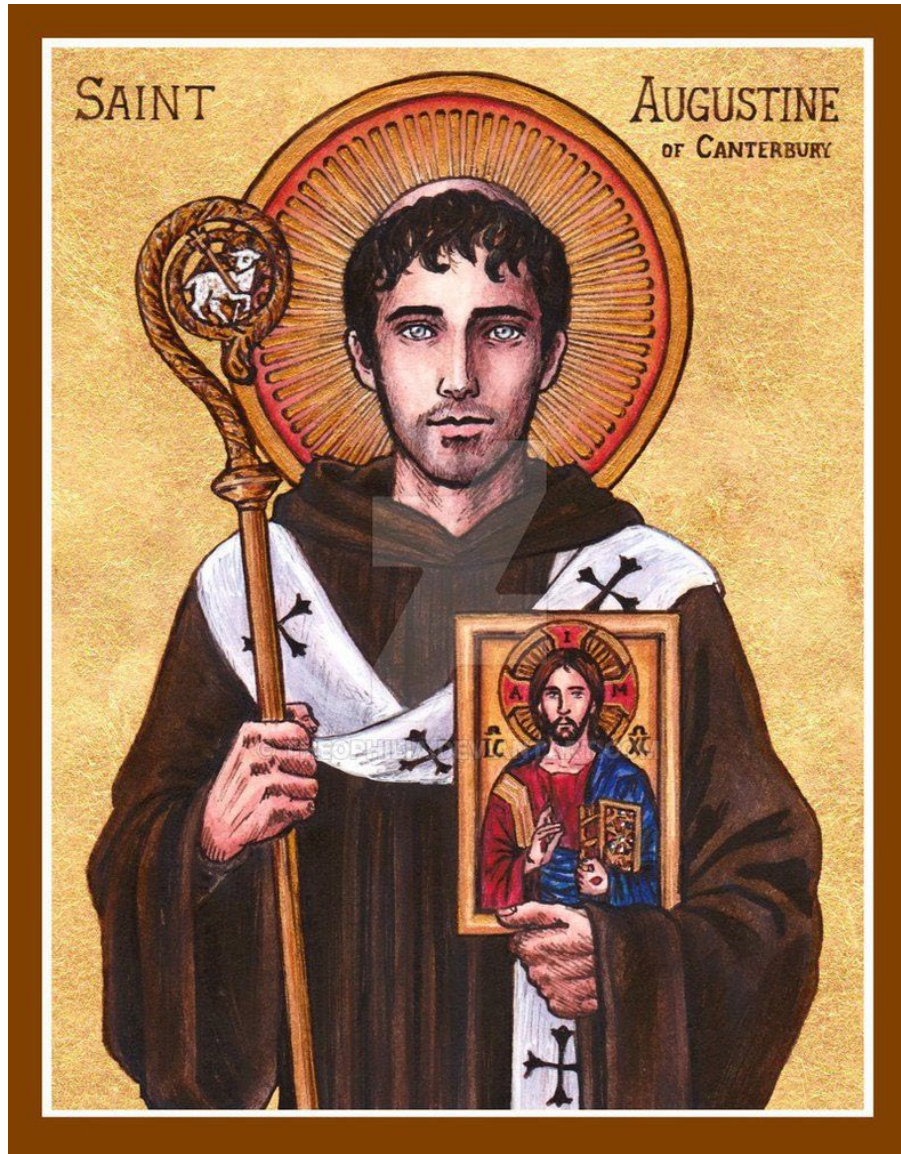


# The Holy Eucharist



## St. Nina of Georgia Orthodox Catholic Church

An Affirming and Welcoming Community  
of the Orthodox Catholic Church of America  
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THE EUCHARISTIC HOST USED IS GLUTEN-FREE. IF THERE ARE OTHER CONCERNS ABOUT THE EUCHARISTIC ELEMENTS OF BREAD AND WINE, PLEASE SPEAK WITH THE PRIEST PRIVATELY IN ADVANCE.

## *About the Community*

St. Nina of Georgia Orthodox Christian Church is a loving, inclusive and affirming place of worship within the Orthodox Catholic Church of America. Our mission is to show the love of Jesus Christ to everyone. We strive to make a home for those whom no one else has reached, or who have come to feel unwelcome or uncomfortable in their former religious communities. At the same time, we welcome those who are for the first time coming to learn of God's love for humankind and seeking a way to worship and pray with others. The mercy of God is important to us as we realize that we are redeemed by the love of God. St. Nina's Church and the Orthodox Catholic Church of America make no distinction among persons with respect to sexual or gender identity, orientation, or expression, and we fully include everyone in our sacramental life. We are not a specifically "gay church" but we have many LGBT people among us in all capacities, lay and clerical. As well, we welcome and have women who are so called by God participating in every level of the ordained clergy. We welcome people on the basis of love, not category. One of the Orthodox Catholic Church of America's historical roots is in the first congregation in the United States established to meet the needs of gay men and lesbians who were rejected by their own faith traditions, organized in Atlanta in 1946. For more information about the Orthodox Catholic Church of America, please visit [www.orthodoxcatholicchurch.org](http://www.orthodoxcatholicchurch.org)



Our Bishop, Mar Stephen of Galveston

# The Holy Eucharist: Rite Two

## The Word of God

*A hymn, psalm, or anthem may be sung.*

*The people standing, the Celebrant says*

Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit our Mother.

*People* And blessed be God's kin-dom, now and for ever. Amen.

*In place of the above, from Easter Day through the Day of Pentecost*

*Celebrant* Alleluia. Christ is risen.

*People* The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia.

*In Lent and on other penitential occasions*

*Celebrant* Bless the Lord who forgives all our sins;

*People* His mercy endures for ever.

*The Celebrant may say*

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit our Mother, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

*When appointed, the following hymn or some other song of praise is sung or said, all standing*

Glory to God in the highest,  
and peace to his people on earth.

Lord God, heavenly King,  
almighty God and Father,  
we worship you, we give you thanks,  
we praise you for your glory.

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,  
Lord God, Lamb of God,  
you take away the sin of the world:

have mercy on us;  
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:  
receive our prayer.

For you alone are the Holy One,  
you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High,  
Jesus Christ,  
with the Holy Spirit our Mother,  
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

*On other occasions the following is used*

Holy God,  
Holy and Mighty,  
Holy Immortal One,  
*Have mercy upon us.*

### **The Collect of the Day**

*The Celebrant says to the people*

The Lord be with you.  
People And also with you.  
Celebrant Let us pray.

*The Celebrant says the Collect.*

People Amen.

### **The Lessons**

*The people sit. One or two Lessons, as appointed, are read, the Reader first saying*

A Reading (Lesson) from \_\_\_\_\_.

*A citation giving chapter and verse may be added.*

*After each Reading, the Reader may say*

The Word of the Lord.

*People* Thanks be to God.

*A Psalm, hymn, or anthem may follow each Reading.*

*Then, all standing, the Deacon or a Priest reads the Gospel, first saying*

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ  
according to \_\_\_\_\_.

*People* Glory to you, Lord Christ.

*After the Gospel, the Reader says*

The Gospel of the Lord.

*People* Praise to you, Lord Christ.

## **The Sermon**

*On Sundays and other Major Feasts there follows, all standing*

## **The Apostles' Creed**

We believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth;

We believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit  
and born of the Virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

We believe in the Holy Spirit,

the holy catholic Church,

the communion of saints,

the forgiveness of sins

the resurrection of the body,

and the life everlasting. Amen.

## The Prayers of the People

*The Celebrant may introduce the Prayers with a sentence of invitation related to the occasion, or the season, or the Proper of the Day.*

### Form V

*Deacon or other leader*

In peace, let us pray to the Lord, saying, "Lord, have mercy"

For the holy Church of God, that it may be filled with truth and love, and be found without fault at the day of your coming, we pray to you, O Lord.

*Here and after every petition the People respond*

Lord, have mercy.

For the Holy Synod of Bishops, for Stephen our own Bishop, for all bishops and other ministers, and for all the holy people of God, we pray to you, O Lord.

For all who fear God and believe in you, Lord Christ, that our divisions may cease, and that all may be one as you and the Father are one, we pray to you, O Lord.

For the mission of the Church, that in faithful witness it may preach the Gospel to the ends of the earth, we pray to you, O Lord.

For the peace of the world, that a spirit of respect and forbearance may grow among nations and peoples, we pray to you, O Lord.

For those in positions of public trust, especially our President and all civic leaders, that they may serve justice, and promote the dignity and freedom of every person, we pray to you, O Lord.

For all who live and work in this community [especially \_\_\_\_\_], we pray to you, O Lord.

For a blessing upon all human labor, and for the right use of the riches of creation, that the world may be freed from poverty, famine, and disaster, we pray to you, O Lord.

For the poor, the persecuted, the sick, and all who suffer; for refugees, prisoners, and all who are in danger; that they may be relieved and protected, we pray to you, O Lord.

For this community, for those who are present and for those who are absent, that we may be delivered from hardness of heart, and show forth your glory in all that we do, we pray to you, O Lord.

For our enemies and those who wish us harm, and for all whom we have injured or offended, we pray to you, O Lord.

For ourselves; for the forgiveness of our sins, and for the grace of the Holy Spirit to amend our lives, we pray to you, O Lord.

For all who have commended themselves to our prayers; for our families, friends, and neighbors; that being freed from anxiety, they may live in joy, peace, and health, we pray to you, O Lord.

For all who have died in the communion of your Church, and those whose faith is known to you alone, that, with all the saints, they may have rest in that place where there is no pain or grief, but life eternal, we pray to you, O Lord.

Rejoicing in the fellowship of the ever-blessed Virgin Mary, (*blessed N.*) and all the saints, let us commend ourselves, and one another, and all our life to Christ our God. *To you, O Lord our God.*

*Silence*

*The Celebrant adds a concluding Collect, or the following Doxology*

For yours is the majesty, O Father, Son, and Holy Spirit our Mother; yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory, now and for ever. *Amen.*

## **Confession of Sin**

*A Confession of Sin is said here if it has not been said earlier.*

*The Deacon or Celebrant says*

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

*Silence may be kept.*

*Minister and People*

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.

*The Bishop, when present, or the Priest, stands and says*

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit our Mother keep you in eternal life. Amen.

## **The Peace**

*All stand. The Celebrant says to the people*

The peace of the Lord be always with you.  
*People* And also with you.

*Then the Ministers and People may greet one another in the name of the Lord.*

## **Offertory Sentences**

Let us with gladness present the offerings and oblations of our life and labor to the Lord.

Walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself for us, an offering and sacrifice to God. *Ephesians 5:2*

*Representatives of the congregation bring the people's offerings of bread and wine, and money or other gifts, to the deacon or celebrant. The people stand while the offerings are presented and placed on the Altar.*

*During the Offertory, a hymn, psalm, or anthem may be sung.*

## **The Holy Communion**

### **Eucharistic Prayer D**

*The people remain standing. The Celebrant, whether bishop or priest, faces them and sings or says*

The Lord be with you.



*People* And also with you.

*Celebrant* Lift up your hearts.

*People* We lift them to the Lord.

*Celebrant* Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

*People* It is right to give God thanks and praise.

*Then, facing the Holy Table, the Celebrant proceeds*

It is truly right to glorify you, Father, and to give you thanks; for you alone are God, living and true, dwelling in light inaccessible from before time and forever.

Fountain of life and source of all goodness, you made all things and fill them with your blessing; you created them to rejoice in the splendor of your radiance.

Countless throngs of angels stand before you to serve you night and day; and, beholding the glory of your presence, they offer you unceasing praise. Joining with them, and giving voice to every creature under heaven, we acclaim you, and glorify your Name, as we sing (say),

*Celebrant and People*

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

*The people stand or kneel.*

*Then the Celebrant continues*

We acclaim you, holy Lord, glorious in power. Your mighty works reveal your wisdom and love. You formed us in your own image, giving the whole world into our care, so that, in obedience to you, our Creator, we might rule and serve all your creatures.

When our disobedience took us far from you, you did not abandon us to the power of death. In your mercy you came to our help, so that in seeking you we might find you. Again and again you called us into covenant with you, and through the prophets you taught us to hope for salvation.

Father, you loved the world so much that in the fullness of time you sent your only Son to be our Savior. Incarnate by the Holy Spirit our Mother, born of the Virgin Mary, he

lived as one of us, yet without sin. To the poor he proclaimed the good news of salvation; to prisoners, freedom; to the sorrowful, joy. To fulfill your purpose he gave himself up to death; and, rising from the grave, destroyed death, and made the whole creation new.

And, that we might live no longer for ourselves, but for him who died and rose for us, he sent the Holy Spirit our Mother, his own first gift for those who believe, to complete his work in the world, and to bring to fulfillment the sanctification of all.

*At the following words concerning the bread, the Celebrant is to hold it, or lay a hand upon it, and at the words concerning the cup, to hold or place a hand upon the cup and any other vessel containing wine to be consecrated.*

When the hour had come for him to be glorified by you, his heavenly Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end; at supper with them he took bread, and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me." (+)

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me." (+)

Father, we now celebrate this memorial of our redemption. Recalling Christ's death and his descent among the dead, proclaiming his resurrection and ascension to your right hand, awaiting his coming in glory; and offering to you, from the gifts you have given us, this bread and this cup, we praise you and we bless you.

*Celebrant and People*

We praise you, we bless you, we give thanks to you, and we pray to you, Lord our God.

*The Celebrant continues*

Lord, we pray that in your goodness and mercy your Holy Spirit our Mother may descend upon us, and upon these gifts, sanctifying them and showing them to be holy gifts for your holy people, the bread of life and the cup of salvation, the Body and Blood of your Son Jesus Christ. (+)

*People Amen!*

Grant that all who share this bread and cup may become one body and one spirit, a living sacrifice in Christ, to the praise of your Name.

Remember, Lord, your one holy catholic and apostolic Church, redeemed by the blood of your Christ. Reveal its unity, guard its faith, and preserve it in peace.

Remember the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Catholic Church of America, our Bishop Mar Stephen of Galveston, and all who minister in your Church. Remember all your people, and those who seek your truth. Remember all who have died in the peace of Christ, and those whose faith is known to you alone; bring them into the place of eternal joy and light.

And grant that we may find our inheritance with the Blessed Virgin Mary, with matriarchs and patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and martyrs, with St. Nina of Georgia, NAME, commemorated today, and all the saints who have found favor with you in ages past. We praise you in union with them and give you glory through your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ, all honor and glory are yours, Almighty God and Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit our Mother, for ever and ever. AMEN.

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say: Our Mother and

*People and Celebrant*

Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy Name,  
thy kin-dom 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 let us not fall into  
temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kin-dom,

and the power, and the glory,  
for ever and ever. Amen.

## **The Breaking of the Bread**

*The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread.*

*A period of silence is kept.*

*Then may be sung or said*

[Alleluia.] Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;  
Therefore let us keep the feast. [Alleluia.]

*In Lent, Alleluia is omitted, and may be omitted at other times except during Easter Season.*

*Facing the people, the Celebrant says the following Invitation*

The Gifts of God for the People of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

*The ministers deliver the Sacrament in both kinds to the people. It is the practice of the Orthodox Catholic Church of America that the clergy, as servants to the people, receive last of all.*

*The Bread and the Cup are given to the communicants with these words*

The Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ keep you in everlasting life. [Amen.]

*or with these words*

The Body of Christ, the bread of heaven. [Amen.]  
The Blood of Christ, the cup of salvation. [Amen.]

*During the ministration of Communion, hymns, psalms, or anthems may be sung.*

*After Communion, the Celebrant says*

Let us pray.

*Celebrant and People*

Almighty and everliving God, we thank you for feeding us with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and for assuring us

in these Holy Mysteries that we are living members of the Body of your Son, and heirs of your eternal kin-dom. And now, Father, send us out to do the work you have given us to do, to love and serve you as faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord. To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit our Mother, be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

*The Bishop, when present, or the Priest, may bless the people.*

*The Deacon, or the Celebrant, dismisses them with these words*

*Deacon* Let us go forth into the world,  
rejoicing in the power of the Spirit.

*People* Thanks be to God.

*From the Easter Vigil through the Day of Pentecost "Alleluia, alleluia"*  
*may be added to any of the dismissals.*

*The People respond* Thanks be to God. Alleluia, Alleluia.

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### NOTE ON INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE “Father, Son, and Holy Spirit our Mother”

It is an unfortunate fact of history that religion in general, and Christianity in particular, has been repressive when it comes to allowing women to fully be who they were created to be, equals with men, as illustrated in the Biblical creation story in which Eve is taken from the **side** of Adam, not - as the Church Teachers say - from his feet such that woman would be inferior to man, and to fully exercise their God-given capabilities, especially with reference to their abilities to answer God’s call to serve Her as clergy at all levels: readership, diaconate, priesthood, episcopacy. The historical overemphasis on the “masculinity” of God has played a large part in legitimizing and perpetuating this repression.

When it comes to God the Son incarnate, it is historical reality that He was incarnated as and ever remains a Jewish man, Consequently, it is proper to refer to Him with masculine pronouns. Additionally, since the Eastern Orthodox tradition holds that every theophany (manifestation of God) in the Hebrew Scriptures is a theophany of the pre-incarnate Word of God, in order to preserve the continuity of existence of the Second Person of the Trinity it is proper to use masculine pronouns when referring to the Lord God spoken of and appearing in the Hebrew Scriptures.

The ancient languages of the Judeo-Christian Tradition, Hebrew and Aramaic, put the word for “spirit” (in general and specifically when referring to God the Spirit) in the feminine gender. One argument says that this is merely an accident of history, having nothing to do with the nature of the Holy Spirit. But is this really the case? Could it not be understood, rather, that the Hebrews had a very good reason for making “spirit” feminine? One way to ferret out this reason is

to look at how the Spirit of God is spoken of in the Hebrew Scriptures. To fully address this is beyond the scope of this note, so I will advise the reader to look at contemporary scholarship on the subject, eg Joan Schaupp's "The Feminine Imagery of God in the Hebrew Bible" *Priscilla Papers* vol. 14, no. 4 (Autumn 2000), which present evidence that the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit, is there presented as feminine and as a mother. Hence, the practice for using inclusive language adopted for this text is to speak of the Holy Spirit as "Mother."

When describing the Spirit as Mother, there are two very important points to remember. First, the phrase "Father, Son, and Holy Spirit our Mother" might appear to say that there is one part of the Trinity that is masculine in gender, and another part that is feminine in gender. This is not the case. One fundamental teaching of Trinitarian theology is that all Three Persons share one Essence in a unique way such that what can be essentially predicated of one Person can be essentially predicated of all. The first Creation Story recounted in Genesis makes it clear that the creation of humanity was an act of the whole Trinity: "Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness..." (Genesis 1:26 NRSV) It is the whole Trinity that is imaged in humanity. Thus the genders imaged in humanity - masculine, feminine, and (as we now know) genderfluid - are reflections of the genders present in the whole of the Trinity from which the image was made. The Father is genderfluid **and** feminine **and** masculine, as is the Son and the Spirit.

Secondly - and this is the point behind emphasizing "the Holy Spirit **our** Mother" - the Spirit is not the Mother of the Logos. The Second Person of the Trinity is begotten of the Father alone. With regards to relationship with humanity the Holy Spirit can indeed be called Mother, because an absolutely Traditional and historical designation for the Holy Spirit is "Comforter" ... and is not comforting a quintessential quality of being a mother?

The Trinity is always referred to by a singular pronoun, to make clear the reality of the One God worshipped in the Christian Tradition. The question then becomes, in light of the omnigendered essence of the Trinity: What pronouns should be used to refer to God the Trinity? The short answer is: Any and all. The longer answer involves more nuance, and must take into account the historical reality of male privilege and repressive patriarchy as well as the needs of any particular worshipping community. The argument can be made that to redress aeons of repression and to aid in the elimination of what aspects of oppressive patriarchy still exist the feminine pronouns should be used exclusively. That is the practice adopted in this text.

The use of this particular language of inclusion should not be considered an end solution, but rather an effort on the part of this community to be affirming of the absolute equality of women and to acknowledge that that equality is absolutely rooted in the Divine Order. This use does not preclude continued discussion and modification of the language we use to describe God as we work towards justice for women and the eradication of oppressive patriarchy.