ORDINATION RITE

1. Tonsure and Minor Orders

2. Subdiaconate

3. Diaconate

4. Priesthood.

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THE TONSURE

Archdeacon: Let those who are to receive the first clerical Tonsure come forward.

(as the name of each candidate is called, he answers “Present” and comes forward.)

Bishop: May the name of the Lord be blessed.
All: Now and forevermore.

Bishop: We rely on the strength of the Lord.
All: Who made heaven and earth.

Bishop: My dear brethren, Let us pray to Jesus Christ Our Lord on behalf of these servants of His, who are to adopt the tonsure to-day in order to symbolize their renunciation of the world out of love for Him. May the gift of His Holy Spirit make them devout and persevering servants of the Church, men who are free of worldly entanglements and secular ambitions. May the change in their external appearance be accompanied by an interior growth in virtue. May all obscurity, whether in spiritual insight or knowledge of men, be cleared from their eyes and the enduring light of grace illuminate their minds. Through the same Jesus Christ, Our Lord, who lives and reigns with the Father in the unity of the same Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.

All: Amen.
(during the cutting of the hair — Psalm XV, 1-4, is sung):

Antiphon: You and no other, O Lord, will assure my inheritance to me.

Psalm: Keep me safe, Lord; I put my trust in You.

The Lord, whom I own as my God, *confess that in him is all my good!

There are faithful souls in this land of his;
*wondrous delight he gives me in their companionship.

What do they do but lay up fresh store of sorrows,
*that betake themselves to alien gods?

Not with these will I pour out the blood of sacrifice;
*I will not take forbidden names upon my lips.

Antiphon: You and no other, O Lord, will assure my inheritance to me.

Bishop: (As he cuts the hair of each candidate):

It is the Lord I claim for my prize, the Lord who fills my cup; You and no other will assure my inheritance to me.
Bishop: Let us pray. Grant us, we beg You, O Lord, that these servants of Yours, whose heads have been tonsured today as a sign of dedication to You, may always be faithful to Your love; may You guard them from harm to the end of their days, through Christ Our Lord.

All: Amen.

(Psalm XXIII is now sung):

Antiphon: He shall receive a blessing from the Lord, a reward from God his saviour, because such is the race that seeks the Lord.

Psalm: The Lord's are the earth and its fullness; * the world and those who dwell in it.

For he founded it upon the seas * and established it upon the rivers.

Who can ascend the mountain of the Lord? * or who may stand in his holy place?

He whose hands are sinless, whose heart is clean, * who desires not what is vain, nor swears deceitfully to his neighbor.

He shall receive a blessing from the Lord, * a reward from God his savior.

Such is the race that seeks for him, * that seeks the face of the God of Jacob.

Lift up, O gates, your lintels; * reach up, you ancient portals, that the king of glory may come in!

Who is the king of glory? * The Lord of hosts; he is the king of glory.

Antiphon: He shall receive a blessing from the Lord, a reward from God his savior, because such is the race that seeks the Lord.

Bishop: Let us pray.

Assistant: Let us kneel. (Pause)

Arise.

Bishop: Hear our humble prayer, O Lord, and graciously bless these servants of Yours. In Your name we now invest them with the sacred garment of clerics. By Your help may they wear it so faithfully in the Church as to merit the reward of everlasting life, through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

(Investing each candidate with the surplice):
May the Lord clothe you after His own desire: with this surplice, put on the new man whom He created in justice and true holiness.

**Bishop:** Let us pray. Almighty God, Eternal Lord, ever merciful to sinners, deliver Your servants, here present, from all attachment to worldly ways. Since today they set aside their secular style of dress, may they always enjoy Your favour to the full. Just as they bear on their heads the mark of Your divine choice, so also by Your help may they receive in their hearts the lasting inheritance allotted to them, through Christ Our Lord.

**All:** Amen.

**Bishop:** My dear sons, you are aware that today you have been bound to the service of the Church in a special manner: you have received the rights and responsibilities of clerics. You must be careful, therefore, never to forfeit them through any fault of your own. Always strive to please God by your decent bearing, your prudent behaviour, and your eagerness to serve others. May God Himself, through His Holy Spirit, grant you this grace.

**All:** Amen.

**MINOR ORDERS**

**THE OFFICE OF PORTER**

**Archdeacon:** Let those who are to be ordained to the office of Porter come forward.

*(As the name of each candidate is called, he answers “Present” and comes forward.)*

**Bishop:** My dear sons, since you are about to receive the Order of Porter in the House of God, you should reflect seriously upon the duties of your office. A Porter is assigned the task of summoning worshippers to divine services, of greeting the faithful at the entrance to the Church, and of making provision for what is needed at the altar. You must carefully safeguard Church properties, and wisely foresee future requirements. At the appointed hours the House of God must be opened to the faithful; their fitting behaviour should be secured, and their needs attended to, throughout the service.

The physical opening and closing of Church doors by the aid of visible keys should be a symbol to you of the spiritual opening of Christian hearts at divine worship: by your words and example you should strive to exclude every worldly
desire or unbecoming attitude by which Satan seeks to gain entry into the Temple of God. The inspired words heard by the faithful must take root in their hearts and bear a fruitful harvest in their lives. May the Lord in His kindness grant you the grace to achieve these aims.

Bishop: *(Presenting the keys to each candidate)*:

Fulfill your office as one who must render to God an account of the sacred premises kept by these keys.

Bishop: My dear brethren, let us humbly beg Almighty God to bless these servants of His whom He has chosen for the office of Porter. May they always faithfully serve in the House of God, announcing the hours of prayer and providing for the reverent assistance of the faithful at divine services, through the help of Our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with Him in the unity of the Holy Christ, God, forever and ever.

All: Amen.

Bishop: Holy Lord, Almighty Father, Eternal God, graciously bless these servants of Yours in their office of Porter. May they discharge their duties so carefully among the guardians of Your Church on earth, that they will receive a fitting reward in the company of Your Saints in heaven. Through Our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.

All: Amen.

THE OFFICE OF READER

Archdeacon: Let those who are to be ordained to the office of Reader come forward.

*(As the name of each candidate is called, he answers "Present" and comes forward.)*

Bishop: My dear sons, since you have been chosen to be Readers in the House of God, consider carefully the nature of your office.

The Lector's duty is to read before the people of God the selections of Holy Scripture appointed for each Eucharistic celebration. You must strive, therefore, to pronounce the sacred words distinctly, and to divide the phrases intelligently, without false emphasis or improper intonations, so that the faithful may easily understand and draw profit from the inspired text. The truth contained in the Word of God, should not, through any carelessness on your part, be lost to the listening congregation.
Moreover, the truths pronounced by your lips you must believe in your hearts and practice in your daily lives: you should try to instruct your hearers, not only by word, but also by example.

The Lector takes his stand where he may be seen and heard by all. If, then, you are placed in a high and conspicuous position, it follows that your spiritual conduct should be raised to a corresponding plane of virtue. You must influence those who see and hear you by the lesson of your own life. May the grace of God accomplish this in you.

**Bishop:** (Presenting the lectionary to each candidate):

Receive this book and read the word of God to the people. If you fulfill your office carefully and effectively, you will share the reward of those who, from the beginning, have proclaimed the Gospel to the world.

**Bishop:** My dear brethren, let us beg God, the Father Almighty, to bless these servants of His whom He has chosen for the office of Lector. May they read Holy Scripture intelligently in the Church, and practise its precepts in their lives. Through Jesus Christ, Our Lord, His Son, who lives and reigns with Him in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.

**All:** Amen.

**Bishop:** Let us pray.

**Assistant:** Let us kneel. (Pause)

Arise.

**Bishop:** Holy Lord, Almighty Father, Eternal God, graciously bless these servants of Yours in their office of Lector. By their careful application to reading, make them able to communicate the lessons of Scripture to the people. Help them to express God's will so clearly and to fulfill it themselves so generously, that their sacred words and holy example may strongly promote the life of the Church. Through Jesus Christ Our Lord, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.

**All:** Amen.

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**THE OFFICE OF EXORCIST**

**Archdeacon:** Let those who are to be ordained to the office of Exorcist come forward.

*(As the name of each candidate is called, he answers “Present” and comes forward.)*
Bishop: My dear sons, since you are about to receive the Order of Exorcist, consider carefully the nature of your office. The duty of the Exorcist is to expel evil spirits. You will receive authority, therefore, to lay your hands upon possessed persons: through the imposition of your hands and the words of exorcism, the Holy Spirit will by His grace expel evil spirits from the bodies of those who are possessed.

Accordingly, in your purification of others you must be careful to keep your own minds and hearts free from evil inclinations, lest you be thwarted by those very forces whose influence you are striving, in virtue of your office, to overcome in others. You must learn how important it is for men in your position to control the sinful tendencies of human nature, lest the enemy should detect any weakness in your lives that he could exploit for his purposes. For you will rightly gain command over evil spirits in others only after you have successfully resisted their various efforts to influence your own behaviour. May God Our Lord, through His Holy Spirit, grant you the grace to reach the degree of virtue required by your office.

Bishop: (Presenting a book to each candidate):

With this book receive the power to lay your hands upon those who are possessed.

Bishop: My dear brethren, let us humbly beg God, the Father Almighty, to bless these servants of His, whom He has chosen for the office of Exorcist. May they become truly spiritual men, capable of resisting all the various forms of malign influence and of expelling evil spirits from possessed persons. Through Jesus Christ, His Son, Our Lord, who lives and reigns with Him in the unity of the same Holy Spirit, God, forever, and ever.

All: Amen.

Bishop: Let us pray.

Assistant: Let us kneel. (Pause)

Arise.

Bishop: Holy Lord, Almighty Father, Eternal God, graciously bless these servants of Yours in their office of Exorcist. Through the imposition of their hands and the words of exorcism, may they effectively restrain the power of evil spirits over men. Grant them the grace and spiritual strength to heal the afflicted members of Your Church. Through Jesus Christ, Your Son, Our Lord, who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.

All: Amen.
THE OFFICE OF ACOLYTE

Archdeacon: Let those who are to be ordained to the office of Acolyte come forward.

(When his name is called, each candidate answers "Present" and comes forward.)

Bishop: My dear sons, since you are about to receive the Order of Acolyte, consider carefully the nature of your office. The duty of the Acolyte is to carry the blest candles at divine services, and to pour the wine and water at the Eucharistic sacrifice.

You must strive, then, to live in a manner worthy of your office. When you bear lighted candles before the altar, you cannot hope to please God, if at the same time your minds are darkened by sinful habits. Those who know you well would be offended by such conduct.

Rather, in the words of Holy Scripture, “Let your light shine before men, in order that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.” And St. Paul says, “In the midst of a depraved and perverse generation... you shine like stars in the world, holding fast the word of life,” Therefore, “let your loins be girt about and your lamps burning”... “that you may be children of light.” “Lay aside the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light in the Lord. Walk, then, as children of light.”

The precise meaning of this light, so strongly emphasized in the New Testament, is explained by St. Paul when he adds, “For the fruit of light is in all goodness and justice and truth.”

Accordingly, you must dedicate yourselves to the pursuit of goodness, justice and truth, in order to illuminate your own lives, the lives of others, and the living Church herself. For you will serve worthily at the altar, offering wine and water for the Eucharistic sacrifice, only if you have already offered yourselves to God in the daily sacrifices required of those who practise charity and self-control. May the Lord in His kindness grant you this grace.

Bishop: (Presenting candlestick and candle to each candidate):

Receive the candlestick and candle as a sign of your duty to illuminate the House of God, in the name of the Lord.

Candidate: Amen.

Bishop: (Presenting a cruet to each candidate):
Receive the cruet as a sign of your duty to pour wine and water at the Sacrifice of the Blood of Christ, in the name of the Lord.

Candidate: Amen.

Bishop: My dear brethren, let us humbly beg God, the Father Almighty, to bless these servants of His whom He has chosen for the office of Acolyte. When their hands hold visible lights before the eyes of men, may their hearts enlighten the spiritual world with holy desires. Through the help of Our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with Him in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.

All: Amen.

Bishop: Let us pray.

Assistant: Let us kneel. (Pause)

Arise.

Bishop: Holy Lord, Almighty Father, Eternal God, who brought light into this world through Your Son Jesus Christ and His Apostles, and cancelled the decree of death against us through His glorious death on the cross, when blood and water flowed freely from His side for the salvation of mankind, graciously bless these servants of Yours in their office of Acolyte. May they faithfully serve at Your altars, bringing light into the Church with sacred candles and providing the wine and water to be changed into the Blood of Christ, Your Son, in the Eucharistic sacrifice. Set their hearts aflame, O Lord, with longing for Your love and illuminate their minds with the splendor of Your grace, so they may always serve in Your Church with perfect fidelity. Through Christ Our Lord.

All: Amen.

Bishop: Let us pray. Holy Lord, Almighty Father, Eternal God, who commanded Moses and Aaron to light tapers and lamps before Your dwelling-place in the Tabernacle, graciously bless these servants of Yours in their office of Acolyte in the Church. Through Christ Our Lord.

All: Amen.

Bishop: Let us pray. Almighty, Everlasting God, fountain of brightness and source of all goodness, You enlightened the world through Jesus Christ, Your Son, who is the very light of truth, and You redeemed mankind by the mystery of His passion: graciously bless these servants of Yours whom we have ordained to the office of Acolytes. We beg you in Your mercy to clarify their minds with the light of knowledge and to move their hearts with the desire of self-sacrifice.
ORDINATION RITE

By Your help may they faithfully fulfill the duties of their office and merit an eternal reward in heaven. Through the same Christ Our Lord.

All: Amen.

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THE FINAL EXHORTATION

Bishop: My dear sons, carefully consider the Orders that you have received and the burden laid on your shoulders. Strive to lead a holy, devout life and to please Almighty God, in order to obtain His grace. May He in His mercy kindly grant it to you.

All those who have been promoted to the first Tonsure or to the four Minor Orders should recite once the seven Penitential Psalms, together with the Litany, Versicles and Orations.

Ordained: Gladly.

Bishop: Subdeacons and Deacons should say the Nocturn of this day.

Ordained: Gladly.

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THE RITE OF ORDINATION TO THE SUBDIACONATE

Archdeacon: Let those who are to be ordained subdeacons come forward:

N.N., to the title of the Diocese of N. (or the appropriate formula);

N.N., members of the Order of N. (or the appropriate formula), to the title of common life (or to the title of poverty).

(When his name is read out, each candidate replies “Present” and steps forward).

Bishop: (If the candidates are religious, this first instruction is omitted):

My dear sons, you are about to be ordained to the sacred order of the subdiaconate. Your personal decision to accept this office has called for serious and prolonged consideration on your part. Up to this moment you remain free: if you so decide, you may choose to enter the secular professions. But after receiving this order, you may no longer withdraw
from the course you have chosen. You will be bound for life to the service of God, but the bonds that tie you to Him will free you for higher forms of action. You will take upon yourselves the obligation, by His help, to observe chastity and to devote yourselves without reserve to the ministry of the Church. While there is time, therefore, reflect upon this. If you are determined to persevere in your holy resolution, come forward in the name of the Lord.

(The candidates advance one step. If candidates for the diaconate and the priesthood are present, they are called now and come forward. If not, the Litany of the Saints begins at once. After the Litany, if candidates for the diaconate and the priesthood are present, they are dismissed by the archdeacon: "Let those who are to be ordained Deacons and Priests return to their places." If not, the bishop proceeds at once to the second instruction):

**Bishop:** My dear sons, since you are now to receive the subdiaconate, you should carefully consider the nature of the office entrusted to you. The Subdeacon plays a significant part in solemn celebrations of the Eucharist: the purification of altar linens comes under his supervision; he co-operates with the Deacon in preparing the gifts for the altar, and presents to him the paten and chalice employed in the Sacrifice.

The offerings brought to the altar have been called the Loaves of Proposition. These should be carefully measured with due regard for the needs of the people in Holy Communion, and for a sufficient store of freshly consecrated hosts at the Altar of Reservation.

The altar linens should be kept immaculately clean, and corporals are to be purified in a manner that will emphasize their close employment in the sacramental action. In supervising these material services, you should make sure they are so carefully and reverently performed that their spiritual meaning may be clearly discerned.

The altar in the Church is Christ Himself. In his Apocalypse, St. John depicts Our Lord as a golden altar standing before the throne of God. In Him and through Him the gifts of the faithful are offered to God the Father. Those who believe in Him, the members of His Body, are symbolized by the palls and corporals used on the altar: with these the Lord is wrapped about as if with precious garments.

In the words of the Psalmist, "The Lord is our King, He is clothed in splendor." In another passage of the Apocalypse, the Son of Man is girded with a golden cincture, that is, encircled by a glorious host of the Saints.
It follows that, should any members of the Church through human weakness chance to contract the stains of sin, you must administer to them the cleansing waters of Christian doctrine. When they have purified themselves by this instruction, they may adorn the altar once more, and participate anew in the Eucharistic sacrifice.

You must prepare yourselves, therefore, to assist at the altar of God, and to serve the Church, the Body of Christ, in a worthy manner. You must be firmly grounded in the Catholic faith. If in the past you have been lacking in zeal, now you must begin to serve the Lord in earnest. Careless behaviour must give way to vigilance, excess to temperance, and imprudent conduct to a mature self-control. May all these gifts be granted you by God, who lives and reigns forever and ever.

All: Amen.

*A sentence has been omitted here (the version of Rom. XIV, 23 required by the liturgy is not generally accepted by exegetes today): “All that is not the outcome of faith is sin,” the Apostle tells us; it is a source of division, it threatens the unity of the Church.*

Bishop: (Presenting chalice and paten):

You are entrusted with a sacred ministry. I exhort you, therefore, to conduct yourselves in a manner pleasing to God.

Bishop: My dear brethren, let us beg almighty God to pour out His grace and His blessing upon these servants of His whom He has called to the subdiaconate: may their faithful service in His presence win for them the rewards promised to the Saints; through the help of our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.

All: Amen.

Bishop: Let us pray.

Assistant: Let us kneel. (Pause)

Arise.

Bishop: Holy Lord, Eternal God, Almighty Father, graciously bless these servants of Yours whom You have called to the subdiaconate. Make them strong defenders of Your Church, watchful guardians of Your holy places, faithful assistants at Your altar. May the Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding come upon them, the Spirit of Counsel and Fortitude, of Knowledge and of Piety: fill them with the Spirit of Reverence. May they be so strengthened in Your service, so
ready to obey and so submissive to direction, that they will always obtain from You abundant graces. Through Jesus Christ, Your Son, Our Lord, who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the same Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.

All: Amen.

Bishop: (Investing candidates with the amice):
Receive the amice, the symbol of self-restraint in word. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Subdeacon: Amen.

Bishop: (Investing candidates with the maniple):
Receive the maniple, the symbol of good works. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Subdeacon: Amen.

Bishop: (Investing candidates with the tunic):
May the Lord clothe you in a radiant tunic, and grant you a joyful heart. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Subdeacon: Amen.

Bishop: (Presenting the lectionary):
With this sacred book receive authority to read the Word of God in the Church, for the salvation of all the faithful, both living and dead. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Subdeacon: Amen.

THE RITE OF ORDINATION TO THE DIACONATE

Archdeacon: Let those who are to be ordained to the order of the diaconate come forward.

(When his name is read out, each ordinand replies “Present” and steps forward.)

Archdeacon: Your Excellency (or the appropriate formula), you are requested by the Church to ordain the subdeacons here present to the office of the diaconate.

Bishop: Do you know them to be worthy?

Archdeacon: As far as human frailty permits, I know and I testify that they are worthy to undertake the burden of this office.
Bishop: Thanks be to God.

Relying upon the help of Jesus Christ, Our Lord and Saviour, we have decided to ordain the subdeacons here present to the order of the diaconate. If anyone has any proper objection to raise concerning the candidates, in God's name and with all due deference let him come forward and sincerely speak his mind.

(Here the bishop pauses briefly)

My dear sons, since you are about to be raised to the Levitical order, it will be well for you to consider earnestly the high dignity of the office you will undertake. A deacon is ordained to assist at the altar of sacrifice, to baptize, and to preach the Word of God.

Under the Old Law, as you know, the tribe of Levi was singled out from the twelve and dedicated to the Temple service in a special manner. To assist at sacrifices became the settled office of the Levites. This honor was thought to be so exclusively their own, that no one dared to perform the ceremonies of divine worship unless he belonged to that tribe. Through such an important hereditary right the Levites became, and were actually called, “the Tribe of the Lord”.

Today, my dear sons, you inherit their office and their name. You have been singled out for Levitical service at the Ark of the Covenant, a type of the Church founded by Christ. The Church must always be ready to wage unceasing war against her spiritual enemies. In the words of the Apostle, “Our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the Principalities and the Powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness on high.” Just as the Levites, encased in their battle armor, carried the Ark of the Covenant on their shoulders, it is your duty to support and defend the Church with spiritual weapons, by preaching the Word of God and by the example of a perfect life.

The name Levi signifies what is “raised up”. It follows, my dear sons, that you who have inherited this traditional name must rise above the carnal desires and worldly passions that threaten to overthrow the spirit. You must strive to attain the purity of heart, the stainless chasity, required of men dedicated to the service of Christ, the dispensers of His holy sacraments. Only then will you be worthy of this sacred order, and deserve to be called members of “the Tribe of the Lord.”

As assistants who co-operate in the sacrifice of the Body and Blood of Christ, keep yourselves free from every allurement of the flesh. In the language of Holy Scripture, “Purify yourselves, you who carry the vessels of the Lord.”
Remember that St. Stephen was made a deacon by the Apostles because of his remarkable purity of heart. Make sure, therefore, that those who hear the Gospel from your lips may learn its meaning from your practice. Let them apply to you the words, “How welcome is the coming of those who bring good news!” In preaching the good news of Christ, your conduct should be modeled upon the holy example of those who have gone before you. May the Lord in His kindness grant you this grace.

All: Amen.

(Here the Litany of the Saints is sung. If the ordination of subdeacons has preceded, it is omitted.)

Bishop: Let us all join in common prayer on behalf of these candidates for the diaconate. Let the whole Church in unison beg Almighty God to bless them in the ministry of Levites for which they are preparing, that the sacramental graces to be conferred today may clarify their minds and enlighten their lives with holy wisdom. Through the help of Our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.

All: Amen.

Bishop: My dear brethren, let us beg God, the Father Almighty, to bless these servants of His whom He has called to the diaconate, and in His goodness to fill them with His grace and preserve in them the sacramental gifts they are to receive. Through His gracious mercy, may He assist us in the acts of ordination that we will presently perform. May He bless, sanctify, and strengthen these candidates whom, after mature consideration, we have judged worthy to be raised to the sacred ministry. Through Our Lord Jesus Christ, His only-begotten Son, who lives and reigns with Him in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.

All: Amen.

Bishop: The Lord be with you.

All: And with your spirit.

Bishop: Lift up your hearts.

All: We have lifted them up to the Lord.

Bishop: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All: It is right and just.

Bishop: It is truly right and just, it is proper and salutary, that we give thanks to You at every time and place, O holy Lord, Father Almighty, Eternal God, source of all honours, giver of rank and degree, dispenser of every office. All creatures were brought into being by Your transcendent power, and
marshaled into order by Your Word, Our Lord Jesus Christ. By Your providential care they are furnished with every faculty and supplied with every necessity. You have adorned Your Church, the Body of Christ, with gifts in great variety: the many different members that enter into its structure You have joined in a marvellous harmony, in order to develop and augment the Mystical Body of Your Son.

For those who are to fulfill Your sacred offices, You have instituted three distinct orders of the ministry. From the very beginning the sons of Levi were chosen to devote their lives to service in the mysteries of Your House: You rewarded them with the gift of an eternal blessing to be handed down to each generation.

Look down with equal mercy, O Lord, upon these servants of Yours, who are to assist at Your altars. In the spirit of humble prayer we ordain them to the office of Deacon. As men who lack divine knowledge and the highest understanding, we can only judge their lives to the best of our ability. But what is unknown to us cannot escape Your mind, O Lord, and what is hidden from us cannot deceive You. You know every secret; You search every heart. With a divine discernment that cannot fail, You may examine the lives of these candidates, in order to wipe away every transgression and enable them to achieve Your designs.

BESTOWAL OF THE OFFICE

**Bishop:** Receive the Holy Spirit, the Strengthener, so you may resist Satan and his temptations. In the name of the Lord.

Send forth, we beg You, O Lord, Your Holy Spirit upon them, that He may strengthen them, by the sevenfold gift of Your grace, to fulfill their office faithfully. May they generously model their lives upon the pattern of all virtue, using their powers with humility, modest reserve, stainless purity, and submission to religious authority. May Your teachings shine forth so clearly in their conduct, that the faithful may be inspired to follow their example. Preferring a good conscience to every other standard, may they persevere in their loyal allegiance to Christ, and so render themselves, by the help of Your grace, through the patient and careful performance of lesser offices, worthy of even greater responsibility. Through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, Our Lord, who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the same Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.

**All:** Amen.
Bishop: *(Investing candidates with the stole):*

Receive the white stole from the hand of God, and fulfill your office: for God by His power can make you grow in grace. Who lives and reigns forever and ever.

Deacon: Amen.

Bishop: *(Investing candidates with the dalmatic):*

May the Lord clothe you in the joyful dalmatic of salvation, and surround you always with the garment of virtue.

Deacon: Amen.

Bishop: *(Presenting the lectionary):*

With this sacred book receive authority to read the Gospel of Christ in the Church, for the salvation of all the faithful, both living and dead. In the name of the Lord.

Deacon: Amen.

Bishop: Let us pray.

Assistant: Let us kneel. (Pause)

Arise.

Bishop: Hear our prayers, O Lord, and send Your Holy Spirit to bless these servants of Yours. Endow them with spiritual gifts that will enable them to win favour in Your sight and to influence others by the example of a holy life. Through Jesus Christ, Your Son, Our Lord, who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the same Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.

All: Amen.

Bishop: Let us pray. Holy Lord, Eternal Father, foundation of our faith and hope, source of all grace, and rewarder of achievements: by the angels ministering on high whom You swiftly send to every corner of creation, the effects of Your Will are felt throughout the universe; include within Your providential care these servants of Yours, who now prepare themselves for the ministry. Purify them for service at Your holy altars. Chasten their hearts by Your grace, and make them worthy members of that order which Your Apostles, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, instituted in the early Church. Help them to emulate the virtues of St. Stephen, the courageous leader of the seven deacons first chosen at Jerusalem. Grant them, in the fulfillment of their office, all the qualities of mind and heart that will enable them to render You a pleasing service. Through Jesus Christ, Your Son, Our Lord, who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the same Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.

All: Amen.
THE RITE OF ORDINATION TO THE PRIESTHOOD

THE PREPARATORY CEREMONIES

Archdeacon: Let those who are to be ordained to the order of the priesthood come forward.

(When his name is read out, each ordained replies "Present" and steps forward.)

Assistant: His Excellency N.N., Bishop of N., solemnly directs that no one may come forward to be ordained unless he is fully qualified in accord with the prescriptions of canon law. He enjoins, moreover, that none of the ordained shall depart until the Bishop's final blessing has been received.

Archdeacon: Your Excellency, you are requested by the Church to ordain the deacons here present to the office of the priesthood.

Bishop: Do you know them to be worthy?

Archdeacon: As far as human frailty permits, I know and I testify that they are worthy to undertake the burden of this office.

Bishop: My dear brethren, since on a sea voyage both the captain and the passengers of the ship share the same dangers, they should be of one mind concerning their common interests. It is a wise tradition, therefore, that in the selection of those who are to be raised to the altar the voice of God's people should be heard. Sometimes an individual may have personal knowledge about the life and conduct of a candidate beyond what is generally known. Besides, a priest will receive greater support from the people when they have freely consented to his ordination.

These deacons, with God's help, are to be ordained to the priesthood. As far as we can judge, their conduct has been commendable and pleasing to God. In our opinion, then, they are worthy of advancing to this higher position in the Church. Yet rather than rely solely upon the judgment of a few, whose opinions are fallible and whose approval might be influenced by friendship, it will be well to consult the people as a whole.

Feel perfectly free, then, to express your views upon the conduct and character of the candidates and your opinion of their qualifications. But base your judgment on their fitness for the priesthood upon their merits rather than upon your affection for them. Consequently, if anyone has any proper objection to raise concerning the candidates, in God's name and with all due deference let him come forward and sincerely speak his mind.
(Here the Bishop pauses briefly.)

My dear sons, you are about to be consecrated to the office of the priesthood. Endeavour to receive this honor worthily and to fulfill its obligations commendably. A priest is ordained to offer sacrifice, to bless, govern, preach and baptize. So high a dignity should be approached with great reverence. Those who are chosen for it should be noted for their perseverance in virtue, for their upright character and gifts of understanding.

When the Lord commanded Moses to select from the whole people of Israel seventy men to assist him, with whom the gifts of the Holy Spirit should be shared, He added this direction: "Choose those whom you know to be elders among the people." You yourselves are prefigured in these seventy elders, if now, fortified by the sevenfold gifts of the Holy Spirit, you faithfully keep the ten commandments and prove yourselves sound and mature both in knowledge and in practice.

In the New Testament Our Lord, using the same mysterious symbol, chose seventy-two disciples and sent them two-by-two before His face to preach the Gospel. In this manner He taught us by word and deed that the ministers of His Church should be perfect both in faith and in action, that their lives should be based upon the twofold charity, the love of God and one's neighbor.

You must strive, therefore, with the help of God's grace to become worthy assistants of Moses and the twelve Apostles, that is, of the Catholic Bishops prefigured by them. The Church is endowed, graced and governed by a remarkably varied ministry: some of those taken from her ranks are consecrated bishops, others are assigned to lesser orders, priests, deacons and subdeacons; each is of a different dignity, yet together the many members form one Body of Christ.

Accordingly, my dear sons, chosen as you are to become our anointed helpers in the ministry, maintain in your deportment an inviolate purity and holiness. The sacredness of your duties must be consciously expressed in your lives. Since you will celebrate the mystery of the Lord's death, you should mortify in your members every vice and disorderly passion. Let the doctrine you teach be spiritual food for the people of God. Let the character of your lives bring joy to the Church of Christ. In this way your preaching and your example will constructively further and strengthen the family of God, so that we, for having promoted you to this office, and you, for taking it upon yourselves, may never deserve the Lord's condemnation, but rather merit His just
reward. Such is the prayer that we beg He will graciously grant us.

All: Amen.

LITANY OF THE SAINTS

(After the invocation for the faithful departed):

Bishop: That You bless these candidates.
All: We beseech You, hear us.
Bishop: That You bless and sanctify these candidates.
All: We beseech You, hear us.
Bishop: That You bless, sanctify and consecrate these candidates.
All: We beseech You, hear us.
(The litany now continues as usual.)

THE LAYING ON OF HANDS

Bishop: Let us pray, brethren, to God the Father almighty, that He may shower many heavenly gifts upon these servants whom He has chosen for the office of the priesthood. What they have undertaken at His gracious call, may they achieve by means of His help. Through Christ Our Lord.

All: Amen.
Bishop: Let us pray.
Assistant: Let us kneel. (Pause)
Arise.
Bishop: Hear us, we beg You, O Lord God, and pour out upon these servants of Yours the blessing of the Holy Spirit and the power of priestly grace. May those whom we present to you for consecration be sustained by the constant bounty of Your gifts. Through Jesus Christ, Your Son, Our Lord, who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the same Holy Spirit, God, world without end.

All: Amen.
Bishop: The Lord be with you.
All: And with your spirit.
Bishop: Lift up your hearts.
All: We have lifted them up to the Lord.
Bishop: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All: It is right and just.

Bishop: It is truly right and just, it is proper and salutary, that we give thanks to You at every time and place, O holy Lord, Father almighty, eternal God, source of all honors and dispenser of every authority. All things make progress, all are sustained by Your power. In accord with Your wise designs the human mind continually advances to higher knowledge. Similarly, too, the various priestly orders and the offices of Levites, instituted for sacred functions, grew and developed. For after appointing high priests to rule the people, you selected men of lesser degree to be their associates and helpers. In the desert You enabled Moses to govern the growing numbers of Your people by sharing the Spirit You had granted among seventy prudent men chosen to assist him. In the same manner You bestowed upon Eleazar and Ithamar, the sons of Aaron, the fullness of their father's priestly powers, in order to provide sufficient priests to offer saving sacrifices and to perform the more usual rites. By the same providence, O Lord, You assigned to the Apostles of Your Son associate teachers of the faith; by means of these preachers the Apostles were able to spread the Gospel to the ends of the earth. Therefore, we beg You, O Lord, to support us in our weakness with similar helpers: our greater frailty requires more assistance.

We implore You, almighty Father, to bestow on Your servants, here present, the power of the priesthood. Excite in their hearts the spirit of holiness, so that in fulfilling this second degree of priestly office, received from You, O God, they may steadfastly persevere, and influence others to virtue by the example of their lives.

May they be prudent fellow-workers in our ministry. May the pattern of all virtues shine forth clearly in them. May they give so good an account of their stewardship, as to obtain at length the reward of everlasting happiness. Through Our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.

All: Amen.

THE INVESTITURE

Bishop: Receive the yoke of the Lord, for His yoke is sweet and His burden light.
Receive the vestment of the priesthood, the symbol of chari­ty; for God by His power can bring His love to perfect fulfillment in you.

**Ordinand:** Thanks be to God.

**Bishop:** O God, the source of all holiness, whose consecration is effective and whose blessings are faithful, on these servants of Yours, whom we now raise to the priestly rank, pour out the gift of Your blessing. By their prudent bearing and their exemplary lives may they prove themselves true fathers of the people, faithful to the norms that Paul proposed to Titus and Timothy. Day and night let them meditate on Your law, believing what they read, teaching what they believe, practising what they have taught. May justice, constancy, mercy, courage and all other virtues be expressed in their lives. May they inspire others by their example and strengthen them by their counsel. May they keep pure and un tarnished the gift of their high calling. In the sacred act of consecration may they change bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Your Son for the worship of Your people. Through persevering charity may they grow to perfect manhood, to the full measure of Christ’s maturity, and with a good conscience and true faith, filled with the Holy Spirit, may they rise again on the day of the just and eternal judgment of God. Through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, Our Lord, who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the same Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.

**All:** Amen.

THE ANOINTING OF HANDS

*(After the first verse of the Veni Creator):*

**Bishop:** Consecrate and sanctify these hands, we beg You, O Lord, by this anointing and by our blessing.

**Ordinand:** Amen.

**Bishop:** That whatever they bless may be blessed, and whatever they consecrate may be consecrated and sanctified in the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Ordinand:** Amen.

THE PRESENTATION OF HOST AND CHALICE

**Bishop:** Receive the power to offer sacrifice to God and to celebrate the Eucharist for the living and the dead, in the name of the Lord.
Ordinand: Amen.

RESPONSORY

(After the ablutions the Bishop intones the following responsory, which is continued by the choir.)

No longer do I call you servants, but my friends, for you know all the deeds I have done in your midst, (alleluia).

Receive in your hearts the Holy Spirit, the Strengthener. He is the One whom the Father will send you, (alleluia).

V. You are my friends if you do the things I command you. Receive in your hearts the Holy Spirit, the Strengthener. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

He is the One whom the Father will send you, (alleluia).

THE COMMISSION TO ABSOLVE

(After the Creed):

Bishop: Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained.

THE PROMISE OF OBEDIENCE

Bishop: (If he is the Ordinary of the ordained):
Do you promise reverence and obedience to me and my successors?

Ordained: I promise.

Bishop: (If he is not the Ordinary of the ordained, and the latter is a diocesan priest):
Do you promise reverence and obedience to the Bishop who is your Ordinary at the present time?

Ordained: I promise.

Bishop: (If he is not the Ordinary of the ordained and the latter is a religious priest):
Do you promise reverence and obedience to the Prelate who is your Ordinary at the present time?

Ordained: I promise.
Bishop: May the peace of the Lord be always with you.

THE ADMONITION AND BLESSING

Bishop: My dear sons, since you are to perform an act of almost overwhelming significance, I admonish you, before you begin to celebrate the Eucharist, to learn carefully from other experienced priests the ritual of the whole Mass — the consecration, the breaking of the bread, and the communion.

May the blessing of almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, descend upon you: may you be blessed in your priestly ministry; for the sins and offences of the people may you offer appeasing sacrifices to almighty God, to whom be honor and glory forever and ever.

All: Amen.

THE FINAL EXHORTATION

Bishop: My dear sons, carefully consider the order that you have received and the burden laid on your shoulders. Strive to lead a holy, devout life and to please almighty God, in order to obtain His grace. May He in His mercy kindly grant it to you.

Now that you have been ordained to the priesthood, I ask you, after offering the Eucharist for the first time, to celebrate three other Masses, one in honour of the Holy Spirit, a second in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and a third for the faithful departed. I ask you also to pray to almighty God for me.

Ordained: Gladly.

SPECIAL PRAYERS INCLUDED IN THE MASS OF ORDINATION

COLLECT

Bishop: Let us pray. Answer, we beg You, O Lord, the prayers of Your petitioners, and guard Your devoted servants with unfailing protection. Banish all fear from our hearts, that we may generously perform the duties You assign us. Through Our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.

All: Amen.
SECRET

Bishop: By Your mysterious promptings, O Lord, help us to offer these gifts with worthy hearts. Through Our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.

All: Amen.

POSTCOMMUNION

Bishop: Let us pray. Always sustain by Your gracious aid, O Lord, those whom Your sacraments replenish, so that in celebrating Your mysteries and in living by Your precepts we may share the fruit of Your redemption. You who live and reign with God the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.

All: Amen.