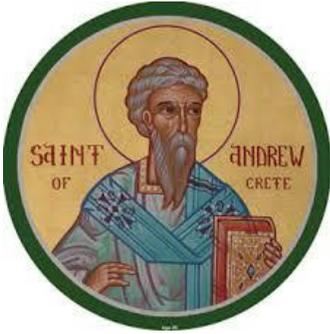


THE GREAT COMPLINE



There is no other sacred hymn that compares with this monumental work, which St Andrew wrote for his personal meditations. Nothing else has its extensive typology and mystical explanations of the scripture, from both the Old and New Testaments. One can almost consider this hymn to be a “survey of the Old and New Testament”. Its other distinguishing features are a spirit of mournful humility, hope in God, and complex and beautiful Trinitarian Doxologies and hymns to the Theotokos in each Ode.

The canon is a dialog between St. Andrew and his soul. The ongoing theme is an urgent exhortation to change one’s life. St Andrew always mentions his own sinfulness placed in juxtaposition to God’s mercy, and uses literally hundreds of references to good and bad examples from the OT and NT to “convince himself” to repent. For further information visit: [Great Compline](#).

THE PRESANCTIFIED LITURGY

The Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts is an ancient service in the Orthodox Church. It is the solemn Lenten Vespers with the administration of Holy Communion added to it. It comes in the evening after a day of spiritual preparation and total abstinence. There is no consecration of the Eucharistic gifts at the Presanctified Liturgy. Holy Communion is given from the Eucharistic gifts sanctified on the previous Sunday at the celebration of the Divine Liturgy, unless, of course, the feast of the Annunciation should intervene; hence its name of “presanctified”.



THE AKATHIST HYMN TO THE THEOTOKOS



The Akathist Hymn is a profound, devotional poem, which sings the praises of the Holy Mother and Ever-Virgin Mary. It is one of the most beloved services in the Orthodox Church. The word "akathistos" means "not sitting," i.e., standing; normally all participants stand while it is being prayed. To read the rest of this article, visit: [Akathist](#).