



# GUIDELINES

FOR A

# HIERARCHICAL DIVINE LITURGY

Prepared by:

The National Forum  
of Greek Orthodox Church Musicians

in conjunction with

The Office of the Archbishop  
Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America

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# Guidelines for a Hierarchical Divine Liturgy

It is an honor to host a hierarch in your church. Hierarchical services require special considerations by the priest, psalti, and choir director. We have compiled the following information from the Office of Archbishop Demetrios and several of our leading choir directors who are experienced with hierarchical services. The Office of the Archbishop has approved these guidelines. We hope they will aid the church musicians of your parish to create a “smooth flow” and proper completion of the services.

In consultation with their priests, choir directors have the responsibility to understand these modified services, feel comfortable with their order, and teach the changes to the choir members so that all are thoroughly prepared for the hierarchical visit. Therefore, in order to be both liturgically, theologically, and traditionally correct, the following guidelines are provided. Since the most common service for participation is the Divine Liturgy, the following sections (*Universal Guidelines, General Guidelines, and Specific Guidelines*) relate specifically to that service. However, the Universal and General Guidelines may also be applied to all special services when a hierarch is present.

## Universal Guidelines

### *A. Musical Considerations*

The choice and presentation of music for a Hierarchical Liturgy are important, and the following guidelines are given:

1. Use music written with *traditional and familiar Byzantine melodies*. Familiarity does indeed breed respect and confidence in the choir, easing the stress of the participating clergy. New melodies and non-Byzantine-like compositions *should not be used* unless specifically sanctioned by the senior-ranking hierarch.
2. Use one composer's music for all or large sections of the service so the participating clergy feel comfortable intoning the same mode/note for a period of time. At large gatherings and hierarchical services, several priests will be participating in the service and taking turns intoning the petitions. Keeping in the same mode will help them find their pitch more easily and participate with less stress!
3. If you include recessional music at the end of the liturgy, sing Orthodox hymns or play organ arrangements based on Byzantine hymns.

4. Orthodox services are generally divided into large sections. If you are using more than one composer's work, be mindful of the natural breaks that occur at the beginning and end of these large sections – do not insert another composer's music in the middle. This allows the clergy and choir to stay “in pitch” for a longer period.
5. It is not a good idea to use “composite” liturgies. However, if you do choose to mix musical compositions, be careful with your choice of composers. One would never consider mixing the Agnus Dei of a Beethoven's Mass with the Credo from Mozart's Mass because their styles are so different, so we should not do it with Orthodox church music either.
6. Be very aware of *tempo* during a hierarchical service, just as you should during a regular service. Be sure not to drag. For instance, the *Kyrie eleison's* should be sung quickly and not be unnecessarily elongated. Because a hierarchical service is longer than normal, the choir should not add to its length by singing too slowly.
7. While not always the responsibility of the choir, testing the sound system and the microphones to be used for clarity is important. It is especially important that the reader(s) are audible. Whenever possible, take the initiative to speak with your priest and/or parish council members to ensure the quality of the sound.

## ***B. Liturgical Considerations***

The theme of this section is “*communication is the most important element of your preparation.*” Despite all the rehearsals, discussions, and meetings, it is inevitable that *something* in the liturgy will change during its rendering. The choir director can smooth the flow by being ready for any change and communicating those changes quickly to the organist and choir. The following list will help everyone cope with any new situations arising during a service.

1. The choir director must have a complete grasp of the hierarchical service and its musical modifications. Discuss its specifics with the senior-ranking priest or deacon at a meeting before the service (see ***Specific Guidelines***). Most of these guidelines apply to all hierarchical visits.

During the meeting, make a written list of the parts of the liturgy to be done by the clergy and those expected of the choir and psalti (see *Checklist* at end of these Guidelines). Be frank and honest, and promise only what you can produce. However, also be flexible enough to fulfill even the last minute wishes of the clergy.

2. Everyone needs to be cognizant of the hierarchical protocol of our Church, especially the director. Any hierarch is approachable, but you should follow a specific protocol when doing so. Generally, if you have a question regarding the order of service or who is to do what, start with the *head*

*senior-ranking priest (Proistamenos)* and allow him to answer your questions first. Remember, the senior-ranking priest has been in contact with the hierarchical offices and will have had most of his own questions of order and content answered already. He also will be in charge of choosing which other priests, deacons, and altar boys will be senior-ranking with him in the sanctuary. Finally, the senior-ranking priest may have been in charge of gathering and printing the text for the service, so he will be able to answer most questions himself.

For questions he cannot answer, the priest will usually defer to the hierarch. In some cases, the senior-ranking priest will defer all questions of order and content to the assistant to the hierarch. Even though you may feel comfortable with a hierarch, and be on friendly speaking terms with him, you should still refer any service questions first to the senior-ranking priest.

3. When a deacon is present, he will intone much of the service. Since most churches in our country are not blessed with having both a deacon and a priest, the “addition” of the deacon will be a new experience. Be sure to communicate with the deacon since he has a complete knowledge of the service and is usually well-versed musically. The deacon (or the hierarch’s assistant) has been entrusted by the hierarch to see to the proper completion of the service. He will know the modifications preferred by the hierarch and any of his special preferences (see *Specific Guidelines*).
4. The organist must also be thoroughly versed in the musical changes needed for a Hierarchical Liturgy. There are times when communication between the choir director and the organist may break down. If the director and organist anticipate this, “recovery” will be quicker and easier.
5. Choir members should also understand the service modifications and mark or arrange their music accordingly. In addition to rehearsing these musical modifications, the director may find it very helpful to have cue cards ready for the entire service. This aids in communication during the liturgy, especially when quick changes occur.
6. It is important for the director to have eye contact with the clergy in the sanctuary. If this is not possible, a choir member can be delegated to do this, watching for signals of last minute changes and/or assisting with the cue cards.
7. Be sure to discuss the service with your head psalti, and share the service with him or her, especially the Hierarchical Liturgy. There are specific parts of the Liturgy during which the psaltai can and should participate. Letting them know that you not only are aware of this, but also expect them to help out will make them an ally and will beautify the service.

8. Despite all rehearsals, meetings, and pre-planning, it is inevitable that *something will change during the liturgy!* There are times when the clergy or hierarch will do something different than planned. The choir director can smooth the flow by being ready for such changes and communicating those changes *quickly* and *calmly* to the organist and choir.

## General Guidelines - Hierarchical Divine Liturgy

Be cognizant of the following *General Guidelines* in order to keep the flow of the service unbroken.

1. Any time the hierarch steps forward to the Royal Doors and blesses the congregation (e.g., during the first set of petitions, at the end of the Cherubic Hymn, etc.), the choir should sing *Eis Polla Eti, Dhespota*. However, if the choir's response is to be *Ke to Pnevmati sou*, do not sing *Eis Polla Eti, Dhespota*.
2. The service is longer when more clergy participate. At those places in the Liturgy where all the clergy need to repeat the same action (e.g., during the Cherubic Hymn; or when the clergy receive communion), be ready to fill the extra time needed to cover this action. Have the choir (rather than the organ) repeat part or all of the hymn.
3. Relying on the organ to give pitches before every choral entrance and response is annoying at best, and breaks the flow of the "dialogue" between clergy and choir. Our choir members are responsible and musical enough to hold their own pitch from one response to another, so the director should expect them to do it.

## Specific Guidelines - Hierarchical Divine Liturgy

The Divine Liturgy is the most common service for choir participation when a hierarch is present. Other services also occur with high-ranking celebrants and the order of those services should be obtained from the senior-ranking priest. The following list of notes is given as a guide to prevent common musical mistakes. They should be used in conjunction with the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy Outline provided on previous pages and with other notes from your meeting with the clergy before the service.

**Doxology:** *Evloghitos ei, Kyrie, dhidhaxon me....* always sung *three (3) times*; *Aghios o Theos...* always (traditionally) sung three times, followed by *Dhoxa Patri... Aghios Athanatos....*, and ended by singing the entire *Aghios o Theos* again in an elongated fashion (*asmatikon*).

**Responses:** Sing these simply and quickly so as not to lengthen the service. Be ready to respond *Is polla eti Dhespota* when the hierarch turns to bless the people.

During *Remembering our most holy, pure, blessed, and glorious Lady..*, sing *Iperaghia Theotoke, soson imas*. When a local hierarch celebrates, check this with the senior-ranking priest or his assistant. Some may use *presveve iper imon*.

**Antiphons:** The chanting of Psalm Verses is a much-neglected part of every Liturgy. Ask the psalti to chant these psalm verses before each antiphonal refrain (*Tes presvies...*, *Soson imas.....*). Have the verses ready for a choir member to chant if the psalti does not. Correct verses for the day, in Greek and English, may be found elsewhere in this **Companion**.

In between the first and second antiphons, there are responses, and then during the *Remembering our most holy, pure, blessed, and glorious Lady.....*, sing *Iperaghia Theotoke, soson imas* (or *presveve iper imon* – see above).

**Dhefte proskinisomen:** Done by the hierarch, assisted by the clergy. As the hierarch blesses the people, the choir sings *Eis Polla Eti, Dhespota*. At the end of the *Dhefte proskinisomen*, the clergy sing *Soson imas Ie Theou.....psalondas Si, Allilouia*. The choir then repeats the entire *Soson imas* of the day to give the hierarch time to prepare for singing the Apolytikia.

**Apolytikia:** Of the Day: Done by the hierarch while censuring.  
(after the Small Of Saints/Feast: Done by psalti or choir. (Discuss with clergy  
Entrance) and psalti before the service.)  
Of the Church: Done by the choir.

**Kontakion:** Chanted by the hierarch, but the last line is chanted either by the psalti or the choir. Be prepared to chant it if the psalti does not pick it up (e.g., in *Prostasia ton Christianon....*it is the phrase *.....Theotoke ton timon ton se*).

**Aghios O Theos:** When a hierarch celebrates, there is a much more elaborate sequence for this hymn:

- Using a traditional melody (second mode), the choir first sings it two times (2x)
- Then the clergy chant it once (1x)
- Then the choir once more (1x)
- Then the clergy once again (1x) followed by the choir singing *Dhoxa patri.....*
- The clergy then most usually chant the *Tu Vimatos* (an elongated version of the hymn, with a blessing from the hierarch interspersed between each verse – see next).

**Aghios O Theos tou Vimatos:**

Traditionally, the clergy or chanter chants this from within the altar, but the choir may do it instead if previously discussed with the senior-ranking priest. Regardless, at the very end of each recitation by the hierarch (*Kyrie, Kyrie, epivlepson.....*), the choir still sings: *Eis polla eti, Dhespota* after the hierarch has completed the blessing of the people.

The choir responds to the clergy's *Dhynamis* with a repeated *Dhynamis*, and sings the *Aghios O Theos* for the last time.

Then comes the sequence for *Kyrie soston tous efsevis*:

Deacon/Priest:	Intones it once
Hierarch/Clergy:	Chants it once
Deacon/Priest:	Intones it again
Choir:	Sings it once, <i>without organ</i> , taking the pitch of the deacon/priest
Deacon/Priest:	Intones <i>Kai epakouson imon</i>
Hierarch/Clergy:	Chants it once

**Fimi:** Review this section carefully with the senior-ranking priest or deacon, as there may be variations.

When the Archbishop celebrates:

The Deacon recites the Patriarchal Fimi.  
The Archbishop and clergy chant the Patriarchal Fimi.  
The Deacon recites the Archbishop's Fimi.  
The clergy chant the Archbishop's Fimi.  
The clergy then exit the sanctuary, followed by the Archbishop. During their exit, the choir immediately sings the Archbishop's Fimi once.

When a Metropolitan celebrates:

The Deacon recites the Patriarchal Fimi.  
The Metropolitan and clergy chant the Patriarchal Fimi.  
The Deacon recites the Metropolitan's Fimi.  
The clergy chant the Metropolitan's Fimi.  
The clergy then exit the sanctuary, followed by the Metropolitan. During their exit, the choir immediately sings the Metropolitan's Fimi once.

When an Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese is the presiding celebrant in the Archdiocesan District or in any Metropolis:

Note: Auxiliary Bishops do not have a Fimi of their own.  
The Deacon/Clergy recites the Local Hierarch's Fimi.  
The Bishop and clergy chant the Local Hierarch's Fimi.  
The clergy then exit the sanctuary, followed by the Auxiliary Bishop, while the choir sings the Local Hierarch's Fimi once and the Auxiliary Bishop blesses the faithful.

When there is a visiting hierarch from another jurisdiction or country:

Contact the office of your local Metropolitan or his assistant for the proper order of commemoration.

**Epistle and Gospel:** The Epistle should always be intoned. When the hierarch blesses the Epistle reader, the choir should wait until he is completely finished before singing *Allilouia*.

After the Gospel, the choir sings *Dhoxa Si, Kyrie* as the Deacon/Priest carries the Gospel to the hierarch, and then sings an elongated *Eis polla eti, Dhespota* as the hierarch blesses the people with the Gospel.

**Cherubic Hymn:** The *Cherubic Hymn* may have to be repeated in whole or in part 2-4 times to cover the activities in the sanctuary. This will depend on the number of clergy present.

The *Amin* at the Great Entrance is sung and repeated several times, depending on the number of prayers offered during the procession and subsequent commemorations by the presiding hierarch. The last of the *Amin's* is sung after the hierarch's last prayer (after accepting the chalice from the deacon/priest).

Be ready to sing *Is polla eti Dhespota* when the hierarch turns to bless the people with the Bishop's candle at the end of the hymn.

**Aghapisose:** This hymn, sung in place of *Patera Ion*, may have to be repeated once or twice depending on the number of clergy present.

**Aghios, Aghios, Aghios:** When the liturgy of St. Basil is celebrated, the long prayer during this hymn may be spoken in its entirety or shortened, depending on the wishes of the hierarch. Ask if singing is needed (repeating the hymn) to cover this prayer.

**During Communion:** It is likely that many more people will receive communion when a hierarch is present. Find out from the senior-ranking priest which hymns are permissible for singing during this time (e.g., *Exomologhiste (Psalm 135)*, other seasonal Communion hymns (*Koinonika*, etc.). This is also an excellent place to share time with the psaltai.

**Kyrie eleison's after Communion:** The three *Kyrie eleison's* ending with *Master give the blessing (Dhespota aghie evloghison)* are sung just before the *Apolisis* (blessing) that begins *May the blessing of the Lord and His mercy come upon you...* However, some hierarchs (and clergy) place these *Kyrie eleison's* earlier, just before the prayer that precedes *Ii to Onoma Kyriou* (O Lord, Who blesses those who bless You...). Because of such possibilities, check this section carefully with the senior-ranking priest and deacon.

**Ton** This hymn is sung for all levels of hierarchs. It is appropriate to  
**Dhespotin:** begin singing this (softly) after the Saint(s) of the Day have been commemorated in the dismissal prayer (the *Apolisis*).

**Polychronion:** The *Polychronion* normally is sung in the Plagal Fourth Mode. It is always sung for the Patriarch at the end of Vespers or the Divine Liturgy. Although not usual practice, it may also be sung for the Archbishop or a Metropolitan at the conclusion of the Liturgy, especially on their feast days. Check with the senior-ranking priest or the hierarch's assistant whether to sing this when the Archbishop or a Metropolitan is celebrating. If it is to be done, begin singing it after the hierarch intones ... *through the prayers of the Holy Fathers...*

Hopefully these guidelines for the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy will take some of the mystery out of its fulfillment and allow everyone to participate competently in the service. Last minute changes are inevitable and should be expected, but the clergy will always respect the choir director who is prepared for this service and its modifications. The goal is, as always, a seamless worship to God the Father, and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and receipt of the blessings of Heaven through the Holy Spirit.

For specific music or more information, please contact the **Church Music Federation** of your Metropolis or the **National Forum of Greek Orthodox Church Musicians**. Refer to the back section of your current Liturgical Guidebook or the Forum's website ([www.churchmusic.goarch.org](http://www.churchmusic.goarch.org)) for current names, addresses, e-mail's, and phone numbers.

## Forms of Address

<u>Title:</u>	<u>Form of Address:</u>	<u>Salutation:</u>
<b>Ecumenical Patriarch</b>	<b>His All-Holiness</b> <i>Pa-na-ghi-ó-ta-tos</i>	<b>Your All Holiness</b> <i>Pa-na-ghi-ó-ta-te</i>
<b>Other Patriarchs</b>	<b>His Beatitude, the Patriarch of _____</b> <i>Ma-ka-ri-ó-ta-tos</i>	<b>Your Beatitude</b> <i>Ma-ka-ri-ó-ta-te</i>
<b>Archbishop of Independent Churches (Greece, Cyprus, etc.)</b>	<b>His Beatitude</b> <i>Ma-ka-ri-ó-ta-tos</i>	<b>Your Beatitude</b> <i>Ma-ka-ri-ó-ta-te</i>
<b>Archbishop (America, Australia, Crete, England – under the Ecumenical Patriarchate)</b>	<b>His Eminence</b> <i>Se-va-smi-ó-ta-tos</i>	<b>Your Eminence</b> <i>Se-va-smi-ó-ta-te</i>
<b>Metropolitan</b>	<b>His Eminence</b> <i>Se-va-smi-ó-ta-tos</i>	<b>Your Eminence</b> <i>Se-va-smi-ó-ta-te</i>
<b>Titular Metropolitan</b>	<b>His Excellency</b> <i>Pan-i-e-ró-ta-tos</i>	<b>Your Excellency</b> <i>Pan-i-e-ró-ta-te</i>
<b>Bishop</b>	<b>The Right Reverend ____, Bishop of _____</b> <i>The-o-phi-lé-sta-tos</i>	<b>Your Grace</b> <i>The-o-phi-lé-sta-te</i>
<b>Archimandrite</b>	<b>The Very Reverend Father</b> <i>Pa-no-si-o-lo-gi-ó-ta-tos</i>	<b>Reverend or Father</b> <i>Pa-no-si-o-lo-gi-ó-ta-te</i>
<b>Priest (Presbyter)</b> - Married - Married theologian - Celebrate - Celebrate theologian	<b>Reverend Father</b> <i>Ai-de-si-mó-ta-tos</i> <i>Ai-de-si-mó-lo-gi-ó-ta-tos</i> <i>Pa-no-si-ó-ta-tos</i> <i>Pa-no-si-o-lo-gi-ó-ta-tos</i>	<b>Reverend or Father</b> <i>Ai-de-si-mó-ta-te</i> <i>Ai-de-si-mó-lo-gi-ó-ta-te</i> <i>Pa-no-si-ó-ta-te</i> <i>Pa-no-si-o-lo-gi-ó-ta-te</i>
<b>Deacon</b>	<b>Reverend Father</b> <i>I-e-ro-lo-ghi-ó-ta-tos</i>	<b>Reverend or Father</b> <i>I-e-ro-lo-ghi-ó-ta-te</i>