

A Brief Introduction to Etiquette in the Orthodox Church

You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation (1 Peter 2:9)

All things should be done decently and in order (1 Corinthians 14:40)

Between Orthodox people of different cultures there is some variation of practice. These notes are intended to aid you to behave in a dignified, respectful, and reverent manner in our Orthodox Christian parish of ALL SAINTS.

WHEN YOU ENTER THE HOLY TEMPLE

ARRIVE ON TIME. If you are late, enter quietly. If any action is taking place, stay at the back until it is finished.

CROSS YOURSELF when entering or exiting, or when passing in front of the Holy Altar.

BOW when entering/exiting, asking a Priest's blessing, and for the Holy Trinity or Mother of God.

NO LIPSTICK. If you are wearing lipstick, remove it before kissing the holy eikons.

DRESS. Wear a dignified outfit. Nothing too revealing. Men remove hats. Women are encouraged to cover their heads.

CANDLES. Do not light candles if the priest is censuring, preaching, or reading the Holy Gospel. Wait.

DURING THE HOLY SERVICES

STAND, if you are able. Always stand for the reading of the Holy Gospel, the Holy Eucharist, and when the priest faces you and gives a Blessing.

NO CHATTING. Chat after the holy services, not before, or during. Turn your mobile phone to silent, ideally turn it off.

LEG-CROSSING. If you are unwell or weak you may sit, but do not cross your legs or recline in a "relaxed manner".

CHILDREN. If your child becomes noisy or upset, remove her/him until s/he calms down.

CROSS YOURSELF AND BOW whenever you hear 'Father, Son, and Holy Spirit'.

TOUCHING VESTMENTS. When the Priest passes by, many will touch the hem of his vestment.

PARTAKING OF THE HOLY EUCHARIST. You MUST be a member of the Orthodox Church to partake of the Holy Eucharist.

BLESSED BREAD (antidoron). Do not take too much. Do not let crumbs fall to the floor.

LEAVING THE HOLY TEMPLE

LEAVE THE HOLY TEMPLE only when the holy services have finished. Ask a blessing before departing.

PHOTOGRAPHY/FILMING. Always ask permission first.

HOLY ALTAR. No-one enters the holy altar without the blessing of the priest.

GREETING THE PRIEST. Right hand over left, palms up, bow slightly, and say: '*Father, bless*' or '*Your blessing, Father*', then kiss the priest's hand.

Father Jakob
Presbyter, All Saints

Holy Martyr Hyakinthos of Kaesareia in Kappadokia [3rd July], 2017