

The Ordination of a Priest

In preparation for the ordination, the candidate shall serve 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 vest the sticharion and cuffs of his Priestly vestments and the stole of his Deacon's vestment. The candidate shall serve as the first Deacon during the Divine Liturgy up until the time of the ordination.

Immediately following the Great Entrance, the two sponsors lead the candidate out the north door. A chair is placed at the northwest corner of the Holy Table. 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 Deacon to be a Priest. Wherefore, let us pray for him, that the Grace of the All-Holy Spirit may come upon him.

Clergy: Kyrie eleison, kyrie eleison, Kyrie eleison (*repeatedly very slowly*)

While the Clergy is slowly singing Kyrie eleison, a Deacon or Junior Priest very softly 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 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 the Holy Priesthood, and for his salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

That the God who loveth mankind will vouchsafe unto him a pure and blameless ministry, 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 God, who hast no beginning and no ending, who art older than every created thing, who crownest with the name of Priest those whom thou deemest worthy to serve the world of thy truth in the divine ministry of this degree: Do thou, the same Lord of all, deign to preserve in pureness of life and in unswerving faith this man, also, upon whom, through me, thou hast graciously been pleased to lay hands. Be favorably pleased to grant unto him the great grace of thy Holy Spirit, and make him wholly thy servant, in all things acceptable unto thee, and worthily exercising the great honors of the priesthood which thou hast conferred upon him by thy prescient power. For thine is the might and 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 great in might and inscrutable in wisdom, marvelous in counsel above the sons of men: Do thou, the same Lord, fill with the gift of thy Holy Spirit this man whom it hath pleased thee to advance to the degree of Priest, that he may be worthy to stand in innocence before Thine Altar, to proclaim the Gospel of thy Kingdom, to minister the word of thy truth, to offer unto thee spiritual gifts and sacrifices, to renew thy people through the laver of regeneration. That when he shall go to meet thee, at the Second Coming of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, Thine Only-begotten Son, he may receive the reward of a good steward in the degree committed unto him, through the plenitude of thy goodness. For blessed and glorified is Thine all-holy and majestic Name, of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages, Amen.

The new Priest rises, kisses the Bishop's right hand, turns and stands facing the people next to the Bishop in the Holy Doors. The Bishop removes the Deacon stole from him. The Bishop takes each piece of the new Priest'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 sponsors, puts the pieces of the vestment on the new Priest. The above is repeated for each piece of the vestment. Once the new Priest is fully vested, he kisses the Bishop's right hand. All of the Clergy come to greet and congratulate the new Priest. The new Priest serves the remainder of the service as the first Priest.

Following the consecration of the Holy Gifts, the Bishop will call the new Priest to the front of the Altar and hand him the consecrated Lamb saying:

Receive thou this pledge, and preserve it whole and unharmed until thy last breath, because thou shalt be held to an accounting therefore in the Second and Awesome Coming of our Great Lord, God, and Savior, Jesus Christ.

The new Priest takes consecrated Lamb and kisses the Bishop's right hand. He then walks to the back of the Altar and holds the Lamb, facing West, until the Bishop calls him back to the front. The new priest will bring the Lamb back to the Bishop immediately before, Attend. Holy things are for the Holy.