

*The*  
ORDER FOR  
CONFECTING  
CHRISM

ORTHODOX CHURCH  
IN AMERICA  
2024



## INTRODUCTION

**I**N THE Orthodox Church in America, the present rite has become known, in English, as the “Order for Confecting Chrism”; in Slavonic, it is the “Order for Brewing Myrrh”—*chin mirovareniya*. The term *vareniye*, “brewing,” might be translated, even more literally, as “boiling” or “cooking.” In the order given below, the Slavonic verb *variti* and its derivatives (such as the derivative noun *vareniye*) are variously translated as “confect,” “brew,” “simmer,” or “boil,” depending on context—“confect” is used for the whole process, “brew” is used for the general mixing of ingredients, and “boil” or “simmer” is used for the specific application of heat and stirring, depending on the implied length and intensity of the act.

## THE ORDER FOR CONFECTING CHRISM

This fully retranslated and newly corrected order has been translated from the sole definitive Slavonic text: ЧИНЪ МУРОВАРЕНІЯ (Moscow: Synodal Printing Press, 1894). However, some of the text has been rearranged and expanded for ease of use. Notably, the instructions regarding preliminary preparations have been moved from the back of the text to the front, and the more detailed instructions for Holy Tuesday and Wednesday have been moved from the back and integrated into the main rubrics. Some rubrics have been clarified or tweaked to reflect the circumstances and practice of our own local Church and inherited customs that go unmentioned in the Slavonic edition. Furthermore, the Old Russian Imperial units of measure have been converted into United States customary units of measure, and the amounts of required ingredients have been adjusted to reflect the needs of the Orthodox Church in America, with the proportions, however, remaining essentially the same.

PRIEST JOHN MIKITISH

Chancery of the Orthodox Church in America  
Springfield, Virginia

February 29, 2024

## PRELIMINARY PREPARATIONS

### *Sunday of the Veneration of the Cross*

**T**AKE 1.8 gallons of olive oil, as well as 0.4 gallons, or 1500 ml, of white wine, and place them in a specially prepared cauldron to boil them on the Sunday of the Veneration of Cross. After cooling the mixture, pour it into jars, and gently pound the following ingredients. Each solid ingredient should be mixed with some of the liquid styrax, but the resultant mixtures of styrax and solids should not be mixed together. In particular, the more fragile ingredients, such as rose petals, should not be mixed with the resins.

2 lb. of liquid styrax;  $\frac{2}{3}$  lb. of benzoin resin;  $\frac{1}{2}$  lb. rose petals;  $\frac{1}{3}$  lb. of darker-colored frankincense;  $\frac{1}{3}$  lb. of pure white frankincense;  $\frac{1}{4}$  lb. of sweet basil;  $\frac{1}{3}$  lb. of cardamom;  $\frac{1}{2}$  lb. of orris root;  $\frac{1}{3}$  lb. of ginger root;  $\frac{1}{4}$  lb. of galganal;  $\frac{1}{4}$  lb. of calamus root.

## THE ORDER FOR CONFECTING CHRISM

Afterwards, combine the boiled wine and oil with the pounded ingredients—again, without mixing the solid ingredients—in the same jars and place it all in a warm place for two weeks.

### *Sunday of St. Mary of Egypt*

After two weeks have passed, pour the oil from the jars into other vessels, straining the sediment from the styrax. Separate out half the sediment from each jar and discard it. Take the other half of the sediment, place it in same jars it came from, and add an equal volume of white wine.

### *Wednesday of the Sixth Week*

After four days have passed, separate the wine that is in the jars with the flowers and herbs and pour it into the vessels with the oil, but leave the styrax and frankincense in the wine in the same jars.

At this point, then, there are two sets of ingredients prepared: fragrant oil combined with wine made fragrant with flowers and herbs in

one set of vessels, and resins and wine in the original jars. The latter will be added to the main mixture on Holy Tuesday; the former will be added on Holy Wednesday.

## GREAT and HOLY MONDAY of PASSION WEEK

**I**N THE MORNING, the metropolitan comes to the place prepared for the confecting of the chrism. The priests and deacons are vested in lesser vesture. The service begins thus:

**PROTODEACON:** Bless, Master.

**METROPOLITAN:** Blessed is our God, always, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

**READER:** O heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, who art everywhere present and fillest all things, Treasury of blessings, and Giver of life: come and abide in us, and cleanse us from every impurity, and save our souls, O Good One.

THE ORDER FOR CONFECTING CHRISM

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal:  
have mercy on us. (*thrice*)

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to  
the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of  
ages. Amen.

O Most Holy Trinity, have mercy on us.  
Lord, cleanse us from our sins. Master, pardon  
our transgressions. Holy One, visit and heal  
our infirmities for thy Name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. (*thrice*)

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to  
the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of  
ages. Amen.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed  
be thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be  
done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day  
our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us  
from the evil one.

**METROPOLITAN:** For thine is the kingdom  
and the power and the glory, of the Father and

*Great and Holy Monday of Passion Week*

of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

**READER:** Amen.

Lord, have mercy. (*twelve times*)

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Come, let us worship God our King.

Come, let us worship and fall down before Christ, our King and our God.

Come, let us worship and fall down before Christ himself, our King and our God.

**And then this psalm (Psalm 142):**

Hear my prayer, O Lord; give ear to my supplication in thy truth; hearken unto me in thy righteousness. And enter not into judgment with thy servant, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified.

For the enemy has persecuted my soul; he has humbled my life to the earth; he has set me in dark places, like those long dead. And

my spirit was despondent within me; my heart within me was troubled. I remembered days of old, I meditated on all thy deeds; on the works of thy hands did I meditate. I spread forth my hands unto thee; my soul thirsts for thee like a waterless land.

Hear me speedily, O Lord, my spirit has failed; turn not thy face from me, lest I become like them that go down to the pit. Cause me to hear thy mercy in the morning, for I have hoped in thee; make known to me, O Lord, the way wherein I should walk, for I have lifted my soul up to thee. Deliver me from my enemies, O Lord; I have fled unto thee for refuge. Teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God; thy good Spirit shall guide me in the land of uprightness.

Thou shalt quicken me, O Lord, for thy Name's sake; in thy righteousness thou shalt bring my soul out of affliction, and in thy mercy thou wilt lay waste my enemies. And thou wilt destroy all them that afflict my soul, for I am thy servant.

*Great and Holy Monday of Passion Week*

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. Glory to thee, O God. (*thrice*)

**PROTODEACON:** In the eighth tone: The Lord is God and has revealed himself to us: blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord. O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good; for his mercy endures forever.

**CHOIR:** R̄. The Lord is God and has revealed himself to us: blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord.

**PROTODEACON:** V̄. All nations compassed me round about, but in the Name of the Lord have I driven them back. R̄.

V̄. I shall not die, but I shall live and declare the works of the Lord. R̄.

V̄. The stone which the builders refused, is become the head stone of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes. R̄.

**Then the choir sings the troparion, tone eight:**

Blessed art thou, O Christ our God, who hast revealed the fishermen as most wise by sending down upon them the Holy Spirit; through them thou didst draw the world into thy net. O Lover of man, glory to thee. (*twice*)

**Glory ... Now and ever ...**

**Theotokion: tone one**

In giving birth, thou didst preserve thy virginity; in falling asleep, thou didst not forsake the world, O Theotokos. Thou wast translated to life, O Mother of Life, and by thy prayers thou dost deliver our souls from death.

**And then the READER: (PSALM 50)**

Have mercy on me, O God, according to thy great mercy, and according to the multitude of thy compassions blot out my transgression. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my iniquity, and my sin is continually before me. Against thee only have I sinned and done what is evil before thee, that thou mightest be justified in

thy words and prevail when thou art judged. For, behold, I was conceived in iniquities, and in sins did my mother bear me. For, behold, thou hast loved truth, the unknown and hidden things of thy wisdom hast thou made known unto me.

Thou shalt sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be cleansed; thou shalt wash me, and I shall be made whiter than snow. Thou shalt cause me to hear joy and gladness; the bones that have been humbled shall rejoice. Turn thy face away from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and establish me with a ruling spirit. I will teach transgressors thy ways, and the ungodly shall return to thee. Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation, and my tongue shall rejoice in thy righteousness.

O Lord, thou shalt open my lips, and my mouth shall declare thy praise. For if thou hadst desired sacrifice, I would have given it; thou wilt not be pleased with whole-burnt offerings. A sacrifice to God is a broken spirit, a broken and humbled heart God will not despise. Do good, O Lord, in thy good pleasure unto Zion, and let the walls of Jerusalem be built. Then shalt thou be pleased with a sacrifice of righteousness, with oblation and whole-burnt offerings. Then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar.

Then, the full order of the Lesser Sanctification of Waters, beginning with the troparia to the Theotokos in tone six: O Virgin who from the angel ... (*A Small Book of Needs*, p. 151). After the final litany and the prayer at the bowing of the heads (*A Small Book of Needs*, p. 167), before the dismissal, the following prayer is added:

**PROTODEACON:** Let us pray to the Lord.

**CHOIR:** Lord, have mercy.

*Great and Holy Monday of Passion Week*

**METROPOLITAN:** Lord Jesus Christ, Only-begotten Son of thine eternal Father, thou hast said with thy most holy lips: ‘Without me, ye can do nothing.’ Lord, my Lord, through faith I embrace thy words with my heart and my soul, and I fall down before thy goodness: help me, a sinner, to accomplish this work which I am about to begin, in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**CHOIR:** Amen.

And then the dismissal. After the dismissal, the implements for confecting chrism which have been placed there are sprinkled with the newly blessed holy water. The **METROPOLITAN** also sprinkles a little holy water into the cauldron for confecting chrism.

And then the priests sprinkle the proper amount of olive oil—that is, the 4.2 gallons remaining from the initial 6 gallons—and a third of the remaining wine with the same holy water. (*Note that the wine that remains after the preliminaries is divided into three portions, and a*

*third of it is sprinkled with holy water and added to the cauldron each day of the brewing, as is also noted below.)*

After the oil and a third of the wine have been so sprinkled, the metropolitan blesses everything with his hand, saying: In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The heating element is turned on. The chrism is brewed according to the direction of one who knows the art. All the remaining olive oil, 4.2 gallons, is poured into the cauldron, and the portion of the wine that has been blessed is also added, and then they are simmered. The priests and deacons remain for the brewing and take turns reading the holy Gospel while wearing sacred vestments.

## GREAT and HOLY TUESDAY

**I**N THE MORNING, the honorary sacristan and the priests present sprinkle the next portion of the wine with holy water, as per the directions given above. They pour this wine into the cauldron and boil it, as indicated above, accompanied by the reading of the holy Gospel. Then styrax and the other materials from the jars, from the preliminary preparations, are placed into the cauldrons. Then mastic and sandarac are cooked in, having been first gently mashed.

GREAT and HOLY  
WEDNESDAY

**I**N THIS SAME WAY, in the morning, the honorary sacristan sprinkles wine with holy water, together with the fragrant oil and wine that had been reserved during the preliminary preparations, and this is all added to the cauldron and everything is simmered together that day until the fourth hour after midday. Then the heating element is deactivated. When the mixture cools, the essential oils, the balsam of Peru, the turpentine, and the nutmeg butter are added into the chrism, and they are mixed together in one cauldron; and when the mixing is done, that chrism is poured into vessels prepared for this purpose, and those vessels are placed on a table prepared in the chamber. In anticipation of the next day's service, the alabaster\* is placed on the table of oblation.

\* The special vessel containing old chrism, already consecrated.

## GREAT and HOLY THURSDAY

**B**EFORE THE LITURGY, the metropolitan enters the monastery church and vests as is customary. Then, the precious Cross, together with candles and fans, goes before him, together with a peal of the bells, as he enters the chamber where the chrism is sealed. Arriving there, he passes the full vessels out to the archpriests and then the other priests, and they bear that chrism from there into the altar area, the deacons preceding them with candles and censers. And around the chrism, on one side and the other, fans are carried by deacons as the bells continue to ring.

And they ALL sing the troparion, in tone eight:  
Blessed art thou, O Christ our God, who hast revealed the fishermen as most wise by sending down upon them the Holy Spirit; through them thou didst draw the world into thy net. O Lover of man, glory to thee.

When they have entered the altar area, they place the vessels of chrism on the table of oblation and, as needed, on additional tables prepared around it. After this, the metropolitan and all the others take their places, and the Hours begin.

When the Great Entrance with the holy Gifts is to be performed, then the senior priest bears the alabaster and the other priests bear vessels of chrism, going before the holy Mysteries. Deacons lead them on either side, carrying fans, and before them go deacons with censers and subdeacons with candles. And when they come before the holy doors, two deacons with fans enter as is customary, while the others stand in rank between the holy table and the holy doors on one side and the other. The first priest, carrying the alabaster, awaits the metropolitan before the holy doors. The metropolitan comes out, takes the first vessel of chrism from him, and places it on the right side of the holy table. And then the holy things enter according to the customary order.

*Great and Holy Thursday*

Then the **DEACON** says: Let us complete our prayer unto the Lord ... and the rest.

When the **METROPOLITAN** says, And grant us with one mouth ... And may the mercies of our great God ... , then the **DEACON** stands silently on the ambo. And the consecration of chrism takes place without the closing of the royal doors, just as the holy Gifts are sanctified at a hierarchical service.

The **METROPOLITAN** opens the new vessels of holy chrism and makes the sign of the Cross over each vessel three times, saying:

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

And again the **PROTODEACON** comes out and says: Let us attend.

And another **DEACON** says: Let us pray to the Lord.

And **ALL** in the altar reply: Lord, have mercy.

The METROPOLITAN then says this prayer over the holy chrism:

O Lord of mercy and Father of lights, by thee is given every good gift and every perfect gift. Grant us, unworthy though we be, grace for the service of this great and life-giving mystery, just as thou didst grant to Moses, thy faithful minister, and to thy servant Samuel, and to the holy apostles. And send down thine All-holy Spirit upon this chrism and make it to be a royal anointing, a spiritual anointing, a storehouse of life, the sanctification of souls and bodies, the oil of gladness. Those who went before us under the Law and those who shone forth under the New Covenant did by this chrism anoint kings, priests, high priests, prophets, and all who are born again in the bath of re-creation through the hands of the apostles and also the bishops and priests who came after them, even unto the present day. Yea, O Master, God Almighty, show this chrism, by the descent of thy holy and adorable Spirit, to be a garment of incorruption,

*Great and Holy Thursday*

a perfecting seal, inscribing thy divine Name, and that of thine Only-begotten Son and of the Holy Spirit, upon those who receive the holy washing, so that they might be known in thy presence, being citizens and members of thy household, thy servants and handmaidens, sanctified in soul and body, converted from every malice and every sin, delivered through the covering of the most pure garment of thy glory, acknowledged by the holy angels and archangels and all the powers of heaven on account of this holy sign, and terrifying in the face of all wicked and unclean demons. Then they shall be a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, sealed by this, thy most pure mystery, bearing thy Christ in their hearts and becoming a habitation for thee, the God and Father, in the Holy Spirit. For holy art thou, O our God, and thou dost rest in the saints, and unto thee do we send up glory, to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

**And then the METROPOLITAN:** Peace be unto all.

**SINGERS:** And to thy spirit.

**DEACON:** Bow your heads unto the Lord.

**SINGERS:** To thee, O Lord.

**The METROPOLITAN prays in secret and reads this prayer:**

To thee, the God and King of all, we bow the neck of our heart in thanksgiving, for thou hast made us worthy ministers of these holy mysteries, and we proclaim the mercy which thou hast richly poured out upon us, and we ask to receive sanctification from thee, like myrrh upon the head, for myrrh poured out is the Name of thine Only-begotten Son, Christ our God, through which the whole visible and invisible world is made fragrant. For thou art worshipped and glorified, and unto thee do we send up glory and worship, to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

## *Great and Holy Thursday*

And then, having signed the holy chrism with the sign of the Cross three more times, he covers the vessels with their lids.

Then the DEACON says the litany: Having remembered all the saints ...

The DEACONS with their fans stay in their places until: Let our mouths be filled ...

And after the end of the liturgy, the SENIOR PRIEST leads the PRIESTS, and they carry the holy chrism out to a place that has been suitably prepared. And as they leave the monastery church, they sing Psalm 44:

My heart has poured forth a good word; I speak of my works to the king; my tongue is the pen of a ready writer. Thou art fairer in beauty than the sons of men; grace was poured forth on thy lips; therefore God has blessed thee forever. Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O mighty one, in thy comeliness and thy beauty, and bend thy bow, and prosper, and reign, because of truth and meekness and righteousness, and thy right hand shall guide thee wondrously.

Thine arrows are sharp, O mighty one, in the heart of the king's enemies; under thee shall peoples fall. Thy throne, O God, endures forever and ever; the scepter of thy kingdom is a scepter of uprightness. Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore God, thy God, has anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. Thy garments smell of myrrh and aloes and cassia from the ivory palaces, whereby they have made thee glad. Kings' daughters stood in thine honor; at thy right hand stood the queen, clothed in a vesture of gold, wrought about with many colors. Harken, O daughter, and see, and incline thine ear; forget also thy people and thy father's house. And the king shall desire thy beauty, for he is thy Lord, and thou shalt worship him, and the daughter of Tyre shall worship with gifts; the rich among the people shall pray before thy face. All the glory of the king's daughter is within; she is clothed in gold-fringed garments, wrought about with many colors. The virgins

## *Great and Holy Thursday*

that follow her shall be brought to the king; her companions shall be brought to thee. With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought; they shall be led into the king's temple. Instead of thy fathers, sons are born to thee; thou shalt make them princes over all the earth. I shall commemorate thy Name in every generation; therefore shall the peoples praise thee forever, yea, forever and ever.

The chrism is put in that place that has been prepared, and a few drops are poured from the alabaster into each newly consecrated vessel.

The holy chrism is transported from St. Tikhon's Monastery and kept at the Chancery of the Orthodox Church in America. It is distributed freely with the blessing of the metropolitan, under the supervision of the chancellor.

## APPENDIX: INGREDIENTS

INGREDIENT	AMOUNT	WHEN ADDED
Olive oil	6 gal	Preliminaries, Monday
White wine	1.25 gal (about 4750 ml)	Throughout
Styrax ( <i>liquidambar</i> )	2 lb.	Preliminaries
Benzoin Resin	2/3 lb.	Preliminaries
Dark frankincense	1/3 lb.	Preliminaries
Pure, white frankincense	1/3 lb.	Preliminaries
Rose petals	1/2 lb.	Preliminaries
Sweet basil	1/4 lb.	Preliminaries
Cardamom	1/3 lb.	Preliminaries
Orris root	1/2 lb.	Preliminaries
Ginger root	1/3 lb.	Preliminaries
Galangal	1/4 lb.	Preliminaries
Calamus root	1/4 lb.	Preliminaries
Mastic	2/3 lb.	Tuesday

## Appendix: Ingredients

INGREDIENT	AMOUNT	WHEN ADDED
Sandarac	1/7 lb.	Tuesday
Venetian turpentine	2/3 lb.	Wednesday
Balsam of Peru	1/2 lb.	Wednesday
Nutmeg butter	2/5 lb.	Wednesday
Nutmeg oil	2/5 oz.	Wednesday
Oil of cinnamon	2/5 oz.	Wednesday
Oil of serpyllum	1/2 oz.	Wednesday
Oil of rose	1/2 oz.	Wednesday
Oil of clove	1/2 oz.	Wednesday
Rosewood oil ( <i>lignum rhodium</i> )	2/5 oz.	Wednesday
Bitter orange oil ( <i>Citrus x aurantium</i> )	2/5 oz.	Wednesday
Oil of marjoram	2/5 oz.	Wednesday
Oil of lavender	3/4 oz.	Wednesday
Oil of rosemary	3/4 oz.	Wednesday
Oil of bergamot	2/5 oz.	Wednesday
Oil of lemon	4/5 oz.	Wednesday



*The Order for*  
**CONFECTING CHRISM**

was typeset in Arno Pro with Rose block capitals  
for the **ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA**  
by **SAINT TIKHON'S MONASTERY PRESS**  
and printed by **SPENCER PRINTING**  
Honesdale, Pennsylvania

**GLORY TO OUR GOD**

**UNTO ENDLESS**

**AGES!**

