

## **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 censing, 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*