



Prósphora

Πρόσφορα

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a.k.a. Prósphoron (singular) Prósphora (plural)



Greek
Language



Prosfhora will become -- The Body of Christ.

Πρόσφορον

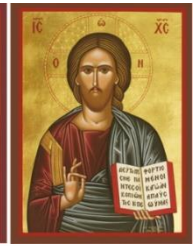


Greek Tradition

Ingredients



NOTE: Recipe yields approx. 2 Bread Loaves.



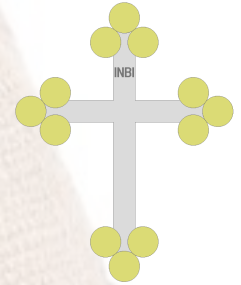
6 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups, Wheat Flour* All-Purpose
2 cups, Water
2 $\frac{1}{4}$ tsps, Yeast (jarred)
1 scant, Salt (i.e., less than a full teaspoon)

NOTE: Always check the label on the flour, use 100% Pure WHOLE WHEAT FLOUR, All-Purpose (i.e., no leavening/rising agent).

NOTE: The amounts used from a jarred version of YEAST are completely different from the amount listed on a individually pre-packed envelope of YEAST. This recipe uses jarred YEAST.

Additional items.

Religious Seal (sfrangitha)
8" or 9" Baking Pans (for the oven)
Clean Linen (for the dough rising process)
Index Card (with name/s of the Prepares)

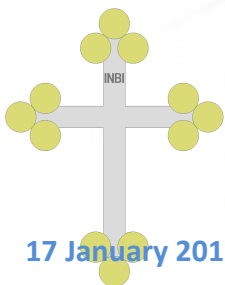


Various Other Ingredients.

There is literally NO OTHER INGREDIENTS. In our attempt to stay true to its origins, all ingredients must be pure and natural.

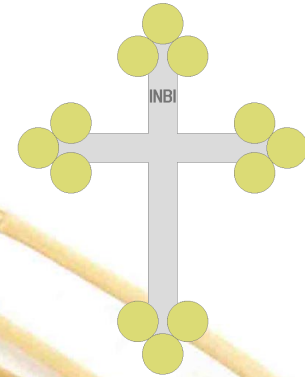
NOTE: By this simple recipe, all the ingredients are LENTEN BASED.

Opening Prayer. O Lord Jesus Christ, only begotten Son of the Eternal Father, Who hast said with Thy most pure lips: Without Me you can do nothing. O Lord, our Lord, with faith we accept Thy words; help us, sinners, to prepare the Bread of Offering, that the works of our hands may be acceptable at The Holy Table and may become through the operation of Thy Holy Spirit the communion of Thy Most Pure Body for us and for all Thy people. In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.



17 January 2017





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.

Prosphora will become -- The Body of Christ.

Προσφορον

The Scriptural References

And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, "*Take, eat; this is My body.*"

The Old Testament

Genesis 3:19



Psalms 50:1-19



The Apostolic Constitutions

Book VII, Chapter 29



Book VIII, Chapter 12



The New Testament

St Matthew 26:19,26-30



St Mark 14:16,22-26



St Luke 22:13-20



St John 6:47-51



*The entire chapters of St John 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17
contains the Lord's discourses during
the Last Supper.*

The New Testament in Greek.

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



The Orthodox Cultural Diversity

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 Holy Prosfhora Bakers



**Celebrated on the Second Sunday of Lent
(and on the 28th of September, and on the 31st of October).**

The Venerable Spyridon and Nicodemus, the Prosfhora Bakers of the Kiev Near Caves fulfilled their monastic obedience by baking prosfhora for thirty years.



St Spyridon came to the monastery in the time of Igumen Pimen (1132-1141), when he was no longer a young man. There, he was joined by St. Nicodemus, and together they toiled and led a strict ascetic life while baking prosfhora, a duty which they combined with unceasing prayer and singing of the Psalms. Even during his life St Spyridon was glorified by miracles. He was illiterate, but knew the entire Psalter by heart.

Once, his mantle caught fire from the oven. The fire was put out, but the mantle remained whole. St Nicodemus labored with St Spyridon and led a very strict life. Their relics are in the Kiev Caves of St Anthony. The fingers of St Spyridon's right hand are positioned to make the Sign of the Cross with three fingers. They are also commemorated on September 28, and the second Sunday of Great Lent.

Troparion of the Holy Prosfhora Bakers, in the Fourth Tone:

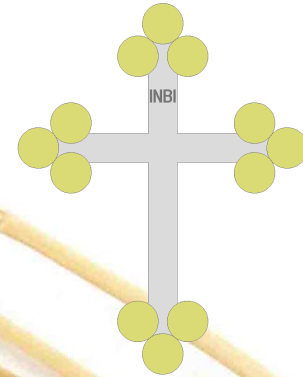
While you made loaves for the Eucharist with your own hands, with your mouths you offered unceasing psalmody to the Lord as a sacrifice of praise, O blessed Spyridon and honored Nicodemus. Entreat Christ God together on behalf of our souls.

Kontakion of the Holy Prosfhora Bakers, in the Third Tone:

That thou mightest reveal thy burning love for the Lord, O wondrous Spyridon, with thy mantle thou didst stop up the mouth of the furnace which was burning mightily; and that thou mightest show forth the well-spring of the waters of the gifts of the Spirit which dwelt within thee, bearing water in thy robe thou didst extinguish the flame of the fire. Wherefore, as thou hast boldness before the Lord, ever pray with the blessed Nicodemus in behalf of us who hymn thee.

Kontakion of the Holy Prosfhora Bakers, in the Eighth Tone:

Come, let us honor the glorious pair, the honored disciples of King David the ancestor of God: Spyridon and Nicodemus who were pleasing unto Christ! For by chanting the psalms day and night they protected themselves from every sin as with a rampart, soared aloft to the heavens on the divine wings of the Spirit, passed through the gloom of this life like arrows and sparks and attained unto the never-waning Light. Wherefore, celebrating their memory today, let us cry out to the Savior with fervor: By their supplications, O Christ God, have mercy upon us!



The Orthodox Prayer.
<http://www.orthodoxprayer.org/>

Preparations

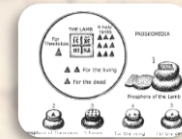
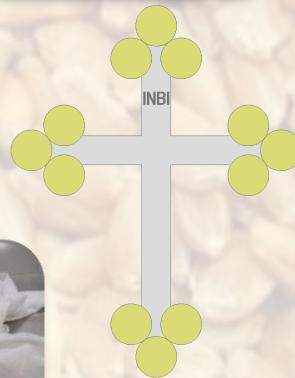
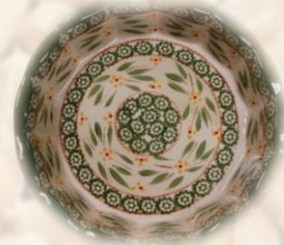
Generally speaking, it takes 3 hours to prepare Prosphora.

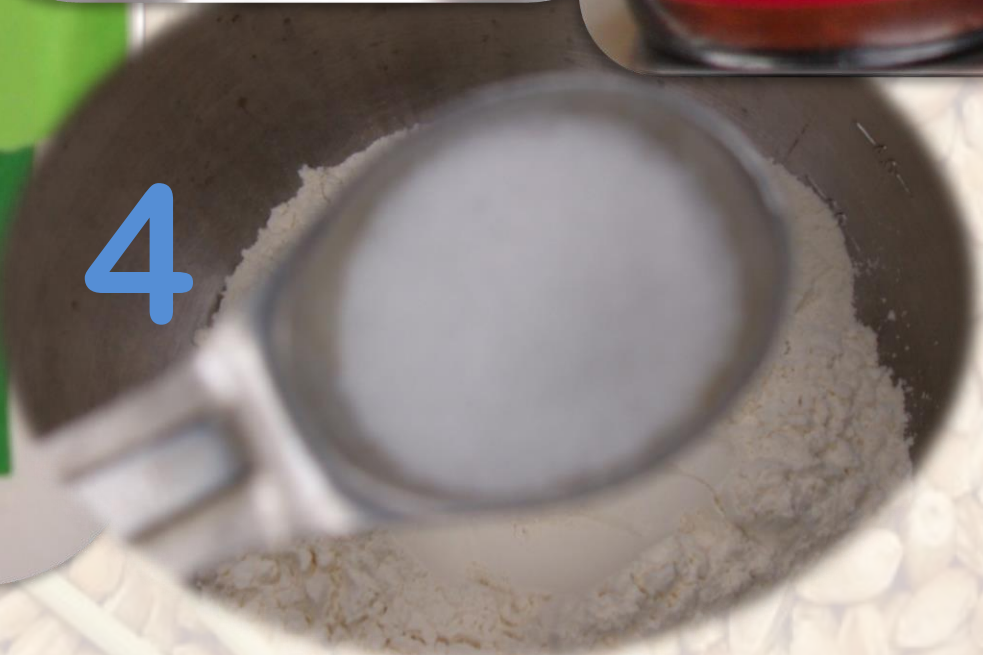
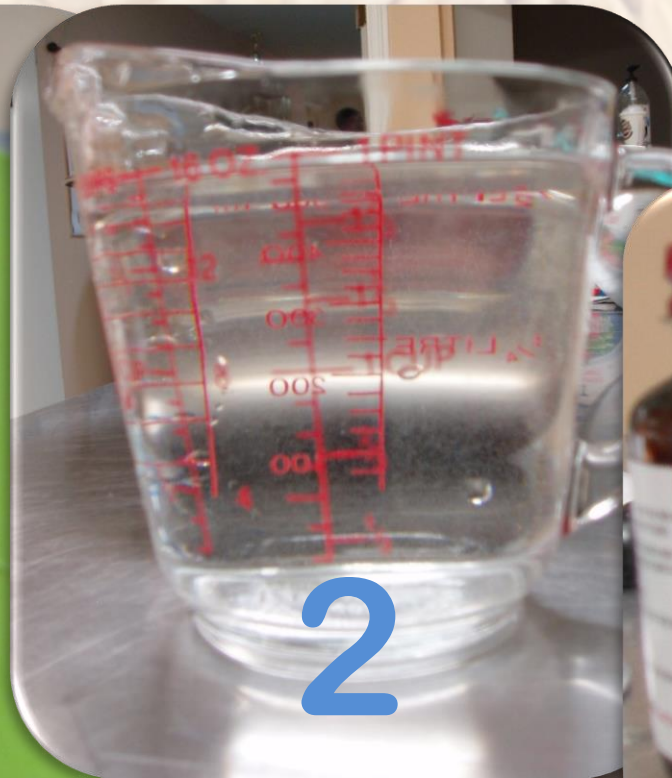
Prepare Yourself. Make the sign of the Cross. Light your Candle or Olive Oil Lamp. Light the Incense. Have an Orthodox Icon, and a Cross nearby.

Prayer. Pray to God for **Humility** in making the Bread, for **Forgiveness** of our sins, and for the acceptance of the **Bread Offering** from us.

Prosphora will become -- The Body of Christ.

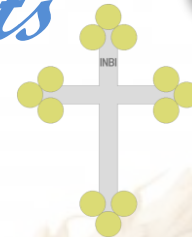
Προσφορον







Measuring the Ingredients



The Water. Measure exactly 2 cups of WARM WATER, and leave in the measuring cup.

The Yeast. Measure exactly 2 ¼ teaspoons of yeast into a small bowl. Add a small amount of the water (approx. ½ cup) to the yeast and stir until the yeast is all wet. Then, set your yeast mixture aside to activate.

NOTE: The yeast needs to be activated before adding to the flour, and using warm (room temperature water) helps the yeast to grow.

The Flour. Measure exactly 6 ¾ cups of Pure Wheat Flour into a large mixing bowl. Leveling off each of the measurements as you go.

The Salt. Measure approximately 1 skant (a small amount less than a teaspoon). Then add THE SALT to your FLOUR. Stir the FLOUR and SALT together.

Then form a well into the FLOUR/SALT mixture. Now, add your YEAST mixture to your flour, and your remaining WARM WATER (approx. 1 ½ cups). Stir until all is incorporated together. Then, remove the dough from the mixing bowl for the KNEADING process.



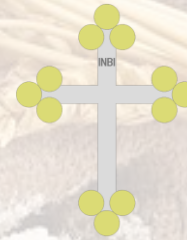


Kneading For 25 minutes.

The Kneading. Keep kneading the dough for 25 minutes. It will seem too dry at first, just keep kneading. You want a stiff dough.



NOTE: Remember when KNEADING, the Prospora will become the Body of Christ. Thus, the DOUGH should be slightly TIGHT, COURSE, or have TENSION to it when we are finished kneading. As normal FLESH MUSCLES in a body become constricted or tighter the longer it sits, so must the ending results of our KNEADING (slightly constricted, not mushy). Too much over kneading, and we have over worked the yeast and it will no longer rise properly.

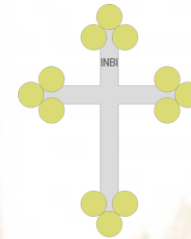


1st Rising For one hour.

The First Rising | Resting. Put the dough into a clean bowl, and cover it with a clean towel. Allow the dough to RISE for one hour.

Kneading For 10 times.

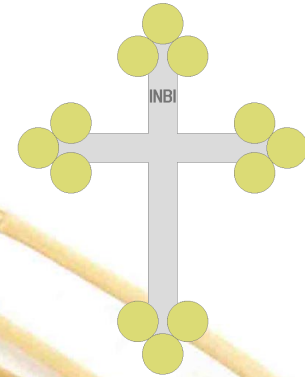
The Kneading. After the first rising (one hour), remove the dough from the pan. Knead the dough for about 10 times (approx. 1 minutes or less), just enough to bring it together. Then, pat into a ball and cut it into two equal halves.



2nd Rising For 10 minutes.

The Second Rising / Resting. After you have cut the dough into two equal portions. Place them both back on your clean counter (or back into the pan separating each), and cover it again. Let it rest for 10 minutes.



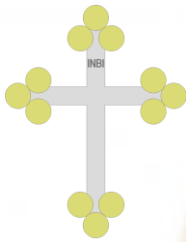


Assembly

Time for
Seal Pressing & Resting
Approx. 45 Minutes

Prosphora will become -- The Body of Christ.

Προσφορον



Flouring the baking pans

The Flouring. Some baking pans require flouring while others do not (i.e., non-stick surfaces). Generally using an 8 or 9 inch round baking pan. A CERAMIC PAN needs some flouring. An ALUMINUM PAN needs far more flouring than most pans. While, thanks to modern technology, our non-stick surface pan needs very little flouring at all.

CAUTION: You are “not” using any grease or butter, and the flour is simply loose on the baking pan.



Panning the Dough

The Rolling Pins. After the second rising (ten minutes), remove the each half dough from the pan. Take one of the HALVES and form into a ball and roll it out into the size of your baking pan. Rub some flour around the sides of the dough and on the top. Place into the already floured pan, floured side down.



The Panning. Once the dough is in the baking pan, rub some more flour on the top of the dough to make it dry.

Applying the Seal

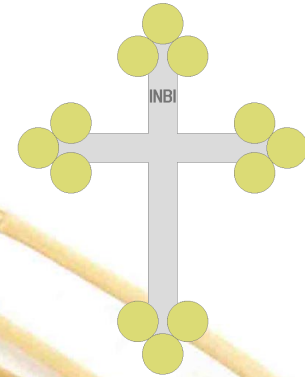


The Sealing. After the dough has been placed into the baking pan, and you have rubbed some flour to the TOP of the dough. Then place the seal in the center of the dough. Remember, you will press straight down with all your weight while we all pray The Lord's Prayer. If you are short, or don't have much upper body strength, you can put the pan on a lower surface, like a chair, so more of your weight will be on the seal.

The Toothpicks. Once the SEAL is pressed on the dough, add 16 toothpicks around the seal, evenly spaced, to secure the seal on the dough.

3rd Rising For 30-45 minutes.

The Third Rising. Cover the dough (in the baking pans) with a clean towel. Allow a THIRD RISING, this time with the seal on it. After the THIRD RISING (thirty to forty-five minutes), remove the toothpicks and the seal from the dough. Now it is ready to be baked.



The Seals

Time for Seal Info

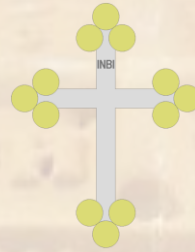
Approx. 5 Minutes

Prosfhora will become -- The Body of Christ.

Προσφορον

REVERSED IMAGE

READABLE



Reverse
Imagery

The Seal Image. The same concept of a mirror, or the older plate printing press, the image on the seal is actually in reverse. Thus, when it is stamped on the dough it will come out as a readable image.

NOTE: I have flipped the image above to clearly display what image is actually STAMPED.



Μήτηρ

M / Mitir = **Mother**

Θεοῦ

Θ / Theou = **God**



**The Nine Ranks of Angels
/ The Saints**

Ἰησοῦς

Ις / IC / ΙΣ = **Jesus**

Χριστός

Χς / XC / ΧΣ = **Christ**



Νικα

Νικα / NIKΑ = **Victory**



The Seals - Explanations

PROSKOMEDIA

(Readable Imagery)



Prosphora of the Lamb



Prosphora of Theotokos



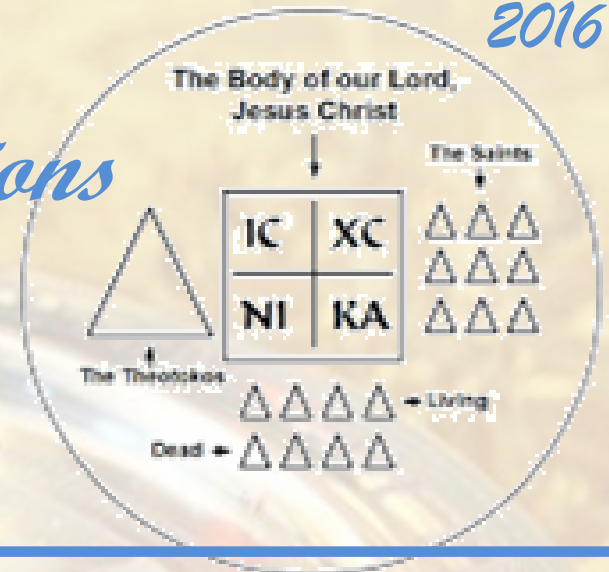
9 Ranks



For the living



For the dead



Ἰησοῦς

Iς / IC / ΙΣ = **Jesus**

Χριστός

Χς / XC / ΧΣ = **Christ**

Νικα

Νικα / ΝΙΚΑ = **Victory**



Μήτηρ

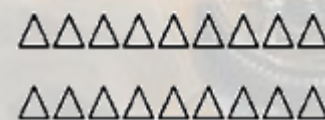
Μ / Mitir = **Mother**

Θεοῦ

Θ / Theou = **God**



The Nine Holy Ranks
of Angels / Saints



**The Living &
The Departed**

The Seals - Manufacturing

(Reversed Imagery)



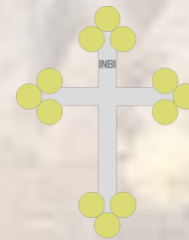
Note. Typically as with any printing STAMP, an example of the stamp is printing on the TOP/UPPER side to show where and how to stamp the image onto the item receiving the stamped image.



TOP SIDE



STAMPED IMAGE



Typically the older SEALS were made of **CARVED WOOD**, and the newer ones are made of **PLASTIC**. Nowadays, thanks to modern technology, we also have the STAMPED SEAL already inside a **non-stick baking pan** itself.

Personal Preferences.



Ἰησοῦς

Ις / IC / ΙΣ = **Jesus**

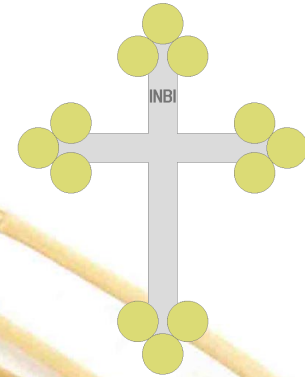
Χριστός

Χς / XC / ΧΣ = **Christ**

Νικα

Νικα / NIKΑ = **Victory**





The Baking

Time for Baking

Approx. 35 Minutes

Prosfhora will become -- The Body of Christ.

Προσφορον



The Baking

The Baking. After the THIRD RISING has completed. Bake in a preheated oven at 375° Fahrenheit for 35 minutes. Depending on your oven, you may adjust the amount of baking time to ensure a proper baking of the bread. Once it has completed baking, remove from the oven, and remove from the pans while it is still hot.

The Cooling. Allow the bread to completely cool. If you are leaving it unattended cover it with your clean towel. Allowing the bread to completely cool over night is okay.



,BIΣT'



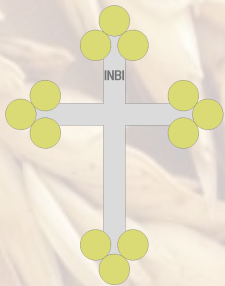
Decoration. The ICXC NIKA SEAL is all that is allowed/required.

Scheduling. It is always best to talk with FATHER and the CHURCH OFFICE prior, to schedule any Prosphora Baking/Offering ahead of time. The Prosphora must be at the church prior to the start of the Divine Liturgy (i.e., used during The Office of Oblation)

Wrapping. After the bread is completely cooled. Wrap cooled bread tightly in plastic wrap to keep fresh. Include an index card with your name and the date you baked the bread. If it is going to be stored in the FREEZER, be sure to use a heavy enough plastic wrap for freezing, then wrap in aluminum foil to protect it.

Transportation. Bring to the CHURCH, and give to FATHER approx. one full hour before Liturgy/Orthros. Or you may make prior arrangements for the delivery. The Priest will decide when it is best to use the bread or to freeze it for another day.

Refrigeration. When bringing to the CHURCH, please bring it fresh, cooled, and already wrapped. The PRIEST will determine how much to use, and will place in the alter freezer any additional Prosphora Loaves to be used at a later date.



Closing Prayer. O Lord Jesus Christ, Thou art Thyself the fulfillment of all good things. Fill our hearts with joy and gladness, and save us, for Thou art all-merciful. Amen.

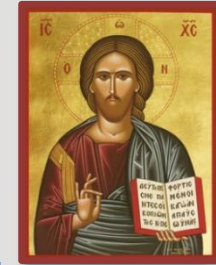


Prosphora will become - - The Body of Christ.

Icon of the
PATRON
SAINT of
the Church



At the Church



Location. The Prosphora is used during THE OFFICE OF OBLATION (Proskomide) held as a prerequisite immediately prior to the Divine Liturgy at the church. The Table of Oblation (Prothesis), which is situated at the left (north) side of the altar.

*The BREAD (Prosphora) &
the WINE (usually Mavrodaphne)
are both offered
during the Office of Oblation,
then during the Divine Liturgy
together they become
the BODY and BLOOD of Christ.*

<http://www.goarch.org/ourfaith/ourfaith9561>

The Office of Oblation (Proskomide) ✙

Since the early Church, the Office of Oblation (Proskomide) has been a service of offering gifts to God in preparation for the Sacrament of Holy Eucharist or Holy Communion in the Divine Liturgy. The Office of Oblation is thus -- a prerequisite for the Divine Liturgy.

Today, the priest conducts the Office of Oblation inaudibly during Matins behind the Altar Iconostasis (Icon Screen). The Table of Oblation (Prothesis or sometimes Proskomide) is located to the left of the Holy Altar table. The Table of Oblation represents the cave or stable of Bethlehem where our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ was born.

For the Oblation, members of the congregation bring wine and bread as an offering to the Church. During the Divine Liturgy, the WINE will be consecrated into the blood of Christ, while the BREAD will be consecrated into the body of Christ.

The wine is a pure grape sweet wine. It is often the Greek sweet wine Mavrodaphne or the sweet wines from Samos or Cyprus.

The holy bread (also called prosphora or offering) must be made from pure wheat flour and water, and is leavened and well baked. Usually, there are five loaves to represent our Lord's miracle of feeding of "five thousand men besides women and children" with only five loaves of bread ([St. Matthew 14:17-21](#)). But if it is not possible to make five loaves, at least one is necessary for the offering. ✙

In the center of the top of the bread is a round seal. During the Office of Oblation, the priest cuts small portions of the bread to prepare for Holy Communion.



Into the Chalice

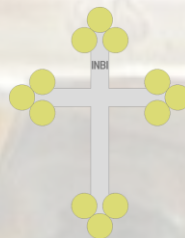
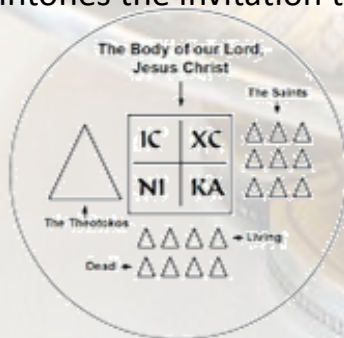
During the Communion Anthem of the Divine Liturgy: The priest breaks the Lamb into four pieces. This breaking is significant because it has reference to the suffering and bruised Body of Christ on the Cross. For this reason the priest arranges **the four pieces of the Lamb - IC, XC, NI, KA** on the paten in the form of a cross. Then he takes the portion marked IC, and with it he makes the sign of the cross over the chalice, and as a symbol of the reuniting of our Lord's soul and body at the time of His Resurrection, he places it in the chalice gently, saying softly: << >>

Afterwards he places the remaining **three portions of the Lamb** into the chalice, as well as all the portions **in memory of the Theotokos** (the large triangle on the left) and all the portions **in memory of the Saints** (the nine small triangles on the right).

Finally, he places in the chalice any small remaining particles **in memory of the Living** (the smaller triangles cut below the Lamb) and **in memory of the Departed Souls** (the smaller triangles cut below the Living), saying: << >>

(Note: If communicants are expected, the portions in memory of the Saints, the particles in memory of the Living and Departed, are dropped into the Chalice after administering Communion.)

After the Communion Anthem is concluded: The priest, holding the Chalice, turns towards the worshippers and intones the invitation to Communion. The Communion Prayer/Hymn is said by all.



Taken from: The Divine Liturgy Explained (fourth edition), by Rev. Nicholas M. Elias. Pages 90-93.
Papadimitriou Publishing Co. 47 Ippokratous Street, Athens, 2000. ISBN 960-550-065-5.

The Antidoron

In the early years of our Church all Christians, who were present in the Divine Liturgy, received Holy Communion. But later on, because of laxness of the original zeal and ignorance of the benefits from the Holy Communion, the Christians received it at long intervals. Since then, our Church distributes at the end of the Divine Liturgy all the remaining pieces of the blessed bread PROSPHORA (used for the Holy Eucharist) that were not placed into the chalice. Those remnant pieces left from the PROSPHORA are called the ANTIDORON (meaning instead of THE GIFTS).

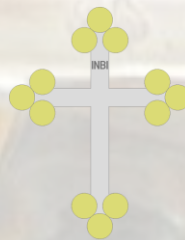
This distribution of bread, the ANTIDORON, is a method by which the non-communicants share partially in the Grace and the Blessings of the Divine Liturgy.

The faithful proceed quietly with reverence and piety, required in the House of God and receive the ANTIDORON from the priests, kissing his hand. This is an ANTIDORON practice and a sign of respect to the ordained person, whom God has given the special power of consummating the Bloodless Sacrifice and who touches with his hands the Precious and Most Holy Body of our Lord.

The priest, while distributing the ANTIDORON, says to each recipient:

<< The blessing of the Lord and His mercy may come upon thee. >>

After receiving the ANTIDORON, the faithful leave the Church quietly and reverently, with their hearts filled with happiness and thankfulness and re-enforced in the Christian life.



Useful Websites

For **VIDEOS** on making Prospora:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wWgslACJ_4A

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TQAec9ao7Wk>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7TL0yDFzsgw>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o7-NAMTe4sU>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wWgslACJ_4A

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dpD5AD3jwXc>

For **TECHNICAL NOTES** on making Prospora:

<http://www.prospora.org/page2.html>

<http://www.prospora.org/page4.html>

<http://www.pravoslavie.ru/english/69314.htm>

<http://www.illumination-learning.com/blog/2013/06/a-prospora-bakers-guide-to-common-mistakes/>