

Preparation for Holy Communion

Introduction

There are always two things that the Church offers us to help us in our spiritual development.

- 1) The structure of services
- 2) Personal devotions

The first one is public, communal, Common Prayer-when the local church comes together

The second one is private, between the believer and God

In an ideal situation (my vision for Luton):

Weekly Liturgy:

Starts Saturday night with The Vigil-which is made up of Great Vespers, Matins and the First Hour.

Greek practice this happens Sunday morning and goes straight into the Liturgy
Slav practice; this happens Saturday evening and then we rest.
(About two and half hours)

Sunday we have The Liturgy

Reality:.....!!

Cf Monastic situation Vesp evening service, Matins first service of morning.

How Church seeks to prepare us publicly

Personal Preparation

Stages

1) Confession

Regular aim for once every six weeks at least. If possible more often, but talk to the priest/spiritual father (NB Fr Stephen)

2) Prayer Rule: Prayer and Bible Reading (each person has their own prayer rule)-between you and God

3) Fasting from midnight

4) Prayers of Preparation for Holy Communion

These divide into three;

a) Saturday Night:

Read the Canon of Preparation for Holy Communion

Use different Canons in our weekly Prayer Services/Molebens

Then we pray the Canon

Set Prayer of Odes based on the Nine Odes of the Bible.

The Nine Odes are as follows:

1. The (First) Song of [Moses](#) ([Exodus](#) 15:1-19)
2. The (Second) Song of Moses ([Deuteronomy](#) 32:1-43)^[1]
3. The Prayer of [Hannah](#) ([1 Samuel](#) 2:1-10)
4. The Prayer of [Habakkuk](#) ([Habakkuk](#) 3:1-19)
5. The Prayer of [Isaiah](#) ([Isaiah](#) 26:9-20)
6. The Prayer of [Jonah](#) ([Jonah](#) 2:2-9)
7. The Prayer of the [Three Holy Children](#) ([Daniel](#) 3:26-56)^[2]
8. The Song of the Three Holy Children ([Daniel](#) 3:57-88)^[3]
9. The Song of the [Theotokos](#) (the [Magnificat](#), [Luke](#) 1:46-55); the Song of [Zacharias](#) (the [Benedictus](#), [Luke](#) 1:68-79)

Originally, these odes were chanted in their entirety every day, with a short refrain inserted between each verse.

Eventually, short verses ([troparia](#)) were composed to replace these refrains, a process traditionally inaugurated by Saint [Andrew of Crete](#). Normally the second ode is omitted owing to its severe nature. The most notable exception to this is in the [Great Penitential Canon](#) of St. [Andrew of Crete](#) which is chanted during [Great Lent](#).

Gradually over the centuries, the verses of the Biblical Canticles were omitted (except for the *Magnificat*), and only the composed troparia were read, linked to the original canticles by an *irmos*. During [Great Lent](#), however, the original Biblical Canticles are still read.

BUT only one Canon which uses all Nine Odes: Great Canon of St Andrew of Crete, all others have only eight-second ode is based on Deuteronomy 32 1-43

Originally when a Canon sung, before each Ode the relevant Biblical Ode would be sung first eg....

Need to read it regularly: everytime we prepare for Communion , do read it beforehand, prepare yourself, but the more you read it, the more familiar you get the more you will learn about how God wants to bless you.

b) Preparatory Prayers for Holy Communion

Sunday morning

Again we start with the Usual Beginning

Psalms (OSB) 22, 23, 115/KJV 23, 24, 116 v 10-19

Glory , Alleluia,

First prayers for forgiveness

NB Prayers for Holy & Great Thursday

Lord have mercy 40x (Prostrations as desired)

Series of prayers by the Great Saints

Awesome

2nd prayer of St John Damescene

Fourth Prayer of St John Chrysostom; Metropolitan Anthony

Lines of St Symeon the Translator

Finish with the Troparia

c) Thanksgiving after Holy Communion

Prayers are read by The Reader after the end of the service, they are a thanksgiving on behalf of the people for the Body and Blood of Christ.

Ends with the Song of Symeon

We have received the Body and Blood of Christ and yes we may have the world to face but we are strengthened to do so, but we also know that we are ready to meet the Living Christ, because this prayer is Symeon's prayer to die.

Troparion and Kontakion: John Chrysostom-default Liturgy: that of St John Chrysostom

But 13 x a year we celebrate the Liturgy of St Basil (normally in Lent but sometimes outside) and when we celebrate St Basil we sing the troparion and kontakion to St Basil, as in the Pre-Sanctified Liturgy we sing the troparion and kontakion of St Gregory.