

Offering of the Lamb



The Lamb should be in the church while praying the Psalms as they include prophecies about the life and works of the Lord Christ.

The Offering of the Lamb Rite

1. Praying the Psalms
2. Washing hands & choosing the Lamb
3. Baptizing the Lamb
4. The Procession of the Lamb, and the thanksgiving prayers



1. Praying the Psalms (1)



- The Priest and the deacons put on the white tunics of the service before praying the Psalms of the hours.
- The church prays the Psalms of the 3rd and the 6th hours on non-fasting days, Saturdays (except Bright Saturday), Sundays, and the Holy Fifty Days.
- The 9th hour Psalms are also prayed on fasting days.
- On the weekdays of the Great Fast and the Fast of Jonah, the psalms of the 11th and the 12th hours are added.

2. Washing Hands and Choosing the Lamb (1)



- The priest washes his hands three times before going outside the Sanctuary to choose the Lamb. This is done as preparation for touching the bread that will be changed into the holy Body.

2. Washing Hands and Choosing the Lamb (1)



The priest stands at the gate of the Sanctuary facing westward and a deacon stands before him holding the basket containing the loaves of bread. On the right hand of the priest stands another deacon holding a cruet with the wine.

The number of loaves of bread from which to choose should be an odd number (3, 5, 7, ...) as the sacrifice of the Lord is unique and is without equal.

The priest examines the wine before signing it and the basket of bread before choosing the best loaf to become the Lamb.





The congregation chants “Lord have mercy” 41 times during the examination process. This represents the sufferings that the Lord endured during His trial (39 lashes, the crown of thorns and the rod that he was hit with).

3. Baptizing the Lamb (1)

The priest enters the Sanctuary while holding the Lamb and takes water on his right hand to wash the Lamb on both sides. This is a symbol of the baptism of the Lord Christ.

Then, the priest puts his hand on the Lamb and prays an inaudible prayer mentioning the names of all who asked him to pray on their behalf, along



“Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29)

3. Baptizing the Lamb (2)

The placing of the priest's hand on the Lamb represents the transfer of all the problems, troubles, and sins to the Lord Christ to carry them on behalf of His people. This is the best time to lay all of one's troubles and sins before God as heaven was opened during the Lord's Baptism in the Jordan River.



The priest covers the Lamb with a veil, places the cross upon it.



4. The Procession of the Lamb, the signings and the Thanksgiving Prayer (1)

Then the priest raises the Lamb above his head while standing at the Sanctuary gate facing the congregation and saying “Glory and honor...

Remember, O Lord,.....”



In raising the Lamb above his head, the priest declares that this is the living bread that comes from heaven.

The cross upon the Lamb symbolizes the Lord carrying the cross on His shoulder.



- Then the priest proceeds around the altar while praying inaudibly, “Remember O Lord those who asked us to remember them in our prayers and supplications...”
- This procession around the altar while the Lamb is over the head of the priest represents the Salvation that was accomplished for the whole world.



4. The Procession of the Lamb, the Signings, and the Thanksgiving Prayer ⁽³⁾

- After the procession, the priest stands on the left side of the altar and places the Lamb on his left hand close to the wine and the water in the hands of the deacons.





•Then, he signs all of them three times (in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit) loudly and then places the Lamb in the paten under the star.



4. The Procession of the Lamb, the Signings, and the Thanksgiving Prayer ⁽⁴⁾

- After this the priest unveils the chalice and holds the cruet of the wine and signs the congregation with it while saying, “Peace be with you.”
- Then the priest pours the wine in the chalice and pours water in the wine cruet (up to a third) and shakes it before pouring this water in the chalice.
- This is done while the priest prays the Thanksgiving Prayer.
- The priest signs the congregation with the cruet of wine to remind them that we have peace with God through the shedding of the Blood of His



4. The Procession of the Lamb, the Signings, and the Thanksgiving Prayer ⁽⁵⁾

Mixing the wine and the water represents the blood and the water that came from the side of the Lord when the soldier pierced Him with the spear.



4. The Procession of the Lamb, the Signings, and the Thanksgiving Prayer ⁽⁶⁾

The Lamb is placed under the star in the paten symbolizing the star that appeared in the East and guided the wise men to the manger.



5. The Absolution of the Servants (1)

After the Thanksgiving Prayer, the priest holds the cross in his right hand and prays the prayers of the prothesis of the bread and the wine inaudibly.

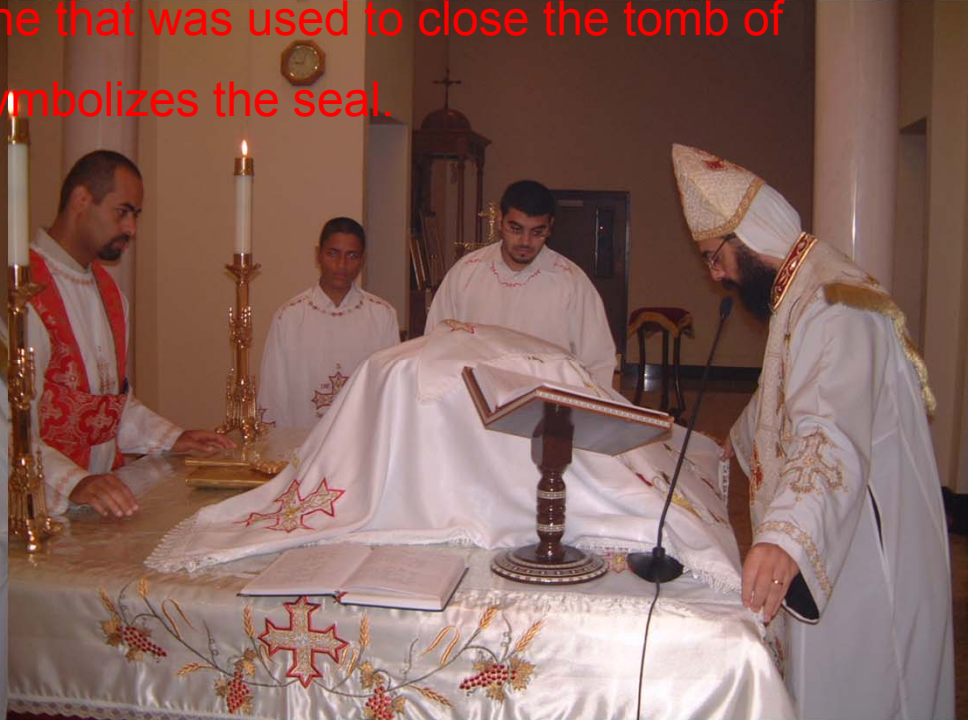




- Covering the paten and the chalice with veils represents the covering of the Body of the Lord in order to bury Him after His death on the cross.



- The “Προσφερην” symbolizes the stone that was used to close the tomb of the Lord Christ. The triangular veil symbolizes the seal.

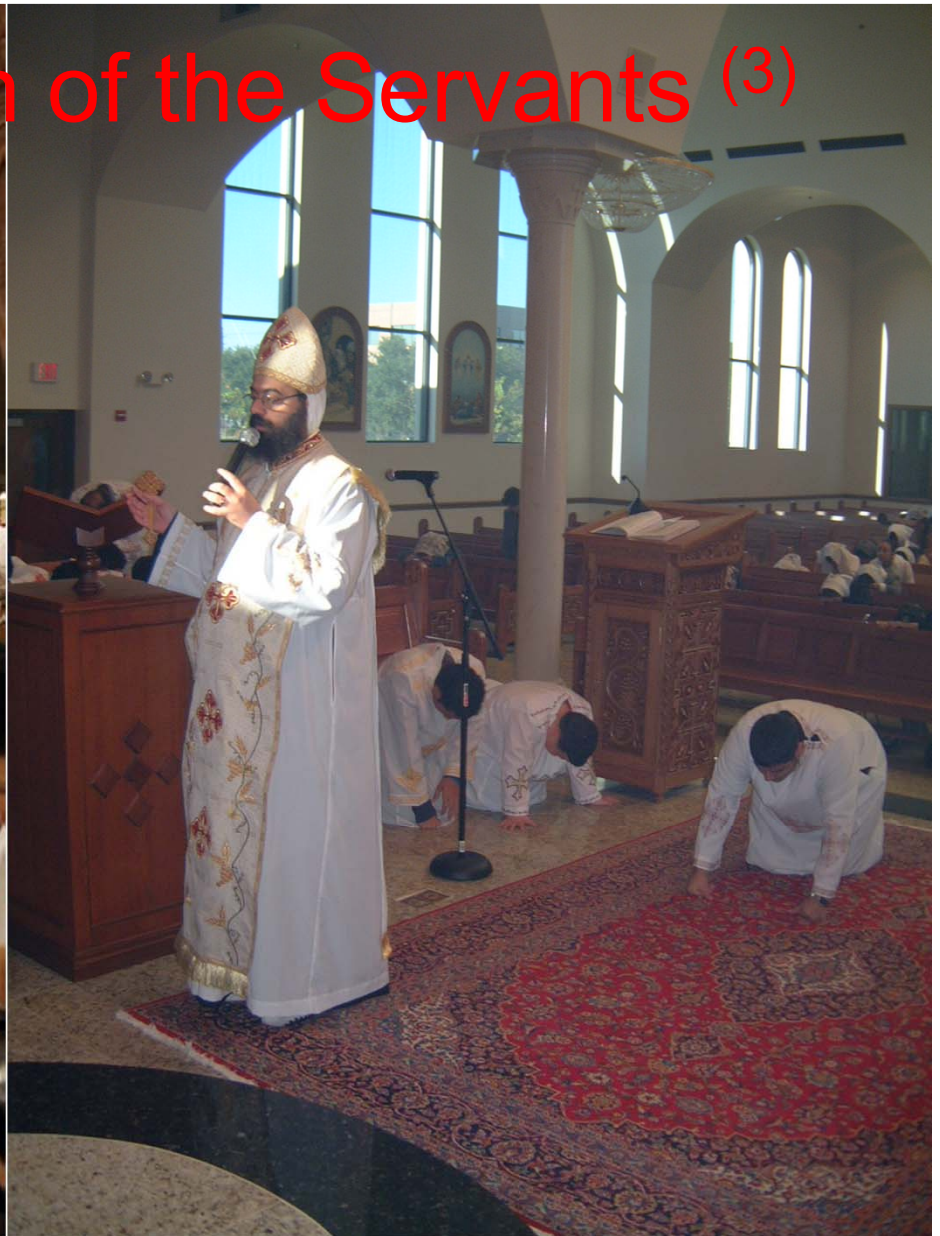


5. The Absolution of the Servants (2)

- Then he places a veil in the shape of a triangle above the “Προσφερι̅ν”.
- The priest bows before the altar, stands up, then kisses the altar and proceeds around the altar from the right side and exits the sanctuary.



5. The Absolution of the Servants (3)



Then, facing East, the priest prays the Absolution of the Servants.