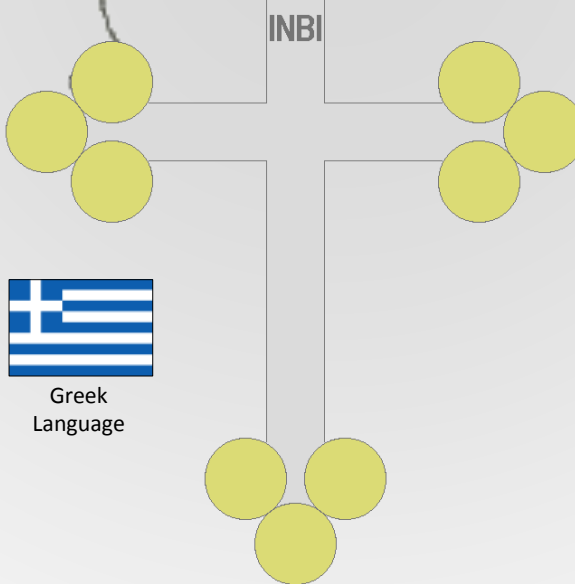


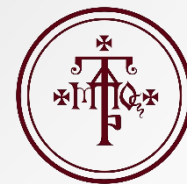
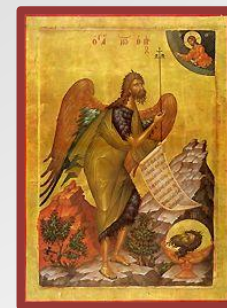


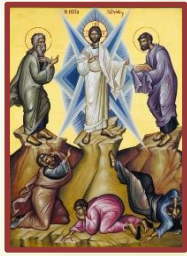
The Blessing of the Grapes

<i>Ingredients</i>	<u>2</u>
<i>Readings</i>	<u>3</u>
<i>Preparations</i>	<u>8</u>
<i>Assembly</i>	<u>11</u>
<i>Decorations</i>	<u>13</u>
<i>At the Church</i>	<u>16</u>



Greek
Language





Greek Tradition

Ingredients

NOTE: Recipe yields approx. 1 large basket of Grapes.



Red Grapes (whole grapes)

White Grapes (whole grapes)

Black Grapes (whole grapes)

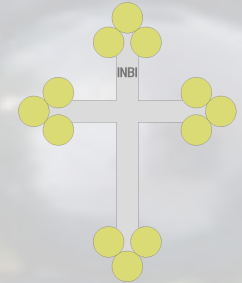
Additional items.

Drying Towels (for the Grape Drying process)

Clean Towel (for the Basket presentation)

Large Basket (for the presentation)

Camera (take a photo of your Grapes)



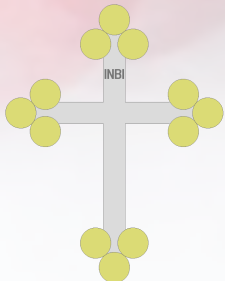
Options.

You can use either SEEDLESS or with SEEDS. Using as many as you want to offer, and as many that would fit in your personal basket. Roughly mixing the three colors in thirds each. Personal Preferences here.

NOTE: By using only GRAPES, thus all the ingredients are LENTEN BASED, and the specific portions can be very easily modified/cut in ¼ quartered, ½ halved, or even doubled.

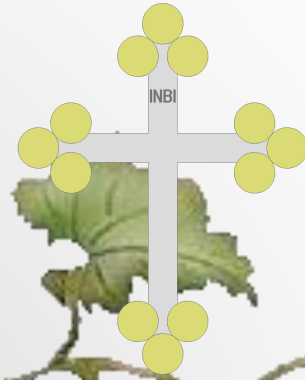
When to Make

NOTE: The Blessing of the GRAPES is celebrated on The Holy Transfiguration, on the 06th August.



Opening Prayer. For favorable weather, for an abundance of the fruits of the earth, and for peaceful times, let us pray to the Lord.
(The Litany of Peace or Great Litany.)





Readings

Reading Citations

Based on

The Holy Bible

(with Scriptural References) and

The Greek Orthodox Faith

NOTE: Hoover the computer mouse over the LITTLE BLUE CROSSES to reveal additional information. You must have Adobe Professional to read it.

The Scriptural References

The first of the **first fruits of your land** you shall bring into the house of the Lord your God.

The Old Testament

Genesis 4:2-4



Exodus 23:19



Numbers 15:19-21



Nehemiah 10:35-37



Proverbs 3:9



The Apostolic Constitutions

Book VII, Chapter 29



Book VIII, Chapter 47



The New Testament

St Matthew 17:1-13



St Mark 9:2-10



St Luke 9:28-36



1st Corinthians 15:12-24



1st Corinthians 16:1-2



James 1:17-18



2nd Peter 1:10-19



The New Testament in Greek.

<http://www.goarch.org/chapel/biblegreek>



The Orthodox Cultural Diversity

One of the peculiarities of this Great Feast is the rite of blessing grapes and apples. The tradition of bringing the first fruits of summer into the temple is positively ancient. In the Christian Church, it is a continuation of Old Testamental practice, and is sanctified by the Apostolic regulations (Rule 3; cf. rule 28 of IV Ecumenical Council).



The Orthodox Faith



The Divine Liturgy

The Doxology



The Trisagion



The Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed



The Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed; formulated at the First (in Nicea, 325 AD) and the Second (in Constantinople 381 AD) Ecumenical Councils. Written in the Greek Language (The Symbol of Faith). The current Orthodox Creed reflects the revisions and additions made at the Second Ecumenical Council. https://orthodoxwiki.org/Nicene-Constantinopolitan_Creed

The Triumphal Hymn



The Lord's Prayer



The Greek Orthodox Church uses a slightly different Greek version based on Byzantine text-type. On line 5, having *ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς* instead of *ἐπὶ γῆς* and on line 8, having *ἀφίμεν* instead of *ἀφήκαμεν* (present tense rather than perfect tense). http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lords_Prayer

The Communion Prayer



The Apostolic Constitutions



The Apostolic Constitutions (or Constitutions of the Holy Apostles); by Bishop Clement, Bishop and Citizen of Rome. Written in the Greek Language in 375 – 380 AD.

The Canonical Traditions




Unlike the canon law of the Roman Catholic Church, the canon law of the Orthodox Church has not been codified. Neither is it prescriptive in character, anticipating a situation before it actually takes place; instead, it is corrective in nature, responding to a situation once it has occurred.

The Blessing of Grapes

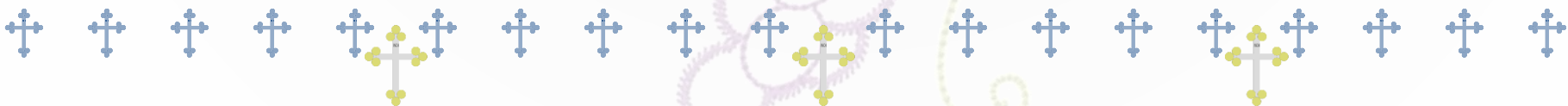
on the Feast of the Transfiguration



It is the tradition of the Day of Transfiguration to consecrate **grapes, apples** and **other fruit** after the Divine Liturgy. The custom of bringing fruit to the temple for consecration originates in the Old Testament time (**Genesis 4:2-4**; **Exodus 13:12-13**; **Numbers 15:19-21**; **Deuteronomy 8:10-14**). The Apostles brought this tradition to the Church of the New Testament (**1st Corinthians 16:1-2**). Instruction regarding bringing fruit to temple is found in the Third Rule of the Apostolic Canon, the earliest collection of ecclesiastic laws (canons), known since the second century. In Greece, August is the month of ripeness of fruit, mostly grapes and new ears of corn. Since old time, the faithful have been bringing them to temple for consecration and as Thanksgiving to God. St. John Chrysostom wrote, "Plowman receives fruit from the earth not so much for his labour and diligence, as out of goodness of God Who grows this fruit, because neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase." 

Grapes are brought to temple because they are directly related to the Eucharistic sacrament; that is why in the prayer for consecration of grapes the priest says, "Bless, Lord, this new fruit of vine which reached ripeness because Thou kindly provided good weather, drops of rain and stillness. Let eating this fruit of vine make us joyful. And give us the honor of offering this fruit to Thee, as the gift of purging of sins, altogether with the Holy Body of Thy Christ."

In the first centuries of Christianity, the faithful brought forth to the temple the fruit and crops of the new harvest: bread, wine, oil, incense, wax, honey etc. Of all these offerings, only bread, wine, incense, oil and wax were taken to the altar, while the rest was used for the needs of the clergy and the poor whom the church was caring for. These offerings were to express gratitude to God for all goods, but at the same time help servants of God and people in need. Until today, consecration of bread and wine, eggs and milk and other food has been kept in consecration of artos in the church and meals at home on **Easter**. Consecration of flowers and tree branches is performed now on **Palm Sunday**, the days of the **Holy Trinity** and **Exaltation of the Cross**, and on Sunday of the week of the Veneration of the Cross. Rice with raisins and honey are used as offerings in services for the dead and remembrance repast. Proskophora are brought forth for proskomide everywhere even today.

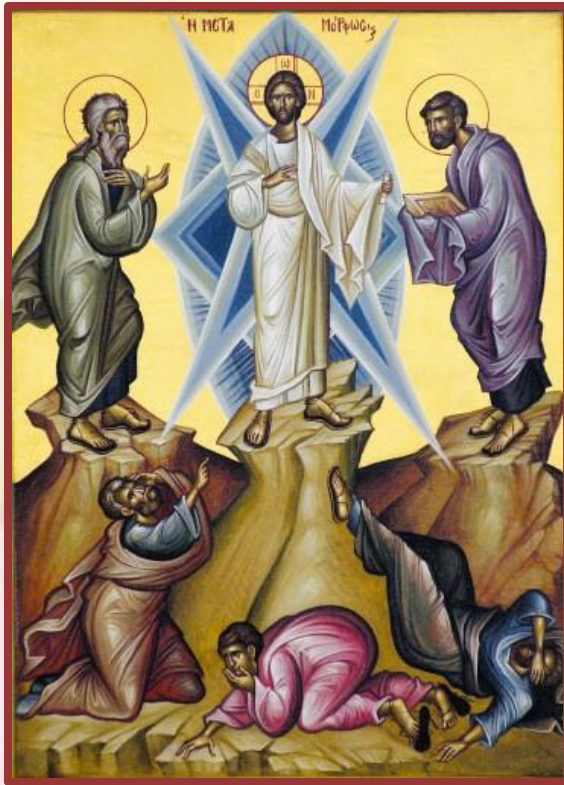




Greek Tradition



Holy Transfiguration



The Holy Transfiguration

Celebrated on the 06th of August.

The Transfiguration of Christ is of the 12 major feasts of the Church. **The Transfiguration occurred 40 days before the Crucifixion of Christ, but it is such a joyous feast that we do not celebrate it during Great Lent.** The Church, in Her wisdom, therefore placed this feast instead on August 6th, exactly 40 days before the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross on September 14th. Because of the joy of the Transfiguration, the fasting today is not as strict and fish therefore is traditionally eaten. In our churches today, we also have special prayers that are read for the blessing of grapes. In the Slavic Orthodox churches, other kinds of fruit, including apples, are also blessed.

With the blessing of the grapes and other fruit, we offer to God things He has given us, in gratitude. The blessing itself also points to the reality of all of creation sharing in this victory of transfiguration and change that Christ brings about through His Life, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension and by the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Church.

The Transfiguration of Christ reveals to us the heights God wants to bring us human beings. The glory with which Christ shone forth is the destiny of all the Saints and all those united with the Lord. We are called to be Saints, to experience a very real union with Him in which we do not lose our human essence and personality, but in which we become more and more godlike, just like iron in a fire does not stop from being iron. We can experience God in a very real, personal way, even now in this life.

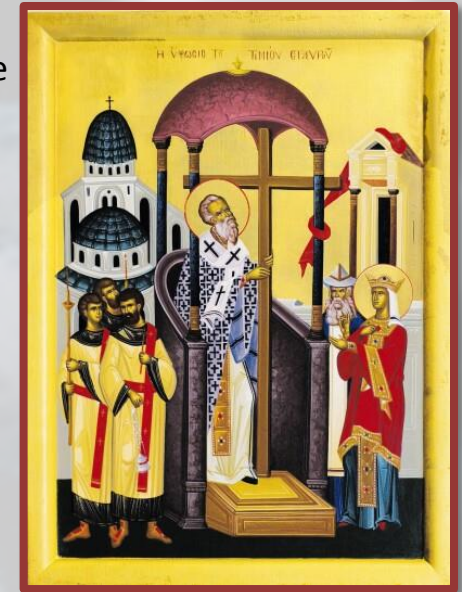
Apolytikion of Holy Transfiguration in the Grave Tone:

You were transfigured on the Mount, Christ God revealing
Your glory to Your disciples, insofar as they could
comprehend. Illuminate us sinners also with Your everlasting
light, through the intercessions of the Theotokos. Giver of
light, glory to You.

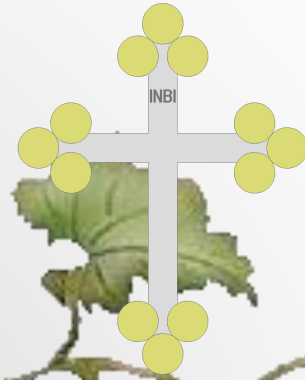
17 January 2017



Exaltation of the Holy Cross

**Kontakion of Holy Transfiguration in the Grave Tone:**

You were transfigured upon the mount, O Christ our God,
and Your disciples, in so far as they could bear, beheld Your
glory. Thus, when they see You crucified, they may
understand Your voluntary passion, and proclaim to the
world that You are truly the effulgence of the Father.



Preparations

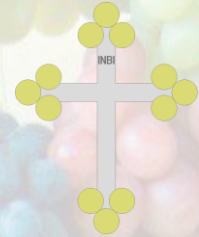
Generally speaking, it takes less than a day to prepare the GRAPES.

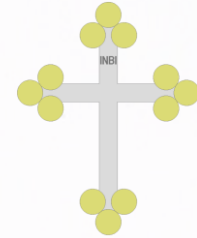
Prepare Yourself. Make the sign of the Cross. Light your Candle or Olive Oil Lamp. Light the Incense. Have an Orthodox Icon, and a Cross nearby.

Prayer. Pray for a **Bountiful Harvest** of the fruits of the earth.

The Orthodox Prayer.

<http://www.orthodoxprayer.org/>





Preparing -- The Grapes

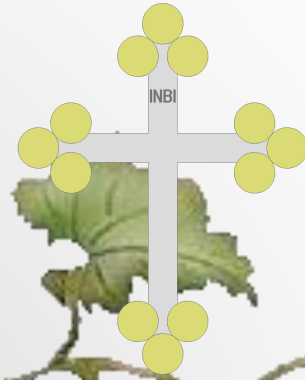
Wash-Rinse the Grapes. Rinse the Bunches of Grapes in Water. Repeat as necessary.

NOTE: Depending on where you purchased or harvested the grapes, you may need to clean/rinse them better.

Cutting the Grapes. If you plan on sharing the BLESSED GRAPES, generally I would cut the bunches into smaller groups of 10 or less grapes per group, simply to make them easier for sharing with friends. However, I like to leave one or two NATURAL WHOLE BUNCHES, so the Priest can lift up to the Lord, a large NATURAL BUNCH during “The Blessing of the Grapes” ceremony.

Drying the Grapes. After you have cleaned the Grapes, you need to DRY them. Simply, place them on a clean towel and allow them to dry. Let set for 10+ hours.

NOTE: You must time the drying process just right, from the removing of the water to the placing them in your basket, or else the grapes will not dry properly and could mold quickly / easier from all the moisture. Change the underside towel a few hours later during the afternoon, if necessary.



Assembly

Time for Assembly

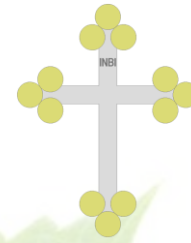
Approx. 5 Minutes

To fill your Basket



The Basket Container

The Basket should be clean.

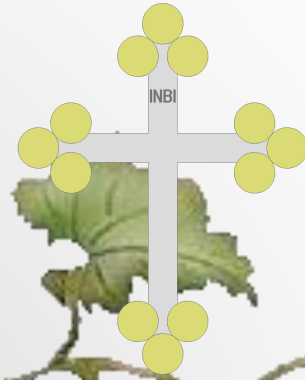


The Basket. You may use any type of BASKET, either a wicker one, a wooden one, a metal one, or whatever you like, i.e. any simple/basic shaped basket is fully acceptable (personal choice) for your GRAPE Harvested Presentation. I enjoy the BASKET simply to be more like a true harvesting of the grapes in a basket. Additionally, it can be an elaborate basket of your finest designs, or a simple silver tray, either is fully acceptable. Though ideally, a small carrying BASKET with handles is best.

CONTAINER SIZE: The BASKET should be big enough to carry/harvest all of your grapes.

TIME ALLOCATION: Approximately 5 minutes to prepare, i.e. place all of your grapes in one basket.

NOTE: I use a CLEAN TOWEL to cover the inside of the BASKET, to keep the grapes clean and free of damage from the basket. Additionally, it ensures that you don't have roll-away grapes falling out of any holes in your basket.



Decorations

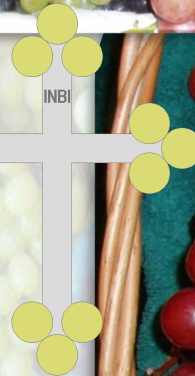
Decoration Ingredients

Grapes

Personal Preferences



*Basket
Decorations*



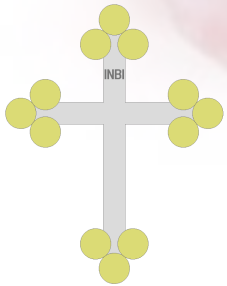
,BIΣΤ'

Decoration. Generally, I would bring the Grapes in a BASKET typically used/representing the Harvesting of the Grapes. I use a clean towel to decorate the basket itself. Additionally, with a CROSS placed on top of all the bunches of grapes.

Scheduling. It is always best to talk with FATHER and the CHURCH OFFICE prior, to schedule any BLESSING OF THE GRAPES ahead of time. Ideally, the Basket of Grapes should be at the church prior to the start of the Divine Liturgy.

Transportation. Bringing the Grapes in a BASKET, helps you to put more focus on the actual harvesting of the Grapes, and it makes it more fun to carry.

Refrigeration. If any BLESSED GRAPES are left-over from the Service, it should be refrigerated. It makes a nice breakfast meal.

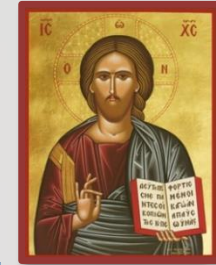


Closing Prayer. For favorable weather, for an abundance of the fruits of the earth, and for peaceful times, let us pray to the Lord. ✙ ✙
(The Litany of Peace or Great Litany.)

Icon of the
PATRON
SAINT of
the Church



At the Church



The Prayer for the Blessing of the Grapes, on the 06th of August.

<< PRIEST >> *Let us pray to the Lord.*

<< PEOPLE >> *Lord, have mercy.*

NOTE: During the Blessing of the Grapes Ceremony, the PRIEST will lift up to the Lord, one of the Grape Bunches. Thus, it makes a better presentation (befitting a harvest of first fruits) when you left one or two as a large NATURAL WHOLE BUNCH on top.

<< PRIEST >> *Bless, O Lord, this new fruit of the vine, which You have graciously been please to bring to maturity through temperate seasons, gentle rains, and favorable weather. Let it be for joy to those of us who shall partake of this fruit of the vine for the purification of those who offer it as a gift, through the sacred and holy Body and Blood of Your Christ, with whom You art blessed, together with Your all holy, good, and life giving Spirit, now and forever and to ages of ages.*

<< PEOPLE >> *Amen.*

http://www.goarch.org/chapel/liturgical_texts/basil#blessing