

VIII. A LITURGICAL SUGGESTION

A last question which can legitimately be asked is whether the original connection between Eucharist and marriage should not be restored in the practice of the Church. It is our opinion that it should, in a responsible and competent way, under the appropriate direction of ecclesiastical authorities.

Actually, both the Greek *Euchologion* and the Slavonic *Trebnik* require that the service be held "after the Divine Liturgy," while the priest is still "standing in the Sanctuary." Since this requirement is never fulfilled in practice, so that the connection between Eucharist and marriage does not ap-

pear at all in the way crowning is celebrated (generally in the afternoon), a restoration of the original way of celebrating crowning in the framework of the liturgy itself (see above, Chapter IV) would be the best way—pastorally and liturgically—to manifest the true dimensions of Christian marriage.

Clearly, the betrothal service is to be celebrated separately on a previous day, possibly on the eve of the wedding itself. The crowning would then take place during the regular Sunday liturgy according to the following:

- the usual exclamation: "Blessed is the Kingdom."
- the Great Litany with the additional petitions from the crowning service.
- the three wedding prayers, each followed by one of the antiphons of the liturgy (however, the antiphons may also be omitted, after the pattern of the liturgy celebrated in conjunction with Vespers on the eve of great feasts).
- the crowning.
- the Little Entrance, the Trisagion and the Scripture readings followed by the rest of the Divine Liturgy.
- after taking Holy Communion, the bridegroom and bride would also partake in the Common Cup, blessed with the appropriate prayers.
- the triple circular procession ("Rejoice, O Isaiah").
- the removal of crowns and the end of the service.

This order would not prolong the liturgy for more than ten minutes and would give to the crowning service its true and original place in the liturgical action of the whole Church. This service would, of course, not be performed in cases of "mixed marriages" or "remarriages." In those cases, the joint partaking of Holy Communion being excluded, the service would be celebrated separately from the Divine Liturgy.