

The Church Year and The Hymnbooks of the Church

- Fixed Feasts of Saints and Events
 - Always on the same date every year
 - Hymns for Vespers, Orthros, and Liturgy are found in the **Menaion** (Book of Months)
 - Some fixed feasts are celebrated on Sundays as well as the Resurrectional commemorations, but others are designated only on weekdays.
 - Major feasts involve events in the lives of Jesus Christ and His All-Holy Mother, the Theotokos

Major Feasts of the Menaion

- September 8 – Nativity of the Theotokos
- September 14 – Elevation of the Holy Cross
- November 21 – Presentation of the Theotokos
- December 25 – Nativity of Jesus Christ
- January 6 – Theophany (also called Epiphany)
- February 2 – Presentation of Jesus Christ
- March 25 – Annunciation to the Virgin
- August 6 – Transfiguration of the Lord
- August 15 – Dormition of the Theotokos
- Each feast has a preparatory period (Forefeast), an after-feast period (Sunday after feast), and a leave-taking (Apodosis). These periods vary in length per the importance of the feast.

Some Lesser Feasts of the Menaion

- September 1 – New Year
- October 26 – St. Demetrios, 716 Earthquake
- October 28 – Protecting Veil of the Theotokos
- November 8 – Synaxis of the Angels
- December 6 – St. Nicholas
- January 1 – St. Basil, Circumcision of Lord
- April 23 – St. George
- May 21 – Sts. Constantine and Helen
- June 29 – Sts. Peter and Paul
- July 20 – Prophet Elias

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- The Eight-Week Rotation: The Book of the **Octoechos** (Eight Tones)
 - The **Anastasimatarion**: Hymns for Vespers, Orthros, and Divine Liturgy for Sundays (Celebration of the Resurrection of Christ).
 - The **Paraklitiki**: Daily hymns for the rest of the week for Vespers and Orthros (including the Kanons).

NOTE: At the Sunday Orthros, there is an 11-week rotation of Gospel readings, according to the eleven appearances of Christ after the Resurrection. This combination of the 8-week cycle, the 11-week cycle, and the important feasts of the Church, makes every Saturday night Vespers, Sunday Orthros, and Divine Liturgy unique, every week of the year.

- Moveable Feasts of the Church
 - Based on the date of Pascha, the feast of feasts, the central, most important feast of the Church.
 - The **Triodion** (Book of the three-ode period)
 - The Pre-Lenten Sundays
 - Lent
 - Holy Week
 - The **Pentecostarion** (Book of 50-Day Period)
 - Holy Pascha and Bright Week
 - Ascension Thursday (40 Days after Pascha)
 - Pentecost Sunday
 - All Saints Sunday

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- Other Books of Hymns, Services, and Readings
 - The **Horologion** (Book of Hours): Includes apolytikia, kontakia, midnight hours, lesser hours, Small Compline, Lenten hours, and Small Paraklesis
 - The **Euchologion** (Rituals): Includes Baptism, Marriage, Anointing of the sick, Funeral, Consecration of a Church, Liturgies of St. James and Presanctified Gifts, Proskomidi, Confession, and Ordination
 - The **Lectionary**: the Epistles (Apostolos), the Gospels, and Prophecies.

- Some other books
 - The **Asmatika** (melismatic songs):
 - Spiritual songs on different topics.
 - Songs based on one word, such as “Alleluia.”
 - Wordless songs (kratema or terirem)
 - Books of Kontakia by Romanos
 - On the Life of Christ
 - On Christian Life
 - The **Typikon** (Daily Propers)
 - Tells what hymns to sing on any specific day
 - Different versions; Violakis (used for NF Guidebook), Patriarchal, Church of Greece

www.denver.goarch.org/liturgical

www.newbyz.org/typikon_for_sundays.xls

- **Synaxarion:** The lives and accomplishments of the saints sorted by the dates of their feast days.