

MSB Sunday School

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2022-03-03 Parents Meeting

Topic: The Role of the MS Parent

Introduction

- We are here today because we all love our Middle Schoolers and all of the children and youth of our church, and we want to work together and support each other in their upbringing
- Purpose of Parents Meetings
 - To see how we can work together - servants and parents - in the lives of these children
 - To shed some light on some of the things that we, the servants, are seeing in the church that maybe you are not seeing at home
 - Many parents are regularly communicating with us one by one about their children - this is a great thing. In those conversations, sometimes we noticed common themes among all of the children so we wanted to address them here
- One of the common themes is regarding the role of the parent
 - Please don't take this the wrong way!
 - All of you are wonderful parents who have raised amazing children - these kids are extremely smart (sometimes too smart), and very kind - they love one another, they help each other, they make friends... God bless you and may they grow to be successful in every aspect of their life.
 - But the reason that we chose this topic is because sometimes there is a HESITANCY in the role of the parent
 - One might say "Well America is different from Egypt"
 - Another might say "Well the times are different from when I was young and my parents raised me"
 - And some might confuse or mix the role of the parent with the role of the Church
 - So we want to clarify today some of the most important roles of the parent in the upbringing of their children
- We all want to see our children successful and growing in every aspect of their life
 - to grow healthy, to grow mentally, to grow emotionally and socially, to grow spiritually
 - "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men." (Luke 2:52)
- We have to keep in mind what St Paul described for the Corinthians:
"So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase." (1 Cor 3:7)
 - So whatever we discuss today, it will be practical applications and exercises and examples, but in the back of all of it, we have our God who loves us and who is always working and bringing the increase, and we must depend on Him for the fruits.

We can plant and water, but He will bring the fruit.

- But we still need to plant and water and do our part - both as parents and as servants

The Parent: The Spiritual Enabler

- Exercises
 - Read the Bible with your child
 - Stand in prayer with your child
 - Follow-up with their spiritual education - what are they learning in Sunday School? What are they learning in Bible Study?
 - Ask about their hymns class, and learn the hymn with them
 - Bring your child EARLY for the Liturgical Services and stay until the end (i.e. of the Praises)
 - Bring your child on the day of Confession and remind them with the sacrament of repentance and confession
 - Make vegan food at home during the fasts of the church including Wednesday and Friday
 - Give them an allowance to use for alms and tithing
- This is the very basic necessity in the job of the parent
 - The Middle Schooler cannot drive... that's on the parent
 - The Middle Schooler cannot cook... that's on the parent
 - The Middle Schooler cannot bring in income... that's on the parent!
- The Middle Schooler needs encouragement to read the Bible and to stand in prayer... at this point in their life, they may not yet be finding benefit in prayer and in Scripture, but this is the point in their life to build good habits
- Enable them in their good habits instead of in their bad habits
 - If the kid is addicted to his phone, and the parents are getting the latest upgrades and newer phones for him
 - If the kid is struggling to wake up for the liturgy, and the parents say "well I can't wake him up" - so what? Will we leave him to perish? Are you expecting someone else to come and wake him up? This is the time to build good habits!
 - If the kid doesn't want to fast... make vegan food! And make GOOD vegan food! A middle schooler will not survive on salt and water during Lent, they are not an ascetic! Build the habit of fasting and when they get older, they will find the ascetic part of it
 - If the kid has some friends that are negatively influencing him... why do you let them hang out with those friends? And we do sleepovers for them and go to the park or whatever and they miss liturgy or Vespers with their friend... why enable the bad habits?
- One of the major roles - and the easiest role - of the parent is to Enable Good Habits and Spiritual Habits

The Parent: The Spiritual Model

- But to enable and to do it with them is not enough - the parent must also be a spiritual MODEL
 - "And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates." (Deuteronomy 6:6-9)
- If you tell your son/daughter to pray, or to read the Bible, they won't listen. But if they see you doing it, then it's a different story... if you're telling them to pray but you are not praying, then it is not authentic. If you, yourself, don't believe in the power of prayer, then how will you convince your child to believe in it?
 - This is exactly what happened in Luke 11
 - "Now it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, that one of His disciples said to Him, 'Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.' So He said to them, 'When you pray, say: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name...' (Luke 11:1-4)
 - The disciples saw Him praying first... and then they asked: "Lord, teach us to pray"
- Exercises:
 - Let them see you pray
 - Let them see you read the Scripture
 - Let them see you sit down for confession
 - Let them see you attending the liturgy from the beginning - not dropping them off and going home
 - Let them see you fasting! It's not enough to make vegan food for them, and you are eating something else... actually this will have the opposite effect
- On the other hand, our children sometimes see and hear things from their parents that they shouldn't
 - They hear you on the phone with your friend or your sister or your mom - are you gossiping? Criticizing?
 - They hear the kind of music you listen to in your car and in the house
 - They see the kind of TV Shows and Movies you are watching
 - One of the things we are seeing in the Middle School boys and girls now is they are "shipping" each other - "shipping" comes from "relationship" - "Oh flan and flanna look good with each other" - and they start to develop inappropriate relationships with each other... and when we tried to address it with them they said "no no our moms agree! My mom was telling the other moms" - Excuse me?
- Our children - especially in the Middle School age - are following the MODEL that is being set for them
- We expect that when we give a lesson in the class, the parent will model it in the home
 - We give the lesson about Repentance and Confession, but it's not enough - we need Abouna to make time to accept their confession, we need the parent to bring them for their confession date, and we need the parent to be a model for them
 - We give a lesson about alcohol or about dancing in parties... but then if the parent takes their child to a wedding reception and exposes them to all of those things, and more than that the parent is doing those things - then the lesson was useless...

actually the lesson had the opposite effect now.

The Parent: A Guard and Protector

- Monitor their phone and their social media
 - This is very important
 - Read their messages between their friends - what kind of language are they using, and what kind of language are their friends using?
 - See what is coming up on their social media and their Instagram - what kind of pictures and videos are they being exposed to?
 - See what apps are on their phone, and what apps they are using the most
- Learn
 - Learn how to use these apps
 - Learn how to use these phones
 - Learn the language that your kids are speaking
 - If there's something you don't understand - ask them!
 - Following them on these apps is not enough!
- Get to know their friends
 - Invite their friends to your house
 - Listen to the kinds of conversations they are having
 - What kind of language are they using?
 - When you bring them to your house and under your watch, you are controlling the environment
- Know what is going on at school and at church
 - Who are their teachers?
 - What values do their teachers have?
 - What is being taught at school?
 - What agenda does the school or the teachers have?
 - What kind of friends and classmates do they have?
 - **They know more than think**
 - **Don't think you are exposing them to worldly things**
 - **Don't be surprised with what they know**
 - **Let them come to you with their questions**
 - **Don't tell them they're too young, etc or else they will go elsewhere with their questions that is not a parent or servant.**
- Protect them from evil at night
 - The devil's domain is in darkness - when the rest of the house is sleeping, and one is awake in the house, the devil would love to attack
 - Encourage an early bed time
 - No phones in the bedroom
- Teach your child to stand up for themselves and to stand up for the TRUTH
- Teach your child about boundaries
 - What boundaries need to be between boys and girls, and what boundaries between their friends of the same gender
 - Boys will want to play rough with each other - and that's okay
 - Girls will want to hug each other and walk arm in arm - and that's okay

- It's NOT okay for a boy to play rough with a girl
- It's NOT okay for a boy to lay his hands on a girl - either in a violent way or in an endearing way
- It's NOT okay for a girl to walk arm in arm with a boy
- It's NOT okay for a boy to take a picture of another boy - especially a compromising picture - and show it his friends or to the girls
- There are some conversations between boys and girls that are NOT appropriate
- We are starting to see some of these boundaries being crossed between our boys and girls - and it is happening on Wednesday nights after the Bible Study when the parents are late to take their children. This is why we are stressing the pickup times - we do not have servants to be with the kids at that time, because we have other services that day. We have a time for playing and hanging out in the church which is Friday for almost 1.5hr. So we need the parent to do their part in guarding and protecting their children from these things, as well as teaching them about boundaries.
- Don't be afraid of "losing the trust" or "losing the friendship" with your child
 - If they like you, but they perish, then what have you gained?
 - It is good for them to trust you, for them to feel comfortable talking to you, for them to enjoy spending time with you - but not at the expense of protecting them from evil

The Parent: In Correction and Reproof

- Make sure they understand how the punishment fits the crime
 - If they are using their phone inappropriately - take their phone for a set time
 - If they are using bad language on XBOX - take the XBOX for a set time
 - If they get a bad grade at school - what's the reason? Find the reason first before going to the discipline part, or else the punishment may not fit the crime
- Discipline in a way that is befitting of you (as a Christian) and of them (as your beloved son/daughter)
 - Sometimes we forget that we are Christians when it comes time to discipline
 - Sometimes we forget that we love our son and daughter when it comes time to discipline
- Correction by encouragement as much as possible
 - "the carrot not the stick"
 - "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good" (Romans 12:21)
- What is the result of your disciplinary action?
 - Anger, Fighting, Tears?
 - Joy, Peace, Growth, Connection, Understanding?
- It is more important for your child to know that what they did is wrong, or the path they are walking leads to death, or that they have made a mistake - than to fear what happens if they make another mistake
- Set an example in the way that you correct and reproof and discipline

The Role of the Church

- What is the role of the Sunday School Servant?
- Spiritual Teaching
 - To give the clear teaching of the Church to our children
 - We are teaching them the Sound Doctrine, the Interpretation of Scripture, the Church History, the Saints, the Rituals, the Hymns.
 - We are teaching them about what to be careful of and how to deal with certain situations at school
 - We are teaching them how to identify with themselves and understand their identity
 - We are teaching them how to grow in virtue and how to reject vice
 - We are teaching them to obey their parents after they obey the commandment of the Lord
 - As we read in Deuteronomy 6, spiritual teaching is really the role of the parent, but by God's grace, we are helping
- Koinonia (Fellowship)
 - To pray as a group
 - To deal with each other in a group setting
 - To deal with spiritual brothers and sisters
 - To play together in a Christian Environment
 - To help resolve disputes among our children
- Supporting the Parents
 - We have a symbiotic relationship - we have to work together
 - It is very nice when we see parents who are so concerned for their children and they are meeting with the servants and following up with them and taking advice and asking about their child, etc. but more importantly than that - taking ACTIONS after those conversations
 - We are here to support you in the upbringing of your children

Conclusion

- We all gathered today because we all share a common interest - your children. Abouna loves your children, we love your children, and of course, you love your children.
- Our children are living in a world that is moving in the wrong direction, and that has many problems, and we want them to grow mentally, physically, spiritually and socially
- We want them to find success in every aspect of their life
- We want them to be a light of the world that shines before all men
- We are working together - the parents, the servants, Abouna - remembering that "**neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase.**" (1 Cor 3:7)
- Let us depend on the Lord for the upbringing of our children, all the while doing our part and supporting each other in our roles

Technology Tutorial

- We will talk a little bit about how to check and monitor some of these apps
- As a parent, you are responsible for knowing how to use these apps and for monitoring what your child is looking at, who they are talking to, what they are talking about

Not Recommended	Needs Monitoring
TikTok Snapchat Reddit Discord	Instagram iMessage WhatsApp Signal

- What to look for
 - What are the group names?
 - Who is in the group?
 - What kind of pictures are shared in this group?
 - What kind of language is being used in this group?
 - One on One Conversations - especially between opposite genders
 - Who are they following on Instagram?
- How to Monitor
 - Instagram following
 - Instagram DMs
 - iMessage, WhatsApp, Signal
 - Photos
 - Hidden Photos
 - "Recently Deleted"
 - Web Browser History

Responsibility as a Deacon

Introduction

- Deaconship is a RESPONSIBILITY
 - We typically take being a deacon for granted
 - We might treat it like a costume that we wear on Sunday morning, or a privilege to do certain things (e.g. enter the Sanctuary, say certain responses, stand in a chorus, etc.)
 - We might think it's "a blessing on Sunday"
 - It is certainly a privilege and a blessing... but more than that, it is a RESPONSIBILITY
- The idea of a deacon is present in the Scripture in the New Testament, but it is also in the Old Testament with the concept of the Levites. The Levites played the role that we would now call "Deacon"
- The word Deacon means "Servant" in Greek
- We will examine the Responsibilities of the Deacon from three angles
 - The Responsibilities and Duties defined in Scripture
 - The Responsibilities and Duties assigned to you at your ordination
 - The Responsibilities and Duties in the history of the Church as recorded in the Canons

Activity

- Split into three groups
- One will examine the Scripture, one will examine the rites of ordination, the third will examine the Canons
- Each group needs to arrive at a list of responsibilities that are entrusted to us as deacons
- Share with the rest of the group
- Each individual can rate himself 1-10 on his responsibility as a deacon

Scripture

- Sources (Coptic Reader/Bible)
 - Acts 6:1-7
 - 1 Timothy 3:8-13
 - Nehemiah 8:5-8
- Responsibilities of the Deacon
 - To maintain a good reputation (Acts 6:3)
 - To be filled with the Holy Spirit and Wisdom (Acts 6:3)
 - To be reverent and watch our tongue (1 Timothy 3:8)
 - To refrain from alcohol and money and the lusts of the world (1 Timothy 3:8)
 - To keep the faith with a pure conscience (1 Timothy 3:9)
 - Be found blameless (1 Timothy 3:10)

- Reading in a way that "gives the sense" and "helps the people to understand the reading" (Nehemiah 8:8)

Rites of Ordination

- Sources (Coptic Reader)
 - Special --> Consecrations --> Ordinations --> Chanter --> Litanies
 - Special --> Consecrations --> Ordinations --> Reader --> Litanies
- Responsibilities of the Deacon
 - To sing the hymns, chants and spiritual songs
 - To chant from the heart
 - To chant with understanding
 - To refrain from pride and boasting
 - To read and meditate on the Scripture
 - To proclaim the words of the Old and New Testament
 - To expound to the people the right precepts
 - To learn each one of the readings of the Scriptures

Church Canons

- Sources (To be printed)
 - <https://www.dropbox.com/s/q1i66ewg6fozmyb/Canons%20of%20Diaconate.pdf?dl=0>
- Responsibilities of the Deacon
 - To care for the spiritual life
 - To receive the Eucharist in the Liturgy
 - To guard oneself from sins but especially public sins that are stumbling blocks
 - To accept the repentant sinner
 - To avoid sinful places
 - To speak good of the Clergy
 - To speak good of those who have disabilities (e.g. don't make fun of "autism")
 - To fast the Great Fast and Wednesdays and Fridays
 - To chant with intelligence and constancy (faithfulness)

Responsibility in Boundaries

Introduction

- Everyone has boundaries
 - There are certain things you would not be okay with someone doing to you (e.g. hitting you) or saying to you
 - There are certain things you are not willing to do with someone
 - These are boundaries
- We have to know how to:
 - Set Boundaries
 - Maintain Boundaries
 - Enforce Boundaries

Activity: Circle of Trust

- Describe the concept of concentric circles
- Fill out the Circles of Trust
 - <https://www.dropbox.com/s/jwdbb1a1529o08o/Circles%20of%20Trust.pdf?dl=0>
- We have to be able to differentiate between these groups and where every single person fits
- Then we have to know which Boundaries to set
- This decision is influenced by:
 - The Scripture (e.g. the Books of Wisdom, Proverbs, and Sirach)
 - Our Orthodox Faith
 - Lived experience
 - Guidance from parents, servants, priest
- Within each of these circles of trust, there are even subcategories and different boundaries with different people
 - I cannot have the same boundaries with my male friends as with my female friends
 - I cannot have the same boundaries with my brother as with my sister

Boundaries with Friends

- There is a difference between how I act, talk, etc. with my male friends than with my female friends
- Boundaries in Touch
 - It is okay to play rough with your male friends
 - It is **not** okay to play rough with a female friend
 - It is okay to greet your male friend when you see him with a "pound hug" (dap + embrace)
 - A playful touch with a male friend is okay... with a female friend is not okay

- It is not okay to greet your female friend with a hug
- Your anatomy is different from her anatomy
- There are parts of your body that are only available to the center circle - to yourself
- The same goes for your friends' bodies
- Boundaries in Speech and Messaging
 - It is not okay to talk about puberty or sex with a female friend
 - It is not okay to comment on a girl's looks or her body - positively or negatively
 - It is not okay to comment on a girl's clothing or makeup - positively or negatively
 - It is not okay to use sexual language or discuss sexual acts with anyone - male or female
 - It's not okay to "ship" people
- Boundaries in Time
 - It is not okay to be one-on-one with a girl at any time
 - It is okay to go out with a group of your male and female friends (with parental approval)
 - It's not okay to text a girl one-on-one for long periods of time, or after certain times of day (e.g. 9pm)
 - It's not okay to have group chats without a specific purpose that contain both males and females

Setting, Maintaining, Enforcing Boundaries

- Boundaries define us. They define what is me and what is not me. A boundary shows me where I end and someone else begins, leading me to a sense of ownership. Boundaries help us keep the good in and the bad out. Setting boundaries inevitably involves taking responsibility for your choices.
- Remove yourself from situations that cross the line
- Address Conflicts head-on with kindness
 - If someone tries to get you to cross a boundary, address it
 - Just say no
- Reporting to an adult

2026-08-05: History of the Liturgy (2026 Summer MS Boys Convention)

“Keep the traditions just as I delivered them to you.”
(1 Corinthians 11:2)

Introduction

We live in the most advanced society that has ever existed. Technology, Medicine, Communication, Information, etc. has NEVER been at a higher level.

And if you go to any Protestant Church, you will

What is Liturgy?

Liturgy is Holy

It used to take 45 days to get from Florida to Washington state. Then cars were invented and it could take only 45 hours. Then planes were invented and it takes 4.5 hours! But God forbid the plane is an hour late... and if it's 3 hours late, I'm demanding a refund! This is the world we live in... we got so used to having everything fast and easy.

If I want food from a specific restaurant, I can push a button on my phone and it's here. If I want access to any information in the whole world, I can push a button on my phone with AI and I have it. We have Reels and Shorts and Doomscrolling. This is the fast-paced world that we live in.

Liturgy transcends all of that. Liturgy does something different. Liturgy is slow-paced. Liturgy brings us back to reality... because reality is not fast-paced. If I want to grow in virtue like being thankful, I cannot push a button on my phone and now I'm a thankful person. If I want to overcome a sin like lustful thoughts... I cannot push a button on my phone and overcome. I can't just read a book and it's done. These things take time. Liturgy brings us back to the pace of reality.

And this is what it means that Liturgy is **Holy**. Holy means **Set Apart from the World**. Set Apart for God.

When we enter the Liturgy, we enter into God's time.

For example, when Abouna prays: "Therefore, as we also **commemorate** His holy Passion, His Resurrection from the dead, His ascension into the heavens, and His sitting at Your right hand O Father" - we are commemorating events that happened in the past. We are remembering them and

keeping them as a memorial... but then Abouna continues "and His Second Coming which shall be from the heavens awesome and full of glory." - this is an event that hasn't happened yet! So how can we commemorate it?

It is because in that moment, we are not in the world's time. If you check your watch or look at a clock or look at your phone, yes you will see that time is progressing. But in the Liturgical Ritual we are seeing past, present and future converge to one point.

God, is timeless and eternal, He is not bound by time as we are, He is the creator of time itself, and He is inviting us to be present with Him. If I understand my role in the liturgy, then I will find myself in His presence, and His presence is outside of time.

Liturgy is Given by God

Liturgy is how God wants to be worshipped.

The concepts of liturgy, sacrifice and ritual were not invented by man, but have been the expression of worship that is acceptable to God since the beginning.

- Cain and Abel
 - God distinguishes between what is acceptable worship, and what is unacceptable worship.
- Noah
 - God distinguishes between clean and unclean animals, take 7 each of clean animals and 2 each of unclean animals, and the purpose was because only clean animals were to be used for worship and sacrifice.
- Exodus
 - God laid out how the tabernacle should be constructed - what materials, how much of each material, how they were arranged, who would build it, etc.
- Leviticus
 - God ordained specific instructions for each of the burnt offerings, gave them feasts, detailed the rituals for the day of atonement, gave them a daily raising of incense morning and evening, the showbread and the lighting of the candles, the vestments of the priests.
- Anointing
 - God told Moses how to anoint Aaron for the priesthood, and Samuel how to anoint Saul and David for the kingship.
- Christ
 - God incarnate, the Lord Jesus Christ, instituted the Sacrament of the Eucharist and the New Covenant and the Liturgy with the twelve disciples and told them "do this in remembrance of Me."
 - It was the Lord Jesus who then taught the apostles HOW to do it during the 40 days after the Resurrection.
 - In turn, those disciples and their disciples would be the ones who authored the Liturgies that we still use today.

What we have in our hands with Liturgy is something that is given to us by God. It is not for us to change to adapt to our desires.

Liturgy is the Work of the People...

In the Old Testament, everything related to the work of the priest, the sacrifices, the tabernacle or the temple, etc. is called in Greek "λειτουργία" which is the word "Liturgy."

This word means "work of the people."

- λαός means "people"
- ἔργο means "work" (e.g. ergonomics).

Some people treat the Liturgy as a show that they watch... they come to the Liturgy, stand in their place and become silent observers. If we treat the Liturgy like a show, not only will we miss out on the actual experience, but we're more likely to just get completely distracted. The Liturgy is not a very entertaining show to watch! So if it starts to get boring, I start to divert my attention elsewhere and get distracted with my social media, or a game on my phone, or reading the news, or trying to "multi-task" during the Liturgy.

But we are not meant to be watchers or observers of liturgy, but rather active participants. When you go to a show, the entertainer is facing you and he's trying to make you laugh or invoke an emotional response - but when you come to the liturgy, the priest is not facing you, but he's facing east WITH you, because he, LIKE you, is a participant. He, like you, needs repentance. He, like you, needs to eat of the Eucharist. He, like you, needs salvation. So I, like him, need to participate in the Liturgy.

This is why the word "Liturgy" is used - because it means "work of the people." And actually we can expand the definition to be "work of the people FOR the people"

What is History?

1. Finding Sources

- The Holy Scripture
- Patristic Writings
- Church Canons
- Architecture & Iconography
- Liturgical Manuscripts

2. Analyzing Sources

- Is this source reliable?
- How old is this source?
 - Do you think an older source is better or a newer source?
 - Both are valuable! They tell us about different time periods and can show us how things developed or changed over time!
- Does this source show me something that is in line with what I already know from the history?

3. Extrapolating Facts

- What facts does this source give me?

4. Making Conclusions

- Based on what I already know, and what I have already gathered, and the facts this source has given me, what do I think happened? What is the history?
- Review

Early Liturgy

The Last Supper

“For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, “Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me.” In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.” For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death till He comes.
(1 Corinthians 11:23-26)

- This is what the Lord did on the Last Supper.
 - And St Paul received this.
 - And St Paul delivered it to the Corinthians.
 - And we still do it today!
- We take bread, give thanks, break it, say "Take eat, this is My body"
- We take the cup, give thanks, and drink it saying "Take drink, this is My blood"
- Then we proclaim the Lord's death! (Amen Amen Amen, Your death, O Lord, we proclaim)

Liturgy in the Apostles

“Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight.” (Acts 20:7)

- First Day of the Week (Sunday)
- Disciples came together (Assembly)
- Break Bread (Celebrate the Eucharist)
- Paul (Officiant Priest)
- Spoke to Them (Sermon & Teaching)

Liturgy in the Early Church

St. Justin the Martyr in his work called the "First Apology," writes:

On Sunday, all who dwell in the city or country **gather in the same place.**

The **memoirs of the apostles** and the **writings of the prophets are read,** as much as time permits.

When the reader has finished, **he who presides** over those gathered, **admonishes and challenges them** to imitate these beautiful things.

Then we all rise together and **offer prayers for ourselves...and for all others,** wherever they may be, so that we may be found righteous by our life and actions, and faithful to the commandment, so as to obtain eternal salvation.

When the prayers are concluded we **exchange the kiss.**

Then someone **brings bread and a cup of water and wine mixed together to him who presides** over the brethren.

He takes them and **offers praise and glory to the Father of the universe, through the name of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,** and for a considerable time, **he gives thanks** (Eucharist) and we have been judged worthy of these gifts. When he has concluded these prayers and thanksgivings, all present give voice to an acclamation by saying, **"Amen."**

When he who presides has given thanks and people have responded, those whom we call **deacons give to those present** the "eucharisted" bread, wine, and water and take them to those who are absent.

Here, we see:

- Assembly in a Church
- Reading passages from the New Testament and the Old Testament
- A Presider (i.e. priest)
- A Sermon
- Litanies, Supplications, Diptych
- Holy Kiss
- Offertory
- Glorifying the Trinity, giving thanks, and "Amen."
- Distribution

How did Liturgy Change?

Codifying the words of the Liturgy

- Original liturgy, as is seen in St Justin Martyr, the words used to offer praise and glory to the Holy Trinity, and to give thanks, were up to the officiating priest. He could pray whatever words he wanted within the structure of giving thanks, and glorifying God.

- In the 4th and 5th Centuries, the time of heresy - some of the heretics were priests or bishops, and they would use the words of their heresy in the liturgy
- So the Fathers wrote the true faith into the Divine Liturgy and standardized the words that were prayed... in the Coptic Church we have three liturgies: St. Basil, St. Gregory, St. Cyril

Liturgy of St Basil	Liturgy of St Gregory	Liturgy of St Cyril
St. Basil	St. Gregory	St. Mark - translated and updated by St. Cyril
Addressed to God the Father	Addressed to God the Son	Addressed to God the Father
Cappadocian Style	Cappadocian Style	Alexandrian Style
All prayers AFTER Epiclesis	All prayers AFTER Epiclesis	All prayers BEFORE Epiclesis
Any Time	Any Time, Usually Feasts	Any Time, Usually Fasts

The Order of Prayers

Old

- Liturgy of the Word
- Creed
- Reconciliation Prayer
- Offertory
- Liturgy of the Faithful
- Distribution

Current

- Offertory
- Liturgy of the Word
- Creed
- Reconciliation Prayer
- Liturgy of the Faithful
- Distribution

The Day of Liturgy

- Sunday is the day of the Lord
 - It is the day of the Resurrection
 - It is the most important day of the week
 - Liturgy on Sunday is **required** for an Orthodox Christian
- The people, out of piety, wanted to celebrate liturgy on Saturday as well because Saturday was honored by the Lord (although it has less status than Sunday)

- The Church allowed them to pray on Saturdays
- The people, out of piety, wanted to celebrate liturgy on the feasts of the saints which would often come on a weekday
 - The Church gave them a lectionary to pray on weekdays as well

Does Liturgy Still Develop?

1. By the consensus of the Holy Synod
 - The Holy Synod consists of every Coptic Orthodox bishop in the world and is the final say on any ritual or liturgical changes
 - Changes take many years or decades to be studied, approved, and implemented
 - No priest or deacon can just decide to change things however he wants
2. To meet the pastoral needs of the people
 - Adding "air" to the Litany of the Travelers
 - Adding "success to the students, jobs to the needy" to the Supplications
 - Litany of the Seasons - Nile River!
3. For practicality
 - Throwing water vs. touching the head of each person

What Doesn't Change?

1. The Doctrine of the Church
2. The Role of the Bishop, Priest, Deacon
3. The Key Components of Liturgy
 - Thanksgiving
 - Reconciliation
 - Institution
 - Anamnesis
 - Epiclesis
 - Distribution