



ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN ARCHDIOCESE OF BRITISH ISLES AND IRELAND

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. (In all things, however, he has to obey his spiritual father).

On the day of the ordination, the candidate shall vest in the sticharion and cuffs of his Priestly vestments and the stole of his Deacon's vestment.

Immediately following the Great Entrance, the two sponsors lead the candidate out of the north door. The sponsors should be Deacons (if available) or Priests (if Deacons not available). The candidate then makes three prostrations in front of the Holy Doors, with the sponsors holding him by the shoulders, the first Deacon (or Priest) puts his left hand on the right shoulder of the candidate, and the second Deacon (or Priest) puts his right hand on the left shoulder of the candidate, then proceeds to venerate the icon of Christ and of the Theotokos and the Saint of the Church and Saint John the Baptist on the Iconostasis. They return to the front of the Holy Doors. The sponsors lead the candidate to the centre of the solea. The Bishop stands in the Holy Doors with his Mitre and the Staff in his left hand.

The first sponsor intones in a loud voice:

1st Sponsor: COMMAND!

The second sponsor intones in a loud voice:

2nd Sponsor: COMMAND!

The first sponsor intones in a loud voice:

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

The Bishop blesses the candidate on his head three times and says on each time:

Bishop: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. (3)

And the people exclaim each time: Amen.

The candidate kisses the right hand of the Bishop. The Bishop returns to the Altar and sits on the chair which has been placed at the left corner of the Holy Altar Table, with the Mitre and the Staff. The candidate is then led around the Altar Table three times by two Priests, each time kissing the four corners of the altar, the cross on the Bishop's epignation or the omophorion if he is wearing the large omophorion, and the Bishop's hand. While this is happening, the clergy (and the choir) sing the following three (3) troparia:

Clergy and 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. (Tone 7)

Clergy and Choir: Glory to Thee, O Christ our God: the Apostles' boast, the Martyrs' joy, whose preaching was the consubstantial Trinity. (Tone 7)

Clergy and Choir: O Isaiah, dance your joy, for a virgin was with child and has borne a Son, Emmanuel, both God and Man and Orient is His name. Whom magnifying, we call the Virgin blessed. (Tone 5)

After the third hymn, the Bishop stands and the chair is moved away from the Holy Table. He takes off the Mitre and gives the Staff to the one who is serving in the Altar. The candidate kneels in front of the Altar Table, places his right hand over his left hand on the edge of the Holy Table making the sign of the cross, and then places his forehead on top of his hands. The Bishop puts his omophorion and his right hand on top of the head of the candidate. The Parish Priest asks all the people in the church to kneel and the Deacon (or a Priest) intones in a loud voice:

Deacon: Let us attend!

Bishop: The Grace Divine, which always heals that which is infirm and completes that which is wanting, elevates 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.

Choir: Kyrie eleison (*three times*)

The Bishop bless the head of the candidate three times.

Deacon: Let us Attend!

Bishop: O God, who has neither beginning nor end; Thou art older than every created thing and crown with the name of Priest those whom Thou deems worthy to serve the word of thy truth in the divine ministry of this degree: do Thou the same Lord of all deign to preserve in purity of life and in unswerving faith this man upon whom, through me, Thou hast graciously been pleased to lay hands. Be favourably 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 honours 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

Choir: Amen.

A Deacon (or a Priest) briskly and quietly says the following litany as one of the clergy slowly sings "Kyrie eleison" in the Altar.

Deacon or a Priest:

- ❖ 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, let us pray to the Lord.

- ❖ For our father and Metropolitan Silouan, for his Priesthood, succour, maintenance, peace, health and salvation; and for the good works of his 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 loves mankind will vouchsafe unto him a pure and blameless ministry, let us pray to the Lord.
- ❖ For the Queen and all civil authorities, and for our Armed Forces everywhere, let us pray to the Lord.
- ❖ For this city / town / village and countryside / monastery, for every habitation 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.

Bishop: O God great in might and inscrutable in wisdom, marvellous in counsel above the sons of men: do Thou, the same Lord, fill with the gift of Thy Holy Spirit this man whom it has 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 Saviour, 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's 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!

Clergy: HE IS WORTHY! *(With a loud voice)*

Choir: HE IS WORTHY! *(Three times)*

Or Bishop: MUSTAHEK!

Clergy: MUSTAHEK! *(With a loud voice)*

Choir: MUSTAHEK! *(Three times)*

Or Bishop: AXIOS!

Clergy: AXIOS! *(With a loud voice)*

Choir: AXIOS! *(Three times)*

The candidate kisses the right hand of the Bishop and takes each vestment part with the other Priest(s) help him while the choir is sings AXIOS three times. The Bishop, with the help of the Priest(s), vests the new Priest in each part. The above is repeated for each part of the vestment. Once the new Priest is fully vested, he kisses the Bishop's right hand.

Then the Bishop presents the new Priest to the people and says in loud voice:

Bishop: **This is the transformation by the right hand of the Most High!**

Then the choir chants:

Choir: **Who is so great a God as our God? Thou alone art the God that works wonders. (Tone 7)**

The Bishop congratulates the new Priest who kisses the Bishop's right hand. All the Clergy come forward 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, and before: - "So that they may be for those who partake of them vigilance of soul..." the Bishop will call the new Priest to the front of the Altar and hand him the consecrated Lamb on a plate saying:

Bishop: **Take this pledge and keep it pure and unharmed until your last breath for the Second and Awesome Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ when by Him it shall be required of you.**

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, and says in his heart all the customary prayers until the Bishop calls him back to the front. The new Priest will bring the Lamb back to the Bishop immediately before: "Attend, the Holy things are for the Holy".

In receiving Holy Communion, the new Priest comes first before all the other Priests and Archimandrites, and he says the prayer at the Ambon: - "O Lord, who blesses those who bless Thee..."

Metropolitan Silouan

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