

The Ordination of a Deacon

In preparation for the ordination, the candidate shall attend Vespers on the eve of his ordination, and, after having a light supper, begin his Eucharistic Fast. During that time, he shall interact as little as possible with anyone and spend that time praying and preparing himself for the ordination. Married candidates shall refrain from marital relations during this time. He shall have his confession heard either after Vespers or during Matins on the day of the ordination.

On the day of the ordination, the candidate shall be in his cassock. After receiving any instructions from the Bishop's Assistant and/or his Priest, he shall go to a corner and not interact with anyone. During this time he shall pray silently. During the Great Doxology, the Bishop's Assistant will lead the candidate to the Altar. The candidate will take the pitcher, bowl, and towel. Following the Great Doxology, but before the Troparion before the Divine Liturgy, the candidate is led by the Bishop's Assistant to the center of the solea in front of the Bishop. He washes the Bishop's hands. After drying his hands with the towel, the Bishop will drape the towel over the candidate's head and shoulders. The candidate, with the pitcher and bowl in hand, will then go to stand before the icon of Christ. The Troparion before the Divine Liturgy begins and the first Deacon begins the Dialogue with the Bishop in the usual manner.

At the time when the Bishop is to wash his hands during the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy, the candidate is led by the Bishop's Assistant to the center of the solea in front of the Bishop. He washes the Bishop's hands. After drying his hands with the towel, the Bishop will drape the towel back over the candidate's head and shoulders. The candidate will enter the altar through the south door. During the Great Entrance, the candidate, with the pitcher and bowl in hand, walks at the very end behind the processional fans. Following the Great Entrance, the candidate goes to stand before the icon of the Theotokos. After the Bishop says, "And the Mercies our Great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, be with you all," the two sponsors and the Bishop's Assistant go out the north door. A chair is placed at the northwest corner of the Holy Table. The Bishop Assistant takes the pitcher and bowl from the candidate. The sponsors lead the candidate to the center of the solea.

The sponsors help the candidate make a prostration as the first sponsor intones in a loud voice:

1st Sponsor: COMMAND!

The sponsors help the candidate make a second prostration as the second sponsor intones in a loud voice:

2nd Sponsor: COMMAND!

The sponsors help the candidate make a third prostration as the first sponsor intones in a loud voice:

1st Sponsor: COMMAND! Holy Master, bless him who is before thee.

The Bishop blesses the candidate and goes to sit in the chair. The sponsors lead the candidate through the Holy Doors, as the choir begins the following three (3) Troparia:

Choir: Ye holy Martyrs, who fought the good fight and hath received thy crowns: entreat ye the Lord, that he will have mercy on our souls.

Glory to thee, O Christ our God: the Apostles' boast, the Martyrs' joy, whose preaching was the consubstantial Trinity.

O Isaiah, dance thy joy, for a virgin was with child and hath borne a Son, Emmanuel, both God and Man and Orient is His name. Whom magnifying, we call the Virgin blessed.

While the choir is singing the above Troparia, the sponsors lead the candidate around the Holy Table three (3) times. Each time, the candidate kisses each of the four (4) corners of the Holy Table followed by the hand and epigonation of the Bishop who is seated at the northwest corner of the Holy Table. After the third time, the Bishop stands up and the chair is moved away from the Holy Table. The candidate kneels in front of the altar, places his right hand over his left hand on the edge of the Holy Table, and places his forehead on top of his hands. The Parish Priest asks all the people in the church to kneel and the Deacon intones in a loud voice:

Deacon: Let us Attend!

Bishop: The Grace Divine, which always healeth, that which is infirm, and completeth that which is wanting, elevateth, through the laying-on of hands, (*NAME*), the most devout Subdeacon to be a Deacon. Wherefore, let us pray for him, that the Grace of the All-Holy Spirit may come upon him.

Clergy: Kyrie eleison (*Thrice, very slowly*)

While the Clergy is slowly singing the triple Kyrie Eleison, the Deacon or Junior Priest quietly says the following Ektenia in the Altar. He must finish by the time that the Bishop finishes the prayer of Ordination.

Deacon: In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

For the peace from above, and for the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord.

For the peace of the whole world, for the good estate of the Holy Churches of God, and for the union of all men, let us pray to the Lord.

For our father and Metropolitan PHILIP, and for our Bishop MARK, for their Priesthood, succor, maintenance, peace, health and salvation; and for the good works of their hands, let us pray to the Lord.

For the servant of God, (*NAME*) who hath now received the laying-on of Hands to be a Deacon, and for his salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

For the President of the United States, for all civil authorities, and for our Armed Forces everywhere, let us pray to the Lord.

For this city, and for every city and land, and for the faithful, who dwell therein, let us pray to the Lord.

For our deliverance from all tribulation, wrath, danger, and necessity, let us pray to the Lord.

Help us; save us; have mercy on us; and keep us, O God, by Thy grace.

Calling to remembrance our all-holy, immaculate, most blessed and glorious Lady Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, with all the Saints let us commend ourselves and each other, and all our life unto Christ our God.

The Bishop then begins the Prayers of Ordination:

Bishop: O Lord our God, who by thy foreknowledge dost send down the fullness of the Holy Spirit upon those who are ordained, by Thine inscrutable power, to be thy servitors and to administer thy spotless mysteries: Do thou, the same Master, preserve also this man, whom thou hast been pleased to ordain, through me, by the laying-on of hands, to the service of the Diaconate, in all soberness of life, holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. Vouchsafe unto him the grace which thou didst grant unto Stephen, thy first Martyr, whom, also, thou didst call to be the first in the work of thy ministry; and make him worthy to administer after thy pleasure the degree which it both seemeth good to thee to confer upon him. For they who minister well prepare for themselves a good degree. And manifest him as wholly thy servant. For Thine is the Kingdom and the power and the glory, of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages, Amen.

O God our Savior, who by Thine incorruptible voice didst appoint unto Thine Apostles the law of the Diaconate, and didst manifest the first Martyr, Stephen, to be of the same; and didst proclaim him the first who should exercise the office of a Deacon, as it is written in thy Holy Gospel, "Whosoever desireth to be first among you, let him be your servant": Do thou, O Master of all, fill also this thy servant, who thou hast graciously permitted to enter upon the ministry of a Deacon, with all faith, and love, and power, and holiness, through the inspiration of thy Holy and Life-Giving Spirit; for not through the laying-on of my hands, but through the visitation of thy rich bounties, is grace bestowed upon thy worthy ones; that he, being devoid of all sin, may stand blameless before thee in the awesome Day of thy Judgment, and receive the unfailing reward of thy promise. For thou art our God, and unto thee are due all glory, honor, and worship, to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages, Amen.

The new Deacon rises, kisses the Bishop's right hand, turns and stands facing the people next to the Bishop in the Holy Doors. The Bishop takes each piece of the new Deacon's vestments, blesses it and shouts to the people:

Bishop: HE IS WORTHY!

People: HE IS WORTHY!

Bishop: MUSTAHEK!

People: MUSTAHEK!

Bishop: AXIOS!

People: AXIOS!

People: AXIOS! (*Thrice, singing*)

While the people are singing AXIOS three times, the Bishop, with the help of the Bishop's Assistant, puts the pieces of the vestment on the new Deacon. The above is repeated for each piece of the vestment. Once the new Deacon is fully vested, he kisses the Bishop's right hand. The Bishop hands the new Deacon a Service Book. The new Deacon stands on the solea and intones The Ektenia before the Lord's Prayer. The new Deacon serves the remainder of the service as the first Deacon.