



ΒΕΝ ΘΡΑΝ ὠΨΩΤ ΝΕΩ ΠΩΗΡΙ ΜΕΝ ΠΙΠΝΕΤ ΜΑ ΕΘΟΥΑΒΟΥΝΟΥ† ΝΟΥΩΤ ΔΩΗΝ

## Lesson # 5

### LITURGY OF THE WORD

#### *THE CIRCUIT OF THE PAULINE INCENSE*

After the Absolution the serving priest enters the Sanctuary, takes the box of incense and bows before his brethren asking them to bless the box with him. In love and humility they bow in return saying, “You Bless.” Then he puts five spoonfuls of incense into the censer.

#### **A Point On The Round Of The Pauline Incense**

✠ If the Patriarch, a Metropolitan or a Bishop is present he alone should bless the box of incense since he is the Archpriest. On the second signing of the cross he places the incense in the hands the other priests and they put it in the censer. He then completes the rest of the signings.

✠ The incense is placed in the censer which is carried by the deacon who stands towards the right of the altar. The priest then does the sign of the cross on the congregation saying, “Let us pray”, then after the response of the deacon he says, “Stand up for prayer.” The priest then says, “Peace be with you all”, signifying the introduction to the Pauline Readings. The priest then takes the censer from the deacon and says the first Mystery of the Pauline Incense.

#### *THE FIRST MYSTERY OF THE PAULINE INCENSE*

The church has prepared five readings for each Liturgy; the Pauline Epistle, the Catholic Epistle, the Acts (Praxis), the Sinaxarium, and the Gospel. These readings provide an opportunity for Biblical contemplation and teaching. These readings are in addition to the readings said during the raising of Vespers and Morning Incense. During periods of fasting and feasts prophecies are also read. The priest also prays some silent prayers that the Lord may enlighten His congregation and grant them the grace to apply the words that they hear to their own spiritual lives. He then prays the First Mystery of the Pauline Incense, saying: “O God, the great...”, of whom Moses said to his people, **“For the Lord Your God is God of gods and Lord of lords the great God Mighty and Awesome, who shows no partiality nor takes a bribe” (Deut.10:17)**, and Jeremiah the Prophet said, **“And the Great the Mighty God whose Name is the Lord of Hosts.”** ...The Eternal God who is without beginning and without end, who is great in His counsel and mighty in His works...”, as Jeremiah the Prophet said, **“You are great in counsel and mighty in works” (Jer.32:19)**. As the Lord is Mighty in works, He is also Mighty in words,

He made His servant Moses to be, “mighty in words and deeds” (Acts 7:22).“...He Who is present everywhere, with everyone, be with us also, Our Master, in this hour. Stand amidst all of us. Purify our hearts, sanctify our souls and cleanse us from all sins which we have done willingly and unwillingly...”.

Here the priest confesses that the Lord is a blessed God Who is Almighty and omnipresent. He then asks the Lord in humility to be in the midst of His people so that His people will be blessed and the Church will prevail against her enemies, as it is written in the Psalms, ***“God is in the midst of her and shall not be moved. God shall help her just at the break of dawn...The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge” (Ps.46:5).*** The priest then asks the Lord to purify both himself and His people so that they all may be worthy to partake of the Holy Communion.“...Grant us to offer before Your uttering sacrifices, offerings of blessings and a spiritual incense, entering within the veil in the Holy Place of your Holies...”, ***“Where the forerunner has entered for us even Jesus having become high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek” (Heb.6:20).***

The priest then proceeds around the altar three times while praying the Three Major Litanies of Peace, the Fathers, and the Congregation. He then comes out of the sanctuary with his left foot first without putting his back to the altar. The Round of the Pauline Incense is similar to that of the Vespers and Morning Incense (explained previously in The Raising of Incense), the only difference being that the priest in the Pauline Round says, “The blessings of Paul, the Apostle of Jesus Christ be with us all, Amen”, instead of, “The blessings of the Vespers/Morning Incense be with us all, Amen.”

### **Some Notes On The First Mystery Of The Pauline Incense:**

✠ It is preferable for the serving priest to do all of the Pauline Round, but if the Pope, a Metropolitan or a Bishop is serving, he performs the round inside the sanctuary then gives the censer to the serving priest to continue around the church. The ‘Diskolia’, which is the book of Apostolic Teachings, says that, “The Bishop carries the incense around the altar three times, then gives the censer to the priest who proceeds around the church with the incense.” In doing this the Bishop inside the Sanctuary symbolises our beloved Lord Jesus Christ in heaven, and passing the censer to the priest who then proceeds around the church with the incense signifies the Lord commissioning His Angels and His saints to care for and serve mankind; the angels being serving spirits who are sent to serve the believers on earth. It also refers to Moses asking Aaron to incense among the congregation so that God’s wrath might be removed from the people.

✠ In the Pauline Round Of Incense the priest proceeds around the whole church in remembrance of St. Paul who exerted himself exceedingly in his travels to preach the message of the Lord, which he did more than any other Apostle. About this the Apostle says, ***“But by the Grace of God I am what I am and His grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them” (1Cor.15:10).***

✠ When he had to count his toils to convince the Corinthians of the legitimacy of his Apostleship he said, ***“Are they servants of Christ? I am a better one. I am talking like a madman with far greater labors far more imprisonments, with countless beatings. I have been adrift at sea on frequent journeys...”*** (2Cor.11:23-28).

✠ In his Epistle to the Romans, St. Paul says, ***“From Jerusalem and round about to Illyricum, I have fully preached the Gospel of Christ”*** (Romans 15:19). *Illyricum is a city West of Greece. St. Paul is famous for his four preaching journeys on both sea and land in which he endured hardship and tribulation.*

✠ In the Pauline Round the priest offers incense from the left side of the church and proceeding to the right indicating that through the faith preached by St. Paul we were taken from darkness to God’s great light.

✠ If the Pope, a Metropolitan or a Bishop is serving and needs to consecrate the church’s altar, utensils of the altar such as the censor, paten and chalice, or consecrate the icons of the church, he does so during the readings of the Pauline Epistles.

✠ If the serving priest wants to give the censer to his fellow priest, they exchange a kiss like the one exchanged during the Incense of Fellowship (but without saying anything) and then the censer is passed. The same procedure is followed when the censer is given back to the serving priest.

## **THE INCENCE OF THE PRAXIS**

### ***THE PRAXIS CIRCUIT***

There is no round of incense during the readings of the Catholicon, during which time the priest remains in the Sanctuary according to the Lord’s command to His Disciples that they should not depart Jerusalem before the coming of the Holy Spirit. After the round of the Pauline and the Arabic (English) reading the priest starts the prayers and mysteries of the Praxis Round.

### ***THE SECOND MYSTERY OF THE PAULINE***

#### ***INCENSE***

This Mystery comes after the Pauline readings and not during its reading as it was in the ancient Liturgy Books. (The ancient books are now kept in the Library (of the Syrian Monastery).“The priest prays the following prayer which is given with Biblical references below:“...O God of knowledge, and giver of wisdom, who brings to light the hidden things of darkness...”, just as Job said,

**“He uncovers deep things out of darkness and brings the shadow of death to light”** (Job 12:22), and Daniel says, **“He reveals deep and secret things, He knows what is**

**in the darkness and light dwells with Him” (Dan.2:22), “And gives the word to them that preach the gospel with great power” (Ps 67:11)“...Who, of Your Goodness, has called upon Paul to be a chosen vessel, who was for some time a persecutor...”, for it is written that he was “still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord of Damascus, so that if he found any who were of the way whether men or women he might bring them bound to Jerusalem” (Acts 9:1-2)**

The Apostle says about himself,

**“I persecuted the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it” (Gal.1:13).**

“...But he found favour with You, O Lord, that he should become Your chosen apostle and preacher of the Gospel, O Christ Our Lord...”, and the Lord was pleased with him and called Paul to His service, who said,

**“But when I pleased God who separated me from my mother’s womb and called me through His grace to reveal His Son to me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles” (Gal.1:15-16).** “With that you were pleased that he would be called Apostle and preacher to the Gospel of Your Kingdom, O Christ our Lord”, being called a servant of Jesus Christ, as he said, **“Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ called to be an Apostle separated to the gospel of God” (Rom.1:1).** It is written in the Book of Acts, **“As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Now separate for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.’ Then having fasted and prayed and laid hands on them they sent them away” (Acts 13:23).** “...Also now we ask You, O lover of mankind, to graciously grant us and all your people, pure minds and wisdom so that we may learn and understand how profitable Your Holy teachings, which are being read to us are...”. While the congregation listens to the Pauline epistle, the priest goes inside the sanctuary and prays deeply, pleading with God to bestow upon His people a mind that is not preoccupied with the world and its anxieties, for these preoccupations are like thorns which poison the Word of God. He also entreats the Lord to give them, as well as himself, a pure understanding, a clear mind, knowledge and wisdom, and to reveal to them the deep spiritual meanings that are behind the words being read....And as Paul imitated You, O Prince of Peace, so help us to be like him in deed and faith...”.

St. Paul imitated the Lord Jesus as much as his human nature could bear. In imitating his humility St. Paul said,

**“I know how to be abased” (Phil.4:12).**

He claimed to be the least of all the apostles, unworthy of the term ‘apostle’. St. Paul travelled to many countries to preach the word of God, enduring many trials and was tortured many times because of his love for the Lord Jesus Christ **“Who is weak and I am not? Who is made to stumble and I do not burn with indignation?” (2Cor.11:29).** He also followed the Lord in sufferings, as seen in these accounts, which state, **“They stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city supposing him to be dead” (Acts 14:19)...** **“I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ for the sake of His body, which is the church, of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God, which was given to me for you to fulfil the word of God” (Col.1:24-25)**

The priest pleads with the Lord, on behalf of the people and himself, to be like the Apostle Paul in his deeds and faith, heeding the words of St. Paul when he said, ***“Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ” (1Cor.11:1)...*** ***“Nevertheless, I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that day” (2Tim.1:12).*** ***“...That we may glorify Your Holy Name O Lord, and have pride in Your cross at all times...”***. St. Paul the Apostle used to glorify the Lord at all times, and attributed all glory to Him, considering himself weak, as mere dust. He was always proud of the cross and its victory saying, ***“But God forbid that I should glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ by whom the world has been crucified to me and I to the world” (Gal.6:14).*** ***“...And unto You we give glory...”***

### ***MYSTERY OF THE CATHOLIC EPISTLES***

The priest says the Mystery of the catholic Epistle inaudibly saying, ***“O Lord God who has revealed unto us through Your Holy Apostles the mystery of the glory of Your son Jesus Christ...”***. St. Paul asked the Ephesians to pray for him, asking, ***“That utterance may be given to me that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel” (Eph.6:19).*** The word ‘catholic’ is a Greek word which means ‘universal’. The seven epistles following St. Paul’s epistles are called the catholic Epistles, commencing with the Epistle of St. James. They were called the ‘universal’ epistles because they were written to all the nations and not to a particular person or a certain group of people, as were the Pauline Epistles. The Gospel of Christ, as taught by the Apostles, is the doctrine of heaven. If we follow it, it will lead us to a happy eternal life. ***“...And has given unto them according to the power of the infinite gift of Your Grace, that they should proclaim among all nations the glad news of the unsearchable riches of Your mercy...”***. The Lord chose His disciples so that they may preach to the nations about the riches of the Kingdom of Heaven, and of the salvation of Christ, through His death on the Cross and His Glorious Resurrection. St. Paul says, ***“To me who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make all people see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ” (Eph.3:8-9).*** ***“...We ask You Our Lord make us worthy to have a share and an inheritance with them. Graciously grant us to always walk in their footsteps and to imitate their struggle and to have fellowship with them, in the sweat they had for godliness sake...”***. Here the priest asks for himself and for his people that the Lord makes them worthy to inherit the eternal life with Christ, together with the saintly Apostles. The Lord had written their names in His Heavenly Kingdom and prepared a place for them to be with Him, keeping His promise that, ***“If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me and where I am there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honour” (John 12:26).*** Before gaining such an inheritance with the Apostles we must follow in their footsteps, contemplate on their lives and imitate their faith, deeds, struggles, and sacrifices, which were all done in the Name of Jesus Christ. The apostles were martyred and shed their blood for His Name, enduring much persecution and torture in the course of preaching Christ. ***“...Watch over Your holy Church, O Lord, which You founded through them...”***

The church is the group of believers, ***“Having been built on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone in whom the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord” (Eph.2:20-21).***

The Apostle Paul who is one of the founders of the Church speaks to the believers saying, “For we are God’s fellow workers; you are God’s field, ***you are God’s building...For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ” (1Cor.3:9-11).*** “...And bless the lambs of Your flock...”. The believers are the flock of the Good Shepherd, our beloved Lord Jesus Christ, who sacrificed Himself for His sheep,

***“So we, Your people and sheep of Your pasture, will give You thanks forever, we will show forth Your praise to all generations” (Ps.79:13).*** “...And may this vine which You have planted, grow and be fruitful...”. The Church is the vine and the Lord Jesus Christ is the vinedresser Who cares for the vine so that it may grow and increase in its fruitfulness, as seen in the Psalm, ***“Return, we beseech You, O God of hosts, look down from heaven and see and visit this vine and the vineyard which Your right hand has planted” (Ps.80:14-15)*** “...Through Jesus Christ our Lord...”

### ***THE MYSTERY OF THE PRAXIS***

The priest prays the Litany of Oblation, not the Litany of Travellers which is prayed in the morning. If he has already said the Litany of Oblation then he does not repeat it. After the Mystery of the catholic Epistle the priest prays the Mystery of the Praxis. Having put one spoonful of incense in the censor, he says: “O God who accepted the sacrifice of Abraham and prepared for him a lamb in place of Isaac...”. Isaac, despite the fact that he was a strong youth, did not resist his father or flee when Abraham was offering him as a sacrifice on the altar to the Lord; for this reason the Lord accepted this sacrifice. The sacrifice of Isaac is the archetype of the sacrifice of our beloved Lord Jesus Christ who was sacrificed for the forgiveness of our sins. “...Likewise, O Lord, accept this sacrifice of incense and send down upon us in return Your abundantly rich mercy and purify us from all corruption of sin and make us worthy to serve in holiness and righteousness before Your goodness all the days of our life...”

If we raise before the Lord pure and undefiled hands, a sanctified heart and eyes full of innocence and yet illumination, the Lord will accept our offering as a sweet aroma of incense. The church here repeats what Zachariah the priest said, ***“We serve Him in holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life” (Luke 1:75).*** Notice that the priest calls the incense ‘a burnt offering’, meaning a sacrifice, just like the sacrifice of fasting, the sacrifice of prayer, the sacrifice of raising hands during worship, and the sacrifice of praise. As mentioned previously, in the Old Testament temple there was a special altar named the Altar of Incense, where the sacrifice of incense was offered. At the right hand side of the Altar of Incense the angel appeared to Zachariah and announced the birth of his son John.

The priest proceeds around the altar three times while praying the Three Minor Litanies then comes out of the sanctuary and offers incense as mentioned in the Round of the Pauline. He then offers the Gospel Incense before exchanging a holy kiss with his fellow fathers and asking them to pray for him. He then proceeds to offer incense to the icons on the Southern side of the sanctuary’s door, then proceeds towards the Northern side of the

sanctuary. He walks among the congregation down the centre aisle saying, "Let your people through blessing be thousands upon thousands...", and he blesses the congregation while saying, "The blessings of my masters, the Apostles Peter and Paul...". He does not proceed as far as the Western end of the church but returns to the door of the sanctuary while saying the Mystery of the Confession of the congregation.

### **Some Remarks Concerning The Round Of The Praxis:**

✠ In coming out of the sanctuary to offer incense in the whole church the priest symbolises the Apostles when they left Jerusalem to preach Christianity throughout the whole world. The priest does not go around the whole church as in the round of the Pauline, which signifies the fact that the Apostles limited their preaching to Judea and the cities of Judah, whereas St. Paul preached Christianity to the whole world, and therefore encountered more tribulations during his travels than his fellow apostles did.

✠ The priest offers the incense from right to left to indicate that the Apostles returned from the Mount of Olives to Jerusalem after the Ascension of the Lord.

Another reason being that, as the priest started the Round of the Pauline from left to right, he starts the Round of the Praxis from right to left, indicating that both are equal.

✠ After finishing the Round of the Praxis the priest does not enter the sanctuary. This is for two reasons. One is due to that fact that the Apostles did not return to Jerusalem but were martyred in the country where they last preached; and the other is that by the end of the three rounds after reading the Praxis the priest has completed seven rounds, these being the three rounds after the First Mystery of the Pauline, one round after the Mystery of the Congregation's Confession and the three rounds after the Praxis. These rounds are a representation of the children of Israel and the Ark of Covenant who circled Jericho seven times before the walls tumbled down. As the priest proceeds around the altar offering incense and raising prayers and pleadings to the Lord the walls of evil and sin tumble down.

### **القراءات**

بعد تحليل الخدام يدخل الكاهن إلى الهيكل ليبدأ دورة بخور البولس.

### **دورة البولس**

مشابهة تماماً لدورة بخور عشية أو باكر فيما عدا الصلوات السرية التي تقال قبلها وبعدها.

### **ملاحظات**

+ يلاحظ في دورة البولس أن الكاهن يطوف الكنيسة كلها لأن بولس تعب في الكرازة أكثر من بقية الرسل وهو الذي قال عن نفسه "ونعمته المعطاة لي لم تكن باطلة بل أنا تعبت أكثر من منهم جميعهم" (1كو15: 10)

+ في دورة بخور البولس، يبخر الكاهن في الكنيسة مبتدئاً من الشمال إلى اليمين إشارة إلى كوننا بالإيمان الذي كرز به بولس نقلنا من الظلمة

إلى النور.

+ بعد انتهاء الدورة يدخل الكاهن للهيكل ليقول سر الرجعة داخل الهيكل إشارة إلى أن بولس الرسول كان يعود إلى أورشليم بعد رحلاته التبشيرية.

### الكاثوليكون

- كلمة يونانية معناها "جامعة" وتطلق على الرسائل السبع التي تعقب رسائل بولس الرسول وهي (يعقوب ويهوذا والاثنان لبطرس والثلاثة ليوحنا) و تسمى جامعة لأنها لم تكتب لفئة معينة كرسائل بولس الرسول إنما كتبت للأمم والشعوب.

- لا تُعمل دورة للكاثوليكون ولا يخرج الكاهن من الهيكل إشارة إلى وعد الرب لتلاميذه أن لا يبرحوا أورشليم بل ينتظروا موعد الأب.

### الابركسيس

- كلمة يونانية معناها قصة أو تاريخ أو عمل و يقرأ فيه فصل من أعمال الرسل.

- بعد الانتهاء من قراءة البولس يبدأ الكاهن في صلوات وأسرار دورة الابركسيس وهي سر البولس الثاني وسر الكاثوليكون.

- وبعد ذلك يبدأ الكاهن في دورة بخور الابركسيس فيدور في الهيكل ثلاث دورات ثم يخرج خارج الهيكل ويبخر في الكنيسة مبتدئاً من اليمين فيعطي البخور للهيكل القبلي ثم يرجع و يفعل نفس الشيء ناحية الشمال ثم يمر في الممر الأوسط وهو يبارك الشعب "وأما شعبك فليكن بالبركة.....". وفي سيره لا يصل إلى نهاية الكنيسة من الغرب. ثم يرجع للهيكل وقبل دخوله يقول صلاة سرية تسمى سر الرجعة.

### ملاحظات

+ خروج الكاهن من الهيكل للتبخير في الكنيسة يرمز إلى خروج الرسل من أورشليم للكراسة والتعليم في العالم.

+ عدم طواف الكاهن في الكنيسة كلها في هذه الدورة على خلاف ما فعل في دورة البولس إشارة إلى أن الرسل جعلوا عملهم أولاً

مقصوراً على اليهودية، وفي مدن يهوذا وحتى يتميز بولس الرسول الذي طاف في العالم مبشراً، وتعب أكثر منهم في الكرازة والسفر.

+ يطوف الكاهن من اليمين للشمال كنوع من أنواع التمايز على أن الرسل بشروا في مواضع أخرى غير التي بشر فيها يولس الرسول

وإشارة إلى رجوع الرسل من جبل الزيتون إلى أورشليم بعد صعود الرب.

+ عدم دخول الكاهن للهيكل بعد الدورة لأن الرسل بعدما خرجوا من أورشليم للكراسة في العالم لم يعودوا إليها بل استشهدوا كل منهم في البلد الذي بشر فيه.

ΜΑΝΕ ΤΟΥΤΙ

good morning

Πιλαος:

Αλληλοια. Φαι πε πιεζουτ

ετα Ποc θαμιοc:

μαρενθεληλ ητενορνοc

υμον ηδητηc: ω Ποc

εκεναρμεν: ω Ποc

εκεcορτεν νενμωιτ:

cμαρωοτ ηξε φηεθνηοτ

θεν φραν υΠοc: αλ.

**People:**

Alleluia. This is the day that the Lord has made.

Let us rejoice and be glad in it. O Lord save us. O

Lord straighten our ways.

Blessed is He, who comes in the name of the Lord.

Alleluia.

الشعب:

هلليلويا. هذا هو

اليوم الذي صنعه

الرب فلنفرح

ونبتهج فيه. يا

رب خلصنا يا رب

سهل سبيلنا.

مبارك الآتي

باسم الرب.

هلليلويا.

Said on all days that are not part of a fast, on all major and minor feasts, on the feasts of the cross, and the feast of Nayroz.