



The Annunciation of the Theotokos Orthodox Church

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Annunciation Orthodox Church of Manila: Veneration of the Holy Gospel

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During Matins service, Father James Doronela, parish priest of the Annunciation Orthodox Church brings the Holy Bible out from the Holy Altar to the faithful, and holding the Gospel, he emulates the Angel as he shows us the resurrected Christ, about whom he had preached. Like the disciples, the Orthodox faithful bow down and venerates the Holy Gospel, and like the Myrrh-bearing Women, they kiss it, while everyone sings.

The kiss is an action firmly rooted in Eastern Orthodoxy. When Orthodox Christians enter into the church, they venerate the holy icons by kissing the icons. This shows love and respect. The faithful may also kiss the Priest's right hand from time to time. This, too, is an act of veneration.

Icons are holy images. The reverence and veneration (not worship) shown to icons, however, is not directed to mere paint, wood, or stones, but towards the saints depicted. Even when a miracle-working icon is highly venerated, it is the true source of the miracles (God, through the intercessions of that specific saint) that is honored and respected.

The Orthodox faithful regard the Bible as a verbal icon of Christ. The Seventh Ecumenical Council saw that the Book of the Gospels and the Holy Icons should be venerated alike. In every Orthodox church, the Gospel Book has a place of honor on the altar table; it is carried in procession at the Divine Liturgy and at Matins on Sundays and feast days. Such is the respect shown in the Holy Orthodox Church for the Word of God.



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