

Proclamation of the Biblical Readings in the Eucharistic Liturgy of the Syriac Churches

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Abstract

In every liturgical family, including the Syriac ones, the proclamation of the Word of God belongs to the essential elements of the celebration. Although in the many communities sharing the same tradition of Antioch, Edessa and Nisibis the practice of the biblical readings within the liturgy looks different there are some common elements. Among them one can list: a great respect towards the Bible (the book seen as a monstrance); the readings take place during the Liturgy of Catechumens; the readings from both the Old and New Testament are divided by the psalmodic chants; the practice of reading the Gospel is strictly reserved for the priest; the presence of the biblical poetry within the whole celebration. In this study, aside from the analysis of the essential elements of the Syriac Liturgy of the Word, the author has included also a brief introduction to the history and geography of the Syriac Churches and has described the historical place of the proclamation of the Bible, i.e. the *bemā*.