His body and blood. But before we do that, we pray the supreme prayer of the Church - words which our Lord Himself taught us. We all know the Lord’s Prayer, and we have all recited it countless times in our lives, and yet today, let us pray it slowly and attentively, paying attention to each sentence and understanding the request of each petition.

Following the Lord’s Prayer, we will hear the priest lift up the holy gifts and say, “Let us attend, the Holy Gifts are for the Holy people of God.” To which we respond by singing, “One is Holy, One is Lord.” We affirm that although the holy gifts are for the holy people, only one is holy, and that one is Jesus Christ. Thus, in order for us to be holy, we must unite ourselves to Christ, become one with Him and be sanctified by His presence. Following this comes the moment of receiving Holy Communion. It should be obvious that the whole Liturgy leads up to the receiving of Holy Communion. OUR WORSHIP REMAINS INCOMPLETE IF WE CHOOSE NOT TO RECEIVE THE LIFE-GIVING MYSTERIES OF CHRIST’S BODY AND BLOOD.

We should live from Holy Communion to Holy Communion, week by week. St. John Cassian wrote, “We must approach it frequently for the healing of soul and purification of the spirit.”

When the priest says, “With the fear of God, with faith and with love draw near,” it is our invitation to receive Jesus Christ in the most powerful and meaningful way possible. Through this sacrament we receive a gift of forgiveness, of renewal, and of eternal life.

As we approach, let us approach with sincere reverence and the proper awe that we go to be united with Jesus Christ. Let us contemplate the incomprehensible mystery of how God becomes bread and wine for us to eat and drink. And after we receive the holy Eucharist, let us not go back to our places talking or chatting with one another. Although the distribution of Holy Communion may take 10-15 minutes, let us be prayerful, let us be meditative, let us stand quietly offering prayers of thanksgiving for the goodness of God.

So let us now prepare to receive Jesus Christ, and partake of the Kingdom of God.

Talk 9 – Before the Dismissal

We have now partaken of the heavenly gifts. As the post-communion prayer stated, “We have seen the true light. We have received the heavenly spirit. We have tasted salvation. We have renewed, sanctified, and set on fire our souls and are now ready to descend from this heavenly worship and enter back into our earthly existence here in Webster. One aspect of our journey is complete, and yet another aspect is just beginning. The liturgy isn’t over until next Sunday. Our worship and liturgy continues as we walk out the front doors.

God has filled us and nourished us for a purpose. God blesses us so that we may now go out and be a blessing for the world we live in. We are called to carry this spirit of love, this presence of God, into our homes, into Webster, and throughout the whole world, bringing the light of Christ to all people, and giving everyone an opportunity to taste of salvation.

This has been a wondrous journey we have all taken this last hour and a half. Some of us were prepared for this journey ahead of time, and for us the experience has been wondrous. Others weren’t prepared, and I’m sorry that you didn’t get to experience the fullness of the Kingdom of God. Don’t despair, however, since we’ll have another opportunity to taste Paradise at the next Divine Liturgy. May we all prepare ourselves during this upcoming week, and be ready for another exciting journey into heaven next Sunday. Amen.
believers) mystically represent the Cherubim (the angels of heaven) and sing the thrice holy hymn (Holy, Holy, Holy) to the life giving Trinity (Father, Son and Holy Spirit).” And then listen to what it says, “LET US LAY ASIDE OUR EARTHLY CARES THAT WE MAY RECEIVE THE KING OF ALL.”

This is the moment in the liturgy when we should offer to God all the cares and worries of our lives. What concerns did you come to church with today? Hand them over to the Lord. What sins are pulling you down? Confess them now and offer them to Christ. What anxieties are you thinking about for the upcoming week? Turn everything over now to our loving God and “lay aside our earthly cares” so that we may only concentrate on one – God Himself. We are called to offer God our complete attention at this moment! The Gospels teach us, “Seek first the Kingdom of Heaven, and all these things will be added to you.”

This is also the time when we may pray for our loved ones, family and friends. The priest will come around in the Great Entrance and say, “May the Lord our God remember us all in his Kingdom.” Offer your own prayer for those with whom you are concerned, both living and dead, asking God to remember them in His kingdom.

In this way, as we clear our mind of all earthly care, and as we pray for the salvation of all people in the world, we prepare ourselves to humbly say our Creed of Faith - words which describe, confess and proclaim what we believe!

Talk 6 – Kiss of Peace

Right before we say the creed, the priest offers the peace of God to the people, and then asks them to “let us love one another.” WE CANNOT PROCEED FORWARD IN THE DIVINE LITURGY WITHOUT LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER. In the ancient Church, at this point of the service they performed a meaningful and beautiful act – “the kiss of peace.” Everyone would turn to one another, and greet one another with “the kiss of peace,” saying “Christ is in our midst.” “He is and always shall be.”

Once we offer this sign of our love for one another, then we are in a position to publicly declare our profession of faith – what we believe as Orthodox Christians. We say a summary of our faith in the Creed that the Holy Fathers put together in the 3rd and 4th ecumenical council in the 4th century.

Let us turn to our neighbor and offer this kiss of peace.

Talk 7 - After the Creed and before the Holy Anaphora

Having stated what we believe, we are now ready to begin the Holy Offering. Explain the connection with the animal sacrifice in the OT which washed away the sins of the people. Jesus Christ becomes the lamb of God. 

Now let us pray together the prayer before hearing the Holy Gospel, asking the Holy Spirit to come upon the bread and wine, but when the priest says the prayer “Make this bread the precious body of your Christ” all of you may respond with a loud voice “AMEN.” AMEN means “so be it,” so you are participating in the prayer by saying that you agree, and humbly ask our Lord to change this bread and wine into His body and blood.

Let us now pray together this consecration, and receive the Holy Spirit.

Talk 8 - Before the Lord’s Prayer

We have now come to the doorstep of our salvation. The gifts have been offered and accepted. We have gone through the journey of laying aside our earthly cares and calling upon the Holy Spirit, and now we are ready to receive Jesus Christ through