

The Addition of the Phrase “Changing Them by Thy Holy Spirit” to the *Anaphora* of St. Basil the Great

1. In the Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostomos, and at the point in the Prayer of the *Anaphora* where the Holy Gifts are consecrated, according to the order that generally prevails today, the serving Priest utters three phrases, while, at the same time, he blesses the Bread and the Wine, respectively, by making the sign of the Cross over them.

2. These three phrases are as follows:

[...And we entreat, beseech and supplicate Thee: Send down Thy Holy Spirit upon us and upon these Gifts here presented:]

a.

Deacon: Bless, Master, the Holy Bread.

Priest: And make this Bread the precious Body of Thy Christ:

Deacon: Amen.

b.

Deacon: Bless, Master, the Holy Cup.

Priest: And that which is in this Cup, the precious Blood of Thy Christ:

Deacon: Amen.

c.

Deacon: Bless, Master, both the Holy Things.

Priest: Changing Them by Thy Holy Spirit:

Deacon: Amen, amen, amen.

3. It is clear that the *Epiklesis* [invocation] for the consecration is restricted solely to the first two phrases, whereas the third phrase

refers simply to the manner in which the Gifts are consecrated, namely, through the visitation of the Holy Spirit (“changing” is a “modal” participle, *i.e.*, one that indicates the way in which something is done).

4. In the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great, at the point where the *Epiklesis* occurs, according to the prevailing and more recent order, the Priest likewise utters three phrases and at the same time pronounces three blessings (with the sign of the Cross).

5. These three phrases are as follows:

[...We beseech Thee and entreat Thee...that Thy Holy Spirit may descend upon us and upon these Gifts here set forth, and bless them and hallow them:]

a.

Deacon: Bless, Master, the Holy Bread.

Priest: And show this Bread to be itself the precious Body of our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ

Deacon: Amen.

b.

Deacon: Bless, Master, the Holy Cup.

Priest: And this Cup to be itself the precious Blood of our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ;

Deacon: Amen.

c.

Deacon: Bless, Master, both the Holy Things.

Priest: which was shed for the life of the world:

Deacon: Amen, amen, amen.

6. It is clear that the third phrase does not have the character of an invocation or a blessing; it is simply a continuation of the second phrase, which does involve a blessing. It pertains only to the one Gift, and does not refer to the operation of the Holy Spirit.

7. In earlier times, in all of the Divine Liturgies, there were only two blessings at the two *Epikleseis* respectively; later on, however, following the model of the Holy Trinity, the third phrase began to be introduced and eventually took hold completely.

8. The addition of the third blessing to the Prayer of the *Anaphora* in the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostomos was relatively easy, because it was combined with what was now a separate third phrase: “Changing Them by Thy Holy Spirit.”

9. However, the addition of the third blessing to the Prayer of the *Anaphora* in the Liturgy of St. Basil the Great was more difficult, because this third phrase, as we have previously mentioned, (§6), does not pertain to the two Gifts; nor does it refer to the operation of the Holy Spirit.

10. An artless attempt was made to overcome this difficulty through various arbitrary interpolations in the text of the Liturgy of St. Basil, which appear in manuscripts from the sixteenth century onwards.

11. At one time, the interpolators added the phrase, “changing Them by Thy Holy Spirit” from the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostomos at the relevant point in the Liturgy of St. Basil, with various combinations of syntax, thereby giving rise to unacceptable syntactical errors; at other times, they arrived at extreme solutions, removing this entire section of the *Anaphora* of St. Basil, that is, the three aforementioned phrases, and adding the corresponding section from the *Anaphora* of St. John Chrysostomos.

12. However, the disputed phrase “changing Them by Thy Holy Spirit” did not exist in the original text of the Liturgy of St. Basil, a fact which is demonstrated by the following considerations:

a. It is not attested in the many authoritative manuscripts of this Liturgy.

b. It is not attested in the parallel text of the Alexandrian Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great.

c. The addition does not work syntactically, because it causes a syntactic anomaly and is pleonastic.

d. The *Epiklesis* in the *Anaphora* of St. Basil is perfect and flawless in form; its meaning is quite clear and the addition, one way or another, is superfluous.

13. This incongruous addition to the *Anaphora* of St. Basil was noted by St. Nicodemos the Hagiorite, who in fact severely condemned it, considering it an addition made by some ignorant and presumptuous individual who, being opposed, it appears, to the Latins [who lack an *epiklesis* in their consecration rite—*Trans.*], took these words from the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostomos and inserted them into the Liturgy of St. Basil; hence, these words are not found in the ancient liturgical manuscripts, as we have determined by our investigations, but neither do such words fit the syntax here (note on the Nineteenth Canon of the Synod of Laodicea, *Πηδάλιον* [*The Rudder*], p. 428, n. 3).

14. The question of the addition of the phrase “changing Them by Thy Holy Spirit” to the *Anaphora* of St. Basil was handled correctly and deplored as a reckless and syntactically unsound addition by editions of the Liturgy published at several different times:

a. G. Protopsalides, *Αἱ Θεῖαι Λειτουργίαι* [*The Divine Liturgies*] (Constantinople: 1875), 2nd ed., p. 133.

b. Protopresbyter N.P. Papadopoulos (ed.), *Εὐχολόγιον τὸ Μέγα* [*The Great Evchologion*] (Athens: M. Saliberos Publications, 1927), p. 64.

c. Archimandrite Spyridon Zervos (ed.), *Εὐχολόγιον τὸ Μέγα* [*The Great Evchologion*] (Venice: 1862), pp. 90-91.

15. Final conclusion: it is inadmissible to add the phrase from the Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostomos, “changing Them by Thy Holy Spirit,” to the *Epiklesis* in the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great, since it is not necessary, does not fit the syntax, is redundant, is an arbitrary interpolation in a text which is philologically quite sound, and is not attested in the manuscript tradition.

16. We have cited the following significant texts and also scholarly editions of the correct form of the *Epiklesis* in the Liturgy of St. Basil the Great:

a. Ioannes M. Fountoules, Ἀπαντήσεις εἰς Λειτουργικάς Ἀπορίας, τ. Δ' (301-400) [*Responses to Liturgical Questions, Vol. IV (301-400)*] (Thessaloniki: 1982), §330, pp. 64-68.

b. *Idem*, “Ἀπαντήσεις σὲ Λειτουργικὲς, Κανονικὲς καὶ ἄλλες Ἀπορίες” [“Answers to Liturgical, Canonical and Other Questions”], §§480-481, Ὁ Ἐφημέριος, a. 15 March 1989, pp. 87, 91; b. 1/15 May 1989, p. 14; c. 1/15 May 1989, pp. 137-138.

c. *Idem*, Βυζαντιναὶ Θεῖαι Λειτουργίαι Βασιλείου τοῦ Μεγάλου καὶ Ἰωάννου τοῦ Χρυσσοστόμου [*The Byzantine Divine Liturgies of St. Basil the Great and St. John Chrysostomos*] (Liturgical Texts, Vol. XII; Thessaloniki: 1978), pp. 48-49.

d. St. Nicodemus the Hagiorite, Ἱερὸν Πηδάλιον [*The Rudder*], p. 428, n. 3 (Nineteenth Canon of the Synod of Laodicæa).

e. Panagiotis N. Trembelas, Αἱ τρεῖς Λειτουργίαι κατὰ τοὺς ἐν Ἀθήναις Κώδικας [*The Three Liturgies According to the Codices in Athens*] (Athens: 1935), pp. 183-184.

f. Archimandrite Spyridon Zervos (ed.), *Εὐχολόγιον τὸ Μέγα* [*The Great Evchologion*] (Venice: 1862), pp. 90-91.

g. Protopresbyter N.P. Papadopoulos (ed.), *Εὐχολόγιον τὸ Μέγα* [*The Great Evchologion*] (Athens: M. Saliberos Publications, 1927), p. 64.

h. Ἱερατικὸν (Β') [*Hieratikon (II)*] (Holy Mountain: Holy Monastery of Simonopetra, 1992), pp. 120-121.