



This was the beginning of the period of exile, known as Adam's lamentation. The hymns sung in the Church on Cheesefare Sunday describe Adam's lamentation at losing the Paradise of delight. The whole realm where we live now is actually an exile, and we are struggling to enter Paradise once more. In the funeral service we sing: "And grant me the home country of my heart's desire, making me again a citizen of Paradise." But even after the departure from Paradise God continued to love and be concerned for human beings, and therefore He gave His Law, sent the Prophets, and so on.



Since it is likely that we shall sin after Baptism, we have the Sacrament of Repentance and Confession, which is a second baptism, because it brings us back to the purity which we acquired through holy Baptism and makes us living members of the Church once more. We confess our errors to our spiritual father and receive healing. Another Sacrament is that of Ordination. Through ordination the apostolic grace and blessing are transmitted to every generation. The bishops are successors to the holy Apostles and they ordain priests and deacons. They celebrate the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, perform all the other Sacraments, and guide and cure the people of God. Through the Sacrament of Marriage the bridegroom is united with the bride, and they form a Christian family. There is also the Sacrament of Holy Unction, by which our body is anointed with consecrated oil, and we ask God to cure our soul and body.



In the Divine Liturgy we partake of the Body and Blood of Christ. Therefore it is a communion of man with God. It is not a matter of sentiment or a symbolic act. Through Holy Communion the human being becomes “of one body and blood” with Christ. At the same time we acquire communion with our brothers and feel them to be brothers of Christ and children of the same God and Father.