

Bringing the Church into Our Lives and Homes

There are occasions in a person's life in which special services can be requested. Here's a partial list to help you integrate the life of the Church into your own life:

- **Birthing/Naming Prayers and the Churching**—The birthing prayers (said right after birth) and naming prayers (usually said on the 8th day after birth) are said when the priest is invited to the hospital or home right after a mother gives birth. Because it's traditional for the mother to stay home for 40 days after birth, there are special prayers to welcome her and her baby to the church; these prayers are called the "Churching." Please see Fr. Dustin to schedule. There are also prayers the priest can say in the event of a miscarriage or if you adopt.
- **Baptism and Christmation**—how one becomes a member of the Church.
- **Confession**—the mystery (sacrament) of forgiveness, sometimes referred to as a "second baptism."
- **Informal Betrothal**—when you get engaged, informal betrothal prayers can be said. See Fr. Dustin to schedule.
- **Marriage**—the service in which the Church unites a man and woman in Holy Matrimony. It should be noted that the Orthodox Church can only marry a man and a woman when one of them is an Orthodox Christian and the other one has been baptized in the name of the Trinity, in other words, the non-Orthodox person also has to be a Christian. If you want to request a Marriage service, please see Fr. Dustin at least 6 months in advance so that you can apply for the Ecclesiastical Marriage License issued by our Metropolitan.
- **Wedding Anniversary**—there are special prayers the priest can say on the anniversary of your wedding. See Fr. Dustin to schedule.
- **Funeral**—the burial rite of the Orthodox Church. Typically, you call the priest right after someone dies so that he can come and say the Trisagion (memorial) prayers. The meal immediately following the funeral is usually a fish meal because Jesus ate fish after being resurrected from the dead (John 21:9-14). After the funeral, the family usually schedules memorials to be said after Divine Liturgy (see below). Please also note that the Orthodox Church can't do funerals for those who are cremated; this is because we believe in a bodily resurrection.
- **Memorial, or Trisagion, service and Koliva**—these are memorial services for the departed. They are typically scheduled at the end of Divine Liturgy for the 40th day after death, the first year anniversary, and every year after that, if the family so wishes. When you pray a memorial, it is expected that you make and bring the Koliva, which is a wheat dish prepared in honor of the dead (Fr. Dustin can get you a recipe). This is in remembrance of what Jesus said regarding death and resurrection, "Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit." (John 12:24)
- **Artoklasia**—means the "breaking of bread." This service (performed usually at Vespers or at the end of Divine Liturgy) is when a family brings 5 loaves ("artos" means bread) to be blessed by the priest (Fr. Dustin can get you the recipe). These loaves are brought in honor

of a particular saint (such as your patron saint on your name day) or for one of the Great Feasts.

- **House Blessings**—are performed in connection with the Great Feast of Theophany. This season usually lasts until the beginning of Great Lent, though house blessings can be done at anytime during the year. This is short service where you invite the priest to come and bless your house with holy water. Though it is typical to feed the priest or to offer a small tip, Fr. Dustin does not require this.
- **Icon Blessings**—some people like to bring their icons to church to be blessed by the priest. Some priests will set the icon on the altar during Liturgy. Others, will leave the icon on the altar for 40 days. Fr. Dustin usually says blesses them with holy water in a short service following Divine Liturgy or one of the other services.
- **Unction, Anointing of the Sick**—the full unction service is quite long. However, unction that is blessed during Holy Week is kept by Fr. Dustin so that he can bring it to the sick during the year. When he does this, it's a short service that can be performed in the home or hospital. Note, Orthodox Christians, unlike Catholics, do not see Unction as a “death rite,” therefore please feel free to call Fr. Dustin anytime you have an illness or surgery and require prayers. When Fr. Dustin gets called to the home or hospital, he can also hear confession or bring communion.
- **Traveling Prayers**—can be requested from Fr. Dustin when you take a long trip. They are usually performed after Divine Liturgy the Sunday before you leave.
- **Vehicle Blessing**—if you buy a new vehicle there are prayers that the priest can say to bless it.
- **St. Phanourios Bread**—In the Orthodox Church, it's common to request the help of St. Phanourios when you lose something. After finding your lost item, you honor the saint by baking a special bread (see Fr. Dustin for the recipe) and bringing it to the church to be blessed.
- **Vasilopita**—is the St. Basil Bread that is made in honor of St. Basil who is celebrated on January 1st. We hold our own Vasilopita celebration at Twelve Apostles, but some folks also invite the priest over to bless their own family Vasiloptia.