

Vespers with the Bishop

When the bishop wants to serve at Vespers on the great Saturday evening, or the Vespers on the eve of the great feasts, the arrival & receipt of the Bishop will be as follows: The Bishop, together with the accompanying clergy, two by two according to the ecclesiastical order, enters the church, where is received in *pronaos* by: a priest, two deacons and an *anagnost* or subdeacon. The priest carries the Holy Gospel; the deacons the censers and *Dichero-Trichera*; and the *anagnost* has the staff and *Mandiyas*. Entering the church, the bishop says with a low voice the prayer: **"I will enter Your House, I will kneel into your holy Church, into thy fear O Lord..."**

When the bishop will be in the front of the servants who welcomed him, he vests with *Mandiyas*, been helped by the great *ecclesiarch*, receives the staff and kisses the Holy Gospel, while the deacons incenses him three times.

Meanwhile the priests or the cantors sing: **"Our Master (Pe Stapânul)..."**

After the Holy Gospel is kissed, the bishop, vested with *Mandiyas*, goes in the middle of the Church, together with the entire group, in accordance to the ecclesiastical order. Arriving in the middle of the church, he bows three times, after which the deacons will present him the *Dichero-Trichera*, and he will bless with them all four cardinal points; meantime the cantors sing: **"For many years, O Master!"** and after that the bishop will seat in His chair with the *anagnost* next to him keeping the staff.

The priest and the deacon receive the blessing and start the Vespers. If is watching, the deacon from the middle of the church says: **"Stand up!"** the priest take the censer, bless the incense and start incensing together with the deacon the altar and the entire church. Reaching in the middle of the church, the priest says: **God bless and** continue the incensing; arrived in front of the holy table, says: **Glory to the Holy and Consubstantial and life giving Trinity, now and always and forever and ever** and the cantors respond: **Amen. Come let us worship...** and the Psalm of the Vesper will be read. If there is no watching, the priest says the Vespers' blessing: **Blessed is our God, now and always and forever and ever** and the cantors answer: **Amen. Come let us worship...** and the Psalm of Vespers will be read.

If the bishop wants to do the Pontifical Liturgy next day, during the Vespers' psalm will read the respective prayers and the deacon will hold for him the Liturgical book.

Afterwards follows the great litany, **Happy the man..., Lord I have cried to you hear me...** etc. At the last *sticheron* the deacons will come, bringing with them two trays the *epitrachilion (stole)*, *omophorion* and the *miter*. The bishop vests with them while the deacons taking the bishop *Kamilafka*, bow before him and go in the altar.

At the entrance, the priests and the deacons come out from the altar through the northern door, going two by two in the middle of the church, bowing before the bishop, who sits in his chair, and each of them take their assigned place. The priests from the right hand side will move back a little so that the bishop can come down from his chair and stand in the middle of the church.

All being seated, the bishop reads the entrance prayer, and the archdeacon, pointing towards the holy doors, says in a low voice: **Master bless the holy entrance;** and the bishop bless, saying: **Blessed is thy holy Saints entrance now and always and forever and ever. Amen.** The deacons, holding in their hands the *Dichero-Trichera*, they present the censers to the bishop, for blessing, and after that they start incensing the royal icons, the *iconostasis*, the bishop, the priests and the entire *naos*, as prescribed.

After that, the archdeacon comes in the front of the holy doors and says: **Wisdom rise!** while the deacons with *Dichero-Trichera* go next to the bishop; the bishop receives *Dichero-*

Trichera, then it starts the song: **O joyful light...** Arriving at the words: We praise the Father, and the son and the Holy Spirit... all the celebrants bow, the deacons start incensing the two royal icons, and the bishop bless with the *Dichero-Trichera* the four sides. After that, the bishop turning towards the altar and lifting up his hands with the *dichero-trichera* in the sign of the cross goes to the altar held on his both sides by the highest rank priests being followed by the other clergy, in a two by two formation. The deacons remaining in the front of the royal icons incense all the clergy entering the altar. The bishop goes at the high place and after "**O joyful light**" is finished, the deacon says: **Let us attend!** and the bishop, blessing says: **Peace be to all!**

The *prochimenon* and the readings follow; while the bishop sits during this time in the high chair.

After the readings, the bishop will take his place in front of the Holy Table up until the litanies are finished.

LITIA

If there is *Litia*, after the litanies are finished, the priests and the deacons, in the order they have stayed at the holy table will come out through the deacon doors and will join in a two by two going in the middle of the church; the deacons having in their hands the *Dichero-Trichera* and the censers and after all the servants did three bows, they present the censers to the bishop for blessing of the incense.

The deacons incense the *naos*. At the end of the *stichera* of the *Litia*, the deacon, facing the altar, says the prayer: **Save, O God, Your people...** and the other prayers together with the commemorations, and after that the deacon says: **Again we pray...** and one of the priests says: **Listen to us, O God, Our Savior...** the cantors: **Amen.** The bishop: **Peace be to all.** The deacon: **Bow your heads unto the Lord,** and the bishop reads in a loud voice the prayer: "**Stapane mult milostive...**"

After the prayer, the cantors sing *Stihoavna*. After "**Now you shall dismiss...**" and "**Our Father...**" the daily *Troparion* will be sang, twice, while the bishop assisted by the deacons censes the *Artoclasia* table. After the daily *troparion* will follow the *troparion* for the Mother of God: **Hail Mary full of grace...**, during that the bishop censes the *Naos*, comes in the front of the *Artoclasia* table, takes one bread, and makes the sign of the Cross upon the other breads. The deacon says: **Let us pray to the Lord;** and the bishop will read the prayer for the blessing of the breads, wheat, wine and oil: **Lord Jesus Christ our God...** the cantors: **Amen,** and after: Blessed be the Holy name of the Lord..., The rich will become poor..., after that the bishop, escorted by all the servers, comes in the front of the Holy Doors and addresses the people: Blessing of the Lord... the Cantors: Amen. And if is watching, will begin the reading of the six psalms. All the servers will enter the holy altar and will read the matins prayers, and the priest in charge, after the first three psalms, comes in the front of the Holy Doors and continues to read the rest of the Matins prayers.