

✠ Service of the Sacred Elements ✠

of the

Apostolic Orthodox Church


This Service may be performed alone or in the presence of others. You may wish to perform it before icons or a cross, but this is not necessary.

A pinch of salt, a few drops of water on a small plate or in a small glass, a stick of incense in a holder, and a votive candle in a glass container will be needed and should be placed on the sides of a small table. Before beginning the Service, light the candle and incense.

Before and after each prayer, an encircled cross ⊕ is made with the element.

Facing the icons, or the direction of East, the opening invocation is made:

n the name of the ✠ Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

ord God, Heavenly Father, we come to worship and adore Thee through these elements which form the divine fabric of all Thy creation, and in which we see Thee: air, fire, water, and earth. Amen.

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AIR

Place the incense and its holder in the center of the table. Remove the incense and hold it throughout the prayer.



We worship Thee through the element of air, symbolized by this incense. It is air which envelopeth the earth, which occupieth all space invisibly, providing protection and life to all.

We pray the wings of the Holy Spirit to rush about us, enveloping us with Thy Life that we may always live and move within Thee. And as the fragrance of this incense filleth the space about us, so too may our prayers fill the heavens with glory and praise worthy only of Thee. Amen.



Replace the incense in its holder.

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FIRE

Take up the candle and hold it throughout the prayer.



We worship Thee through the element of fire which purifieth and transformeth all things it toucheth into its own nature, and which provideth warmth and light even in the coldest and darkest of places.

As this flame burneth brightly, may the flame of faith burn within us. Illuminate Thou our souls, enveloping us with Thy Light that we may purge the darkness from ourselves and the world around us. Amen.



Place the candle in the center of the table.

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WATER

Take up the water and hold it throughout the prayer.



We worship Thee through the element of water which provideth sustenance to all physical beings, which turneth the barren desert into a rich living oasis, and which bringeth awe and inspiration to those over-looking its vast expanses.

As we are cleanséd by immersion in the waters of Baptism, may we be cleanséd and purified by immersing ourselves in Thee, and in the stillness of Thy Presence, be carriéd away by the currents of the Holy Spirit unto the shores of Thy kingdom. Amen.

Place the water in the center of the table.

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EARTH

Take up the salt and hold it throughout the prayer.



We worship Thee through the element of earth, symbolized by this salt. It is the earth which provideth the foundation for physical life, which nurtureth both animate and inanimate beings inhabiting it, and whose beauty, shining forth in space, provideth a monument to Thy glory.

As the vine planted deep within the soil beareth forth the best fruit, so too may we plant our roots deep within Thee. And having Thee as our foundation and nourishment, may we ever grow strong in Thee and share with others the fruit which we bear in Thy Name. Amen.



Place the salt in the center of the table. Allow the candle and incense to burn out completely and the water to evaporate. The salt should then be sprinkled upon the earth.