

A background image showing a priest in red and gold vestments performing a ritual. His hands are clasped over a golden chalice. In the foreground, there is a golden plate with a small round object, possibly a host or a piece of bread. The scene is set on a white cloth-covered table. The text "Eucharistic Liturgy" is overlaid in a large, white, serif font, centered horizontally and partially enclosed by a thin gold border. A horizontal gold line passes through the middle of the text.

Eucharistic Liturgy

Introduction to the Liturgy of the Syriac Orthodox Church of Antioch

Today's Agenda

- Church Architecture and Basic Information
- Baking the Bread
- Women in the Liturgy
- Syriac Poetry in the Liturgy
- Number of Liturgies
- Order of the Liturgy
- Liturgical Text Sample
- Light and Deification in the Syriac Liturgy

Church Architecture and Basic Information



- Iconography in Church
- Iconography in Vestments and vessels
- Iconography at Home
- Synagogue or Church?
- Aramaic Language
- 500,000 Syriac Christians from Syria (in Syria and the Diaspora) + 1.2 M in India



Baking the Bread

- Qurbono
- Flour – Dust
- Water – Water
- Oil – Air
- Salt – Fire
- Christ + 12 Disciples + 70 Apostles
- 5 Wounds

Women in the Liturgy



Women in the Liturgy

- Mor Ephraim the Syrian and Mor Jacob of Serug
- Female chanters and deaconesses
- Abbesses are ordained deaconesses and may commune nuns, and children under five years of age

Syriac Poetry

- Mor Ephraim of Syria - Harp
- Mor Jacob of Serug - Flute
- Mor Severus of Antioch – Octechoes
- “Severus was not only a profound theologian, defending according to his lights what was for him the true understanding of the Incarnation as taught by St. Cyril, he was also a great pastor, through his homilies and letters leading his people and those he knew to a true worship of God the Word made flesh, as well as being an ascetic. But with all this he combined the gifts of a poet, which found expression in his hymns, many of which survive in the Syriac translation. In the Syriac Octoechos, 295 out of 365 hymns are ascribed to Severus. In this he invites comparison with the later, great defender of Chalcedon, St. John Damascene, the monk of Jerusalem, to whom is ascribed the Greek Octoechos, as well as many other liturgical poems... I think we shall see that these two great saints, even if they differ in terminology they use to express their understanding of the Incarnation, are united in the songs with which they celebrate it.” –Fr. Andrew Louth

Number of Liturgies

- 80 Total Liturgies throughout History
- 13 Liturgies are currently used
- Last Liturgy composed by Mar Salibi during his Bishopric (1154-1171)
- James, Mark, Peter, Twelve Apostles, John, Xystus, Julius, John Chrysostom, Cyril, Jacob of Sarugh, Philoxenus, Severus of Antioch and Mor Bar Salibi
- 21 Commentaries on Liturgies (fifth century – 18th century)

Order of Liturgy

- Refer to Handout

Sample of Liturgical Texts

“For you are the one who had mercy upon our race and sent us your only begotten Son, Lord, who is our Saviour Jesus Christ, illuminator, benefactor, and redeemer of our souls and bodies, who was proclaimed by his prophets in the ancient days, when he was about to dwell among us, came in the end of time and took himself our humanity; the Word became flesh; he neither took change nor alteration, but by the Holy Spirit he was conceived by Mary, the ever-virgin and holy Mother of God...

Sample of Liturgical Texts

[He took] a body having a rational and intelligent soul, in true and hypostatic unity, which was not an imaginary apparition. Without separation or division, he truly took a human body and soul and all that a man has and in all things he resembled us except sin: He did not merely dwell among men, but while being perfectly God the Word, he perfectly took flesh and became man. His divinity did not become humanity; but he remained in his divinity and took completely the human nature. He was not two, but one King, one Christ, one Lord, one God the Word incarnated who is revealed to us. He dwelt among men, affirmed the earth and blessed it; he restrained the waves of the sea.

Sample of Liturgical Texts

- He was known with his deeds, revealed in power, conquered the human passions and put an end to the transgression of law, converted the erring, and destroyed the power of death from us, which had conquered man in the beginning, and showed him to be invincible in the end. Through the [human] body he caught hold of [death] and that which was caught was destroyed. Through his death, he restored the glory of man who was destitute from glory.” – Ancient Anaphora of Timothy of Alexandria

Sample of Liturgical Texts

- https://soundcloud.com/marc_yacoub/nsale-kolan-aramaic-syriac-orthodox-hymn
- “Let us all pray and beseech the Lord for kindness and mercy. Merciful Lord, have mercy upon us and help us. May we be worthy to raise to You praise, thanksgiving, glory, adoration and never-ceasing good exaltation continually, at all times and in all seasons. Blessed are you delightful bread and glorified are you sweet fruit who was offered on our behalf and forgave us and sanctified us through His holy sacrifice. Oh the lamb, Son of the Virgin ewe, who has ascended to the Cross and saved us from irrational animal sacrifices, to Whom is due praise, worship and glory at this time of offering the divine Eucharistic offering, in all feasts, hours, times, and all the days of our lives unto the ages of ages. Amen”

Light in the Syriac Liturgy

- “By thy **light** shall we see the **light**, Jesus full of **light**. Thou, True **Light**, gives the **light** to your creatures all. **Lighten** us with Your bright **light**, You, the Father’s **Light** Divine. Thou who dwellest in the light-mansions, holy, pure; keep us from all hateful thoughts, from all passions vile. Grant us cleanness in our hearts; deeds of righteousness to do.” –Opening Prayer of Liturgy chanted by the congregation

Light in the Syriac Liturgy

- “Drive away from us, O Lord, all foul thoughts through this sacrifice which we are offering unto You. And **enlighten** by it our souls, and sanctify our bodies that we may offer You praise and thanksgiving and to Your Only begotten Son, and to Your Holy Spirit now, always and forever.” –Prayer after the Reconciliation Prayer

Deification in the Syriac Liturgy

- Deification is explicitly mentioned in the Liturgy of Jacob of Serug, Feast of Pentecost and the Order of Preparing the Myron
- “He became man of His own will in order to make us gods as it pleased Him. He was born of the womb of flesh that He might bring us forth from the spiritual womb” – Liturgy of Jacob of Serug
- “O Christ, our God, unite us through our mingling with You.” –Feast of Pentecost

Deification in the Syriac Liturgy

- Commentaries on the Liturgy understand the Liturgy as the project of Deification
- “The project of deification man has planned (you will become like God) was a failing project. As for the project [of deification] planned by Jesus Christ, it was a successful project.” –Metropolitan Mor Isaac Sakka

Communion and Dismissal

- Body and Blood Together
- Water – In Indian Churches
- White Cloth
- Dismissal