

The Opening of a Church
from
The Book of Occasional Services

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¶ *For use before the Consecration*

¶ *The Bishop, or a Priest appointed by him, shall officiate. But if the Opening and Consecration take place at the same time, the Bishop shall officiate.*

¶ *Bells and organ shall remain silent, and no lights shall be lighted, until the time appointed. The Altar shall be bare, its vestments and ornaments being placed nearby.*

THE OPENING OF THE DOOR

¶ *The People having assembled in the Church shall stand facing the door. The Senior Warden, or some other appointed Layman, shall close the door, and wait inside to open it. The Officiant and other Ministers, having vested, shall go outside to the Church door, where the Officiant, with the foot of the Pastoral Staff or of the Processional Cross, shall knock three times, saying,*

O PEN me the gates of righteousness, that I may go into them, and give thanks unto the Lord.

¶ *The Warden shall open the door, and say,*

This is the gate of the Lord, the righteous shall enter into it.

¶ *Then the Officiant, with the foot of the Pastoral Staff or of the Processional Cross, may mark the threshold with the sign of the cross, and shall say,*

P EACE be to this House, and to all who enter here; In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

¶ *Then the Procession shall enter the Church, stopping inside the door. Meanwhile an appointed Minister shall say responsively with the people the following Antiphon and Psalm.*

Antiphon. This is none other than the house of God, * and this is the gate of heaven.

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Laetatus sum. Psalm 122

I WAS glad when they said unto me,
We will go into the house of the Lord.
Our feet shall stand in thy gates,
O Jerusalem.
Jerusalem is built as a city
That is at unity in itself.
For thither the tribes go up, even the tribes of the Lord,
To testify unto Israel, to give thanks unto the Name of the Lord.

For there is the seat of judgment,
Even the seat of the house of David.
O pray for the peace of Jerusalem;
They shall prosper that love thee.
Peace be within thy walls,
And plenteousness within thy palaces.
For my brethren and companions' sakes,
I will wish thee prosperity.
Yea, because of the house of the Lord our God,
I will seek to do thee good.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost:

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

¶ *The people kneeling, the Officiant and other Ministers shall proceed up the center aisle to the chancel gate, saying or singing the Prayer Book Litany or the Litany for the church.*

BENEDICTION OF THE ORNAMENTS

¶ *Then, the people standing, the Officiant may go with the other Ministers to bless the various Ornaments, Vessels, and Vestments of the Church, beginning with the Font, and ending with the Altar. A Hymn may be sung while the Ministers move to the various stations.*

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THE DEDICATION

¶ After blessing the Altar, the Officiant shall turn to the people, and say,

The Lord be with you;

People. And with thy spirit.

Officiant. Lift up your hearts;

People. We lift them up unto the Lord.

Officiant. Let us give thanks unto our Lord God;

People. It is meet and right so to do.

IT is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto thee, O Lord, holy Father, who dwellest in the heavens, yet hast thy habitation among the sons of men; who by thy blessed Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, didst cleanse the temple, that it might be a house of prayer for all people; Regard, we beseech thee, the supplications of thy people; cleanse and sanctify this house, which we desire to dedicate unto thee, that being devoted henceforth to the proclamation of thy glorious Gospel, the ministration of thy holy Sacraments, and the offering of prayer and praise, it may be filled with the glory of thine abiding presence, and may be an holy temple acceptable unto thee; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord; by whom, and with whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, all honour and glory be unto thee, O Father Almighty, world without end. Amen.

¶ Then the Officiant may pour water on the midst of the Altar in the form of a cross, and shall say,

I DEDICATE this Altar, and this Temple, together with all the Vessels and Vestments thereof, to the glory of God, and in honour of _____; In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

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¶ *Here bells may be rung, and the organ shall sound for the first time. The Officiant shall dry the Altar with a towel, and then go to his seat.*

THE VESTING OF THE ALTAR

¶ *While the following Antiphon and Canticle are being sung, appointed Ministers shall vest the Altar, place the Ornaments, and (unless the Consecration is to follow) light the lights.*

Antiphon. Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Sion: *
put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city.

Canticle. Benedictus es, Domine.

BLESSED art thou, O Lord God of our Fathers: * praised
and exalted above all for ever.

Blessed art thou for the Name of thy Majesty: * praised
and exalted above all for ever.

Blessed art thou in the temple of thy holiness: * praised
and exalted above all for ever.

Blessed art thou that beholdest the depths, and dwellest
between the Cherubim: * praised and exalted above all for
ever.

Blessed art thou on the glorious throne of thy kingdom: *
praised and exalted above all for ever.

Blessed art thou in the firmament of heaven: * praised
and exalted above all for ever.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, * and to the Holy
Ghost:

as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, * world
without end. Amen.

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THE HOLY COMMUNION

The Collect.

O ALMIGHTY God, who in every place art present, and yet doth hallow the places set apart to thy Name: Pour forth thy blessing upon this House of Prayer; and grant that all who shall seek thee here, may ever find the light of thy countenance, and the joy of thy love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Epistle. Revelation 4:1-11

AFTER this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter. And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne. And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald. And round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold. And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God. And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes before and behind. And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle. And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which

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was, and is, and is to come. And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.

The Gospel. St. Mark 14:12-16

And the first day of unleavened bread, when they killed the passover, his disciples said unto him, Where wilt thou that we go and prepare that thou mayest eat the passover? And he sendeth forth two of his disciples, and saith unto them, Go ye into the city, and there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water: follow him. And wheresoever he shall go in, say ye to the goodman of the house, The Master saith, Where is the guestchamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples? And he will shew you a large upper room furnished and prepared: there make ready for us. And his disciples went forth, and came into the city, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover.