

Holy Water: How Should We Use It?

There are a variety of ways Orthodox Christians employ Holy Water in their daily life. For example, it is drunk, on an empty stomach and in small amounts, usually taken together with a piece of *prosphora*. This especially pertains to the great *hagiasma* (water blessed on the eve of and the day of the Feast of the Lord's Baptism in the Jordan), with which people's homes are sprinkled.

One should never forget that Holy Water is a holy thing of the Church, something touched by the grace of God, something that merits being treated with great reverence.

It is customary to accompany the use of Holy Water with the following prayer: "O Lord my God, may Thy holy gift, Thy Holy Water, be unto the remission of my sins, unto the enlightenment of my mind, unto the strengthening of my spiritual and physical powers, unto health of my soul and body, unto the taming of my passions and infirmities, according to Thy boundless mercy, by the prayers of Thy Most-pure Mother and all Thy Saints. Amen."

Although out of reverence toward a Holy Thing, it is desirable to consume on an empty stomach Holy Water blessed on Theophany, in time of special need for God's help, e.g. during illness or when under attack by evil powers, one both may and should drink it without hesitation at any time. If treated with reverence, Holy Water remains fresh and pleasant to the taste for a long time. It should be stored in a specially designated place, preferably near your home Icon Corner.