of saints is usually the day of their death, that is, their birth to heaven. It can also be the day of the finding or transferral of their relics. Every day of the Church Year is dedicated to one or more particular saints. The liturgical services (hymnography) for the saints are collected month by month in twelve volumes called the Menaia (from the Greek, meaning monthly).

578 In the Mystery of Baptism, Christian parents usually give their newborn children names of Christian saints. In giving a name, a spiritual relationship is established between the saint and the person who receives their name. According to an ancient Church custom, children receive the name of the saint on whose day they were born.

B. The Church Building – The Place of the Community's Prayer

579 The Old Testament mentions how the patriarchs singled out the places in which God manifested himself to them: "[Abram] built there an altar to the LORD, who had appeared to him" (*Gn 12:7*). At this place Abraham raised his prayer to God (see *Gn 12:8*). The patriarch Jacob named the place where the Lord appeared to him the "house of God" (see *Gn 28:17*). In the time of Moses, the sacred place of encounter with God was the "tabernacle (or tent) of the Covenant." The Israelites built it according to God's instructions: "Have them make me a sanctuary, so

⁴¹⁰ Menaion, The Placing of the Precious Robe of our Most Holy Lady, the Mother of God in the Church at Blachernae, (July 2/15), Troparion.

⁴¹¹ See VATICAN COUNCIL II, Constitution Sacrosanctum Concilium [On the Sacred Liturgy], 104.

that I may dwell among them" (Ex 25:8). The tabernacle of the Covenant was the place where the people gathered, and the Lord spoke to them.

- 580 In the time of Israel's kings, the tabernacle of the Covenant was replaced by the temple that King Solomon built on Mount Sion in Jerusalem. It had three sections: the court, the Holy Place, and the Holy of Holies. In the Holy of Holies were placed the principal sacred memorials of the Chosen People from the time of the Exodus from Egypt and the Sinai Covenant: (i) the Ark of the Covenant with the tablets; (ii) a golden urn holding the manna; and, (iii) the staff of Aaron that budded (see Heb 9:4). The temple, in which sacrifices were brought according to the Law of Moses, was a visible sign of God's presence among his people.
- 581 The Jerusalem temple was a foreshadowing of Christ—the true place of the encounter between God and humankind. Such a place is also the Church of Christ—the community of believers: "For we are the temple of the living God; as God said, `I will live in them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people" (2 Cor 6:16). The place where the Church community gathers "in remembrance of" Christ (see Lk 22:19) for the "breaking of bread" (see Act 2:42)—for celebrating the Eucharist—is the Christian temple.
- 582 At first, Christians gathered for prayer and the breaking of bread in their homes, and in times of persecution it was in places where martyrs had been buried. Eventually, church buildings were erected over these burial sites. Unlike pagan temples, where there was no place for the people, Christian churches were built as places of gathering for the community. In fact, it is the community—the temple of the Living God—that sanctifies the building, not the building that sanctifies the community.
- 583 An explanation for the origin of the Ukrainian word for temple (khram, translated from the Greek oikos, meaning house) is that it derives from the word for palace (khoromy). This points to the grandeur and beauty of the "house of God." The Christian house of worship is also called church, from the Greek kyriake, which means of the Lord, that is, a building dedicated to God. The Ukrainian name sobor (unified or conciliar gathering) indicates a special place for the assembling of a Church community, headed by a bishop.
- 584 The church's dome is a symbol of heaven, and the joining of the dome to the nave (Greek for boat) is an image of the union of Christ the Head with his Church—his Body. It also symbolizes the joining of heaven and earth in Christ's incarnation. Ukrainian churches are usually built with one, three, or five domes. One dome symbolizes the one God, three domes the Most Holy Trinity, and five domes Christ and the four evangelists.