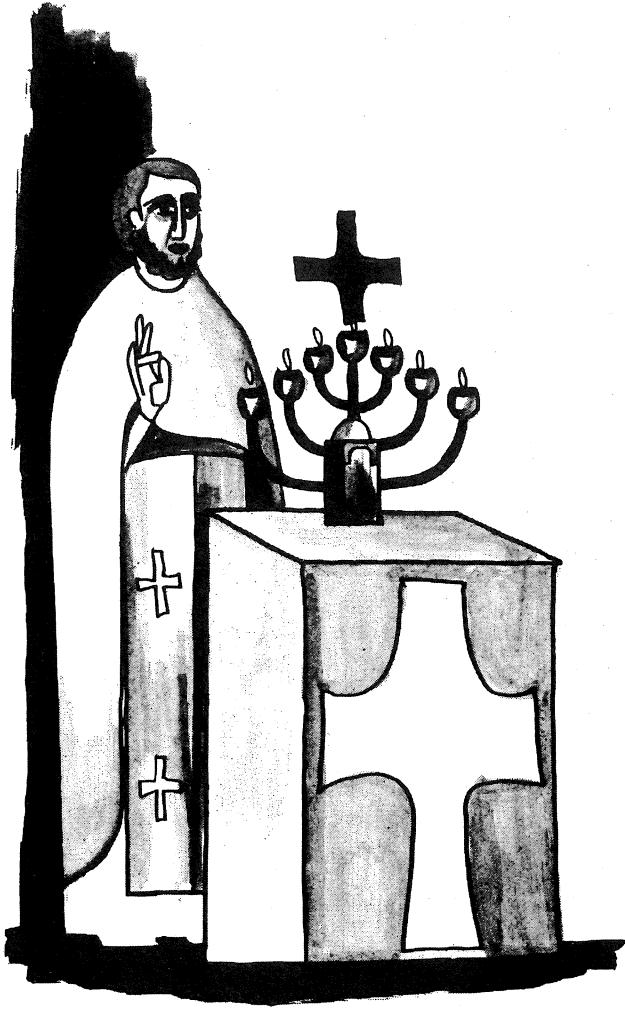


16. GOD BLESSES AND SPEAKS TO US

The priest now speaks God's Word to us. God's first words are a blessing:

"Peace be with you all."



Do you remember when we first gathered together and began our prayer to God? The first thing we asked of God was peace. Find the Great Litany again in your Divine Liturgy books. Write the first line of the first three petitions here:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

God now gives us His blessing of peace.

Following God's blessing, we hear readings from several parts of the Bible which is the Word of God. The readings are:

- a. short verses from the Psalms (Old Testament),
- b. a reading from the Epistle (New Testament),
- c. a reading from the Gospel (New Testament).

Prokimenon

The **prokimenon** is a short verse from the Psalms that usually announces the theme of the Epistle and Gospel readings. Originally, it was a whole Psalm that was sung before the reading of the Epistle. These short verses from the Old Testament are read or sung just before our readings from the New Testament. They remind us that God's prophecies have been fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Here are the Prokimenona for the feasts of Palm Sunday, Ascension, Pentecost and the Great Feast of Easter. Draw lines matching the Old Testament verses with the correct New Testament feasts. Look up the Bible verses for the Feasts if you need help.

PROKIMENON

1. **This is the day which the Lord hath made;
let us rejoice and be glad in it.**
(Psalm 118:24)
2. **Blessed is he that cometh in the name of
the Lord.**
(Psalm 118:26)
3. **Be thou exalted, O God above the heav-
ens.**
(Psalm 57:5)
4. **Their voice has gone out into all the earth,
and their words to the end of the world.**
(Psalm 19:4)

FEAST

- A. Palm Sunday
(Matthew 21:9)
- B. Ascension
(Acts 1:9-11)
- C. Pentecost
(Acts 2:1-6)
- D. Easter
(Matthew 28:1-8)



The Epistle Reading

The **Epistle** is the section of the New Testament that contains the Acts of the Apostles (the history of the Church in its beginning years) and the Letters of the Apostles to the different Churches throughout the Empire or to their leaders. Sometimes these letters told of certain problems in the Churches and offered advice to their members. Sometimes they told of the history of God's chosen people and the fulfillment of God's promises. In all of the letters, we find the teachings of Jesus Christ as they were lived and taught by His disciples and apostles. These letters are read today in our Church by a member of the congregation, usually by someone who has been blessed as a **Reader**. Look up these Epistle readings and match them with the feast on which they are read.

Acts 1:1-12	Pentecost
Romans 5:6-10	Holy Saturday
Acts 2:1-11	Ascension
Romans 6:3-11	Good Friday