

Ordination of Subdeacons

Words to be said are in this style: **All:** say these words.

Instructions are in italics.

This service is used in the appropriate part of the Holy Eucharist.

Where the candidates bring candles forward, lighted tea-candles in suitable holders are deemed safest.

The Collect

Bishop: Almighty, everlasting God, by whose Spirit the whole of the church is made holy and governed, pour forth your sanctifying grace into the hearts of this your servant/these your servants, who is/are about to be numbered among the subdeacons of your church, that with a pure heart and an open mind she/he/they may faithfully receive your blessing from on high; through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

A Collect for Peace

Bishop: Teach us, O Lord, to see your life in everything and in all the peoples of the earth and so guide the nations into the understanding of your laws that peace and goodwill may reign upon earth; through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

The collects being ended, the bishop takes a seat upon a faldstool before the altar. All are seated, the ordinands come forward bearing lighted candles and someone appointed for the purpose presents them to the bishop, saying:

Proposer: Let those who are to be ordained to the order of subdeacon come forward.

The ordinands take a step forward, their candles are taken from them and put on the altar. All are seated.

Bishop: Dearly beloved brothers (sisters), in previous times the order of the subdiaconate was seen as a grade of probation for the greater orders of deacon and priest. It gives to those who receive it greater steadfastness of purpose to the end that, with singleness of heart, they may dedicate their lives to Christ in his holy church. So great, indeed, is the responsibility laid upon those who in these greater orders become Christ's representatives, that a season of trial for the preparatory grade was often appointed.

Addressing the ordinands:

Bishop: You, well beloved brother/sister having already offered yourself to the service of God and to help forward His Kingdom on earth, are now moved to devote yourself still further to his service and that of his church. For this purpose we invoke the Divine Blessing; and, with the help and ready concurrence of the faithful, shall now proceed in

the exercise of our office to bring you as a holy oblation into the presence of Christ, not doubting that at the latter end, you, having the witness of faithful service, you will shine, pure and lustrous, as jewels in the crown of our Master.

The bishop rises and addresses those present as follows:

Bishop: Let us pray, dearest faithful, that almighty God, in his great lovingkindness and watchful care over his church, may bestow a plentiful grace on this acolyte/ these acolytes, now about to be raised to the order of the subdiaconate.

All sing the following litany, during which the ordinands lie prostrate:

The Litany

All: God the Father, seen of none,
God the co-eternal Son,
God the Spirit, with them One;
Hear us Holy Trinity.

God eternal, mighty King,
Unto You our love we bring,
Through the world Your praises ring;
We are Yours O Trinity.

Christ the Lord of life and light,
Ruler of the starry height;
Fount of glory infinite;
You we worship, Master.

Mighty Lord we hail you here,
Recognize your presence dear,
Feel and know that you are near,
Keeping thus your promise.

Though your face we cannot see,
As of old of Galilee,
Strong in faith we you,
Ever-present Master.

From our fathers we have heard,
Of the gift your hand conferred,
We have proved the Holy Word;
Be that gift outpoured.

Though your form from earth has gone,
Your apostles handed on,
Sacramental benison;

Be that blessing with us.

We this power would now convey,
Strengthen then our hands we pray,
Pour your might through us today,
Hear us Holy Master.

Monarch at your feet we kneel,
For your servant we appeal,
Fill his/her heart with holy zeal,
In your service, Master.

Lord of holy church the head,
Mystic power upon him/her shed,
By your love may he/she be led;
Hear us Holy Master.

Link in mystic bond with you
This your servant that he/she be,
From the world and self set free;
By your power O Master.

May he/she stand before your face,
Filled with love and heavenly grace,
Grant him/her with the saints a place;
Near you Lord and Master.

The bishop takes his crozier in his left hand; holds it above the prostrate ordinand and says or sings alone:

Bishop: We beseech you hear our prayer,
Bless + your servant prostrate there,
Hold him/her in your loving care;
Hear us Holy Trinity.

Hear your servants as they pray,
Help this chosen one today,
Bless+ and + hallow him/her for aye;
Hear us Holy Trinity.

Pour your loving-kindness great,
On your chosen candidate,
Bless + Him/her, + Hallow, + Consecrate;
Hear us Holy Trinity.

The bishop and clergy kneel and everyone sings:

All: God the Father, seen of none,
God the co-eternal Son,
God the Spirit, with them one;
We are yours O Trinity.

The bishop and the ordinands rise and are again seated.

Bishop: Dearly beloved children in Christ, who are about to be admitted to the office of subdeacon, you should know what was in former times committed to your ministry. It was the duty of the subdeacon to provide water for the service at the altar, to minister to the deacon, to wash the altar cloths and corporals, to present to the deacon the chalice and paten to be used at the sacrifice, to guard the church doors or the gates of the sanctuary and in later times to read the epistles before the people. Endeavour then to fulfil those duties that still form the visible part of this office in such a way as to show true reverence for the inner things they typify. The altar of the holy church is the throne of Christ. So strive earnestly to follow the example of our divine Master, so that you may meetly minister at the divine sacrifice, both in the invisible sanctuary of your heart as in the visible sanctuary of the church.

Bishop: We ask of you that you pay particular attention to developing within you certain virtues of character, symbolised in the vestments belonging to this order. By the amice, control of speech; by the maniple, the love of service or diligence in all good works; by the tunicle, the spirit of joy and gladness. Develop within yourselves confidence in the good law, which may be interpreted as a recognition of the plan revealed by almighty God for the perfecting of creation.

Bishop: Will you strive, as far as in you lies, to order your life accordingly?

Ordinand: I will.

The bishop rises and with both hands extended towards the ordinands, who kneel before her/him, says the following prayer, momentarily holding the crozier when making the sign of the cross over the ordinands:

Bishop: O Lord Christ, the fountain of all goodness, who bestows on all who serve thee the gifts they need to fulfil their various offices, graciously regard this your child/these your children who we now present for the order of the subdiaconate and so + open to your heavenly grace her/his/their hearts and minds that she/he/they may be steadfast in your holy service. Increase in her/him/them the sevenfold gift of the Spirit that, growing in the knowledge of things eternal, she/he/they may offer her life/his life/their lives as a holy and continual sacrifice unto you, O great King of Love, to whom be praise and adoration from all mankind and from the angel host.

All: Amen.

The bishop rises and lays the right hand upon the head of each ordinand, saying to each:

Bishop: In the Name of Christ our Lord, I admit you to the order of Subdeacon.

The bishop is seated and hands each new subdeacon the empty chalice and paten, cruets, lavabo bowl and towel. The new subdeacon touches each of these with his/her right hand, the bishop saying:

Bishop: Look after the things given to you for your ministry and may your behaviour be fitting in the sight of God.

The bishop touches the amice of each ordinand:

Bishop: Take the amice as symbol for the control of tongue. In the name of the + Father and of the + Son and of the Holy + Spirit.

All: Amen.

The bishop places the maniple on the left arm of each ordinand,:

Bishop: Take the maniple as symbol for the fruit of good works. In the name of the + Father and of the + Son and of the Holy + Spirit.

All: Amen.

The bishop vests each new subdeacon with the tunicle, saying:

Bishop: The Lord clothe you with the garment of gladness and the vesture of joy. In the name of the + Father and of the + Son and of the Holy + Spirit.

All: Amen.

The bishop delivers to each new subdeacon the book of epistles, saying:

Bishop: Take the book of Epistles and receive the authority to read them in the church of God, both for the living and the dead. In the name of the + Father and of the + Son and of the Holy + Spirit.

All: Amen

The bishop rises and blesses the new subdeacons:

Bishop: The blessing of God Almighty, the + Father, the + Son and the Holy + Spirit come down upon you, that with steadfastness and zeal you may persevere in that which you have undertaken today.

All: Amen.

The celebration of Eucharist continues, one of the new subdeacons reading the epistle.

The Epistle

The Epistle ended, the subdeacon says:

Sub-deacon: Here ends the epistle.

All. Thanks be to God.

The Mass continues, in the prayer of consecration, the following is added after the words: 'for all our bishops, clergy and faithful':

Especially for the new subdeacon who in Christ's holy name we have admitted into the sub-diaconate'.

Please pray for the new sub-deacon(s) in the coming weeks and again on the first anniversary of this occasion. Please also pray for the Old Catholic Apostolic Church.