

ARCHANGEL GABRIEL ORTHODOX CHURCH



CATECHISM - THE CATECHUMENATE

EXPECTATIONS OF CATECHUMENS

1. If the new catechumen was registered on the membership role of another religious body, the catechumen must upon being enrolled as a catechumen **write to this body and ask to be removed from their previous membership roster.** (This is exceedingly important should the catechumen die during catechism.)
2. A catechumen in the Orthodox Church will **not frequent non-Orthodox religious services, and will under no circumstances commune** in any religious body that is not in communion with the canonical Orthodox Church.
3. It is expected that each catechumen do their utmost to **attend as many divine services as possible**, at the very least weekend services, Feast days and (during Lent) the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts. If for some reason this cannot be done, the priest ought to be consulted.
4. If possible, a catechumen should try to **visit another canonical Orthodox parish and perhaps a monastery** during their catechumenate.
5. A catechumen should immediately **turn in pledge cards to the parish**, and be in the habit of **contributing financially and practically** to the communal life of the parish.
6. The catechumen should **attend any formal catechism classes** that are offered in the parish.
7. The catechumen should **foster a personal life of prayer and spiritual reading** at home, and **participate in the fasts and feasts** of the Church.
8. The catechumen should **arrange to meet with the priest regularly** during their catechumenate, to receive guidance, ask questions and to process what they are learning.

RECOMMENDED READING (IN NO CERTAIN ORDER):

- ✦ **The Orthodox Faith** (four volume set), by Fr. Thomas Hopko. Can be accessed online at <https://oca.org/orthodoxy/the-orthodox-faith>.
- ✦ **The Beginning of a Life in Prayer**, Archimandrite Irenei Steenberg
- ✦ **Thinking Orthodox: Understanding and Acquiring the Orthodox Christian Mind**, Eugenia Constantinou
- ✦ **For the Life of the World**, Fr. Alexander Schmemmann
- ✦ **Great Lent**, Fr. Alexander Schmemmann
- ✦ **Know the Faith**, Fr. Michael Shanbour (free as ebook here: <https://store.ancientfaith.com/know-the-faith-ebook/>)
- ✦ **Bread & Water, Wine & Oil**, Archimandrite Meletios Webber

IN PREPARATION FOR BAPTISM/CHRISMATION

- ✦ You should have a **sponsor** (godparent) prior to your reception into the Church.
- ✦ You should settle on a **patron saint**, whose name you will take in baptism.
- ✦ You will need a **baptismal cross and a candle**. Will you or your godparent/sponsor purchase these things? People being received should spend time selecting a cross. If they want a costly cross, they may want to tell the godparent that they are making this purchase themselves.
- ✦ You will need a **baptismal robe**. The parish has several in various sizes that you can borrow, but if you want to keep it you should get your own made. After reception into the Church you will wear the baptismal robe in all divine services for 40 days.
- ✦ You need to make sure you have an **icon of your patron saint**. If it has not been blessed already, you will want to bring it to the Baptism so it can be blessed.
- ✦ Prepare and make **life confession prior to your reception**. Be ready to establish regular confession practice (at least monthly, if taking Communion regularly).
- ✦ Be **prepared to take Holy Communion at the first Liturgy** after your baptism/chrismation, and as often as possible for the next 40 days (and beyond).