

**ADDENDUM ~ VIATICUM:** Among the ancient Greeks the custom prevailed of giving a supper to those setting out on a journey. This was called **Ὁδοιπόριον** *hodoiporion*". The provision of all things necessary for such a journey, viz. food, money, clothes, utensils and expense, was called **ἐφόδιον** / *ephódion*. The adjectival equivalent in Latin of both these words is **viaticus**, i.e. "*of or pertaining to a road or journey* ["*via*" in Latin]". Subsequently the noun "viaticum" figuratively meant the provision for the journey of life and finally by metaphor the provision for the passage out of this world into the next. It is in this last meaning that the word is used in sacred liturgy.

Formerly **VIATICUM** meant anything that gave spiritual strength and comfort to the dying and enabled them to make the journey into eternity with greater confidence and security. For this reason anciently not only any sacrament administered to persons at the point of death, baptism, confirmation, penance, holy unction, Eucharist, but even prayers offered up or good works performed by themselves or by others in their behalf, e.g. alms-deeds, and finally anything that tended to reconcile the dying with God and the Church came under this designation. In the course of time "**VIATICUM**" was applied to the Eucharist generally, but finally it acquired its present fixed, exclusive, and technical sense of Holy Communion given to those in danger of death.

Ideally then the last sacrament that a Christian should receive before death is the Divine Eucharist. Many times, however, the dying person may be unconscious or if awake may be intubated and unable to swallow. In these types of cases then the Mystery of Holy Anointing becomes by default the so-called «Last Rites», but this was never the original intent of the Church, which thankfully has been restored by Vatican II both for the Latin as well as the Eastern Catholic Churches. In the Byzantine Churches there are also (1) prayers at the moment of the passing of the soul from the body (when one has suffered a long time), (2) prayers of absolution at death, and (3) the first Panachida that the priest can offer on the deceased person's behalf.



## ~ Memorial Services in the Byzantine Churches ~

Traditionally, in addition to the service on the day of death, the «Panachida» or «Memorial Service for the Faithful Departed» is served at the request of the relatives of an individual departed person on the following occasions:

- **Third day** after death (*many times this is also the day of burial*)
- **Ninth day**
- **Fortieth day**
- **First anniversary** of death



After the first year, the departed is then remembered at the five «All Souls Saturdays», but may be remembered at any time throughout the year if the family so chooses. The above is the general pattern followed although there can be much variation among the Churches of the Greeks and Slavs.

### **THIRD DAY SERVICE**

The third day service is celebrated because the one who has died, by baptism and chrismation, received his being through the Trinity, and having been translated, he hopes to be changed back to the ancient beauty in which man was first made before the fall.

### **NINTH DAY SERVICE**

The ninth day service is celebrated that his spirit may dwell together with the holy spirits, the angels, since the soul is immaterial as is their nature. The angels are ranked according to nine orders, and in three trinities they proclaim and praise God in Trinity.

### **FORTIETH DAY SERVICE**

The 40<sup>th</sup> day service is celebrated in the memory of the Savior's Ascension 40 days after His Resurrection and that the deceased, when he is resurrected, may be taken up in the clouds to meet the Judge, our Savior and Master, and thus be with Him forever (1Thes. 4:17).

## **FIRST YEAR AND ANNUAL MEMORIAL SERVICES**

On the first year anniversary and each year thereafter relatives should observe the memorial of the departed to demonstrate that he lives and is immortal of soul and he shall be restored when the Creator raises up his body. The offering of «Boiled Wheat» – “Kollyva” – bears witness that, as Christ died according to the flesh and was raised up and lives, thus, we too, as St. Paul says, «shall be raised up and live in Him.»



**Κόλλυβα:** The word is derived from classical Greek κόλλυβος, *kollybos*, i.e. a small coin or a small gold weight. In the Hellenistic period the neuter plural form of the word, i.e. κόλλυβα, *kollyba*, took the meaning of small pies made of boiled wheat. Christians of the Byzantine Tradition consider **kolliva** to be symbolic of death and resurrection, according to the words of Jesus in the Gospel:

*Verily, verily, I say unto you, «Except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die, it remains alone: but if it die, it brings forth much fruit.» (John 12:24)*

Wheat which is planted in the earth and rises in new life is symbolic of those beloved departed who have died in the hope of resurrection, in accordance with the words of Saint Paul:

*«So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body....» (I Corinthians 15:42-44)*

While recipes may vary widely, the primary ingredient in today's Kollyva consists of wheat kernels which have been boiled until they are soft. These are usually mixed with a variety of ingredients which may include some or

all of the following: pomegranate seeds, sesame seeds, almonds, ground walnuts, cinnamon, sugar / honey, raisins, anise, and parsley.

The Kollyva mixture is then placed on a platter and shaped into a mound or cake, to resemble a grave. The whole is then decorated with a powdered sugar covering, with raisins or almonds decoratively placed on the surface. A cross is traced on the top, and on its sides may be placed the initials of the departed for whom the memorial is held. A candle, usually placed in the center of the Kollyva, is lit at the beginning of the service and extinguished at its end; the candle symbolizes the light wherewith the Christian is illumined in Baptism, and also the light of the world to come, which knows no setting.



**Pre-Vatican II Latin Rite Tradition** also had a custom similar to the Byzantines. Requiem Masses were said on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup> days after death and at the 1<sup>st</sup> year anniversary. The 30<sup>th</sup> day was particularly important in England and Ireland and was known as the «**Month's Mind.**» In medieval and later England, it was a service and feast held one month after the death of anyone in his or her memory. Venerable Bede, a Benedictine monk, speaks of the day as *commemorationis dies*. These "Minding days" were of great antiquity, and were survivals of the Norse *minne*, or ceremonial drinking to the dead just as the Byzantine custom can be traced back to funeral offerings associated with Demeter the Greek goddess of grain and agriculture.

**Post-Vatican II, Novus Ordo Missæ:** The current Roman Missal only has propers for the 1<sup>st</sup> year anniversary; daily Masses for the Dead may also be celebrated like they were in the past.

