

LEX ORANDI, LEX CREDENDI

The aphorism of Prosper of Aquitaine popularized in a shortened version is *Lex orandi est legem credendi* or *Lex orandi, lex credendi*

The Latin dictum translates as “The Rule of Prayer is the Rule of Belief” or “What one prays is what one believes.”

With this as a guiding principle, we who are Christ’s faithful of Epiphany parish, wish to share with you this small sample of the daily prayers of Byzantine Ruthenian Catholics as a means for you to understand our Church.

Why do we all pray the same prayers? The Lord Jesus taught us to pray not *My* Father but *Our* Father. I, me, my, do not appear in the Lord’s Prayer, but our, us, and we, do. And no wonder! We are not an only child. Saint Paul the Apostle, inspired by the Holy Spirit, explained:

As a body is one though it has many parts, and all the parts of the body, though many, are one body, so also Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, slaves or free persons, and we were all given to drink of one Spirit. ...Now you are Christ’s body, and individually parts of it.

(First Epistle to the Corinthians 12:12-13, 27)

Note that the Lord’s Prayer concludes with the doxology as given in the *Didache* (The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles), a church manual composed between A.D. 50-90 (with the subsequent expansion to include the divine persons of the Holy Trinity).

Prayers of great saints, people who were filled with the Holy Spirit and close to God are included in daily prayers, principally Saint Macarius the Great, Saint Basil the Great and Saint Peter the Studite monk. These serve as a school of prayer, tutoring us to an ever more perfect expression of this communication with God.

At baptism and chrismation we receive a share in the Royal Priesthood or the Baptimal Priesthood of Jesus Christ (cf. First Epistle of Saint Peter 2:9 and CCC 784, 1119, 1546). As such those who receive the baptismal priesthood participate on Christ's work to offer intercessions for the world, the Church, and the people of our community. These are seen in various prayers as well as the feature of praying "Lord, have mercy" twelve times (the Litany of Peace has twelve petitions reflecting the Twelve Apostles).

Finally, by using the prescribed prayers, the spirit of vigilance is stirred in us for the return of the Lord in His Second Coming.

The Lord Jesus told His disciples about "the necessity for them to pray always..." (Luk8 18:1). What follows is how we try to follow our Lord's command.