



## The Orthodox Faith

**T**he Orthodox Church is the one, holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church in which resides the fullness of Christian truth. It is holy because its head, the Lord Jesus Christ, is Holy and Has made it the unique vehicle of sanctification; it is Catholic because it knows no limitation of time or place and encompasses within itself the entirety of Christ's Church; and it is apostolic because it alone has maintained, with unbroken continuity and without any alteration, the faith of the apostles through the ages.

**T**he Orthodox Church is the repository of the Truths as professed by 2000 years of Tradition; while listening to the needs of the New Millennium. We recognize that the Orthodox Church is the vibrant, living vehicle of the Holy Spirit in the world. As the Living Church, it (she) is under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and is not static...or unchanging. As the young

Church evolved and grew throughout its first century, so it continues to evolve and grow today, as the Holy Spirit directs and leads it.

**T**hrough the centuries there have appeared many heretical teachings which distorted the revealed truth, and which the holy Fathers confronted "with the slingstone of the Spirit," that is to say, by the power of the Holy Spirit. And this is so because the holy Fathers were the bearers of the pure Tradition of the Church. Among these heresies are those of Arianism, the pneumatomachians who fought against the spirit, the Nestorians, the monophysites, the monothelites, the iconoclasts, etc. All these heresies refer chiefly to the Person of Christ, but also to that of the Holy Spirit, and of course they disturb the foundations of man's salvation. For if Christ is not consubstantial with the Father, but is God's first creature, and if the Holy Spirit is not true God, man's salvation is put in doubt, the possibility of deification is cut off.

**C**hrist said to Apostle Peter, who confessed His divinity: "You are Peter, and on this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16,18). The rock (petra) on which the Church is supported is the confession that Christ is the Son of God.

### **Testaments of Orthodoxy:**

**O**rthodoxy confesses the Apostolic and Ecclesiastical Canons, established by the Seven Holy Ecumenical and Provincial Councils, and the traditions of the Holy Orthodox-Catholic Apostolic Church, its rules and ordinances.

We have seven sacraments of the New Testament, namely: Baptism, Chrismation, the Eucharist, Confession, the Priesthood, Marriage and Anointing with Oil, instituted by the Lord Christ and His Church, and we believe in their operation and reception, and

that by the Grace of the Holy Spirit we may receive blessings from on high.

**T**he Holy Eucharist is the oldest experience of Christian Worship as well as the most distinctive. Eucharist comes from the Greek word which means “thanksgiving.” In a particular sense, the word describes the most important form of the Church’s attitude toward all of life. The origin of the Eucharist is traced to the Last Supper at which Christ instructed His disciples to offer bread and wine in His memory saying these words “This is my body”, “This is my blood”, and “Do this in remembrance of Me” (Luke 22: 19,20). The Eucharist is the most distinctive event of Orthodox worship because in it the Church gathers to remember and celebrate the Life, Death, and Resurrection of Christ and, thereby, to participate in the mystery of Salvation.

### **Conclusion:**

**T**he Church is not a human organization, but a Divine-Human Organism. It is not a human corporation, but the Divine-human Body of Christ. The source of the Church is this God Himself. It is not men's invention, it is not a fruit and result of men's social need, but it is the sole place of man's salvation

**T**he greatest gift of grace, which we have, is that we belong to the Church. The greatest gift is that we are in this great Family. We should value this gift, we should feel very deeply moved and struggle to remain in the Church, experiencing its sanctifying grace and showing by our lives that we are in its place of redemption and sanctification. Thus we shall also have the great gift of the “blessed ending,” when we

are granted to lie asleep “in the midst of the Church.”

### **Glory Be to God. Amen!**

*For more information you can visit the website of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America.*

<http://www.goarch.org/en/ourfaith/>

<http://www.goarch.org/en/ourfaith/articles/article8029.asp>