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**THE ROLE AND IMPORTANCE OF THE ORDERS OF  
CANDLE-BEARER, CANTOR, READER, AND SUBDEACON  
IN THE SLAVIC-BYZANTINE TRADITION**

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Through the prayers of the holy martyrs  
the subdeacon Eutychius, the acolyte Tarcisius,  
the reader Theodul, the porter Romanus,  
and of all their companions,  
may our Lord Jesus Christ, our God,  
have mercy on us and save us,  
for He is good and loves mankind.

2 Maccabees 15:38

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- CCEO *Code of Canons of Oriental Churches*. On IntraText.com. Accessed 18 Dec, 2019, [http://www.intratext.com/IXT/ENG1199/\\_INDEX.HTM](http://www.intratext.com/IXT/ENG1199/_INDEX.HTM).
- OSR *Архієратиконъ или служебникъ святи́тельскій*. Рїмъ: крїптоферра́тикаа обнтелъ, 1973.
- USP *Архієратиконъ*, unidentified Serbian. Early 17th century. Held in the Greek-Catholic archives in Presov, Slovakia.
- BSL Бачинський, Александр. *Служебникъ святи́тельскій*. Львов: 1886.
- ЕРМ *Большой Потребник*. Москва: тїпографїи єдинобѣцевъ, 1888.
- BSU Подарський, Іван. *Служебникъ и Трєбникъ Архієрейскїи*. 1632. Kept in the manuscript collection of Saint Sophia Cathedral, Kyiv (ф. 312, № 60).
- BAR *Евхологий Барберини ГР. 336*. Омск: Голованов, 2011.
- ESM *Служебникъ Архієрейскїи*. Москва: тїпографїи єдинобѣцевъ, 1910.
- LSS *Служебникъ Сѣнтѣскїи*. Шѣители Шневско, 1740.
- RCP *Чинобникъ Архієрейскаго Свѣщеннослуженїа*. Свѣто-трїонцкїи Монастыр: св Йов Почѣевскїи, 1965.
- RCM *Чинобникъ Архієрейскаго Сѣщеннослуженїа*. Москва: сїнодалной тїпографїи, 1854.
- KPU Київська Патріархія. *Чиновникъ архієрейського священослужіння*. Київ: Видання Київської патріархїї Української Православної Церкви Київського патріархату, 2005.
- OUT Синод Української Католицької Церкви. *Архієретиконъ або Святи́тельскїи Служебникъ*. Toronto: Basilian Press, 1988.

## INTRODUCTION

In the modern era of the Church there is much talk on the theme of ecclesiastical service and participation in liturgical worship. Generally, this theme is broken into two categories: the service of the priestly vocation, and the service of the laity. In many places the only cleric in a parish church is the priest, and his work is seemingly limited to preaching and teaching the faith, and celebrating the Holy Mysteries. All the other necessary work required for the parish's liturgical life (after all, "liturgy" means "the work for the people") – everything from the non-priestly service in the altar and the chanting and reading at the liturgical services to the cleaning of the church interior and the care of the altar linens – is most often piously and lovingly carried out by the laity. Some churches even have "guilds" or "brotherhoods" organized for the sake of serving the Church and responding to these needs. This is, many will say, a wonderful opportunity for the laity to be involved in the life of the Church, to participate in the Liturgy. Though it may be true that these tasks are beneficial to those who carry them out, these duties have not always belonged to the laity.

In the tradition of the Church there are, besides the priest, other ranks of clergy which serve to meet the needs of the Church each according to their own responsibilities. In the section on the priesthood, the popular prayer book *Come Let us Worship* states:

Fulfilling these and other services, bishops need assistants, priests, to whom, through the laying-on of hands, they hand on this Christly spiritual authority in the mystery of priesthood. And the Church also established services which lead to priesthood, and in our Ukrainian rite there are four of them: reader, singer, subdeacon, and deacon.<sup>1</sup>

With the exception of the deacon, these other ranks of clergy are usually known collectively by the term "minor orders." The lower ranks of clergy have existed in

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<sup>1</sup> Translation mine. *Прійдіте поклонімся молитовник, 5-е видання, виправлення* (Львів: Свічадо), 2017, 176-177.

various forms in different places since the early Church, are mentioned as early as the year 251 in a letter of Pope Cornelius I (251-253).<sup>2</sup> As *Come Let us Worship* indicates, the official books of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church provide the rites of ordination for candle-bearer, reader, cantor, and subdeacon. The books of the Russian Orthodox Church and others contain the same, while modern Greek books contain the prayers of ordination for “any ecclesiastical service,” ecclesiarch, psalmist, reader, and subdeacon, but not for candle-bearer.

Despite the antiquity and universality of these ecclesiastical offices, there is a considerable amount of disagreement regarding their place and importance in the life of the Church. There is the common position is that these orders are completely unimportant and say that they will cease to exist in the relatively near future, which has, in some places, already come to pass. Another is to regard these orders as nothing more than requirements to be fulfilled on one’s path to priesthood. A position contrary to these is held by those who assert that these orders are important for the life of the Church and the function of the parish, and that these ordained persons rank among the clergy.

First, let us examine the position that the lower ranks of clergy are unnecessary and should not exist at all. This seems to be the official position of the Latin Church, in which these orders have been discarded by papal legislation. Until 1973, in the Roman Catholic Church one was made a cleric by the reception of tonsure. Following tonsure, one could be ordained to the minor orders of porter, reader, exorcist, and acolyte. The subdiaconate also existed, but was elevated to the status of a major order by Pope Innocent II in the 12<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>3</sup> On 15 August 1972, in his apostolic letter “*Ministeria Quaedam*,” Pope Paul VI abolished the use of the minor orders and subdiaconate. He writes:

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<sup>2</sup> “Cornelius”, on Vatican.va, <https://w2.vatican.va/content/vatican/en/holy-father/cornelio.html>.

<sup>3</sup> Auguste Boudinhon, “Minor Orders,” in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. 10. (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1911), accessed 18 Oct. 2019, <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/10332b.htm>.

Certain ministries were established by the Church even in the most ancient times for the purpose of suitably giving worship to God and for offering service to the people of God according to their needs... the offices of porter, reader, exorcist, and acolyte were called minor orders in the Latin Church in relation to the subdiaconate, diaconate, and priesthood, which were called major orders... it seems fitting to reexamine this practice and to adapt it to contemporary needs. What is obsolete in these offices will thus be removed and what is useful retained... Among the particular offices to be preserved and adapted to contemporary needs are those that are in a special way more closely connected with the ministries of the word and of the altar and that in the Latin Church are called the offices of reader and acolyte and the subdiaconate. It is fitting to preserve and adapt these in such a way, that from this time on there will be two offices: that of reader and that of acolyte, which will include the functions of the subdiaconate... It is in accordance with the reality itself and with the contemporary outlook that the above-mentioned ministries should no longer be called minor orders; their conferral will not be called ordination, but institution. Only those who have received the diaconate, however, will be clerics in the true sense and will be so regarded.<sup>4</sup>

Thus the Latin Church retains, in addition to the major orders of deacon, priest, and bishop, only the “ministries” of reader and acolyte. Those persons who are instituted to serve in these ministries are not clerics, and receive neither tonsure nor ordination.<sup>5</sup>

In contrast to the Latin Church, in the Eastern Catholic Churches these orders very much exist. The canons 325 and 326 of the Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches, the canon law shared by all Eastern Churches of the Catholic communion—hereafter CCEO—state that clerics, constituted as such by ordination, are bishops, presbyters, and deacons, yet as specified by the *Instruction for Applying the Liturgical Prescriptions of the Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches*, “it also foresees the possibility, in addition to these, of other ministers called minor Orders.”<sup>6</sup> CCEO 327 reads:

If besides bishops, presbyters or deacons, other ministers, constituted in minor orders, generally called minor clerics, are admitted or instituted for the service of the people of God or to exercise the functions of the sacred liturgy, they are governed only by the particular law of their own Church *sui iuris*.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Paul VI, Apostolic Letter given Motu Proprio *Ministeria quaedam*, (August 15, 1973), accessed October 16, 2019, <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/ministeria-quaedam-9006>.

<sup>5</sup> It would seem that there is still some remnant of a clerical state in these “ministries,” since they are reserved for men. There is also anecdotal evidence of men who were ordained subdeacons before *Ministeria quaedam*, and thus bound by a vow of celibacy, who, wishing to be laicized, requested as such from the Vatican. The response was not a message that subdeacons no longer exist, but simply the granting of their requests. When this occurred and the persons involved are unknown to me.

<sup>6</sup> *Instruction for Applying the Liturgical Prescriptions of the Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches*, (The Vatican: Congregation for the Eastern Churches, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1996), section 72.

<sup>7</sup> *Code of Canons of Oriental Churches*, (Washington: Canon Law Society of America, 1992), On IntraText.com, [http://www.intratext.com/IXT/ENG1199/\\_INDEX.HTM](http://www.intratext.com/IXT/ENG1199/_INDEX.HTM), canon 327. Hereafter, CCEO.



The canon law of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church *sui iuris* references this canon, and similarly prescribes:

Other than bishop, presbyters and deacons, for the service of the people of God and the execution of liturgical rites there are also appointed, in accordance with the prescriptions of the liturgical books, other ministers, specifically: candlebearers, readers, singers, and subdeacons, which received lower ordinations.<sup>8</sup>

The canon goes on to list the requirements for candidates to these orders, and then specifies: “lower ordinations may be granted on a regular basis and do not give a foundation for requiring ordination to a higher order.”<sup>9</sup> Thus, this answers the questions as to whether lower clergy should exist, and if they are merely traditional. As written in canon law, the position of the Eastern Catholic Churches, and of the Ukrainian Catholic Church in particular, is that that these ministers should exist, and that they serve on a permanent basis and exist in a non-transitional state apart from the priesthood, rather than mere requirements during one’s formation for priesthood.

The next question to be addressed is the rank and state of these ministerial orders. The title of section 73 of the *Instruction* states: “Whoever is enrolled in a minor Order is no longer a lay person.” The following paragraph explains: “While the Code of Canon Law [of the Latin Church] speaks of ministries that can be permanently assumed by the laity... the minor Orders, rather, are inserted in the ecclesiastical Hierarchy according to the level of each one.”<sup>10</sup> That is, the ministries of lector and acolyte that exist in the Latin Church are not the same as the orders that exist in the Eastern Churches. The installed ministers in the Latin Church are members of the laity, whereas, a person ordained to a minor order “is no longer a lay person, but becomes a member of what the

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<sup>8</sup> Translation mine. Original: Окрім єпископів, пресвітерів або дияконів, до служіння Божому народові та звершення літургійних обрядів настановляються, згідно з приписами літургійних книг, також інші служителі, а саме: свічконосці, читці, співці та піддиякони, які отримали нижчі свячення. “Канони партикулярного права Української Греко-Католицької Церкви”, Information Resource of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, [http://news.ugcc.ua/documents/kanoni\\_partikulyarnogo\\_prava\\_ugkts\\_82426.html](http://news.ugcc.ua/documents/kanoni_partikulyarnogo_prava_ugkts_82426.html), canon 46.1.

<sup>9</sup> Original: Нижчі свячення можуть уділятися на постійній основі, вони не дають підстави вимагати вищих свячень. *Канони партикулярного права Української Греко-Католицької Церкви*, 46.1.

<sup>10</sup> *Instruction*, 73.

liturgical books of most Eastern Churches call the “clergy” or “Sacred Orders.”<sup>11</sup> Canon 358 of the CCEO states that “Through diaconal ordination a man is enrolled as a cleric in the eparchy for whose service he is ordained unless, according to the norm of the particular law of his own Church *sui iuris*, *he has already* been enrolled in the same eparchy.”<sup>12</sup> Thus, those ordained to the lower ranks of clergy may be canonically enrolled as eparchial clerics. The *Instruction* comments on this, saying, “It would be beneficial, therefore, that the enrollment in the clergy of the different eparchies happen at the moment of the constitution in a minor Order, so as to assume the minister from that moment into a full and stable form of service for the eparchy.”<sup>13</sup> In referencing CCEO canon 358, Canon 52 of the Particular Law of the UGCC does not contradict it, saying only that “through diaconal ordination every cleric is enrolled in that eparchy for the service of which he is ordained.”<sup>14</sup> Thus, the particular law of the UGCC does not deny the existence of clerics prior to their diaconal ordination.

Next, the roles of these clerical orders must be established. In paragraph 75, the *Instruction* states that the lower clergy, rather than being “mere formalities in preparation for presbyterial ordination,” instead “provide a specific service in the Church, and as such are to be effectively exercised in a definitive way by those who do not intend to enter the presbyterate.”<sup>15</sup> Naturally, since the document was written for Churches of multiple traditions, the *Instruction* does not concretely outline what this service is, but references it, saying that by conferring minor orders “the ministers necessary for a dignified and fitting celebration of the liturgy are obtained, avoiding the practice[s]... of having ministers of a higher range perform the liturgical functions that should be reserved to those of lower range... or of permanently appointing to the laity

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<sup>11</sup> *Instruction*, 73.

<sup>12</sup> CCEO 358, emphasis added.

<sup>13</sup> *Instruction*, 73.

<sup>14</sup> Translation mine. Original: “Через дияконські свячення кожен священнослужитель приписується до тієї епархії, для служіння якій посвячується.” *Партикулярне право*, 52.

<sup>15</sup> *Instruction*, 75.

liturgical tasks expected of a minister.”<sup>16</sup> As an example, one obvious instance of clerical tasks being regularly carried out by the laity is explicitly stated in the canon law of the Philadelphia Metropolia of the UGCC. It states the following:

It is the continuous tradition of all Eastern Churches that only clerics are permitted to enter the Sanctuary. Altar servers have traditionally held the rank of sub-deacon. In places where this custom has fallen into disuse, boys may act in the stead of the sub-deacon provided the prescriptions of Article 278<sup>17</sup> are fulfilled. Since the subdiaconate is a clerical rank, those designated to act in place of an absent sub-deacon should be of the male gender. Under no circumstances, whatsoever are members of the female gender permitted to act as sub-deacons or altar servers.<sup>18</sup>

Just as the role of serving in the Holy Place is, according to the *Pastoral Guide*, proper to the subdeacon, there are many other tasks, roles, and services, normally assumed either by the laity or priestly clergy, that are the duty and privilege of the lower ranks of clergy. As to what these are, it may be deduced that the service that is provided by the stable and permanent service of the minor clerics in any given Church and liturgical rite are those tasks and functions required of and prescribed to the lower clergy by the liturgical rite, the liturgical books, and the tradition as a whole.

Thus, it is the goal of this work is to recover a genuine understanding of the tradition of the orders of candle-bearer, reader, cantor, and subdeacon in the Slavic-Byzantine tradition. First, in order to determine the nature of the lower ranks of clergy in terms of their original role and purpose of these orders, their foundations in the earliest centuries of the Church will be examined by means of historical evidence. Next, in order to determine and understand the lower clergy from the perspective of the Church and the tradition that has been handed on, the prayers, rubrics, and prescriptions of the ordination rites will be examined in depth. The ordinations rites of a variety of liturgical books from various centuries, places, and Churches will be analyzed. Preference will be

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<sup>16</sup> *Instruction*, 75.

<sup>17</sup> *Pastoral Guide of the Ukrainian Catholic Church in the United States of America*, (Philadelphia: 1999), article 278.1: Parish priests are obliged to instruct at” train properly as many acolytes (altar servers) as possible in the responses and ceremonies of the Divine Liturgy and other services. Only males may be altar servers in the Ukrainian Catholic Church. These servers of whatsoever age shall wear sticharion which shall in length reach down to their ankles and the sleeves to their wrists, thereby also replacing the cassocks. The use of any vestments of another *sui iuris* ritual Church is forbidden.

<sup>18</sup> *Pastoral Guide*, article 278.2.

given to Slavonic books, and will not examine the traditions of non-Byzantine Churches. Based on those texts and the conclusions drawn from them, this work shall also propose certain reforms to both current practice and liturgical texts for the sake of establishing and restoring a more genuine and coherent exercise of the tradition of lower ranks of clergy.

## CHAPTER 1 ORIGINS AND HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

In order to properly understand the role of the lower ranks of ecclesiastical ministry in the modern Church, one must examine their origin and their role in the history of the Church, and in doing this, uncover the purpose of their existence.

### *Old Testament*

The first place to look must be the Old Testament, where one can find a structured administration of the people’s worship. 1 Chronicles 9 speaks of “priests, Levites, and temple servants” (1 Chr 9:2 *NRSVCE*). The census-type list goes on to list the priestly families “qualified for the work of the service of the house of God” (1 Chr 9: 13 *NRSVCE*), and the Levitical families, having within it the gate-keepers “in charge of the chambers and the treasures of the house of God” (1 Chrs 9: 26 *NRSVCE*), and the singers “living in the chambers of the temple” (1 Chrs 9: 33 *NRSVCE*). Though the lower ranks of clergy in the modern Church—or even those of the ancient Church—may not be direct descendants of the Levites and temple servants of the Old Testament, they certainly follow the model set by them. It is clear that the concept of having different classes or groups of persons designated to the stable and regular service and ministry in the temple is certainly to be found in the Old Testament. While it may not be true that there is a concrete or direct historical development of the lower clergy of the Christian Church from the worship in the Old Testament, the Old Testament structure has certainly had influence on the New. In fact, these Old Testament servants are referenced in liturgical texts. Paul Bradshaw writes, “the prayers for both subdeacon and reader employ Old Testament typology to define the offices being bestowed. The prayer for a subdeacon looks to the gate-keepers of the tent of the testimony, who are ranked immediately below priests and Levites .”<sup>1</sup> In some old Slavonic books deacons are

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<sup>1</sup> Paul Bradshaw, *Ordination Rites of the Ancient Churches of East and West*, (New York: Pueblo, 1990), 95.

referred to not by the usual Greek word, but instead called “Levites.” As will later be explained, some ministerial roles in the earliest Christian communities, adopted from Jewish worship, later became formalized in the Christian Roman system as the ranks of reader and exorcist.

### ***The Early Church***

An historical examination of the lower clergy must ask the question of how there came to be a formally structured hierarchy of liturgical ministers in the Church. Though, as was previously stated above, even in the Old Testament there was a certain structure, and groups of people designated to perform certain obligations in service to the temple, we must ask how the structure that exists *now* came to be. Paul Bradshaw writes that,

In addition to the orders of bishop, presbyter, and deacon, which are found universally from the second century onward, the early Church also knew of other permanently appointed officials designated to exercise certain liturgical functions—what later centuries would come to call the minor orders. The most ancient of these offices seem to have been those of reader and subdeacon, which are the only ones to appear consistently in the later rites of the East.<sup>2</sup>

There is some evidence to suggest that those offices found in the East were adopted from the Church at Rome. Thus, while the focus of this study is the lower clergy in the Eastern, specifically Byzantine, tradition, it seems that these lower orders of clergy formally developed first in Rome before spreading to the rest of the Christian Church. For that reason it is necessary to examine the lower ranks of clergy as found in Rome in the early centuries of the Church.

The Council of Trent speaks of the “functions of holy orders from the deacon to the porter” as having “been laudably received in the Church from the times of the Apostles,”<sup>3</sup> and states that “from the very beginning of the Church the names of the

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<sup>2</sup> Bradshaw, 93.

<sup>3</sup>“Twenty-Third Session of the Council of Trent”, Chapter XVII: In What Manner the Exercise of the Minor Orders is to be Restored,” on CatholicCulture.org, accessed 2 November, 2019, <https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?recnum=5373>.

following orders and the duties proper to each one are known to have been in use, namely, those of the subdeacon, acolyte, exorcist, lector and porter.”<sup>4</sup> Thomas Lindsay, author of *The Church and the Ministry in the Early Centuries*, writes the following:

The second half of the third and the fourth century witnessed an increase in the lower orders of the clergy, both in the East and in the West. The organizing genius of the Roman Church led the way. The institution of these minor orders, as they were called, can almost be dated. They began about the year 236 A.D. So far as the West is concerned, the minor orders seem to have reached their completion by the beginning of the fourth century, if not a little earlier.<sup>5</sup>

The Catholic Encyclopedia posits that the minor orders “are not of Divine or Apostolic origin,”<sup>6</sup> and that the porter was the adoption of a role in the civil world.

*Porter* denoted among the Romans the slave whose duty it was to guard the entrance of the house. In the Roman period all houses of the better class had an *ostiarius*, or ostiary, whose duties were considered very inferior. When, from the end of the second century the Christian communities began to own houses for holding church services and for purposes of administration, church ostiaries are soon mentioned, at least for the larger cities.<sup>7</sup>

Lindsay asserts that not just the rank of porter, but multiple ranks of clergy were based on the civil and pagan world. He writes, “the Christian churches did copy that great pagan hierarchy... in the multiplication of the lower orders of clergy on the model of the organization of the state temple service.”<sup>8</sup> After describing how other Church structures, vestments, and hierarchies were modeled after the state religion, Lindsay also speaks of lower clergy, saying, “The imitation of the pagan priesthood was also seen within our period in the multiplication of subordinate ecclesiastical offices... We find included in the *clergy*, besides the bishops, elders and deacons, subdeacons, readers, exorcists, acolytes, door-keepers and grave-diggers.”<sup>9</sup> He continues: “The subdeacons are evidently developed from the deacons. The readers and the exorcists represent the old

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<sup>4</sup> “Twenty-Third Session of the Council of Trent,” Chapter II.

<sup>5</sup> Thomas A. Lindsay, *The Church and the Ministry in the Early Centuries*, (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1902), 353

<sup>6</sup> Auguste Boudinhon, “Minor Orders,” in *The Catholic Encyclopedia* (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1911), retrieved November 2, 2019 from New Advent: <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/10332b.htm>.

<sup>7</sup> Johann Peter Kirsch, “Porter,” in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. 12. (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1911), retrieved November 2, 2019 from New Advent: <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/12284b.htm>.

<sup>8</sup> Lindsay, 350.

<sup>9</sup> Lindsay, 353-354.

*prophetic ministry*. The acolytes and the door-keepers were added to the *clergy* in imitation of the officials in the state temples during the days of paganism.”<sup>10</sup> It seems that, in terms of the personnel required, the organizational structure of Christian churches was taken from the pagan temples.

Lindsay describes the structure of the pagan temples and the relationship between the pagan priests and those who assisted them. Lindsay presents the model of the pagan temple with higher and lower priesthoods as the forerunner of the modern Church’s structure of orders divided into what are often called the “major” and “minor” orders:

The service of priests in the state temples was so arranged that there was a higher and a lower priesthood, and that the members of the latter were looked up on as the personal attendants of the former. The one was set apart from the performance of the sacrifices and other holy mysteries, the others were their servants who performed the menial parts of the services... All these attendants of the lower class—whether servants of the higher priests or servants of the sacred place—were included in the temple ministry, and had in consequence their definite share in the temple offerings.<sup>11</sup>

According to the thought of Lindsay, in the Church of today the “major” orders of bishop, priest and deacon, those who are ordained to serve at the altar, are modeled on the higher, sacrificial pagan priesthood, while the “minor” orders, those who assist the priests, serve away from the altar, and execute “menial tasks” are modeled on the lower pagan priesthood. It must be understood that what is said to be modeled on pagan priesthood is the structure of hierarchy and the regime of their authority. Of course, saying that the Christian priesthood itself was inherited from paganism is not acceptable. The Christian priesthood, and all the Divine and Holy Mysteries, were instituted by Jesus Christ, and passed down by the apostles.

In his treatise *On the Origin of the Readership and of the Other Lower Orders*,<sup>12</sup> Harnack provides an excruciatingly detailed analysis of the roles in the pagan temple

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<sup>10</sup> Lindsay, 354.

<sup>11</sup> Lindsay, 354-355.

<sup>12</sup> Adolf Harnack, *Sources of the Apostolic Canons; with a Treatise on the Origin of the Readership and Other Lower Orders*, trans. Leonard A. Wheatley (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1895).



and the origin of the lower clergy in the Roman Church. Harnack writes his work to address the opinion expressed by Thomas Aquinas<sup>13</sup> that the lower ranks “have arisen out of the diaconate.”<sup>14</sup> He calls this theory into question, stating his goal to “examine the testimony which we possess bearing on the nature and history of the readership, and convince ourselves whether this office really existed from its earliest origin as one related to the diaconate and subordinate to it, or not rather as one of an entirely different kind.”<sup>15</sup> Harnack discusses the origin of the lower clergy as a structured *ordo* within the Church hierarchy, as well as the origins of each of the ranks themselves. Ultimately Harnack disagrees with Aquinas except in reference to the subdiaconate. Harnack posits that “This institution [of the effective, five-membered, strictly closed *ordo clericorum ministrorum*], as it is now plain, did not proceed out of the diaconate: it is a complicated picture; it includes three categories, which in their origin had nothing in common, exorcists and readers, sub-deacons, acolytes and doorkeepers.”<sup>16</sup> Since the lower clergy have, according to Harnack, arisen from three unrelated sources, it is appropriate to examine each of these in more detail.

### ***Subdeacon***

With regards to the subdiaconate Harnack does not disagree with Thomas Aquinas, but rather justifies his assertion that the subdiaconate has its origin in the diaconate, writing:

The subdeacons have really developed out of the diaconate. Two causes have here been at work. At first it was thought, on the strength of the account in the Acts of the Apostles, not right to over-step the number of seven for the deacons, while in larger towns a larger number of deacons was necessary. In the second place the deacons became so dignified that they sought to rid themselves of the lower ministerial services. The sub-deacons are thus in their origin the

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<sup>13</sup> *Supplement to the Summa Theologiae*, on New Advent, <http://www.newadvent.org/summa/5037.htm>, q 37, art 2: “Dionysius is speaking of the orders not as sacraments, but as directed to hierarchical actions. Wherefore he distinguishes three Orders corresponding to those actions. The first of these Orders, namely the bishop, has all three actions; the second, namely the priest, has two; while the third has one, namely to cleanse; this is the deacon who is called a minister: and under this last all the lower Orders are comprised.”

<sup>14</sup> Harnack, 55.

<sup>15</sup> Harnack, 56.

<sup>16</sup> Harnack, 90.

superfluous deacons (over seven) and are at the same time the *διάκονοι ὑπηρέται*. This double character explains the fact that they took the *highest* place among the *clerici minores*, they even gravitated more and more towards the higher clergy, until once for all Innocent III numbered them among the higher *ordines* in the west.<sup>17</sup>

Thus with regards to the subdiaconate, Harnack accepts the opinion of Thomas Aquinas, since the responsibility of the subdeacons was to participate in and share the responsibilities of the deacons.

### ***Exorcist and Reader***

Harnack explains that the offices of exorcist and reader come from very prominent roles in the ancient Church, dating back as far as the apostolic age. After the analysis of various sources, Harnack summarizes the establishment of reader and exorcist as clerical ranks in the following manner.<sup>18</sup> First, in the apostolic age a key part of any Christian congregation was, aside from the elders (advisors and guides) and administrative officials (i.e., priests and deacons, “who had to act especially in divine service and in the care of the poor”), the “prophets and teachers who were awakened by the spirit and announced the word of God.”<sup>19</sup> In addition to these main groups there were those who had gifts of the Holy Spirit for the edification of the congregation, “but among the possessors of these only the (apostles), prophets and teachers held a *special rank* in the congregations... in so far as their efficiency was absolutely necessary for the congregation.”<sup>20</sup> Harnack posits that readers and exorcists were among the various ‘men of gifts.’

Addressing the role of the reader, Harnack explains that his functional role was necessary to the community, and thus the person of the reader was important. He writes:

We may safely surmise that the public reading of the Old Testament took place from the beginning in the heathen-Christian congregations. It formed an integral part of divine service. Also other writings, apocalypses, epistles, and soon even gospels were to be read in the church. Not many, however, were fitted for this, and there must have been many highly esteemed

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<sup>17</sup> Harnack, 84-85.

<sup>18</sup> Harnack, 79-83.

<sup>19</sup> Harnack, 79-80.

<sup>20</sup> Harnack, 80. Parentheses Harnack’s.

prophets and teachers who could edify by free speech who were not able to read the holy scriptures. Thus readers were necessary, and the existence of such we find presupposed even in the Apocalypse of St. John.<sup>21</sup> The art of reading and of delivery for the object of edification of the congregation was considered a gift of the Holy Spirit. So far as the reader served for this edification he approximated to the prophets and teachers.<sup>22</sup>

Yet despite this, the reader and exorcist did not possess the same authority as the prophets and teachers, since they did not have “the right of free speech for the edification in which the Holy Spirit spoke direct.”<sup>23</sup> It seems that Harnack understands that readers occupy a place of high dignity due to their God-given ability to read the word of God, but not one of official position, and thus they did not have the liberty or authority of “free speech for edification”<sup>24</sup> as did the teachers and elders.

The second century brought, according to Harnack, the development of the Church’s familiar clerical structure of bishop-priest-deacon. The “prophets and teachers died out more and more, or were deprived of their original significance,”<sup>25</sup> and thus, “the reader was to step into the blank”<sup>26</sup> of their absence. Harnack provides the evidence that “in the Apostolic Canons the reader is placed, according to his rank, between the presbyters and deacons... he is reminded that he holds the place of an evangelist.”<sup>27</sup> At this time, the reader—as well as confessors, virgins, widows, and exorcists—stood outside the new structure and took their place by the side of the officials and enjoyed “a more or less high esteem. They possessed rank but not office.”<sup>28</sup>

The beginning of the third century brought the final form of the Church’s new structure, which brought the solidification of the lower clerical orders as such. Harnack writes:

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<sup>21</sup> Rev 1:3 *RSVCE*: Blessed is he who reads aloud the words of the prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written therein; for the time is near.

<sup>22</sup> Harnack, 80.

<sup>23</sup> Harnack, 80.

<sup>24</sup> Harnack, 81.

<sup>25</sup> Harnack, 81.

<sup>26</sup> Harnack, 82.

<sup>27</sup> Harnack, 82.

<sup>28</sup> Harnack, 81-82.

As now the exorcist and reader were necessary for certain acts in the divine service, a certain rank by the side of the priests and deacons might exist in the church, but not any more as independent. Thus... in the years 222 to 249, which were most decisive for the consolidation of the churches, first at any rate in Rome, then also in the west, the appointment of *clerici minores* is met with, and exorcist and reader are remitted to this position in this separation of higher and lower, acting and ministering clergy, of priests and of servants in holy things, we see at once a striking agreement with the Roman sacrificial system.<sup>29</sup>

Thus, he concludes that “exorcists and readers there had been in the church from old times: sub-deacons are not essentially strange, as they participate in a name (deacon) which dates from the earliest days of Christianity.”<sup>30</sup> That is, while subdeacons derived their work from the apostolic institution of the diaconate, the reader and exorcist continue in the roles from the early Christian assembly, and eventually become official offices and are confined to a specific place in the hierarchy of ministers, which derives its form from the pagan system.

### *Porter and Acolyte*

This leave Harnack with two final ranks of lower clergy to introduce—“we must, therefore, direct our attention to the acolytes and doorkeepers. Here we find in fact the key to the historical understanding of the whole momentous institution of the *clerici minores*.”<sup>31</sup> While the institution of exorcist and reader was the formalization of already existing roles in the community, Harnack finds the situation to be much more complicated with regards to the other lower ranks. He writes:

What a difference there was between the exorcist and the reader on one side, and the sub-deacon, acolyte, and doorkeeper on the other! The former had already a *history* in the church when they became *clerici minores*, and were certainly not developed out of the diaconate; with the latter it is, however, quite different. *Their names and functions only appear before us with certainty for the first time in the year 250.* Whence do they arise?... Acolytes and door-keepers (*πλωροί*) are quite strange, are really novelties. And these acolytes even at the time of Cornelius<sup>32</sup> stand at the *head* of the *ordines minores*: for that the sub-deacons follow on the deacons is self-evident. Whence do they come? Now if they do not spring out of the Christian

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<sup>29</sup> Harnack, 83.

<sup>30</sup> Harnack, 85.

<sup>31</sup> Harnack, 85.

<sup>32</sup> See the letter of Pope Cornelius I, cited below.

tradition, their origin must be explained from the Roman. It can in fact be shown there with desirable plainness.<sup>33</sup>

With an analysis of the various positions of those who cared for the temple, Harnack establishes that the orders of porter, acolyte and subdeacon were directly adopted from the pagan religion of the Roman state. He explains:

The temples have only partially their own priests, but they all have a superintendent (*aedituus = curator templi*). These *aeditui*, who lived in the temple, fall again into two classes. At least 'in the most important brotherhoods the chosen *aedituus* was not in a position to undertake in person the watching and cleaning of the *sacellum*. He charged therefore with this service a freedman or slave.' ' In this case the *sacellum* had two *aeditui*, the temple-keeper, originally called *magister aedituus*, and the temple-servant, who appears to be called the *aedituus minister*. '... The temple-servant opens, shuts and cleans the sacred place, and shows to strangers its curiosities, and allows according to the rules of the temple those persons to offer up prayers and sacrifices to whom this is permitted, while he sends away the others.'<sup>34</sup>

In the figure of the *aedituus minister* Adolf Harnack sees the Christian porter and posits that the latter is the descendant of the former. Similar to the responsibilities of the *aedituus* of the pagan temple, Harnack describes the responsibilities of the Christian porter:

He had to look after the opening and shutting of the doors, to watch over the coming in and going out of the faithful, to refuse entrance to suspicious persons, and, from the date of the more strict separation between the *missa catechumenorum* and the *missa fidelium*, to close the doors, after the dismissal of the catechumens, against those doing penance and unbelievers.<sup>35</sup>

The porter and *aedituus minister* were ministers assigned to the specific temple or church building, and their responsibilities were concerned with its care. For Christians, the adoption of the *aedituus minister* and creation of the rank of porter “first became necessary when there were special church buildings (there were such even in the second century), and they like the temples, together with the ceremonial of divine service, had come to be considered as holy, that is, since about 225.”<sup>36</sup> The person of the porter arose

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<sup>33</sup> Harnack, 84-85.

<sup>34</sup> Harnack, 85-86.

<sup>35</sup> Harnack, 88.

<sup>36</sup> Harnack, 88.

from the practical necessity of caring for and guarding the ecclesiastical real estate, as one might hire a security guard or receptionist for a hotel or office building.

Similarly, in the person of the pagan *tabellarii*, Harnack sees the Christian acolyte. Quoting Marquardt's exposition of the Roman sacrificial system, Harnack explains:

'Besides the endowment, the colleges of priests were also supplied with a body of servants'-the under officials-'they were appointed to the priests... by all of whom they were used partly as letter-carriers (*tabellarii*), partly as scribes, partly as assistants at the sacrifices.'... Here we have the forerunners of the church doorkeepers and acolytes.<sup>37</sup>

Harnack explains the role and origin of the Christian acolyte, saying:

The church acolytes are without difficulty to be recognized in the under officials of the priests, specially in the '*calatores*,' the personal servants of the priests. According to Cyprian the acolytes and others are used by preference as *tabellarii*... the name 'acolyte' plainly shows the acolyte was not, like the doorkeeper, attached to a sacred thing, but to a sacred person.<sup>38</sup>

The distinction in the role of the two ministers is quite clear here. The *aedituus minister* (porter) was assigned to the *doors* of the temple, while the *tabellarii* (acolyte) were assigned to the *priests* of the temple. It seems the acolyte was akin to a personal secretary or assistant. Lindsay, building off Harnack's exposition, further explains and summarizes the correlations between the ministers in the church and temple:

The acolytes and the door-keepers (*ostiarii*, *πυλωποι*) correspond to these two classes of the lower priesthood in the pagan state temples. The *acolyte* (*ακόλουθος*) was originally an attendant, a scholar, a follower, or more definitely the boy or man-servant who followed his master when the latter went out of his house. They were the servants of the Christian priests doing all manner of services for them, carrying their messages or letters, and in general acting like the *calatores* of the state temples. The door-keepers or *ostiarii* had the same duties in the Christian churches that the *aeditui* had in the state temples.<sup>39</sup>

Harnack concludes, "The new requirements of the sacerdotal and religious church system in Rome, enriched after the heathen pattern, called forth the acolytes and doorkeepers as antitypes to the *calatores* and *aeditui ministri*. Thus a foundation was laid

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<sup>37</sup> Harnack, 87-88.

<sup>38</sup> Harnack, 88.

<sup>39</sup> Lindsay, 355.

for the *ordo clericorum minorum*.<sup>40</sup> Thus, the origins of the acolyte and porter are established as an adoption of the ministers of the pagan temple: porters care for the church building and guard the doors, and acolytes accompany and assist the priests.

### *Synthesis and Improvement*

Harnack and Lindsay establish that the institution of the lower clergy as an *ordo* within the ecclesiastical hierarchy is an adoption of the pagan system with its “separation of higher and lower, acting and ministering clergy, of priests and of servants in holy things.”<sup>41</sup> Lindsay explains this system:

The service of priests in the state temples was so arranged that there was a higher and a lower priesthood, and that the members of the latter were looked upon as the personal attendants of the former. The one was set apart for the performance of the sacrifices and other holy mysteries, the others were their servants who performed the menial parts of the services.<sup>42</sup>

According to Lindsay, what is important here is “not that the Christian churches should have given servants to their bishops and elders or attendants to their buildings for public worship, but that these officials should be classed among the clergy. It is this that was taken over from the pagan state religion.”<sup>43</sup> Those persons charged with the responsibilities of the minor clergy were not taken on simply as good-willed assistants or even as hired workmen. Instead, they were counted among those set aside and tied to the Church and Her service.

Lindsay writes about these lower servants, saying that in the pagan system “at first they were slaves; afterwards they were usually freed-men; these servant priests could never rise to be priests of the higher class.”<sup>44</sup> The pagan servants did not have a ladder to climb, nor were they candidates for higher positions—the clergy was an elite class above the people, and the temple assistants were mere servants. It is in this regard that the

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<sup>40</sup> Harnack, 89.

<sup>41</sup> Harnack, 81.

<sup>42</sup> Lindsay, 354.

<sup>43</sup> Lindsay, 356.

<sup>44</sup> Lindsay, 354.

Christian model is different from the pagan one, for the Church changed the pagan system that it adopted. Lindsay describes this:

The Church, however, did not copy its pagan models slavishly. It broke the pagan rule that the higher ministry was to be reserved for men of a certain rank, and that there was a social gulf between the acting and the serving priesthood. It made those lower orders the recruiting ground for the higher, and in this was constructed a ladder by which deserving men could climb from the lowest to the highest ranks of service within the Church of Christ.<sup>45</sup>

Harnack expounds on the significance of this point:

But that from [acolytes and door-keepers] was created *an effective and closely confined ordo of the second rank*, and that in this ordo the sub-deacons, the readers and the exorcists found their places, and that thus a well-linked chain was formed, is not one of the least of the great actions of the Roman Church for the building up of the ecclesiastical constitution, but rather one of the greatest. Thus the church created a nursery for the higher clergy; thus it allured the ambitious by means of numerous stages; thus it could for years thoroughly sift from among the clergy of the second order, and only advance to the influential higher dignities men well proved.<sup>46</sup>

In breaking down the pagan barrier between the lower and higher priesthods, the Church allowed the priesthood to be *of the people*, and the lowest of the orders became a door to the highest. In other words, the lower clergy of the Christian Church were not slaves or servants, but equals with a lesser service, a lesser responsibility.

The Church's imitation of the pagan system may come as somewhat of a shock to the pious reader. Yet this should not be the case, because, despite the similarities in the pagan and Christian systems, "now the cisterns stored and the conduits distributed a wholesome water."<sup>47</sup> Harnack goes so far to say that by using the old system and recreating it for Christian purposes, the Church conquered paganism. He writes:

The last mentioned offices appear indeed as if their fundamental idea was the imitation of the Roman sacrificial arrangements: but in carrying out this idea in the creation of an effective spiritual rank of the second order, and in the founding of a preparatory school for the priestly office it rises high above a mere imitation: it is the most striking witness of the way in which the Roman church understood how to overcome the dangers which still always threatened her from a dead organisation of the church, to build up her episcopal-presbyterian constitution, and to adopt the useful elements of the religious and civil conditions of Roman life. So far as she made it possible for every one, even the least, to reach the highest dignity of a priest from the

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<sup>45</sup> Lindsay, 356.

<sup>46</sup> Harnack, 89-90

<sup>47</sup> Lindsay, 356.



lowest position of a sexton, and on the other side required, as a rule, every one to begin to serve the church from the lowest step, so far, I say, she broke with the ancient view that the priesthood should be accessible to certain classes only, and also tore down the wall of separation between the priests and the temple servants. The conception of a clergy of eight degrees is certainly not a Christian one; but in the fundamental idea that this clergy should be neutral in the difference between high and low, rich and poor, Roman and barbarian, a Christian thought was effectively at work and therein the old world found its conqueror.<sup>48</sup>

The lower ranks of clergy were found to be an effective way of inducing persons to ministry in the Church, and uniting the clergy and the people.

Such is the manner in which, according to Lindsay and Harnack, the lower ranks came to exist in the structured clerical hierarchy of the Church at Rome: the work prescribed to the deacons was partially delegated to the subdeacons; the roles found in the earliest Christian communities of exorcist and reader were formalized; and the roles of the pagan temple attendants and the servants of the pagan priests were simply adopted as the Christian porters and acolytes. These five ministers were inserted into the ecclesiastical hierarchy below the priests and deacons, but not in an inseparable subordinated way. This structured clerical hierarchy was adopted first by Rome, and from there spread to all the other Churches across the Christian world, which is obvious from the mention of lower clergy in letters, martyrologies, calendars, books of saints, and other historical sources. Some of these will be presented in the next section.

### **Lower Clergy in Historical Sources**

#### ***The Letter of Pope Cornelius I***

Since the lower ranks of clergy were first formally incorporated in the hierarchy in Rome, the earliest sources which reference them are found in the West. They shall be examined here. The first explicit reference to the various lower clergy is from around the year 251 in a letter of Pope Cornelius I (251-253), who wrote, “there were forty-six

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<sup>48</sup> Harnack, 90-92

priests, seven deacons, seven subdeacons, forty-two acolytes, and fifty-two exorcists and lectors together with porters and more than a thousand five hundred widows and [needy] eucnuchs” in the city of Rome.<sup>49</sup> From this letter it is obvious that the clerical hierarchy was already well developed at that time, testifying that these various ranks of clerics existed even before the year 251 when that letter was written. Though the letter says nothing of the roles carried out by the clerics mentioned, there are some assumptions that may be made from the numbers of clerics given.

Harnack states that “As [Pope Cornelius] gives the number of priests as forty-six, it may be concluded with something like certainty that the rule was that the number of the priests and of the acolytes should be equal, and that the little difference may have been caused by temporary vacancies.”<sup>50</sup> Harnack sees this correlation as strong evidence for the equation of the acolyte with the temple *tabelarii*.

The list of clergy also specifies that there are the same number of deacons as subdeacons, again implying that deacons and subdeacons worked together, presumably the deacons being assisted by the subdeacons. Using this as evidence, Harnack posits, as stated above, that responsibility of caring for fourteen districts of the city was simply split between the seven deacons and seven subdeacons.

### ***Persecution in North Africa***

Another very interesting source is a government document from the year 303. This document is an official, very detailed, report of the raid and seizure of a house church during Diocletian’s persecution in North Africa which gives us an insight into the life of a parish church and its clergy in the fourth century. According to Gregory Dix, “the church of Cirta was a small church in an unimportant provincial town. It had not yet needed to build itself a basilica as many of the more thriving churches had done

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<sup>49</sup> “The Ecclesiastical Hierarchy” in Henry Denzinger, *The Sources of Catholic Dogma*, trans. Roy J. Deferrari (St. Louis, London: B. Herder Book Co., 1957), 22.

<sup>50</sup> Harnack, 88.

or begun to do in the later third century, but still worshiped in the old way in a converted private house.”<sup>51</sup> The first point of interest is that, despite the relative unimportance of the town and its church, the document mentions quite a large number of clergy, in addition to the inquiring officials and their scribes: a bishop, three presbyters, two deacons, four subdeacons, at least two lectors, and more than six “sextons.”<sup>52</sup> If the number of any given clerical rank can be understood as an indicator of importance or necessity, then subdeacons and sextons seem to be more important than presbyters and deacons, even in a remote church like that of Cirta.

The report describes how the officials command that the Christians hand over “the scriptures of your law and anything else you have here.” The bishop responds, saying, “the lectors have the scriptures, but we surrender what we have got here.” Due to the absence of the lectors who hold them, the books of the scriptures are not handed over. The officials command the subdeacons and sextons to bring forth items from the house church, which they do. When one of the subdeacons hands over “one very large book,” the officials ask, “why do you only bring out a single book? Bring out all the scriptures you have got.” The subdeacons Catullinus and Marcucius respond “we have no more because we are subdeacons. The lectors keep the books... We do not know where they are... We are not informers. Here we stand. Command us to be executed.” The account goes on to describe the seizure of Church goods and the “search of the lectors’ houses... how one lector was a tailor... how the wife of one of the lectors surrendered six books lest her absent husband be accused of hiding them.”<sup>53</sup>

The passages regarding the lectors provide us with two pieces of information. The first is that lectors were married and had worldly non-clerical jobs in addition to their ecclesiastical responsibilities. The second point of interest is that their clerical rank gave

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<sup>51</sup> Gregory Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy* (London: Dacre Press, 1975), 26.

<sup>52</sup> Dix, 24-26. It is not clear from this edition what exactly Dix means by “sexton”, that is, if this corresponds to acolyte or porter. Despite that, it is obvious that they are persons who care for the church and its goods.

<sup>53</sup> Dix, 25.

them the responsibility of keeping the books of the Scripture, and presumably, though not indicated here, to read from those books at the community's liturgical assemblies. It is also worth taking note that the Scriptures were kept by the lectors not in the church building with the chalices, bowls, dishes, candlesticks, lamps, tunics, veils and other things listed as confiscated items, but in the homes of the lectors themselves: whereas one tome was confiscated from the house church, six tomes were confiscated from the house of a lector, and "two books and some loose quires still unbound"<sup>54</sup> were confiscated from the house of the local schoolmaster. During the persecution of this era, the emperor attempted to persuade Christians to betray the faith and apostatize by handing over the Scriptures, sacred vessels, and such items that the government was determined to confiscate. Because of this, the responsibility of holding the scriptures in one's home was done at great risk, perhaps of similar nature to possessing religious items and attending Church services in the Soviet regime. This responsibility was given to the readers on account of their clerical rank, or perhaps they received readership on account of their willingness to embrace such persecution and martyrdom. Nonetheless, it is obvious that being a reader was no small or unimportant position.

### ***Justinian's Law***

Further evidence for the importance of subdeacons, readers, cantors, and porters is found in the *Novellae Constitutiones* of the emperor Justinian, enacted in the year 535. In his third novel, Justinian address Patriarch Epiphanius regarding the topic of the number of clergy in the "Principal Church" (Hagia Sophia) and the three neighboring churches of the Mother of God, Saint Theodore, and Saint Helen, saying that "persons who have founded churches in this Most Fortunate City have not only made provision for the construction of the buildings, but have also set apart sufficient sums to pay the expenses of a certain number of priests, deacons, deaconesses, sub-deacons, choristers,

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<sup>54</sup> Dix, 25.

readers and porters to be attached to each church.”<sup>55</sup> Justinian explains each of the three latter churches “does not possess its own priest, but they are common to all — that is, not only to the Principal Church but to the others, and all of them going from one to another conduct the services of each in turn.”<sup>56</sup> Thus, because “the bishops, beloved of God, and always attentive to the requests of certain persons, increased the number of ordinations [above that prescribed by the benefactors and founders of the churches], the expenses [to pay the clergy] likewise increased immensely,”<sup>57</sup> the emperor Justinian decrees that the number of clergy assigned to Hagia Sophia and the neighboring dependent churches be limited so that they may be paid without incurring a great debt. For this reason, Justinian orders that there shall not be any more ordinations until the number of clergy decreases to such that they may be paid without incurring debt, though because of the demand of the four churches this number is greater than originally prescribed. With this in mind, Justinian prescribes the following:

We order that not more than sixty priests, a hundred deacons, forty deaconesses, ninety subdeacons, a hundred and ten readers, or twenty-five choristers, shall be attached to the Most Holy Principal Church, so that the entire number of most reverend ecclesiastics belonging thereto shall not exceed four hundred and twenty in all, without including the hundred other members of the clergy who are called porters.<sup>58</sup>

Though this number of clergy is incredibly immense, Justinian writes that the current number of clergy is much larger. This seems to imply that the bishops in Constantinople and the “certain persons” to whom the bishops were attentive thought that it was necessary to have such a large number of clergy.

Yet what is most interesting here is not simply that there are many clergy, but the proportions of the different ranks of clergy. In Justinian’s list there are approximately

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<sup>55</sup> S. P. Scott, *The Civil Law*, XVI, (Cincinnati: 1932), [https://droitromain.univ-grenoble-alpes.fr/Anglica/N3\\_Scott.htm](https://droitromain.univ-grenoble-alpes.fr/Anglica/N3_Scott.htm), Novel III, preface.

<sup>56</sup> Novel III, ch 1.

<sup>57</sup> Novel III, preface.

<sup>58</sup> Novel III, chapter 1.1. Interestingly, the numbers provided add up not to 425, but 415. Cf. Latin text: <https://droitromain.univ-grenoble-alpes.fr/Corpus/Nov03.htm>. Since the topic of deaconesses and their place in the ecclesiastical hierarchy is a much larger topic than this work will allow, they will not be treated here, despite their being mentioned.

the same number of deacons and subdeacons, 100 and 90 respectively, both of which far outnumber the priests, of which there are 60. Justinian next prescribes there to be 110 readers, which is nearly twice that of the priests. Prescribed at 25, only the number of “choristers” or cantors is less than that of priests. Then “those that are called porters”<sup>59</sup> number at 100 persons. What can be assumed from Justinian’s list of clergy is that, in terms of the function of the major churches of sixth-century Constantinople, readers, porters, deacons, and subdeacons were the most-needed clergy for the daily functioning of the buildings and the cycle of services. Perhaps this is because the liturgical and non-liturgical responsibilities of deacons and subdeacons were to light lamps, prepare vessels and vestments for the Divine Liturgy and the offices, and serve within the sanctuary, whereas readers conducted their service outside the sanctuary, chanting and reading the Liturgy of the Hours, possibly even without a priest. Porters were, presumably, to lock and unlock the doors of the churches. All these services are necessary for the daily function of the temple and the daily cycle of liturgical services, whereas the service of priests is required only when the Holy Mysteries are administered. It is also very important to note that the Church at Constantinople deemed the service of the porters, readers, cantors, deaconesses, and subdeacons of such importance that they were to receive a salary for their service just as deacons and priests.

The very low number of cantors is of particular interest. Perhaps the service of cantors required to special training and musical ability, and thus they were to lead the singing at the kliros, rather than simply participate. With 25 cantors and 110 readers, one can imagine that a single kliros might have a highly-trained cantor leading four or five lesser-trained readers.

### **Witness of the Saints**

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<sup>59</sup> Novel III, chapter 1.1. “et insuper centum existentibus his qui vocantur ostiarii.” It is interesting to note here that the porters are listed among those that must be paid for their services in the church, but seemingly not listed among the clergy, at least in this sentence.

In a historical survey of the lower clergy and their place in the Church, the witness of minor clerics who glorified God by their saintly life and death cannot be overlooked. The *Liber Pontificalis*, which describes the life and death of the Popes of Rome, includes several minor clerics in the entry for Pope Xystus II, who was bishop of Rome from 257-258. It says:

Xystus, by nationality a Greek... was bishop in the time of Valerian and Decius when there was the great persecution. At that time he was seized by Valerian and taken to offer sacrifice to demons. But he despised the commands of Valerian. He was beheaded, and with him six others, all deacons... about August 6... And after the passion of the blessed Xystus, on the third day, Lawrence, his archdeacon, suffered also, August 10, likewise the subdeacon Claudius and Severus, the priest, and Crescentius, the reader, and Romanus, the doorkeeper.<sup>60</sup>

This description is valuable because it preserves the memory of the numerous subdeacons, of the reader Crescentius, and of the porter Romanus. The person who first reported and recorded the event, and later the author of the book, obviously thought their ministries in the Church important enough so as not to over look them. The *Roman Martyrology*, in its entry for the same day, provides the names of more minor clerics:

At Rome, on the Appian road, in the cemetery of Callistus, the birthday of blessed Xystus II., pope and martyr, who received the crown of martyrdom in the persecution of Valerian, by being put to the sword. Also, the holy martyrs Felicissimus and Agapitus, deacons of blessed Xystus; Januarius, Magnus, Vincent, and Stephen, subdeacons, all of whom were beheaded with him, and buried in the cemetery of Praetextatus.<sup>61</sup>

Again, the account describes the presence of multiple subdeacons among the martyred clergy, perhaps indicating that there were many of them at that time.

Throughout the *Roman Martyrology* there are many mentions of lower clerics. For the sake of brevity, only those about which something is written will be included here, since there are many about whom nothing is written except their rank among the lower clergy. On January 12<sup>th</sup> the Church commemorates Saint “Eutropius, lector, who suffered in the time of the emperor Arcadius.”<sup>62</sup> On April 4<sup>th</sup> the Church commemorates

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<sup>60</sup> *The Book of the Popes (Liber Pontificalis)*, Vol. I, trans. Louise Ropes Loomis, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1916), 30-31.

<sup>61</sup> *The Roman Martyrology*, (Baltimore: John Murphey Company, 1916), 234.

<sup>62</sup> *The Roman Martyrology*, 13.

Saint “Theodulus, a lector, who, for the confession of the Christian faith, [was] thrown into the sea with stones tied to [his] neck.”<sup>63</sup> On April 5<sup>th</sup> there is the particularly interesting entry which leaves the holy martyrs unnamed: “In Africa, the holy martyrs, who, in the persecution of the Arian king Genseric, were murdered in the church on Easter day. The lector, whilst singing Alleluia at the stand, was pierced through the throat with an arrow.”<sup>64</sup> The *Martyrology*’s entry for the 18<sup>th</sup> of May provides the account:

In Egypt, St. Dioscorus, a lector, who was subjected by the governor to many various torments, such as the tearing off of his nails and the burning of his sides with torches; but a light from heaven having prostrated the executioners, the saint finally consummated his martyrdom by having red-hot metal applied to his body.<sup>65</sup>

On June 6<sup>th</sup> the Church commemorates Saint Artimeus, who “became a believer through the preaching and miracles of St. Peter the Exorcist, who was baptized with all his house by the priest St. Marcellinus.”<sup>66</sup> July 13<sup>th</sup> holds the commemoration of martyrs in Africa. The *Martyrology* writes:

In Africa, the holy confessors Eugenius, the faithful and virtuous bishop of Carthage, and all the clergy of that church, to the number of about five hundred or more, among whom were many small children employed as lectors. In the persecution of the Vandals, under the Arian king Hunneric, they were subjected to scourging and starvation, and driven into a most painful banishment, which they bore with joy for God's sake.<sup>67</sup>

This is particularly interesting to note that there not only were small children who served as lectors, but *many* of them, and they are counted as clergy. On September 2<sup>nd</sup> there is mention of Saint Justus, “bishop and confessor” of Lyons, who “resigned his bishopric, and retired into a desert of Egypt with his lector Viator... His holy body, together with the relics of his blessed lector Viator, was afterwards taken to Lyons on this day.”<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> *The Roman Martyrology*, 96.

<sup>64</sup> *The Roman Martyrology*, 97. Also on April 5<sup>th</sup>, in the calendar of a Slavonic horologion, Sinai manuscript Sin.Slav.13, 157, there is the commemoration of “martyr Theodul, reader” (мкѡа. феодрѡла чтца). There is nothing more said about him, nor is any more information given.

<sup>65</sup> *The Roman Martyrology*, 144.

<sup>66</sup> *The Roman Martyrology*, 165.

<sup>67</sup> *The Roman Martyrology*, 205.

<sup>68</sup> *The Roman Martyrology*, 268.



December 12<sup>th</sup> provides another reference to Pope Xystus (though to which it is not clear) in the commemoration of the “holy martyr Synensius, who was ordained a lector in the time of the blessed pope Xystus.”<sup>69</sup> Saint Athanasius of Alexandria, in his *History of the Arians*, tells of the holy martyr subdeacon Eutychius. Describing his death, he writes:

Imitating the savage practices of Scythians, [the Arians] seized upon Eutychius a Subdeacon, a man who had served the Church honourably, and causing him to be scourged on the back with a leather whip, till he was at the point of death, they demanded that her should be sent away to the mines; and not simply to any mine, but to that of Phæno , where even a condemned murderer is hardly able to live a few days. And what was most unreasonable in their conduct, they would not permit him even a few hours to have his wounds dressed, but caused him to be sent off immediately... After a short interval, however, being unable to accomplish his journey to the mine on account of the pain of his stripes, he died on the way. He perished rejoicing, having obtained the glory of martyrdom.<sup>70</sup>

It is not clear whether or not these martyrs suffered death completely because of their positions of ministry in the Church, or perhaps were chosen for death more quickly. Nonetheless, those who have been ordained to these orders should remember in whose company they stand, the dignity of their office, and the precedent set before them.

Next and more significantly, there is the martyr Tarcisius, who, according to tradition, was a young boy who lived in Rome during the third-century persecution of Emperor Valerian, and died in the year 257.<sup>71</sup> Most of what is known about Saint Tarcisius is from the poem of Pope Damasus (366-384), who compares the martyr Tarcisius to the deacon-protomartyr Stephen. He writes:

You who read this, whoever you are, learn the equal merit of the two men to whom the rector Damasus gave titles after their deserving actions. The Jewish people had struck down with stones Stephen who was advising better things, he who had taken a trophy from the enemy, this faithful levite was the first one to take up martyrdom. When an insane gang pressed saintly

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<sup>69</sup> *The Roman Martyrology*, 381.

<sup>70</sup> *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Second Series*, Vol. 4, trans. M. Atkinson and Archibald Robertson, ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace, (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1892), accessed 15 Nov, 2019, <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/28157.htm>.

<sup>71</sup> Benedict XVI, General Audience, 4 Aug 2010, Rome, accessed 15-11-2019, [http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/audiences/2010/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_aud\\_20100804.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/audiences/2010/documents/hf_ben-xvi_aud_20100804.html).

Tarcisius, who was carrying the sacraments of Christ, to divulge them to the profane, he preferred to be killed and give up his life rather than betray to rabid dogs the heavenly body.<sup>72</sup>

Pope Damasus' comparison of Saint Tarcisius to the holy deacon Stephen may indicate that Tarcisius was a deacon. Despite this, the Roman Martyrology identifies Tarcisius as an acolyte:

At Rome, on the Appian way, St. Tharsicius, acolyte. The Pagans accosted him as he was carrying the sacrament of Christ's body, and began to inquire what it was. But he judged it an unworthy thing to cast pearls before swine. They therefore beat him with sticks and stones until he expired. The sacrilegious searchers examined his body, but found no vestige of the sacrament of Christ, either in his hands or in his clothes. The Christians took up the body of the martyr, and buried it reverently in the cemetery of Callistus.<sup>73</sup>

It is important to note that despite his youth, the child Tarcisius was given the great honor and responsibility of carrying the Eucharist to those Christians dying and in prison. This was done by means of the linen bag proper to the rank of acolyte in the ancient Roman Church, and this was given to acolytes at their ordination.<sup>74</sup> In the Roman Catholic Church, Saint Tarcisius is regarded as the patron of altar boys and first communicants. As his feast day coincides with the Dormition of the Theotokos on August 15<sup>th</sup>, Tarcisius is often overshadowed and forgotten. Yet he should be known to all, and serve as an example to clerics of all ranks to fulfill the service prescribed to them diligently and reverently before God and His Church, despising not even the lowest, seemingly most insignificant roles and responsibilities, so that when they stand before the dread judgement seat of Christ, they may hear Him say, "Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a little, I will set you over much; enter into the joy of your master" (Matthew 25: 21 *RSVCE*).

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<sup>72</sup> Translation from John Sanidopoulos, "Saint Tarcisius the Acolyte," on *Mystagogy*, Aug 15, 2012, accessed 15 Nov 2019, <https://www.johnsanidopoulos.com/2015/08/saint-tarcisius-acolyte.html>. Original: "Par meritum, quicumque legis, cognosce duorum, / quis Damasus rector titulos post praemia reddit. / Iudaicus populus Stephanum meliora monentem / perculerat saxis, tulerat qui ex hoste tropaeum, / martyrium primus rapuit leuita fidelis. / Tarsicium sanctum Christi sacramenta gerentem / cum male sana manus premeret uulgare profanis, / ipse animam potius uoluit dimittere caesus / prodere quam canibus rabidis caelestia membra." From *Anthologiae Latinae Supplement: Vol I Damasi Epigrammata*, ed. Maximilianvs Ihm, (Lipsiae: B.G. Tevbneri, 1895), 21.

<sup>73</sup> *The Roman Martyrology*, 244.

<sup>74</sup> Bradshaw, 101.

## Conclusion

It has been shown that the lower clerical offices have been present in the Church from the earliest of times. It is clear that these clerics were an integral part of the Christian hierarchy and played a major role in the Church's daily operations, each rank carrying out an important ministry for the service of the Church. Lindsay and Harnack describe that in the 3rd century Church in Rome, the Christian ranks of porter and acolyte were adopted from the corresponding roles found in civil pagan society. These clerics provided practical assistance, and were attached to the church building and to specific priests, respectively. Harnack and Lindsay also conclude that the ranks of readers and exorcists were non-hierarchical roles found in the earliest Christian societies, and were also formally incorporated into the hierarchical structure. They write that subdeacons were instituted for the assistance of the apostolically founded rank of deacon, and they share in the same ministry. This hierarchy of the early Roman Church passed to other regions and became universal, with some variations.

Throughout the centuries there have been many saints and martyrs who served the Church in the lower ranks of clergy, and it is evident that their clerical rank was regarded with importance from the fact that their ranks are recorded in the various calendars and books of saints. This serves for the edification of those who now serve as minor clergy, and calls them to serve ever more perfectly, since much will be given to those who are faithful with a little.

## CHAPTER 2 LITURGICAL ANALYSIS

Having examined the historical evidence, we can look to the prescriptions and descriptions regarding readers, cantors, candle-bearers, and subdeacons provided by the liturgical books, both in the texts of prayers and in the rubrics. By looking at the prayers of the Church, one may better understand how the Church herself understands the character of these clerical offices, and the rubrics help to understand their responsibilities. The main object of interest here will be the rites of ordination provided in the service book of the bishop, that is, the *archieratikon* or *euchologion*. In order to do this, it is important to examine not just the contemporary liturgical texts, but the texts from which the modern books have descended, as well as variant texts from other periods and regions. This also will help to understand what editions of the ordination rites and prayers are more genuine, and which contain innovations that may lead to misunderstandings and misconceptions of the lower clergy. These older texts also have interesting rubrical features and other additions which are worth examining.

The texts at hand which were studied and compared for this examination, and will herein be referenced are: the official 1988 Ukrainian-<sup>1</sup> and 1973 Slavonic-language<sup>2</sup> *archieratika* of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, and an unofficial English translation of these, published by the Eparchy of Parma, USA<sup>3</sup>; the 2005 Ukrainian-language *chynovnyk*<sup>4</sup> of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (Kyiv Patriarchate); the 1965 Pochaiv edition<sup>5</sup> of the bishop's *chynovnyk*, Slavonic; the 1906 *Service Book of the Holy*

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<sup>1</sup> *Архисретикон або Святительський Служебник*, Синод Української Католицької Церкви (Toronto: Basilian Press, 1988). Henceforth: OUT.

<sup>2</sup> *Архисратиконъ или служебникъ святиТЕЛЬСКИЙ* (Римъ: крѣптоферратскал обителъ, 1973). Henceforth: OSR.

<sup>3</sup> *The Holy Mysteries*, Paul P. Chomnycky, Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Stamford (Lviv: Svichado, 2012).

<sup>4</sup> *Чинovníк Архирейського священослужіння* (Київ: Видання Київської патріархії Української Православної Церкви Київського патріархату, 2005). Henceforth: KPU.

<sup>5</sup> *Чинovníк Архирейскаго Священнослуженія* (Свѣто-Троїцкій Монастыр: св Йов Почаевскій, 1965). Henceforth: RCP.

*Orthodox-Catholic Apostolic (Greco-Russian) Church* published for the Orthodox Churches in America<sup>6</sup>; the 1886 Lviv bishop's service book of Alexander Bachinsky<sup>7</sup>; the 1854 Slavonic Moscow synodal edition of the *chynovnyk*<sup>8</sup>; the 1740 Greek-Catholic Slavonic bishop's service book of the Univ monastery<sup>9</sup>; a 17<sup>th</sup> century Serbian Slavonic-language manuscript<sup>10</sup>; a 1632 handwritten service book of Ivan Boyarsky<sup>11</sup>; the 1638<sup>12</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> century<sup>13</sup> texts reprinted by the Edinovertsy Old Ritualist Orthodox; a Slavonic *chynovnyk* from the late 14<sup>th</sup> century<sup>14</sup>; and the 8<sup>th</sup> century Barberini codex.<sup>15</sup> Also at hand is Jacobbus Goar's *Euchologion*, which features numerous versions of each of the rites here examined.<sup>16</sup> The current books of the Ukrainian Catholic Church will be taken as normative modern practice, and variants that occur in other texts will be indicated as necessary. All these texts will be treated together according to the ordination rite discussed.

Before examining the texts, it must be understood that the modern books of the Slavic Churches only contain two distinct rites of ordination for lower clergy: there is

<sup>6</sup> *Service Book of the Holy Orthodox-Catholic Apostolic (Greco-Russian) Church*, by Isabel Florence Hapgood, (Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1906).

<sup>7</sup> *Службеник Євѣнгерскій*, Александр Пачинський (Львов: 1886). Henceforth: BSL.

<sup>8</sup> *Чинівник Архієрейського Євѣнгерства* (Москва: євѣнгерскій тїпографїи, 1854). Henceforth: RCM.

<sup>9</sup> *Службеник Євѣнгерскій*, (Євѣнгер Євѣнгерско, 1740). Henceforth: LSS.

<sup>10</sup> An unidentified *архієратикон* of the early 17<sup>th</sup> century once used by the Serbian Orthodox Church, now held in the archives of the Greek-Catholic Church in Presov, Slovakia. Henceforth: USP. For more on this manuscript see Міхал Глеваяк, "Невідомий сербський рукопис архієратикона XVII ст. Спроба презентації", in *Богословія* 71 (2010-2011), pp. 95-106.

<sup>11</sup> *Службеник и Требник Архієрейскій*, Іван Болярскій, 1632. Henceforth: BSU. This edition, kept in the manuscript collection of Saint Sophia Cathedral (ф. 312, № 60), is a hand-written copy of a printed edition. For more, see "Службеник і Требник Архієрейскій 1632 року: Кодикологічний Опис," <http://kyivpravosl.info/2015/05/29/sluzhebnyk-i-trebnuk-arhierejskyj-1632-roku-kodykolohichnyj-opys/>.

<sup>12</sup> *Большой Потребник*, (Москва: тїпографїи єдиновѣцевъ, 1888). Henceforth: EPM. The edition available here for comparison has only the ordination when the candidate is ordained directly to the subdiaconate. Thus, this edition will not be examined until the subdiaconal ordination is discussed.

<sup>13</sup> *Службеник Архієрейскій*, (Москва: тїпографїи єдиновѣцевъ, 1910). Henceforth: ESM. Published based on the 16<sup>th</sup> century text.

<sup>14</sup> Михайло Жетлов, *Чинівник архієпископов Новгородских: древнерусский Требник РНБ, Соф. 1056* (Сретенский монастырь: сретенская духовная семинария, 2017).

<sup>15</sup> *Евхологий Барберини ГР. 336* (Омск: Голованов, 2011). Henceforth: BAR.

<sup>16</sup> Jacobus Goar, *EUCHOLOGION sive Rituale Græcorum Complectens Ritus et Ordines* [...], Edition Secunda (Venetiis: Bartolomæi Javarina, 1730).

the ordination of a “candle-bearer, reader and cantor” (or sometimes simply of “reader and cantor”); and there is the ordination of a subdeacon. Modern Greek books contain prayers for the appointment of “any ecclesiastical ministry”, in addition to those for psalmist, reader, and subdeacon, but having no mention of candle-bearer.<sup>17</sup> Some older texts have separate ordination rites for reader and cantor, or at least indicate a rubrical difference, as do modern Greek texts.<sup>18</sup> Prayers for the ordination of a candle-bearer may also be found. The 17<sup>th</sup> century Serbian manuscript, the 1632 Boyarsky manuscript, and the 16<sup>th</sup> century Edinovertsy texts have separate rites of ordination of candle-bearer, reader and cantor, and subdeacon.

Though the Serbian text includes the rites for the blessing of a cleric, the ordination of a gate-keeper (porter), and the ordination of an exorcist, these will not be examined here. Modern Slavic books have absolutely no mention of these orders, and it seems their duties have transferred to the responsibility of the subdeacons and priests, respectively.<sup>19</sup> Bradshaw writes that reader and subdeacon “are the only [lower clergy] to appear consistently in the later rites of the east.”<sup>20</sup> In old Byzantine sources there is plenty of evidence for candle-bearers, and cantors are nearly always mentioned with readers. Thus, the scope of this liturgical examination will be limited to those found in modern Slavic books: candle-bearer, reader, cantor, and subdeacon.

### **Candle-bearer**

The ordination to candle-bearer is one of those that has been subsumed into the single “ordination of candle-bearer, reader and cantor,” and thus the order of candle-bearer no longer exists on its own in any practical way. Those who have received this ordination are most frequently referred to simply as readers or cantors, since they

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<sup>17</sup> *Ευχολόγιον το Μεγα*, (Βενετία: ἀστήρ, 1862), 185-186.

<sup>18</sup> *Ευχολόγιον*, 186.

<sup>19</sup> J. G. Ramsey, “The canons Regarding the Minor Clergy and their Implications for the Role and Life of these Clergy in the Orthodox Church Today” (Master’s thesis, The University of Wales, 2010), 66: “The functions of Exorcist have been largely been taken over by priests and canonically there is no need to reinstate them as a distinct order.”

<sup>20</sup> Bradshaw, 93.

receive all three ordinations simultaneously. To the greater detriment of the order of candle-bearer, many modern liturgical books do not even include “candle-bearer” in the title, naming only readers and cantors. Despite this, in Slavic books the ritual continues to include the prayer for the ordination of a candlebearer, and such is obvious from the rubrics. One example of this is seen in Hapgood’s edition under the heading “The Office for Setting Apart Readers and Chanters.” The rubrics prescribe that “He who is to be made a Taper-bearer is led by the Sub-Deacon into the centre of the Church.”<sup>21</sup> Yet for some reason, in many books, the title of the ritual does not include “candle-bearer.”

The ritual begins with the candidate being led to the center of the church where he makes three metanies, and then turns and makes three more to the bishop. Having approached the bishop, he bows his head, and the bishop signs him cross-wise on the head three times.

At this point (though in the UGCC and Moscow books this is done after the prayer of ordination to candle-bearer) according to the Boyarsky edition, the bishop intones “Blessed is our God,” and the usual beginning is recited until “Come, let us worship.” Then, according to the same, as well as the Serbian manuscript, Psalm 83 (84) is read. This psalm speaks of the joy of being and living in the temple of God: “How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord of Hosts! My soul longs, indeed, it faints for the courts of the Lord... Happy are those who live in Your house... I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than live in the tents of wickedness” (Psalm 84, *NRSVCE*). The person being ordained to bear a candle in Christ’s Church is doing so because he “longs for the courts of the Lord,” loves the Lord’s temple, and through his service will participate in the joy of the psalmist. For the candle-bearer, ministry in the Church is an honor and privilege, and not a chore.

Next the bishop lays his hand on the head of the candidate and prays the prayer of ordination. In some books this is preceded by the deacon intoning “Let us pray to the

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<sup>21</sup> Hapgood, 307.

Lord.” The prayer prescribed for the candle bearer in modern Slavic books, and not seen or referenced in modern Greek books, is as follows:

O Lord, Who enlighten all creation with the light of your wonders, Who know the deeds of men even before they came into being know beforehand everyone’s life-decisions, Who strengthen those who want to serve You, beautify your servant, *N.*, who has chosen to become a candle-bearer before your holy mysteries with spotless and most pure adornments, so that enlightened, he may meet You in the world to come and may receive the incorruptible crown of life, and with your elect may rejoice in everlasting bliss: *exclamation*: For You are holy and glorified is your most honorable and sublime name, Father...<sup>22</sup>

This English translation of the prayer for the candle-bearer states that the candidate has *chosen* to be candle-bearer, whereas Hapgood’s edition says, “who desireth to become a Taper-bearer.”<sup>23</sup> It is without a doubt to be understood that the candidate must be ready and willing, but perhaps this wording means that he has volunteered to serve as a candle bearer, rather than being appointed or called upon. The Slavonic translations, as well as the UGCC Ukrainian edition, word this more strongly and use a form of the word “to love,” saying that the candidate *longed* to serve before the Holy Mysteries.<sup>24</sup> This is a continuation of the theme of the 83<sup>rd</sup> psalm—it is a joy to serve in the temple of God, and is greatly desired. To be blessed by the Church as a candle-bearer, the candidate should *love* the Holy Mysteries, and *greatly desire* to serve in the Church. The ministry of the candle-bearer is not one of obligation, but is a service of love.

Secondly, the prayer states that God strengthens those who wish to serve Him and asks that He beautify the candidate and grant him eternal life. It is understood here that the service of the candle-bearer is not without heavenly reward. The prayer speaks of being adorned with “spotless and most pure” adornments. Perhaps this adornment is the grace of the office itself, or perhaps the graces to serve worthily and without defilement

<sup>22</sup> *The Holy Mysteries*, 45. Cf. OUT, 174; OSR, 224.

<sup>23</sup> Hapgood, 307.

<sup>24</sup> “Возлюбивша.” In contrast to the candidate’s “longing” to serve in the Lord’s temple, both RCP and RCM use the word *изволившаго*, (“whom You have allowed.”). Cf. RCP, 115; RCM, 58. This is perhaps an influence from the Greek prayer, as Goar’s Greek text speaks of the candidate being “chosen.” Cf. Goar, 198. KPU uses the language of the Russian books: “... Сам і раба твого, (ім’я), якому Ти зволив бути свічконосцем Твоїх таїнств...” (“your servant *N.*, to whom you have allowed to be a candle-bearer of Your Holy Mysteries.”). Cf. KPU, 243.



in the Holy Place. Whatever these adornments are, the Church prays that the candle-bearer be given these graces that he may be enlightened, and thus win eternal life. The Serbian, Edinovertsy, and Boyarsky texts all agree that at this point the candidate is “clothed in the prescribed vesture,”<sup>25</sup> but do not indicate what this is. If this is the candidate’s entry into the clerical state, this vesture would be at least a cassock. If this is not the first rank, as in the Serbian text in which there are two preceding ordinations, perhaps he is given a sticharion or phelonion, which may be a symbol of the “spotless and most pure adornments” asked for in the prayer of the bishop. Dmitrievsky writes that the newly-ordained candle-bearer is given the phelonion,<sup>26</sup> and he posits that the spotless garments spoken of in the prayer are the *kamision* and phelonion.<sup>27</sup> This is supported by the Edinovertsy text which, at the end of the ordination rite, prescribes that the candle-bearer “removes from himself the phelonion and stands before the bishop.”<sup>28</sup>

The modern rubrics prescribe that, following the ordination prayer and the corresponding “Amen,” the bishop gives the candidate a lighted candle. Since he is ordained to be a candle-bearer, the handing of the candle is only logical, and is reminiscent of the ordination to minor orders in the Roman Rite, traditionally held to be valid not by the prayers prayed, but by the handing on of the instruments of office. In the modern Ukrainian and Russian books nothing is said at this point and the ritual

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<sup>25</sup> USP, 19; ESM, 1.5; BSU, 268.

<sup>26</sup> Алексѣя Дмитриевскаго, *Богослужение въ Русской Церкви въ XVI вѣкъ*, часть I. (Казань: типографія Императорскаго Университета, 1884), 353.

<sup>27</sup> Dmitrievsky writes at length about the vestments of the lower clergy. According to him, it seems that lower clergy wore over the cassock a tunic-like vestment called a *kamision*, which was like a sticharion, but with wide sleeves, made of linen or silk fabric, and white or burgundy in color. This tunic was tied with a thick cord. This was the official liturgical vestment, without which lesser clerics could not carry out their service. On top of the *kamision*, especially at more formal celebrations, was worn a phelonion which went down to the waist or longer, and was especially light and easily thrown up on one shoulder for the free usage of one’s hands. This phelonion, similar to the Latin Gothic-style chausable, was worn by all clergy. At more formal celebration priests and bishop would wear much longer, heavier, more ornate “bell”-style phelonia. The sticharion is not worn until ordination to the subdiaconate. Subdeacons and deacons wore the short phelonion on top of the sticharion and orarion. By the time of St Simeon of Thessalonika these three vestments were conflated, and the sticharion was seen as the vestment proper to the reader. Dmitrievsky writes emphatically that the deacon’s sticharion is *not* the same vestment as the *kamision*, and that the tunic worn by the higher clergy should be different than that of the lower clergy, made of thin linen, wool, or even silk in colors corresponding to the liturgical season. In the Russian Church, readers and cantors began to wear deacon’s sticharia in the pre-Mongol period, and references to them wearing them first appeared in the *Archieretikon* of 1677. See *Ставленник*, 13-37.

<sup>28</sup> ESM, 3.

continues on to the opening prayers for the ordination of a reader. In the Serbian and Boyarsky manuscripts, the bishop, having given a candle in a candlestick, address the newly-ordained candle-bearer, saying “Receive this candle and walk with it before the most-pure life-creating Mysteries of Christ. May it be pleasing to you to be like a candle shining on a candlestick. May your light be glorified before the people, and when they see your good deeds, may they glorify God our Father in Heaven. To Him be all glory forever...”<sup>29</sup> This instruction from the bishop to the candle-bearer references his liturgical responsibilities to carry a candle before the Holy Mysteries. Though this may sound like a small and unimportant office, the bishop’s words indicate the great honor that he has. The bishop instructs that the candle-bearer has the responsibility of being an example before the people of God. He is to live an upright and righteous life, glorifying God in all he does and being an example of sanctity to the faithful. He is no longer a member of the laity, but visibly stands above them, like a lamp on a lampstand.

With no mention of a candle, the rubrics of the Edinovertsy edition prescribes that a litany be intoned directly after the ordination prayer. After the standard petitions, a petition for the new candle-bearer is inserted after that for the hierarchy: “For the servant of God N. who is now made to carry a candle before Your Holy Mysteries, that having so longed, he may be strengthened and adorned, and that he be saved, let us pray to the Lord.”<sup>30</sup> This litany’s exclamation is: “For holy and glorified is Your most honorable and magnificent name...” The Serbian and Boyarsky texts also prescribe a litany with this same petition (only with the difference of “before *His* Holy Mysteries”) for the new candle-bearer, which “the archdeacon exclaims in a low voice, but that those standing may hear. The bishop says the same in a whisper.”<sup>31</sup> The exclamation is “for You are our sanctification...” It is worth noting that these litanies for the candle-bearer in the old manuscripts are very similar to the litany at the ordination to subdiaconate found in

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<sup>29</sup> USP, 19; BSU, 269.

<sup>30</sup> ESM, 2.

<sup>31</sup> USP, 20; BSU, 269.

modern books. These litanies echo the prayer of ordination, asking for the candle-bearer to be strengthened and beautified in his service in the holy temple.

Following the litany, the Edinovertsy text prescribes simply that “And having prayed for him, he is dismissed. And he goes to the center of the church and gives the candle to the subdeacon. And he removes the phelonion from himself, and bowing, he stands in front of the bishop.”<sup>32</sup> It is important to note that he hands off a candle, even though the rubrics do not indicate when he receives it. Perhaps the rubrics’ earlier direction that he be given the prescribed vesture of his office refers to both phelonion and candle.

The Serbian and Boyarsky texts have something quite different from other sources. Immediately following the litany, the rubrics of these books prescribe that the bishop says this prayer:

“Christ God, our True Light, Who enlightens and sanctifies everyone who comes into the world, Yourself do now enlighten and sanctify your servant *N.* who walks in Your service, and mark on him the light of Your face, grant him to see the light of Your unapproachable glory, and that his feet may go in the way of Your commandants, through the prayers of Your most-pure Mother and of all the saints. Amen.”<sup>33</sup>

This prayer is a supplement to the prayers and instruction above—it asks God for that which is necessary so that the candle-bearer may truly shine with holiness. It asks that he may follow God’s law, and sanctity and salvation be granted eternal life, where he will see the light of God’s unapproachable glory. It is very clear that the office of candle-bearer is a vocation to holiness above that of every Christian, but one of leadership and example. Unlike the Edinovertsy text, these two manuscripts do not have further rubrics or any indication of a dismissal.

Though modern Greek books make no mention of candle-bearer, there is plenty of evidence for their existence in the Greek world under the name of deputatos. Michal Arranz, SJ writes that the patriarch of Constantinople was ordained as deputatos and

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<sup>32</sup> ESM, 3.

<sup>33</sup> USP, 21; BSU, 270.

would carry a candle in the Great Entrance serving as a “deputatos, or representative of the people.”<sup>34</sup> Saint Simeon of Thessalonika writes that, though it can be found referenced in old usages, the deputatos was no longer in use at the time of his writing.<sup>35</sup> Jacobbus Goar includes in his *Euchologion* the prayer for the ordination of a deputatos or *ceroferar*, which is the same prayer as included in modern books.<sup>36</sup> He does not, however, include any other parts of the ritual or other prayers. In his commentary and analysis of the various ordination rites and their history and development, Alexie Dmitrievsky describes the role of the deputatos in Constantinople:

The “prayer for the appointment of deputatos and candle-bearer” in old liturgical sources was a part of a separate and independent rite for the appointment of a special government position near the patriarch, known as deputatos. The obligations of the deputatos were such that, during liturgical services and the church and especially outside of it, during the many litanies and cross-processions, he went in front of the patriarch and cleared a path for him and the entire procession. With the same goal, during the celebration of the Liturgy when at the time of the little entrance they brought out the Gospel, and at the Great Entrance the Holy Gifts, the deputatos went in front, having in his hand a candle. These obligations of the candidate are directly shown in the words of the prayer in the modern rite “Your servant, ... who has longed bear a candle before Your Holy Mysteries.”<sup>37</sup>

Dmitrievsky goes on to say that the rubric from the end of the ordination of a reader and cantor prescribing that the candidate should be given a lamp and stand before the bishop in the appointed place be moved to directly after the prayer of ordination to candle-bearer, as it would be “a logical fulfillment of the prayer, and would demonstrate to all those present what exactly are the obligations of the newly-ordained.”<sup>38</sup> That is, the newly-ordained candle-bearer would be given a lamp or candlestick, and stand with it before the iconostasis, and go in the front of the processions as prescribed for the main candle at hierarchical liturgies. Saint Simeon of Thessalonika also describes the duties of a candle bearer, saying:

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<sup>34</sup> Михаил Арранц SJ, *Избранные Сочинения по Литургике*, Том 1, “Таинства Византийского Евхология” (Рим, Москва: Институт философии, теологии и истории св. Фомы, 2003), 538.

<sup>35</sup> *Премудрость Нашего Спасения*, Святитель Симеон, Архиепископ Солунский, (Москва: Благовест, 2010), 232.

<sup>36</sup> Goar, 198.

<sup>37</sup> *Ставленникъ*, А. Дмитрієвскій, (Кієвъ: Тип. Императорскаго Университета св. Владиміра, 1904), 19. English translation mine, from the unpublished Ukrainian translation of Eduard Berdnyk.

<sup>38</sup> *Ставленникъ*, 22-23.

He, as a minister of the altar, enters the altar, lights candles and brings the flame to the priest, bears the light before the Holy Gifts, gives the priests prosfora, water, and the warm water, decorates the church and serves in everything... In short, he is a minister of divine action in the temple, and he must do everything with reverence, and know Whom he is serving, that is, that he serves God together with those close to Him, that is, that saints, and that he enters where the angles abide.<sup>39</sup>

Having examined the rite and prayers of ordination of a candle-bearer of both the modern official books and of old manuscripts, it is evident that the office of candle-bearer is highly regarded by the historical Church. He is a person who loves the Lord and His temple, and longs to serve there and abide in it. His service in the Lord's house is for him a great joy and a privilege, and he rejoices in it. He is to be an example of holiness before the faithful, shining like the candle that he bears. Lastly, he is to walk before the Holy Mysteries, meaning that he is an assistant at the celebration of the Eucharist, clearing a path for the Holy Things and leading the celebrating clergy. Through and for his service he receives spotless and pure adornments, enlightenment and sanctification. He receives the instrument of his office - the candle and candlestick – as well as the vesture of his office, a phelonion. In short, the candle-bearer is not to be overlooked or forgotten, for he has an office of great dignity.

### **Reader and Cantor**

In all modern books and most ancient, the orders of reader and cantor share a common ordination rite. That is, they are ordained via the same prayer, and there is little if no distinction made between the two, almost as if “reader” and “cantor” are just two names for the same thing. Though it is not without some complication, a close examination of the ritual will reveal that they are indeed separate and distinct despite the common prayer. It is thus appropriate to address the questions of whether or not cantor

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<sup>39</sup> *Премудрость Нашего Спасения*, 236-237. Translation mine. Here Saint Simeon's commentary is obviously of the combined ordination of candle-bearer, reader, and cantor, and thus he refers only to the duties of “reader and cantor.” However, it is plain that, if these three ranks of clerics are to be separated, the duties cited here are proper to the candle-bearer, and not to either the reader or cantor. One might say that the responsibilities here described belong to the subdeacon, and this could be, as there is some overlap between them.

and reader are distinct and/or different, and if so, in what way, as well as establishing each of their liturgical responsibilities, and what is shared or similar between them.

The first thing to address in order to resolve these questions is to address the terms “reader” and “cantor.” The names English terms “reader” and “cantor” as have been used here present some confusion, as it seems to most that the reader sings the readings, and the cantor is often said to “read” the psalms. However, the Greek and Slavonic terms provide more insight into their particular roles. In Greek, the reader is “*anagnostis*” (ἀναγνώστης), and in Slavonic “*chtets*” (чтец), both from the verb “to read.” In Greek the name for the cantor comes from the word “psalm” – “*psaltes*” (ψάλτης). Though in Slavonic the usual name for the cantor is “*pivets*,” (пѣвец, “singer”) and does not remove any ambiguity, there is also the word “*psalomshchyk*” (псаломщик), which is the direct translation of the Greek *psaltes*. This translation of *psaltes* to *pivets*, as Arranz points out, results in the loss of the cantor’s relationship to the Psalter.<sup>40</sup> Translating *psaltes* as *psalomshchyk* retains this connection between the cantor and the book of the psalms and his role in the liturgy. An equivalent solution for the English-language world, would be to use the word “psalmist” instead of cantor. It is thus apparent that the service of the “cantor” is intrinsically involved with the proclamation of the Psalms, while the reader serves by reading lessons from the Old and New Testaments. This knowledge will be instrumental in understanding the ordination rite.

Since, according to modern rubrics, it is one combined service, the ordination to reader and cantor occurs immediately after the prayer of ordination to candle-bearer (which in modern books is prayed without “Blessed is our God” or any opening prayers). While the candle-bearer is holding the lighted candle given to him by the bishop, the deacons says “Master, bless,” and the bishop intones “Blessed is our God...,” and the candle-bearer prays the usual beginning, ending with the Our Father,

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<sup>40</sup> Арранц, 538. Translation mine.

“For the kingdom...” and “Amen.” According to the Bachinsky and Univ editions, between the deacon’s “Master, bless” and “Blessed is our God,” the bishop blesses three times as he declares “May the Lord bless you to be a reader of the holy church *N.* in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.”<sup>41</sup> This is very similar to the declaration at the end of the ordination “Behold, the servant of God *N.* is ordained a reader...”<sup>42</sup>

The Bishop then intones “Blessed is our God.” At this point both the Serbian and Boyarsky texts prescribe psalmody (Boyarsky specifies that the reader reads the psalms). In the Byzantine rite it is instinctual to begin a service with the Trisagion prayers and a psalm. In the case of these ordinations the psalms are very carefully chosen, and reveal more of the nature of the office given in the ordination rite. Here, both manuscripts prescribe Psalm 46, which is a psalm of praise and rejoicing. It is only natural that at the ordination of a cantor and reader the prescribed psalm is one that speaks of praising God with songs of joy. If one is to assert that cantor and reader are, in fact, distinct, then about which of them does this psalm speak? The Boyarsky edition gives some insight to this, as it provides a second psalm: Psalm 48, which will be presented before the first is examined. From this second psalm is taken the prokeimenon that the candidate intones when he reads from the Epistle later in the ordination. Though it is true that the prokeimenon and the reading of psalms is proper to the cantor, rather than the reader, this second psalm refers to the reader, while the first to the cantor. Each will be examined here in turn.

For the ordination of a cantor, Psalm 46 speaks of singing and praising God with songs of joy:

Clap your hands, all you peoples; shout to God with loud songs of joy. For the LORD, the Most High, is awesome, a great king over all the earth. He subdued peoples under us, and nations under our feet... God has gone up with a shout, the LORD with the sound of a trumpet. Sing praises to God, sing praises; sing praises to our King, sing praises. For God is the king of all the

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<sup>41</sup> BSL, 35; LSS, 50.

<sup>42</sup> BSL, 39; LSS, 56.

earth; sing praises with a psalm. God is king over the nations; God sits on his holy throne.  
(Psalm 47 *NRSVCE*)

It does not take much thought to understand why this psalm is associated with the cantor-psalmist. However, according to the principle of *lex orandi – lex credenda* the recitation of a psalm is much more than a mere mental association—the psalm tells us about the character of the office and role of the cantor. First, it is obvious that the cantor is to sing, and his singing is done in great joy. The psalm tells us that the psalmist is joyful because our God is king, He reigns, and he has conquered our enemies. For this reason, the psalmist rejoices greatly and praises God with song and hymnody. What does this mean for the candidate for ordination? The ordained cantor must be a man of deep faith who is thoroughly convinced that our God reigns and has conquered our enemies. His motivation for serving in the Church must be that he is filled with the joy of Christ’s Good News and is filled with the desire to continually sing and praise God for his wonderful deeds. The cantor sings with love, carefully and intelligently, not out of habit or obligation. Standing amidst and in front of the congregation, the ordained cantor is, like the candle-bearer, a witness of faith and love, and he is a living example of how to conduct oneself before the throne where God sits in His holy temple the Church.

Psalm 48 is very different, and tells us about the role of the reader:

Hear this, all you peoples; give ear, all inhabitants of the world... My mouth shall speak wisdom; the meditation of my heart shall be understanding. I will incline my ear to a proverb; I will solve my riddle to the music of the harp Why should I fear in times of trouble, when the iniquity of my persecutors surrounds me, those who trust in their wealth and boast of the abundance of their riches? Such is the fate of the foolhardy, the end of those who are pleased with their lot... Like sheep they are appointed for Sheol; Death shall be their shepherd... Mortals cannot abide in their pomp; they are like the animals that perish. (Psalm 49 *NRSVCE*)

The second verse of the psalm, which is used as the prokeimenon which the reader intones later in the ordination, tells us that the reader speaks wisdom and meditates on understanding. Even more significant is the first verse of the psalm, used as the verse of the prokeimenon: “Hear this, all you peoples; give ear, all inhabitants of the world”



(Psalm 49:1 *NRSVCE*).<sup>43</sup> This places the reader in a position of authority in the midst of the ecclesial assembly. Though he does not speak his own words, he speaks wisdom and understanding to which the congregation should be attentive. Indeed, the reader proclaims the words of Holy Scripture! Though the cantor also proclaims the words of Scripture in his song, the reader does it not the manner of praise and rejoicing directed to God as does the cantor, but as instruction and even rebuke directed towards the congregation. The other verses of the psalm provide examples of two paths from which the listeners may choose for themselves. The first example is that of the righteous man who listens to the word of God, trusts in Him, and does not fear. The second is the foolhardy man who does not listen and goes to Sheol when he dies. The ordained reader is clearly called to exemplify this first path with his own life. The ordained reader studies and listens to the Word of God in the Holy Scriptures, meditates on it to understand, and he proclaims it for the benefit and edification of all who listen. He is attentive and listens, and then teaches others, not with his own words, but with those given to him. Thus, at the ordination of a reader, the psalm proclaims “my mouth will speak wisdom. Listen to me!”<sup>44</sup>

In the texts, there is a wide variance in what happens once the candle-bearer has prayed the usual beginning (and read the psalms). Despite the disagreement in the order of what is done, the contents of the ordination prayers are largely the same in the different editions and manuscripts, and thus there is no point to go on at length precisely explaining at what point each book has which prayer. Rather all these items will be treated in the order found in the current books.

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<sup>43</sup> Some translations, like that in *Holy Mysteries*, provide this first word as the imperative, “listen!” Cf. *Holy Mysteries*, 48.

<sup>44</sup> It would be negligent to not state here that some books of those that have the roles of reader and cantor clearly distinguished, assign the prokeimenon to the reader, and not to the cantor. (This is most likely due to the fact that Epistle and Old Testament readings are usually, if not always, preceded by a prokeimenon. Also, at the Divine Liturgy, both the prokeimenon and assigned reading change depending on the day’s propers.) Despite this, the rubrics of these books prescribe that the cantor chant a psalm that is *not* the prokeimenon. Cf. ESM, 5.

The official modern books instruct that at this point the candle-bearer, holding the lighted candle previously given to him, reads five troparia: to the apostles, to the holy hierarchs, and to the Theotokos. The modern Orthodox books prescribe that these troparia are read if the Divine Liturgy is not to be served, but without the usual beginning before them. If there is to be Divine Liturgy, then there is “Blessed is our God,” the usual beginning, and the troparia of the day. If these troparia are to be chanted by the candidate as prescribed in many books, including those of the UGCC, then they may be seen to serve as a demonstration of his competence before his bishop and the assembled faithful. Hopefully the soon-to-be cantor proves that he can sing tunefully, according to the designated melody, in a way that others understand the words of the text.

The candidate then approaches the bishop, who tonsures him, saying “The hair of the head of the servant of God, *N.* is being cut in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.”<sup>45</sup>

If tonsure is understood to be the making of a cleric, the question arises as to whether or not candle-bearers are clerics, and if they have the right to wear the cassock or vestments. In the books it is obvious that they wear such things, but perhaps this varies from place to place. Arranz writes: “In ancient BAR the rite of tonsures not found. Tonsure probably took place with no special prayers or ceremonies. It is known that at that time all clerics and monks of East and West wore a special “tonsura.”<sup>46</sup> Goar includes in his section for the ordination of readers and cantors two very interesting prayers for clerical tonsure, which references Melchizedek being tonsured by Abraham as told in the *Palaea Historica*.<sup>47</sup> According to Goar’s first version of the ritual, once the

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<sup>45</sup> *Holy Mysteries*, 47. There is the seemingly Russian variant of: “In the name of the Father – Amen. – and the Son – Amen. – and the Holy Spirit. – Amen.” See: RCM, 116; RCP, 116; and KPU, 245.

<sup>46</sup> BAR= Barberini. Арранц, 537. Translation mine.

<sup>47</sup> Dmitrievsky references this page from Goar as containing a prayer for the ordination of a reader which is from a 1386 manuscript in the library of the Dionysiou Monastery on Athos. See: Алексѣй Дмитриевскій, *Описание Литургическихъ Рукописей*, Томъ II, (Кіевъ: Типо Императорскаго Университета Св. Владимира, 1901), 271.

candidate has been tonsured and the cantor has sung a psalm, the bishop prays this prayer:

Master [and] Lord, Jesus Christ, we ask Thee and beg Thee, look down upon us and upon Thy servant here present; and by Thy spiritual blessing, whereby Thou blessed [Thy] priest Melchisedech, shorn of his locks by Thy servant Abraham according to Thy precept, bless this [man, too]; and grant [him] to guard Thy commands, obeying you in reverence and fear, [and] in holiness and justice; make his ministry perfect in every ordinance of the Church; so that he may continue to please you well all the days of his life. By [Thy] grace and mercies, etc.<sup>48</sup>

The candidate is then blessed and dismissed.

The second prayer that Goar provides is specifically for the office the ordination of a lector, and is also included in the 1749 Univ and the 1886 Bachinsky service books. According to Goar, the ritual is as follows: The candidate is brought before the bishop, who exclaims “May the Lord bless you unto the [rank of] Lector of the holy church *N.* in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit: now and always.”<sup>49</sup> He is then tonsured cross-wise in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and then shorn completely “in the fashion of a cleric by someone [else],” and presented again to the bishop.<sup>50</sup> The bishop places his omophorion on the reader’s head and prays this prayer:

Blessed art Thou, Lord of our fathers, who sent our father Abraham to shave the hair of Thy priest Melchisedech; who were present at the blessing and tonsure of Thy apostles, and granted to them blameless faith in every work; grant that Thy servant, in accord with the tonsure of the just, keep an account of justice in his mind and respectable life; so that, having lived according to Thy precepts, he may be held worthy of a place at Thy right hand; and grant that he who has taken up the shorn hair in his hands (the minister of the tonsure) may obtain the blessing of the just Simeon who raised Thee in [his] arms; and impart [Thy] spiritual blessing to those who have gathered here. *Aloud:* For Thou blessest and sanctifiest everything, Christ our God, and we give glory to Thee.<sup>51</sup>

The ritual then continues on as in other books with a blessing, and the prayer, “O Lord God Almighty.” These prayers are notable because the tonsure is associated not with a

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<sup>48</sup> Goar, 196. Translation by Brian Krostenko. Since it is ambiguous from the text of the prayer, and both prayers are preceded by tonsure, it is not clear if one is for reader, and the other for cantor, or if these are equivalent prayers. Goar specifies that the second prayer is for a reader.

<sup>49</sup> LSS, 50; BSL, 35.

<sup>50</sup> Dmitrievsky also writes that the reader/cantor would receive a small tonsure from the bishop, and then a great tonsure from one of the clerics present. Cf., *Богослужение в Русской Церкви в XVI вѣкѣ*, 355.

<sup>51</sup> Goar, 196. Translation by Brian Krostenko.

particular office, that is with either the reader or with the cantor, but simply with Abraham, Christ, and His disciples.

The bishop then vests him in the phelonion and signs his head in the sign of the cross three times. Simeon of Thessalonika writes that the phelonion is the “beginning of the priestly vestments”, and that he has “entered under the yoke of the priesthood, abides under the shelter of God, and is consecrated for the service of God.”<sup>52</sup> Next, the bishop places his hand on the candle-bearer’s head and says the following prayer: “O Lord God Almighty, receive Your servant, *N.* and sanctify him; enable him with all wisdom and understanding to read and to study Your divine words, preserving his life spotless. *Exclamation:* Through the mercy and bounties, and loving kindness...”<sup>53</sup> It is important to keep in mind that this prayer is prescribed for the ordination of both readers and cantors. The prayer asks that the new cantor or lector be sanctified and enabled, and that his reading be done with wisdom and understanding. Commenting on this, Arranz writes:

The psalter is just as much a part of Holy Scripture as the Prophetologion or Apostolos. One who reads from the Psalter, just as from any other sacred book, requires spiritual qualities that art and nature alone cannot provide. Reading, and especially sung reading, is a spiritual activity which requires God’s assistance so that the reading and song may become a fruitful deed in the Church.

The content of the prayers refers specifically to the reading of the Word of God with wisdom and understanding. Of no other cleric, not even of the bishop, is such a qualification as the deep understanding of the Bible asked. According to some version of the *Apostolic Tradition* “Hippolytus of Rome,” at the time of ordination a reader was entrusted with the very book of the Gospels. It might be suggested that the role of the reader was in antiquity more responsible than now, something like a “didascalia” or catechist.<sup>54</sup>

Thus, the man ordained to reader or cantor is to be a man of Biblical learning who reads with wisdom and understanding. He is sanctified for this purpose, and, as Arranz says, “in this prayer a heavenly reward is not directly spoken about, but only a good life:

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<sup>52</sup> *Премудрость Нашево Спасения*, 235, 236. Translation mine.

<sup>53</sup> *Holy Mysteries*, 47.

<sup>54</sup> Arranz, 538. Translation mine.

preserve him in a spotless life.”<sup>55</sup> It naturally follows, that a heavenly reward will follow from a spotless and holy life.

After this prayer, the bishop gives a book to the candidate. The official books prescribe that he be given the book of the Epistles, from which he intones the prokeimenon, reads the pericope for the Sunday of the Myrrbearing Women (Acts 6:1-7). This periscope speaks of the selection of the seven deacons, so that the ministry of the apostles would not be hindered by having to wait tables in service to the widows. However, in many books the rubrics indicate that the candidate reads a little of whichever pericope to which the bishop opens the Epistle book, and according to Dmitrievsky, the bishop, whenever he wishes, interrupts the reader by announcing “Peace to you.”<sup>56</sup> This is also indicated in Barberini. Hapgood gives the following rubric:

And after the Prayer, the Bishop openeth the book of the Epistles upon the head of the Reader. And the Sub-Deacons lead him from the Bishop, and place him in the middle of the Church, with his face to the east; and the book of the Epistles is given to him, and he readeth, a little, wheresoever it may chance to befall.<sup>57</sup>

This could be done as a sort of test to see how capably the candidate may carry out the reading of a periscope which he has not prepared ahead of time. This would be an especially relevant practice in places where the readings are carried out in a liturgical or other language. If the reader is incapable of reading, he should not read.

Though the modern Slavic books do not indicate a difference in the ritual between reader and cantor, modern and ancient Greek books, as well as a late 1300’s Slavonic text,<sup>58</sup> include the critical rubric that if he is to be a reader, he is given the Epistles, and if a cantor, then the Psalter.<sup>59</sup> Some, such as the 1300’s text, specify that the prokeimenon is read by the cantor from the Psalter. The Edinoversty edition does not

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<sup>55</sup> Арранц, 538. Translation mine.

<sup>56</sup> *Богослужение въ Русской Церкви въ XVI вѣкъ*, 355.

<sup>57</sup> Hapgood, 309. It is interesting that in Hapgood’s text there is no mention of the prokeimenon or alleluia.

<sup>58</sup> Жетлов, 59.

<sup>59</sup> Cf. *Ευχολόγιον*, 186; Арранц, 536; *Барберини ГР.336*, section 166.

have that rubric, but does have the reception of two separate books, as does the Serbian manuscript. According to the Serbian manuscript, the bishop hands to the candidate the Psalter, saying “Receive this book of psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs: know for yourself, that from this time will have the power with all attention and the fear of God to read and sing them in this church. In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.”<sup>60</sup> The candidate then intones the prokeimenon and the corresponding verse. In the Edinovertsy edition the prokeimenon and alleluia are intoned by the reader from the book of the epistles before and after he reads from it, respectively, in the same way that the official UGCC books prescribe. However, the same Edinovertsy edition, and Dmitrievsk’s description both prescribe that “when he is made a cantor” the bishop gives him the Psalter, from which the cantor reads a little: “Blessed is the man, alleluia...”<sup>61</sup> The Serbian text prescribes that after the prokeimenon, the bishop blesses and hands the book of the epistles to the candidate, saying:

Receive this book of the holy epistles and divine readings of the Old Testament and other of church readings, and know that from this time you have the power to proclaim with all understanding and wisdom, adding nothing and taking away nothing, and to read the word of God with fear for the understanding and fruitfulness of all who listen. In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.<sup>62</sup>

Whereas the cantor is told simply to read and sing with attention and the fear of God, the reader is told something much more frightening. This instruction from the bishop to neither add nor take away from the reading is a direct reference to the book of Revelation, warning him of the consequences of negligent reading:

I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to that person the plagues described in this book; if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away that person’s share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book. (Revelation 22:18-19 *NRSVCE*)

To read in the church is a service of great and dreadful responsibility! Through attentive and diligent reading, great fruit may be sown in the hearts and souls of the faithful. Yet

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<sup>60</sup> USP, 25.

<sup>61</sup> *Богослужение в Русской Церкви в XVI вѣкѣ*, 355.

<sup>62</sup> USP, 25.

the reader who reads lazily, negligently, or without the fear of God deprives the faithful of this spiritual instruction and nourishment, perhaps resulting in the loss of eternal life. As Arranz says, “It is very sad that in our day the [duty of] reading the Epistle is entrusted to the first available cleric, who, more often than not, himself does not understand the text.”<sup>63</sup> The reader must read with the fear of God!

After the prayer, the attending subdeacons remove the phelonion from the candidate, and present him to the bishop. The bishop again signs his head with the cross three times, and blesses the sticharion and places it on the reader. The Univ and Bachinsky texts prescribe that upon giving the sticharion to the candidate, the bishop declares, “your priests shall clothe themselves in righteousness and your saints shall rejoice with joy.”<sup>64</sup> This verse from Psalm 131 is the verse prayed by priest every time he vests in the phelonion. This is, perhaps, a remnant of the reader and cantor wearing the short phelonion, rather than the sticharion.

After the sticharion, the same texts instruct that the bishop give the candidate a belt, saying “Gird your thigh with the power of truth for the fulfillment of the Lord's commandments, for the attentive service to his saints.”<sup>65</sup> This is at least partially a reference to Psalm 44 (45), which is a psalm for a wedding, and speaks of dressing in rich vestments and abiding in the reign of the King. Writing specifically about the belt and tunic worn by the lower clergy, Dmitrievsky writes:

To wear a belt with the *kamision* or sticharion was required not just by etiquette, but by the very type of activity of the priest as a minister of the Mysteries, for which freedom of the hands is required no less for the lower clerics and subdeacons, which obtained the “sticharion-belt” at ordination, and sometimes even with the words “the servant of God *N.* is girded with his belt for the readiness of the Gospel, in the name of the Father.” It is now understood why in the rite of priestly ordination nothing is said about the belt, and upon girding with it *axios* is not proclaimed as is usually done in such an instance: the priest's sticharion, just like the *kamision* and belt, transfers to the priest automatically, since before that he was a lesser cleric.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> Арранц, 538. Translation mine.

<sup>64</sup> LSS, 55; BSL, 38.

<sup>65</sup> This is not the prayer a priest prays when he vesting in the *zone*.

<sup>66</sup> *Ставленникъ*, 324. Translation mine via that of Eduard Berdnyk.

Perhaps this rubric for the vesting in the belt and sticharion is a remnant from the ancient practice that lower clerics vested in the *kamision* and phelonion, the first of which was tied up with a cord or belt, as discussed at length in Dmitrievsky’s work.<sup>67</sup>

In the Univ and Bachinsky editions, the ordaining bishop commands the candidate to recite the “orthodox” or “catholic” faith, respectively. The reader then recites “I believe in one God...”, and then kneels.<sup>68</sup>

Once he has been vested, the bishop instructs the candidate:

Son, the order of reader is the first step of the Holy Orders. Therefore, it behooves you to read the holy Scriptures and to strive daily after virtue, so that those who observe and listen to you may be inspired to do likewise. Never allow any blemish disgrace the order which you have received, while you are preparing to receive a higher order. Living peacefully in righteousness and holiness, you shall find favor with God, and thus attain to a higher service. Through Christ Jesus, our Lord, to Whom is due all glory, honor and worship, together with His eternal Father and His all-holy, gracious, and life-giving Spirit, now and ever and forever. Amen.<sup>69</sup>

This instruction of the bishop echoes themes mentioned earlier: that he be holy and virtuous; that he be an example to others. However, unique to this text is the reference to “preparing to receive a higher order.” It is possible that this instruction is a product of the mentality that that lower clergy are simply steps in preparation for the presbyterate, and of no real significance in and of themselves.

This address of the bishop also raises the question concerning the nature of candle-bearer: if reader is the first step of the priesthood, is candle-bearer not a part of the hierarchy? Arranz states that in one manuscript “the order of blessing a candle-bearer is called “prochirisis”, and it is said that candle-bearer was not considered a cleric, was not tonsured, and did not wear real clerical clothes.”<sup>70</sup> However, Dmitrievsky

<sup>67</sup> See *Ставленникъ*, 13-37.

<sup>68</sup> LSS, 55; BSL, 38, 39.

<sup>69</sup> *Holy Mysteries*, 49. Instead of “Holy Orders” the Slavonic text has *іерейства*, (priesthood). Though unique and of great interest, the origin of this prayer is seemingly undetermined. It has a resemblance in form to the instructions given to ordinandi in ordination of the Latin Rite. Goar includes this episcopal instruction (p. 197), and Dmitrievsky specifically indicates that it is found in a 14<sup>th</sup> century text of the patriarchal library of Alexandria. Dmitrievsky also references the page in Goar, and indicates a correlation to an *Euchologion* of the Athos Dionysiou Monastery. See: *Описание Литургическихъ Рукописей*, 638, 344.

<sup>70</sup> Арранц, 540.



is quite emphatic that the candle-bearer, like all minor clergy, wore a phelonion and *kamision*.

In the modern Slavic books, immediately following the bishop's instruction to the reader, the bishop exclaims "Blessed be God. Behold, the servant of God, *N.*, is ordained to the order of reader for the holy church of *N.*, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. Αξιος!"<sup>71</sup> This proclamation asserts that the candidate is ordained for "the church of *N.*", indicating that he is to serve in a particular community in a stable fashion. Dmitrievsky writes that this final part of the ordination "attaches the candidate to a particular corresponding church, and reminds him of his duty to remain a faithful minister and guardian of the order and good estate in that church until the end of his days."<sup>72</sup> This instruction is also unique insofar as none of the other ordinations have the proclamation "*axios!*", not even that for subdeacon.

The Books of the UGCC do not have anything more after "*axios!*" The modern Russian books, as well as Hapgood and the Ukrainian Orthodox *chynovnyk*, instruct that the bishop gives the newly-ordained a lamp, and he stands before the bishop in the appointed place. As earlier mentioned, according to Dmitrievsky, this seems most appropriate after the prayer of ordination to candle-bearer, as the instrument of his office is the candle or lamp. The reader and cantor each receive their instrument: the Epistle book and Psalter, respectively.

The Serbian, Boyarsky, and Edinovertsy texts prescribe a litany be intoned, having within it a special intention for the newly-ordained: "For the servant of God *N.* now made reader and cantor. That Our Lord God sanctify him and enable him with all wisdom and understanding to study and read the Divine Words, and preserve him in

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<sup>71</sup> *Holy Mysteries*, 49.

<sup>72</sup> *Ставленникъ*, 35. Translation mine via that of Eduard Verdnyk. "Good estate"- благообразія.

spotless life, let us pray to the Lord.”<sup>73</sup> Dmitrievsky writes that the litany for the newly ordained *psalmochyk* is the Litany of Fervent Supplication.<sup>74</sup>

From these liturgical texts it is evident that the offices of reader and cantor are quite important and of quite large responsibility and honor. Bradshaw writes that reader and subdeacon are the most ancient of what became the lower ranks of clergy, and “are the only ones to appear consistently in the later rites of the East.”<sup>75</sup> He says that there is evidence, such as the *Apostolic Tradition* of Hippolytus, that the reader “was considered the superior office” over that of the deacon, and that “the reader was required to have ‘the virtues of the deacon,’ which suggests that his was by no means considered an inferior rank.”<sup>76</sup> Those who are ordained as readers and cantors must keep this in mind, and faithfully and diligently carry out their service for the glory of God.

### **Subdeacon**

In all the texts examined here, the rite of ordination of a subdeacon stands alone under its own heading. In the current UGCC books the ritual consists of one prayer by the bishop, a litany and exclamation, and the washing of the bishop’s hands by the subdeacon. With the exception of some rubrics at the end of the rite and the complete absence of the litany, the modern Russian editions are identical to the UGCC text.

### ***Vestments of the Subdeacon***

Before examining the ritual, a word should be said regarding his vestments. In modern usage the subdeacons vests in the sticharion and the orarion. Though it is called as such, it should be noted here that in the modern Slavonic and Ukrainian editions the

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<sup>73</sup> USP, 26: “As prescribed earlier for the candle-bearer”; BSU, 270; ESM, 6.

<sup>74</sup> “Чинъ оканчивался сугубой ектеньей за новопосвященнаго.” *Богослужение въ Русской Церкви въ XVI вѣкъ*, 355.

<sup>75</sup> Bradshaw, 93.

<sup>76</sup> Bradshaw, 93.

word “orarion” is not used, but rather *στίχάρνῃ ἰσζ*, or, the “belt for the sticharion.” Canon 22 of the Council of Laodicea (c. 363) forbids subdeacons from wearing an orarion, and Canon 23 forbids readers and cantors from wearing them.<sup>77</sup> However, perhaps the rubrical mention of the sticharion-belt remains from the time that all the minor clergy wore a *kamision* tied up with a cord or belt under the phelonion. On the other hand, there is no reference of such a sticharion-belt in the other lesser ordinations. Dmitrievsky writes that the sticharion was the vestment proper to subdeacons and deacons, and not that of readers, cantors, and candle-bearers, and thus was received at the subdiaconate ordination. In modern practice this sticharion-belt worn by the subdeacon is identical to the orarion of the deacon, and is simply worn in the form of a cross across the subdeacon’s chest and back, rather than hanging from the left shoulder as usually worn by the deacon.

### ***Opening Rubrics***

The UGCC text does not specify where the ordination is to take place, though one may assume from the rubrics for the ordination of candle-bearer, reader, and cantor, that it is to take place in “the middle of the church.”<sup>78</sup> On the topic of the location of the ordinations of reader and subdeacon, Bradshaw, writing on ordinations in the ancient Church, say that, in contrast to other orders, these two offices [of reader and subdeacon] are now conferred in private, apparently in the *diaconicon* (sacristy) and outside the context of a celebration of the eucharist.<sup>79</sup> The Barberini codex specifies that the ordination of the subdeacon takes places “before the holy table” in the *diakonikon*.<sup>80</sup> 14<sup>th</sup> century Novgorod manuscript gives the option that the bishop stand either before the holy table in the *sluzebnytsia*, or by the great doors of the church. The 17<sup>th</sup> century

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<sup>77</sup> Cf. Ramsey, 79.

<sup>78</sup> Holy Mysteries, 45.

<sup>79</sup> Bradshaw, 98.

<sup>80</sup> BAR, 165.2.

Edinovertsy text instructs that the bishop stands either before the holy table in the *diakonikon* or in the great doors of the church. The Serbian manuscript says that the bishop is seated in his usual place as when celebrates the Liturgy. The Boyarsky edition prescribes that the bishop either is seated, or standing before the holy table with his face to the west.

The ordination taking place in the *diakonikon* could be interpreted in a number of ways. One could take this to mean that the subdeacon is not a minister of the altar, that is, of the Eucharist, as are the deacon and priest. Or, one could interpret this as somehow meaning that his service is of more of a private nature, hence the ordination taking place away from the congregation. This logic, however, does not follow, as priests and deacons are ordained in the sanctuary, which is also away from the congregation. Thus, the most logical conclusion is that he is a minister of the *diakonikon*, what in modern terms would be called the sacristy. That is, the subdeacon is the assistant to the deacon, and prepares and cares for vestments and other such liturgical and church goods.

After establishing where the ordination is to take place, the rubrics instruct what is to be done. The modern rubrics assume that this is a continuation of the previous ritual and instruct:

If the reader is to be ordained subdeacon the same day, after the reader is vested in the sticharion, the subdeacons bring the subdeacon's orarion to the bishop. The bishop blesses the orarion, and the candidate kisses the orarion and the hand of the bishop. The subdeacons vest the candidate. The bishop then makes the sign of the cross over his head.<sup>81</sup>

Other texts prescribe other things.<sup>82</sup> The 14<sup>th</sup> century Novgorod manuscript instructs that at the time of the entrance the candidate is brought forward wearing the phelonion. The bishop removes the phelonion from him, and clothes him in the

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<sup>81</sup> *Holy Mysteries*, 51.

<sup>82</sup> EPM contains the order of "ordination to subdeacon if he is made a subdeacon in one day," and instructs that "he is not given a lamp, he does not receive second tonsure, and the prayer "O Lord, Who enlighten all creation..." is not said. In place of a lamp, the sticharion and belt are brought to the bishop, who blesses them and puts them on the candidate." This naturally raises questions about the necessity of each of the orders, if one can be ordained to a higher without having been ordained to the lower. Goar asks this question regarding the already then-disused rank of *deputatos*, and how the Greeks in Thessalonika can ordain cantor and readers without ordaining them *deputati* before that. Cf. EPM, 514; Goar, 197.

sticharion, and is girded with a belt. The 17<sup>th</sup> century Edinovertsy edition prescribes that before the beginning of Divine Liturgy the candidate is brought forward wearing the phelonion, and the bishop commands that the phelonion be removed from him, and clothes him in the sticharion. The candidate recites “I believe...”, and is girded with a belt. The Serbian manuscript prescribes the beginning, “Come, let us worship” thrice, and then Psalm 23 is sung. The 1632 Boyarsky edition prescribes that after the singing of “Holy God”<sup>83</sup> has ended, the candidate is brought by the deacons to the bishop, who intones “Blessed is our God...” The usual beginning is recited, and after the three-fold “Come, let us worship,” Psalm 23 is recited. The Univ and Bachinsky editions have no rubrics at the beginning of the ordination, nor any mention of vestments. However, these same two editions prescribe that the reader/cantor be vested in both belt and sticharion in the corresponding ordination.

Hapgood has a very interesting rubric: “If the candidate is to receive the Laying-on of Hands to the Sub-Diaconate... on the same day, after he hath been invested with the tunic, the Sub-Deacons bring the dalmatic and the dalmatic-girdle (that is the stole) to the Bishop.”<sup>84</sup> This is of interest because the vestment received at the ordination of the candle-bearer/reader/cantor in the previous ritual is different than that received at the subdiaconal ordination. In the previous ritual the candidate is vested in the short phelonion, which is then removed and he is vested in the “tunic.” Further, this implies that the subdeacon wore either a “tunic” and “dalmatic”, or he removed the “tunic” and vested in the “dalmatic.” The rubrics, however, do not say anything about removing the “tunic.”

The psalm prescribed by the Boyarsky and Serbian manuscripts should be examined, as it helps to understand the character and role of the subdeacon:

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<sup>83</sup> It seems most likely that this would be the “Holy God” of the Great Doxology of Orthros. Otherwise, it could be the “Holy God” of the Divine Liturgy, placing the ordination of subdeacon shortly before the prokeimenon. This would make more sense for the ordination of reader and cantors.

<sup>84</sup> Hapgood, 310.

The earth is the LORD's and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it; for he has founded it on the seas, and established it on the rivers. Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD and who shall stand in his holy place? Those who have clean hands and pure hearts, who do not lift up their souls to what is false and do not swear deceitfully. They will receive blessing from the LORD and vindication from the God of their salvation. Such is the company of those who seek him who seek the face of the God of Jacob. Lift up your heads, O gates and be lifted up, O ancient doors that the King of glory may come in. Who is the King of glory? The LORD, strong and mighty, the LORD, mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O gates! and be lifted up, O ancient doors! that the King of glory may come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory. (Psalm 24 *NRSVCE*)

This psalm tells two very specific things about the responsibilities of the subdeacon: first, the subdeacon is to “stand in His holy place”—the subdeacon serves at the altar; and second, the subdeacon guards the doors. Both of these will be examined in detail later. This psalm also speaks of the character of the subdeacon: he is a man who has clean hands and a pure heart, and who seeks the face of God. The subdeacon does not participate in evil and does not worship things of this world, for he knows that the world and everything in it was made by God, who is the King of Glory. Though his service in the church and through his righteous life, the subdeacon welcomes our King and widens his reign among men.

### *The Ordination Prayer*

Dmitrievsky describes the ordination rite in detail in his book on 16<sup>th</sup> century Russian liturgy.<sup>85</sup> He writes that the candidate for subdiaconate ordination comes forward wearing the short phelonian, which is immediately removed, and he is given the sticharion. After he reads the creed, the bishop girds him with a belt, and read the ordination prayer, “O Lord, our God,” after which he puts on the candidate’s shoulders a towel, gives him a basin, and washes his hands, saying “I will wash my hands among the innocent...”<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> *Богослужение в Русской Церкви в XVI вѣкѣ*, 353-359.

<sup>86</sup> This is the prayer prescribed for when the priest washes his hands after vesting and before celebrating the proskomedia. See below.

According to all the books, after the bishop blesses the candidate, and lays his hand on his head, he prays the prayer of ordination. The prayer should be examined, as it says quite a lot about the responsibilities of the subdeacon. The first line quotes Saint Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, in which he writes about the many and diverse gifts given to the members of the Church by the Holy Spirit: "O Lord, our God, Who through one and the same Spirit, distribute Your gifts to each of those whom You have chosen; Who have given Your Church different Orders and different degrees of ministry for the service of your holy and pure Mysteries."<sup>87</sup> Obviously, this prayer is asserting that the service of the subdeacon one of the many gifts given by the Spirit and one of the necessary ministries in the Church. In 1 Corinthians 11 Saint Paul writes that each of these is just as important as the next:

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord... To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good... All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses. For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ... Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many... God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." ... God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior member, that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it... And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers; then ... forms of assistance, forms of leadership... (1 Corinthians 11 *NRSVCE*)

Thus, according to Saint Paul, the bishop is not to say to the subdeacon, "I have no need of you," nor the priest to the cantor, "I have no need of you," for each has a ministry needed in the Church and a gift given by the Spirit for the service of the Holy Mysteries.

The prayer continues: "Who in your unspeakable foreknowledge foreordained that Your servant, *N.*, be made worthy to serve in Your Holy Church, we humbly beseech You, keep him above reproach in all things."<sup>88</sup> The prayer states that the candidate was foreordained to be made "worthy" for this subdiaconal service, and asks that the

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<sup>87</sup> *Holy Mysteries*, 51.

<sup>88</sup> *Holy Mysteries*, 51.

candidate be preserved in sinlessness. To serve in God’s Church one must be made worthy and must live a righteous life. This is not simply for the reason that clerics are to be examples before the congregation, but because the Church, the temple where God Himself dwells, is a holy place. In the Old Testament there were many cleansing rituals and sacrificial offerings which the clergy were required to offer before entering the temple. The prayer continues and asks, “Grant him to love the beauty of Your house”<sup>89</sup> This is a reference to Psalm 25:8, which specifies that it is “the place where Your glory abides” (Psalm 26:8 *NRSVCE*). The subdeacon *loves* to be in the Church in the presence of the Lord, in His glory. Not only that, but the subdeacon loves the *beauty* that is in the Church. He cares for the beautiful things in the Church and he strives to beautify the temple.

Concerning the next part, Bradshaw writes: “the second half of the prayer describes the subdeacon’s functions as ministry at the doors of the church and the lighting of its lamps. The prayer asks that the subdeacon be granted “to watch over the doors of your holy temple, and to light the lampstand of the dwelling place of Your glory.”<sup>90</sup> The subdeacon guards the doors in his ministerial cooperation with the deacon, who dismissed catechumens from the church. This will be examined in more detail later. The mention of lighting the lampstand without a doubt means that the subdeacon is responsible for lighting the lamps in the altar and throughout the church at the proper times, for example, at the lamp-lighting psalms at vespers, or the *polyeleos*. In emphasizing the subdeacon’s responsibility for the lamps in the church, as referenced in the ordination prayer, Bradshaw compares the Byzantine and Melkite/Jacobite versions of the prayer, which are very similar in this part, and writes that “in the Jacobite rite, [the subdeacon] even receives the oil for the lamps rather than the vessels for the *lavabo* as the symbol of his office.”<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> *Holy Mysteries*, 51.

<sup>90</sup> *Holy Mysteries*, 51.

<sup>91</sup> Bradshaw, 95-96.



The prayer's reference to the "lampstand of the dwelling place of Your glory" is a quotation from Saint Paul's letter to the Hebrews, which describes the worship in the Old Testament: "Now even the first covenant had regulations for worship and an earthly sanctuary. For a tent was constructed, the first one, in which were the lampstand, the table, and the bread of the Presence; this is called the Holy Place" (Hebrews 9:1-2 *NRSVCE*). This quotation emphasizes that the subdeacon's ministry is in the Holy Place: the place where God abides in His glory, the place which the subdeacon is to enter routinely to "light the lampstand of the dwelling place of Your glory." The subdeacon ministers in the presence of God!

Next, the prayer requests, "Plant him in Your Holy Church like a fruitful olive tree, that he may bear the fruit of righteousness." The subdeacon is to be like a "fruitful olive tree" planted in the Holy Church. Arranz understands this to mean that the subdeacon's "role is comprised of service in the temple, and not for the bishop, like is assumed today, especially among the Russians. Most likely he was a sacristan, or maybe, a holder of the keys. He stood in the church like a planted tree, bearing fruit... and his reward will be eternal life."<sup>92</sup> The subdeacon is to bear fruit in his ministry. This means that his work and ministry in the church is not simply labor, but through God's grace effective for the salvation of souls. This must mean more than simply his own soul, but also the souls of those who attend the divine services in the church where he serves.

The final petition of the prayer requests the subdeacon's eternal salvation: "Render him perfect, so that in the time of Your coming he may receive the reward of those who strive at all times to please You."<sup>93</sup> The subdeacon is to strive to please the Lord at all times, which means striving for perfection in all things. For this, he will be

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<sup>92</sup> Арранц, 533. Translation mine.

<sup>93</sup> *Holy Mysteries*, 51.

granted eternal life. The prayer concludes with the exclamation: “For Yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory...”<sup>94</sup>

### ***Concluding Rubrics***

In the UGCC books, immediately after the ordination prayer, the archdeacon intones a litany, with added petitions formed from the ordination prayer. The litany begins like the Litany of Peace. The fourth petition is for the bishop “For our bishop, *Name*, for his priesthood, protection, abiding, peace, health, salvation, and the work of his hands, let us pray to the Lord.”<sup>95</sup> The fifth and sixth petitions are for the newly-ordained subdeacon: “For the servant of God *Name*, who is now being made a subdeacon for the service of holy and immaculate mysteries in His holy church, let us pray... That the Master and lover of mankind, keep him above reproach in everything, and grant him to love the beauty of His house and to stand before the doors of the church of His holy glory, let us pray to the Lord.”<sup>96</sup> These petitions emphasize the duties of the subdeacon to serve for and in the presence of the Holy Mysteries, and prays for his execution of those duties, that he may carry them out in love. The exclamation in the UGCC text is “for You are our sanctification, and we give You glory to You...”<sup>97</sup>

This same litany is found in the Bachinsky, and Univ editions. The Edinovertsy *Great Trebnyk* does not mention a litany, but the 16<sup>th</sup> century Edinovertsy edition contains a litany with the same three petitions as the UGCC books, but continues on with the rest of the Litany of Peace, concluding with the exclamation “for to You are due all glory, honor, and worship...” The Boyarsky edition contains the Litany Peace with added two added petitions which are different from the other books: “For the

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<sup>94</sup> *Holy Mysteries*, 51.

<sup>95</sup> Translation mine. Cf. OSR, 233.

<sup>96</sup> Translation mine. Cf. OSR, 233. The translation in *Holy Mysteries* cannot be trusted, as it is inaccurate in a number of ways, most notably translating the present progressive verb as the future perfect “who is *about to be* ordained a subdeacon.” This error is also found in the Ukrainian translation, which uses “поставляють.” Also, the English translation in *Holy Mysteries* omits an entire petition (“Help and save...”) that is included on the facing page in Ukrainian.

<sup>97</sup> *Holy Mysteries*, 52.

servant of God *N.*, who is now being made a subdeacon, and for his salvation, let us pray to the Lord. That God, the lover of mankind, grant him blameless and unspoiled service in His holy Church, let us pray...”<sup>98</sup> The 14<sup>th</sup> century Novgorod manuscript does not mention a litany for the subdeacon, nor do the Pochaiv, 1854 Moscow, and Kyiv Patriarchate editions.

Following the prayer of ordination, the rubrics in the Boyarsky edition prescribe the following:

The bishop vests the candidate in the sticharion, and girds him with a belt in the form of a cross, as he [the candidate] recites ‘I believe in one God, the Father’ to the end. After the end of the Symbol [of Faith] he tonsures [the candidate] as previously shown for a reader. Then a litany.<sup>99</sup>

These rubrics are extremely interesting for a number of reasons. Firstly, the vesting of the subdeacon in the sticharion corresponds to that which Dmitrievsky writes about the vestments of lower clerics and has already been discussed here, that is, that the sticharion is the proper vestment of the subdeacon and deacon, and *not* of the reader, cantor, or candle-bearer. This same practice is reflected in several of the editions examined here, and has already been mentioned. Secondly, for some reason the subdeacon is tonsured *again*. A “second tonsure” is also referenced in the 1638 Edinovertsy edition.<sup>100</sup> In both cases it is very strange. One could make sense of this double-tonsure if he was to assume that the rank of reader is the first real order in the ecclesiastical hierarchy, and then that the divisions of minor and major orders are distinct from each other within that hierarchy, and induction into each of those divisions requires tonsure. This is, however, merely speculation.

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<sup>98</sup> BSU, 280. Translation mine.

<sup>99</sup> BSU, 279. Translation mine.

<sup>100</sup> CF. EPM, 514. This could be a reference to the abovementioned shaving of the candidate’s head after the bishop tonsures the read as mentioned in Dmitrievsky and Goar, but this seems unlikely based on context.

The Edinovertsy edition prescribes that the subdeacon leave the bishop, holding the ewer in his hands, and he enters the door of the Prothesis Room and places the ewer and towel there, and then serves by the bishop. The same is described by Dmitrievsky.<sup>101</sup>

Following the litany there are many rubrics.<sup>102</sup> *Holy Mysteries* provides the following:

A ewer with water, and a towel are then brought to the bishop. He first takes the towel and places it on the shoulders of the subdeacon, then the bishop gives the bowl with water to the subdeacon. The subdeacon takes them, then kisses the bowl, the ewer and the bishop's hand. Then he pours water over the bishop's hands, saying three times: *All who are faithful*. The bishop washes his hands. He blesses the subdeacon, who has the towel placed on his head and orders him to be led to the appointed place. The bishop begins the Liturgy, or, if not, intones the usual dismissal.<sup>103</sup>

This ritual of the subdeacon being given the ewer of water and a towel corresponds to the reception of the candle, Psalter, and Epistle book by the other ranks of lower clergy.<sup>104</sup> Bradshaw writes:

[The ordination rites] conclude with the symbolic exercise of the principle liturgical functions of the order conferred... The subdeacon says three times 'Those who are faithful,' and then assists the bishop in performing the *lavabo*... later manuscripts of the ordination rite also prescribe the delivery to the subdeacon of the ewer, basin, and towel for the *lavabo*, as was also done in the Melkite rite. Though it is not specified in the rubrically sparse text of the older manuscripts, this ceremony may well have been practiced from earlier times.<sup>105</sup>

That is, the ewer and towel are the instruments with which he exercises his office, or at least part of it, since at a hierarchical Divine Liturgy, the subdeacon washes the bishop's hands at the Cherubic Hymn. Some conclude from this that the role and obligations of the subdeacon are constituted entirely of service to the bishop in hierarchical services. As has already been discussed and expressed by Arranz, the subdeacon's duties are

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<sup>101</sup> *Богослужение въ Русской Церкви въ XVI вѣкъ*, 356.

<sup>102</sup> BSU, 280: And after "Holy God," the bishop, having ordained [the subdeacon], after the end of the litany, goes away to the High Seat, and there the newly-ordained comes, kisses the bishop's right hand, and pours water over his hands, saying three times "Those who are faithful". The Bishop blesses him, washes his [own] hands, and gives [to the candidate] the Epistle book. He accepts it, kisses the hand of the bishop, and goes away to before the Royal Doors of the church, and reads the usual prokeimen and usual epistle.

<sup>103</sup> *Holy Mysteries*, 52. Though not found as such in the books here examined, Dmitrievsky notes that in Russian books the washing of the bishop's hands is prescribed to be done by the newly ordained reader at the end of the ordination, and in Greek books before the bishop's instruction to the candidate. Cf. *Ставленникъ*, 35.

<sup>104</sup> Interestingly, at the point of the reception of the ewer and towel, the Boyarsky edition does not provide a corresponding address "receive this..." from the bishop to the newly-ordained, as in all the other ordinations.

<sup>105</sup> Bradshaw, 95.

primarily for the service of the church building. He also states that “[m]ost likely, in antiquity the role of the subdeacon concerned the Eucharist itself, for the assistance of the deacon.”<sup>106</sup> However, it would be wrong to deny that washing others’ hands is the duty of the subdeacon. It would be wise to remember that priests also wash their hands before every Divine Liturgy. Thus, it may be inferred, that subdeacons, as the permanent and stable caretakers of temple and its sacristies, had the responsibility of preparing and pouring water for the priests at the appointed time. This is indicated in the *Apostolic Constitutions*: “But let one of the sub-deacons bring water to wash the hands of the priests, which is a symbol of the purity of those souls that are devoted to God.”<sup>107</sup> In that context, it is only logical and natural to assume that upon the event of episcopal visitations the responsibility of performing this same duty for the bishop would fall to the subdeacons. Thus, it is quite clear that the service to the bishop and the washing of his hands is *not* the main duty of the subdeacon, but only a small part of his more general responsibilities of preparing and caring for the liturgical services.

There is need to examine the subdeacon’s exclamation of the phrase “All who are faithful,” since today it is misunderstood.<sup>108</sup> Bradshaw makes a connection between this utterance of the subdeacon and the dismissal of the catechumens at the Divine Liturgy:

The subdeacon’s announcement constitutes the beginning of the prayers of the faithful, and is said immediately after the dismissal of the catechumens in the Byzantine eucharist. In all existing texts of that rite it is said by the deacon, but may originally have belonged to the subdeacon as part of his responsibility for guarding the doors of the church.”<sup>109</sup>

Arranz also sees this as being an allusion to the subdeacon’s duties of guarding the doors of the church:

It is important to note that this exclamation is regularly read by the deacon before the dismissal of the catechumens. To place it on the mouth of the subdeacon, although this is the only

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<sup>106</sup> Арранц, 533.

<sup>107</sup> “Apostolic Constitutions” in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. 7. trans. James Donaldson, edited by Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe. (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1886.) on *New Advent*, accessed 16 Dec 2019 via <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/07158.htm>, Book VIII, 2.11.

<sup>108</sup> I have heard it explained by subdeacons, that if only one bishop celebrates, then the subdeacon is to say “He, who is faithful.” If more than one bishop, then the prescribed “Those, who are faithful.” But this makes no sense.

<sup>109</sup> Bradshaw, 95.

instance, emphasizes his responsibility to admit the faithful into the church; in the prayer it is the protection of the temple that is spoken of.<sup>110</sup>

Thus, from this it may be concluded that in his duties in the care of the church building and its doors, the subdeacon was to guard the doors during the Divine Liturgy, allowing entrance only to “those who are faithful”, and barring entrance to catechumens, penitents, and others. If the deacon’s announcement at the beginning of the prayers of the faithful did not originally belong to the subdeacon as Bradshaw proposes, perhaps the subdeacons, being their assistants, stood at the doors and enforced the policy announced by the deacons on the bema. Ramsey points out that Canons 22 and 43 of the Council of Laodicea forbid “servants” from deserting the doors.<sup>111</sup> He goes on to discuss whether the word “servants” refers here to specifically either to porters or subdeacons, but concludes that “it would not be wrong to ascribe door keeping to Subdeacons as one of their functions.”<sup>112</sup>

There are two interesting rubrics related to the hand washing. The first, found in the 16<sup>th</sup> century Edinovertsy (but not the 1638 edition), Univ, and Bachinsky editions, prescribes the bishop to say the prayer “I will wash my hands among the innocent...”, which is prescribed during the priestly vesting prayers when the priest washes his hands before every Divine Liturgy. This only confirms the abovementioned conclusion, that the subdeacon’s pouring water for the bishop to wash his hand is simply him helping the clergy to vest and prepare for the Liturgy.

The second interesting rubric is found in Hapgood’s edition: “the Bishop washeth his hands, according to the rite, and saith the Prayer. Then he signeth the water with his hand, in the form of a cross, thrice. And the Bishop, with this holy water, wetteth the Candidates’s eyes and ears nostrils, and lips.”<sup>113</sup> Something similar to this is prescribed in other books at the Churubic hymn, and will be discussed in the next section.

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<sup>110</sup> Апраиц, 534. Translation mine.

<sup>111</sup> Ramsey, 17.

<sup>112</sup> Ramsey, 18.

<sup>113</sup> Hapgood, 311.

### *The Divine Liturgy*

If the subdiaconal ordination is to be followed by the celebration of the Divine Liturgy, then, according to *Holy Mysteries*,

During the cherubic hymn, the subdeacon, who holds the bowl with water and the ewer, is led before the holy doors to the bishop. The bishop washes his hands as prescribed. During the Great Entrance, the subdeacon walks behind all the ministers. When the bishop says: May the mercies: the subdeacon is led to the sanctuary and, after receiving bishop's blessing, goes to stand with the other subdeacons.<sup>114</sup>

The ritual of washing the bishop's hands displays the subdeacon exercising his duty of assisting with the washing of hands. This is obvious, and has already been discussed.

The Ukrainian Orthodox, Pochaiv, and Moscow editions have more details, and prescribe that when the bishop washes his hands a second time at the Cherubic Hymn, the bishop blesses the water three times, and washes his own eyes, ears, nose, and lips. The subdeacon then walks in the Great Entrance behind all the other ministers. Once the bishop has received the holy gifts, the subdeacon bows to him, and takes the holy water to the right and left klirosi, and to all the people, who anoint themselves with it. He then goes to the altar, pours out the water, and goes and stands before the Holy Doors as prescribed. At the exclamation "May the mercies", he enters the sanctuary, receives the bishop's blessing, and stands with the subdeacons.

What is not obvious is why the subdeacon stands outside the sanctuary until "may the mercies." In his description of ordination,<sup>115</sup> Dmitrievsky writes that when the bishop exclaims "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ," the subdeacon put aside the basin and went to the middle of the church, where he stood on the circular bema, and sang "Only the faithful" thrice. At the bishop's exclamation before the Thrice-Holy Hymn "singing, crying, exclaiming," the subdeacon would again sing three times. After the singing of those exclamations, if he was not ordained to the diaconate at the same

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<sup>114</sup> *Holy Mysteries*, 52.

<sup>115</sup> *Богослужение в Русской Церкви в XVI вѣкѣ*, 357-378. Everything that Dmitrievsky describes here is reflected in the 16<sup>th</sup> century Edinovertsy edition.

liturgy, the subdeacon always went to the prothesis room, and he was always located by the bishop to serve him. If at this Liturgy the subdeacon was to be ordained to the diaconate, then after the exclamation "Only the faithful" he would not go to the prothesis room, but stood in the center of the temple until the exclamation "And may the mercies of our Great God and Savior, Jesus Christ be with all of you." Based on Dmitrievsky's description, it seems reasonable to assume that this repetitive exclamation of the subdeacon is a remnant of his more ancient role of assisting the deacon dismiss those who are not counted among the faithful.

From these prayers and rituals, it is clear what sort of role the subdeacon has in the church. The subdeacon cares for churches the liturgical goods and necessities, preparing vestments and helping the clergy vest. He helps the priests and, when he visits, the bishop to wash their hands before the Divine Liturgy. He lights and cares for the lamps in the altar and throughout the church. He guards the doors of the temple and assists the deacons manage the necessary movement and dismissal and admittance of persons. He is a man who loves the church and loves to serve in the presence of God's glory. He loves the beauty of the church and ministers to keep it beautiful.



### CHAPTER 3 RECOMMENDATIONS AND PROPOSITIONS

Having examined the historical origins and developments of the minor orders, it has been now well established by this study that the various ranks of the lesser clergy are highly regarded by the Church, and each has responsibilities of spiritual significance. Unfortunately, modern practice very often does not reflect that which is found in historical sources, liturgical prescription, and the overall tradition of the Church. It would be beneficial to implement certain changes in order to establish more integral practices with regards to the lower clergy, their clerical state, liturgical responsibilities, and the overall approach to their existence. With that goal, this chapter will outline the role and function of each rank of the lower clergy, and propose certain practices and reforms, based on the research presented in earlier chapters.

Every person who has been ordained to any rank of clergy has been given by the Church a certain position of authority in the community in which they serve. Despite this, modern practice reflects the view that the “minor” orders are indeed very minor and, as a whole, not important. It seems that this mentality is a product of fact that most in the contemporary Church simply do not know what to do with the first ranks of the clergy, nor how they can and should function and serve. It would thus be beneficial to lay out guidelines on how they should operate in a parish setting, and to suggest some practices that would better reflect the nature and dignity of these offices. It is also appropriate to make recommendations for changes and reforms in current practice and liturgical texts in order to return to an integral and sensible ministry to the lower clergy that is coherent with the tradition of the Church.

The first thing that must be done is establish liturgical roles. A large part of this work has been dedicated to showing that the various ranks of clergy are different from one another, and have different roles. This methodology must be extended beyond the lower clergy to both the higher clergy and the laity—that is, it is necessary to keep in mind that the lay faithful are not clerics, and that the higher clergy are not lower clergy, nor *visa versa*.

This is highlighted in the work of John Ramsey, whose own work has goals similar to those of this work. He writes that, based on the canons “along with the theological and historical evidence... there are good grounds to counter the movement of anti-clericalism and to re-establish the canonical rigor of various functions being performed by ordained clergy rather than by laymen.”<sup>1</sup> Speaking from a historical-canonical perspective, he concludes that “the churches should reinstate the minor clergy to perform the various functions of the liturgy, which laity are not permitted to perform, and encourage the laity to perform the parts of the services proper to them.”<sup>2</sup> Ramsey holds that more clearly defining the separate roles of the laity and clergy enrich the liturgy and allow all to engage more properly. For example, he writes that certain things should be taken from the clergy, and returned to the congregation, “such as the responses to the petitions and the “Amen” of the prayers. This would leave the Cantor to focus on his proper functions, such as chanting variable and communion hymns.”<sup>3</sup>

Describing the benefits of separating these roles, he writes, “[t]his will help both to engage the laity with the service and to maintain the understanding that the liturgy is a mystical synergy of human and divine acts. Perhaps the full reality of the Liturgy can only be realized in its correct performance with properly ordained

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<sup>1</sup> J. G. Ramsey, “The canons Regarding the Minor Clergy and their Implications for the Role and Life of these Clergy in the Orthodox Church Today” (Master’s thesis, The University of Wales, 2010), 66.

<sup>2</sup> Ramsey, 67.

<sup>3</sup> Ramsey, 67.

clergy performing their appropriate functions.”<sup>4</sup> Thus, having the clergy perform those ministries that are proper to the clergy and the laity perform those that are proper to the laity will not take the liturgy away from the laity like some suppose, but give it to them more fully.

For that reason, and for the sake of canonical, theological, and historical consistency, Ramsey proposes certain reforms:

There should at least be a Lector or Cantor in each parish to read and chant the services. If the Priest requires assistance at the Altar then a Subdeacon should be ordained for this, if not a Deacon. The office of Doorkeeper is still relevant and those carrying candles in a procession should be appointed as Acolytes. The functions of Exorcist have been largely been taken over by priests and canonically there is no need to reinstate them as a distinct order.<sup>5</sup>

These reforms that Ramsey proposes are certainly in accordance with the conclusions of this work. More such reforms will be proposed later in this chapter.

### **The “Minor” Orders**

Before distinguishing and defining the role and responsibilities of each of the lower clergy, it is necessary to establish a general approach to them that is in concord with research, tradition, and the liturgy. It was discussed in the introduction of this work that a prevalent school of thought holds the lower clergy to be unimportant and unnecessary. It has been proven here that that is not a tenable position, and thus, it is necessary to refer to these clerical ranks by a term other than “minor orders.” Referring to these ministries as “minor” reinforces the mentality that they are unnecessary, and what this leads to is obvious—in the Latin Church these ranks of clergy were treated as mere stepping stones to priestly ordination (with priests often donning the vestments of acolytes and subdeacons and carrying out the service proper to those ranks), and in 1973 they were simply

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<sup>4</sup> Ramsey, 67.

<sup>5</sup> Ramsey, 66.

abolished completely. If we do not wish to bring the same disaster upon our own tradition, we must speak of and treat these clerics with the dignity their office demands.

To refer to these ranks of clergy as “minor” is an injustice. In a liturgical tradition where the entire liturgy is sung, where there are many liturgical books and a very complicated musical system, it is impossible to think that the cantor is of minor importance. In a tradition where the words of Holy Scripture are constantly read aloud, and their being understood is of utmost importance, one cannot hold the position, that the reader is “minor” figure in the liturgical services. In a tradition with complex liturgical services, many liturgical instruments, the constant lighting and extinguishing of candles, many processions and other movements, it is impossible to even think that the subdeacon and candle-bearer are unneeded. The lower ranks of clergy simply are not “minor,” and should not be referred to as such.

### *Candle-Bearer*

Candle-bearer is the first rank of the clergy, and is a simple ministry. The man who is to be ordained a candle-bearer must be a pious man of deep faith, who loves the Church and loves the liturgy, and who greatly desires to abide in God’s temple. He must be righteous and upright of character, and his example stands before the congregation like a shining light. In the Byzantine tradition, light is very important, and symbolizes Christ Himself, Who is the “Joyful light of the holy glory of the immortal, heavenly, holy, blessed Father.”<sup>6</sup> There are many times when the lights are to be lighted or extinguished, and sometimes the assembly is blessed with a lighted candle. The candle-bearer is the custodian of this Light in the church. His ministerial obligations involve serving within and

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<sup>6</sup> “Joyful Light” is one of the most ancient hymns of the Byzantine tradition, and is sung at Vespers everyday, and is the heart of the service.

without the Holy Place, lighting and extinguishing the lamps and candles of the temple at the appropriate times, and distributing tapers to the faithful at the litiya and other times. He carries the primary candle or lamp, and leads the entrances and procession inside and outside the church. In doing so, he ensures that the path is clear before the other clergy and safe for the holy things which they bear. He may also take up the collection at the designated time. At hierarchical services he carries the primary candle or the bishop’s staff, or if the Primate celebrates, he may bear the processional cross. His instrument of office is the lamp or candle and candle-stick. The candle-bearer assists the subdeacon and follows his instructions.

### *Reader*

The reader is the second rank of the clergy, and is a minister of the Word of God. Because “[t]he Church has always venerated the divine Scriptures just as she venerates the body of the Lord, since, especially in the sacred liturgy, she unceasingly receives and offers to the faithful the bread of life from the table both of God's word and of Christ's body,”<sup>7</sup> one may conclude that the dignity of the office of reader is second only to that of the ministers of the altar. The candidate to reader, aside from having the qualities of the candle-bearer and having been ordained as such, must be a man who loves and studies the Word of God, and as such, is a theologian—“Sacred theology rests on the written word of God... as its primary and perpetual foundation... For the Sacred Scriptures ... really are the word of God; and so the study of the sacred page is, as it were, the soul of sacred theology.”<sup>8</sup> The reader is literate, reads well, and can sing and chant clearly. He is trained in the liturgical year, the liturgical books, and the cycle of services. His

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<sup>7</sup> Paul VI, Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation *Dei Verbum*, 18 Nov 1965, on Vatican.va, [http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist\\_councils/ii\\_vatican\\_council/documents/vat-ii\\_const\\_19651118\\_dei-verbum\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19651118_dei-verbum_en.html), 21.

<sup>8</sup> *Dei Verbum*, 24.

ministerial obligations involve not just Epistle and other New Testament readings, but also the Old Testament readings at all the services. The books of the Old Testament are also especially important:

[They] reveal to all men the knowledge of God and of man and the ways in which God, just and merciful, deals with men... give expression to a lively sense of God, contain a store of sublime teachings about God, sound wisdom about human life, and a wonderful treasury of prayers, and in them the mystery of our salvation is present in a hidden way.<sup>9</sup>

If there are to other readings, such as the life of Saint Mary of Egypt or patristic homilies, he reads them with a strong voice from the middle of the temple. He reads, speaks, and teaches with the authority of Church, using not his own words (he does not preach), but those given to him. He must well studied so that he may understand and explain that which he reads like the deacon-apostle Philip, and not like the Ethiopian eunuch.<sup>10</sup> He knows the great responsibility his ministry bears, and that his ministry influences the eternal salvation of those around him. He may be charged with teaching the faith to catechumens and to children.<sup>11</sup> He assists the psalmist at the kliros. His instrument of office is the book of the Epistles.

### *Psalmist*

The psalmist is the third in the clerical hierarchy, and his ministry requires more skill and training than the previous. The candidate to be a psalmist is a man convicted by faith, and thus a man of great joy. The psalmist sings and praises God in the church with love and thankfulness. Chant is central to Byzantine worship, and a very complex musical system has developed, with many books, containing rich theology-laden texts. Thus, the ministerial obligations of the

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<sup>9</sup> *Dei Verbum*, 15.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Acts 8:26-40.

<sup>11</sup> *Dei Verbum*, 25: "Therefore, all the clergy must hold fast to the Sacred Scriptures through diligent sacred reading and careful study, especially the priests of Christ and others, such as deacons and catechists who are legitimately active in the ministry of the word. This is to be done so that none of them will become "an empty preacher of the word of God outwardly, who is not a listener to it inwardly" since they must share the abundant wealth of the divine word with the faithful committed to them, especially in the sacred liturgy."

psalmist require him to have vocal training, be well trained in music theory, the tonal system, the liturgical books, the cycle of services, and the chant tradition as a whole. He must know the many chant melodies and be able to sing them. He, too, must be able to read well, sing clearly, and be understood. He also must be able to lead others not only in chant, but in the learning of theology through the dogmatical texts which he sings. His usual place during the services is at the kliros, and at ordination he receives the Psalter.

### *Subdeacon*

The subdeacon is the last cleric before that of deacon. The subdeacon is a man who loves the Holy Place, and to abide in the place where God dwells in His glory. He loves the beauty of the church and of the liturgical services, and his ministry is to care for the beauty of the house of God, so that everything in the church glorifies and praises God, adding to, and not detracting from, the glory there in. He works to keep the church clean, and he is responsible for decorating it appropriately. His ministry requires him to be well trained in the liturgical services and their movements, as well as the cycles and seasons. He prepares the temple for the services, lays our vestments for the other clergy, and helps them vest. He ensures that the prosfora and wine are of good quality, not spoiled, in sufficient quantity, and in the prothesis before the proskomedia. It is his responsibility to change and clean the altar linens as needed, ensuring the altar and church furniture are adorned in colors proper to the corresponding season of feast or fast. During the services he is the assistant to the deacon, handing him the censer, fan, hot water, and other necessary instruments. He opens and closes doors, and keeps order in the church among the laity, dismissing and admitting people as necessary, and instructs the candle-bearers what to do and when, and in short, makes sure that everyone and everything is where they need to be, and that

nothing is lacking. His usual place is in the Holy Place or in the *diakonikon*. At hierarchical services he holds the *dikirion* or *trikirion*. At his ordination the subdeacon receives the ewer and towel, with which he washes the hands of the presbyters when they vest, and those of the bishop at the Cherubic Hymn.

## **Recommendations and Reforms**

### *Canonical recommendations*

Firstly, as was discussed in the introduction to this work with regards to canon law and the recommendations of the *Instruction*, minor clerics should be treated as clergy within the eparchy and enrolled canonically. In this way, minor clerics would take part in eparchial retreats, formation, conferences, etc.

In light of being made eparchial clerics, those ordained to the lower ranks of the clergy should be bound by clerical obligations and enjoy clerical privileges, corresponding to their rank. For example, those lower clergy may be bound by the obligation of praying the certain offices of the Liturgy of the Hours, or reading a certain amount of Holy Scripture each day. Some clerical privileges are routinely given to lower clerics in the Melkite Greek-Catholic Eparchy of Newton: upon ordination, lower clerics are blessed to wear clerical headgear (the *skoufos*) during the liturgy, and are usually addressed as “Father” as a sign of their spiritual leadership in the community. Similarly, the canon law of the UGCC Philadelphia Metropolia binds all clerics of every rank, explicitly including minor clerics, to wear a riassa with broad sleeves over their cassock at all times at liturgical and para-liturgical services.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> *Pastoral Guide of the Ukrainian Catholic Church in the United States of America*, (Philadelphia: 1999), Article 42.3: “Lectors, subdeacons, deacons, and priests, in accordance with a decree of the Holy See, are to wear a rason with broad sleeves over their cassock during divine services and while administering a Holy Mystery or a sacramental, whenever liturgical prescriptions do not demand that the sticharion be worn.”



Certain official standards of eligibility and procedures for application for ordination to be a minor cleric of the eparchy should be written and published for the benefit of all the faithful, so that all those desiring and feeling a call to serve in the Church may do so, rather than being deemed eligible for ordination.

Those who have been ordained should be given official documents indicating as much, and to what obligations they are bound, and what clerical privileges they enjoy.

Those who, for some reason, were ordained but no longer wish to minister in Christ's Church in the capacity of a minor cleric should be formally laicized, and be given documentation stating as much, that they are no longer bound to clerical obligations, and that all clerical privileges have been revoked.

The ordination rites should be revised so that the orders of candle-bearer, reader, and cantor are no longer conflated, but distinct. In this way, the particular ministry of each order can be exercised more fully and bear more fruit within the Church.

### ***Practical recommendations***

Seminarians should not be ordained just because they have been reached a specified year of their studies. Each candidate should be tested on an individual basis, and accepted to ordination based on his desire, willingness, and preparedness to serve in the capacity of that minor order.

In preparation to ordination to the lower clerical ranks, candidates should undergo specialized training for their chosen rank. For example, cantors should be trained in music generally, as well as in the musical tradition of their Church. Readers should have special study of the Epistles and other books of the Old and New Testaments, and perhaps be trained as a catechist.

Upon ordination to a minor order, the newly-ordained should be assigned to a certain church community and be given a certain and definite ministry that he is responsible to carry out in the capacity of his ordained state. It is all too often that ordained subdeacons carry on unattached to any church community, exercising no ministry in the Church, treating their ordination as if it means nothing, and even attending the Liturgy as a layperson.

Those lay persons who routinely and piously assist with the labors necessary for the upkeep of the parish, especially those related to the liturgical services, and those that have any sort of leadership role (e.g. catechist), should be ordained as minor clerics. There is no reason why those who persons who weekly, if not even daily, come to the church to sing, or serve, or clean and decorate, cannot be blessed by the Church to carry out that service in which they already engage regularly.

To emphasize his ministry with hymns and canticles, the cantor should be known as “psalmist.”

### *Liturgical recommendations*

Upon the death of a minor cleric, he should, as is prescribed for deacons, a lay-man’s funeral should be celebrated, and the departed cleric should be buried wearing cassock and the vestments of his rank. In his hand should be the instruments of his office given to him at ordination. Deacons are buried holding the censer. Subdeacons should hold the ewer and towel, cantors the Psalter, readers the book of the Epistles, and candle-bearers the candle and candle-stick.

Those minor clerics who did not marry before ordination and to whom it is allowed to marry, should not shed their clerical attire at the Betrothal or Crowning. To do so implies either that marriage and the clerical state or opposed,

or that the Church and the cleric’s ecclesial ministry will have no place in the marriage.

During the Divine Liturgy, clerics should approach the Holy Mysteries according to rank. The liturgical books prescribe that the bishop communes first, followed by the priests, and then by the deacons. There is the unfortunate practice that has developed that those below the rank of deacon who serve at the altar approach the chalice last, or if standing in the nave, in no particular order. This is simply illogical and introduces disorder into the liturgy. In fact, clerics should approach all things in this way: the veneration of icons, anointing of litia, etc. Saint Simeon of Thessalonika prescribes this in his liturgical commentary:

For not all will share in Him directly, but some in a pure manner, without veils will come near, like those carrying out the sacred-service partaking of what is more perfect... Therefore in the sanctuary neither the <other> bishops nor the priests, even if they are concelebrants, approach as the first one does. Others of the sanctuary in turn have an inferior rank after these, and are not able to say the same words, and come later to the awe-inspiring communion... After these, others receive before the sacred doors—the subdeacons, the cantors with the lectors, and after them those of the monastic habit, who are first among the people. And after them, in turn, according to rank, come the laity. Nor are all these equal. For some are in good standing and others are doing penance. Everything about each of those partaking of God represents the order and ascent and fitting propriety of communion.<sup>13</sup>

When receiving communion, the priest distributing communion to the faithful inserts the name of each person into the prayer: “The servant of God, *N.*, partakes of the precious...”<sup>14</sup> When priests or deacons are communed, the rubrics prescribe that they receive according to a similar formula, into which is inserted their clerical rank: “...is given to the reverend priest *N.* or deacon *N.*, for the forgiveness of his sins...”<sup>15</sup> It is thus logical to extend this practice to the lower

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<sup>13</sup>St. Symeon of Thessalonika, *The Liturgical Commentaries*, ed. and trans. Steven Hawkes-Teeple (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 2011), 251.

<sup>14</sup>*The Holy Mysteries*, Paul P. Chomnycky, Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Stamford (Lviv: Svichado, 2012), 135.

<sup>15</sup>*Holy Mysteries*, 133. Priests and deacons receive according to a slightly different formula because they receive in the Holy Place, where they receive twice: once of the Most Precious Body, and once of the Most Precious Blood. Since the lower clergy receive before the iconostasis, and receive both Sacred Species at one time, they would receive according to the first formula, simply with their rank inserted into it with their name.

clergy, inserting their clerical rank into the formula: “The servant of God, the reader Romanos, partakes of the precious...” Likewise, when approaching the chalice and the priest does not know him, a lower cleric should be sure to state his name and rank before receiving. If a cleric was to receive Holy Communion by name—a symbol of his identity—but not also by his clerical rank, then it is as if his ordination is not real and not part of his identity.<sup>16</sup> Yet it is in the Church and before the Holy Chalice that a cleric’s ordination has the most meaning, not just in the sense of the temporal Church, but before God, and all His angels and saints who worship in the temple with us. Therefore, to affirm reality the mystical reality clerical state of those lower orders, it would be beneficial to instruct them and the priests who commune them, that they are to receive the Most Precious Body and Blood of Christ by their name and rank.

Upon the recommended reform of the ordination rites, a certain restoration of the vestments proper to the lower clergy should be accomplished. That is, the use of the [short] phelonion should be reintroduced for all the lower ranks of clergy.<sup>17</sup> Likewise, a tunic-like vestment different than the sticharion of subdeacons and deacons should be worn by candle-bearers, readers, and cantors. There is such a garment used in Melkite and Greek Churches, which is similar to a wide-sleeved riassa, but tied around the middle by a cord or belt.

The chanting of psalms, proclamation of readings, and all ministry in the Holy Place should always be performed by clerics when they are present to perform said ministry. This ensures that the required actions will be done properly and responsibly. In the event of the lack of the necessary clerics to perform the

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<sup>16</sup> For the same reason, clerics should take great care to always wear their cassocks in the church, especially when receiving the Holy Mysteries. The cassock is a visible sign of his relationship to God and the Church, of his being set aside for service. Attending the liturgy without this sign is like his denying his ordination, his ministry, and the special mystical relationship between him and God.

<sup>17</sup> A reasonable exception to this would be the subdeacon, since, as demonstrated earlier, he receives the sticharion and orarion at ordination, and not all books indicate that he wore a phelonion. See Михаил Арранц SJ, *Избранные Сочинения по Литургике*, Том 1, “Таинства Византийского Евхология” (Рим, Москва: Институт философии, теологии и истории св. Фомы, 2003), 533.

needed tasks, the pastor of the church may bless a known and responsible person to perform this task, but this should by no means be a regular occurrence. Those who wish to serve regularly should seek ordination.

### **Conclusion**

With the help of these reforms, it would quickly become apparent that the lower ranks of clergy have a significant role in the life of the Church. The liturgical services would be celebrated in a fuller and more beautiful manner. The ministry of the Church would be more effective, as priests and deacons would be better assisted and freed to exercise their own ministries and the laity would be given their proper liturgical roles. Further, these recommendations would help realize the potential that has been handed down to in the tradition of the Church. Whether people know it or not the lower clergy exist. The Church bestows these orders and God imparts His grace upon those candidates. Those who have been ordained would be wise to remember the order than has been bestowed on them, and to serve with their best ability and the diligence due their office. In a word, the lower clergy should be treated in a serious manner and held to corresponding standards, so that those who are ordained to the lower ranks of clergy will conduct themselves and carry out their assigned ministry with the responsibility and dignity that their God-given office deserves, and so that others will treat their office and ministry with the same.

## CONCLUSION

It has been the goal of this work to uncover and present the importance and unique role of each of the lower ranks of clergy in the Slavic-Byzantine tradition. The canon law the Eastern Churches and the particular law of the Ukrainian Catholic Church affirm the existence of the so-called “minor orders,” and instruct that they may be ordained for the sake of permanent and stable ministry. Despite this, in the lower ranks of clergy are very rarely found to serve in such manner, and they are generally held to be of minor importance and even unnecessary.

Through an examination of their history and development, it was shown that in the first centuries of the Church, the ministry provided by door-keepers, readers, exorcists, acolytes, and subdeacons were deemed of such importance that they were formally incorporated into the structured hierarchy of clergy as early as the third century. That same hierarchy has been preserved until modern times. The lower ranks of clergy spread from the early Church of Rome across the ancient Christian world and were adopted everywhere. There are many documents, letters, and other sources which mention the lower clergy and record the witness of many martyrs and saints who served in their ranks.

After examining the development and importance of lower clerics in the early Church and records of the saints, liturgical texts were examined and compared in order to uncover and understand, from the viewpoint of the historical Church, the character and role of each of the orders of candle-bearer, reader, cantor, and, subdeacon. The ordination rites from Slavonic sources dating from between the 14<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century and from various places were examined and compared to the current official texts of the UGCC and other modern texts.

That examination demonstrated that within the official ordination rites, of which there two—one for candle-bearer/reader/cantor, and one for subdeacon—

are present the prayers for four distinct orders of clergy. Using the texts of prayers, prescribed psalms, and rubrics, the character and liturgical role of each order were uncovered. The first rank of the clergy is candle-bearer, who is a man of faith, who loves the Lord's house and has longed to serve in it. He cares for the lighting in the church, lighting and extinguishing the lamps and candles, and with the lamp given to him at his ordination, he leads the processions and entrances.

The second rank of the clergy is reader, one of the most ancient roles in the Church. The reader is a learned man, who loves the Word of God and studies it. He reads all the readings from the Old and New Testament with authority, he understands what he reads, and he teaches the community. At the kliros alongside the reader, the cantor or psalmist—next in the hierarchy—carries out his musical ministry. The psalmist is a joyful man who lovingly praises God with liturgical song. He, too, is learned, for he must know the complex liturgical and musical system and the deeply theological texts which he sings.

The subdeacon is the highest of the lower clergy. He serves in the Holy Place for the assistance of the deacon and the care of the church. He is especially called to be a righteous man, free from iniquity and deceit, for he serves in the place where God dwells in His glory. The subdeacon is responsible for maintaining the beauty of the church and ensuring that nothing is lacking in any way. He also is responsible for guarding the doors and dismissing from the church those who do not belong to the faithful. For his service he receives great spiritual blessings.

It is quite evident from the liturgical texts that in the tradition of the Church these ranks of clergy and their ministries are not only quite different one from another, but also are important and necessary roles, and these clerics carry great responsibility. It is painfully obvious that there is a divergence between the historical evidence, liturgical prescriptions, and overall tradition of the Church

and the state of the lower ranks of the clergy in the Ukrainian Catholic Church today. One of the main contributing factors to this—to the mentality that the lower clergy are just unimportant “minor orders”—is that the responsibilities and ministries of the lower clergy are carried out either by the laity or by the higher clergy. Very often, the laity are allowed to carry out functions which belong the clergy, but are not trained, not ordained, and not given the blessing of God and His Church to carry out these functions. On the other hand, lower clerics are often *not* given the space to carry out these roles, not encouraged or motivated to carry them out, and are not properly trained to do so.

Thus, the first step to restoring the ministry of the minor orders is to establish the boundaries of each person’s role in the community. That is, the lower clergy should be given the tasks and responsibilities that are proper to them, and the laity should not carry them out. Likewise, the role of the laity should not be carried out by the clergy, and this will, as Ramsey suggests, encourage and provide for the more genuine participation of both laity and clergy.

For that reason, the roles of each of the lower ranks of the clergy should be carefully defined, and their importance and responsibility in the Church and in the parish should be emphasized. That has been one of the main goals of this work. Those who have been ordained lower clerics should be encouraged to step up and fulfil the ministries proper to each of them. The laity who piously and lovingly carry out tasks that are proper to the clergy should be encouraged to seek ordination, in order to continue their service as a ministry that is blessed by the Church.

Beyond that, there are other reforms, like those mentioned in the previous chapter, that, if accomplished, would give the lower clergy the space to grow and develop a more integral and traditional exercise of their proper ministries in the Church in accordance with the Her tradition.



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## APPENDIX

### Proposal for Revised Ordination Rites

The following ordination rites have been compiled with the intention of more clearly distinguishing the roles of the lower clergy. The goal was to compile ordination rituals that are substantial enough to be served apart from the others, and contain texts that exemplify the role and responsibilities of the specified clerical rank, yet without departing from the received tradition or filling the ritual with meaningless text.

The text of *Holy Mysteries*<sup>1</sup> has been taken as the base text, with adjustments and corrections made when necessary. Elements of the sources analyzed in Chapter 2 have been added when seen to be beneficial. Rubrics have been either taken directly from these sources or written based on context and practicality. Because candle-bearer is the first rank of the clergy, it does not make sense to leave the tonsure in the second ordination. Therefore, the clerical tonsure has been included in the ordination of the candle-bearer. For the same reason, the bishop's instruction to the reader, "Son, the order of reader is the first step of the Holy Orders" has been omitted.

If the subdeacon will not be ordained to the diaconate at the same Divine Liturgy, and since the routine dismissal of the catechumens is no longer practiced, there is no reason for the subdeacon to remain on the solea until "May the mercies."

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<sup>1</sup>*The Holy Mysteries*, Paul P. Chomnycky, Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Stamford (Lviv: Svichado, 2012).

## ***The Ordination of a Candle-Bearer***

*If there is to be the Divine Liturgy, the bishop is stands in the center of the temple in all his episcopal vesture. If not, he is clothed in mantiya, omophor, and klobuk.*

**Deacon:** Master, give the blessing!

**Bishop:** Blessed is our God, always, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

**People:** Amen.

Heavenly King, Advocate, Spirit of Truth, Who are everywhere present and fill all things, Treasury of Blessings, Bestower of Life, come and dwell within us; cleanse us of all that defiles us, and, O Good One, save our souls.

Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy and Immortal, have mercy on us (*thrice*).

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Trinity most holy, have mercy on us. Cleanse us of our sins, O Lord; pardon our transgressions, O Master; look upon our weaknesses and heal them, O Holy One; for the sake of Your name.

Lord, have mercy (*thrice*)

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Our Father, Who are in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil one.

**Bishop:** For the kingdom, the power and the glory are Yours, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto the ages of ages.

**People:** Amen.

Lord, have mercy. (*12 times*)

Come, let us adore the King, our God.

Come, let us adore Christ, the King and our God.

Come, let us adore and bow down to the only Lord Jesus Christ, the King and our God.

*And then Psalm 83 (84) is sung:* How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord of hosts! My soul longs, indeed it faints for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh sing for joy to the living God. Even the sparrow finds a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, at your altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God. Happy are those who live in your house, ever singing your praise. Happy are those whose strength is in you, in whose heart are the highways to Zion. As they go through the valley of Baca they make it a place of springs; the early rain also covers it with pools. They go from strength to strength; the God of gods will be seen in Zion. O Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer; give ear, O God of Jacob! Behold our shield, O God; look on the face of your anointed. For a day in your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than live in the tents of wickedness. For the Lord God is a sun and shield; he bestows favor and honor. No good thing does the Lord withhold from those who walk uprightly. O Lord of hosts, happy is everyone who trusts in you.<sup>2</sup>

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, Glory be to You, O God. (*thrice*)

*The candidate to be ordained a candle-bearer is brought to the bishop by subdeacons. If a layman, he is dressed in worldly clothes. If a monk, he is in cassock and mantiya. He bows before the bishop and the Holy Doors three times. He then stands before the bishop facing him and bows his head. With his hand, the bishop blesses the candidate on the head thrice, in the form of a cross, saying:*

**Bishop:** In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**Deacon:** Let us pray to the Lord.

**People:** Lord, have mercy.

**Bishop:** O Lord, Who enlighten all creation with the light of your wonders, Who know the deeds of men even before they came into being know beforehand everyone's life-decisions, Who strengthen those who want to serve You, beautify your servant, *N.*, who has chosen to become a candle-bearer before your holy mysteries with spotless and most pure adornments, so that enlightened, he may meet You in the world to come and may receive the incorruptible crown of life, and with your elect may rejoice in everlasting bliss. For You are holy and glorified is your most honorable and sublime name, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

**People:** Amen.

*The bishop takes scissors and cuts the candidate's hair in the form of a cross, saying:*

The hair of the head of the servant of God, *N.*, is cut, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

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<sup>2</sup> Psalm 84 NRSVCE.



**Deacon:** Let us pray to the Lord.

**People:** Lord have mercy.

**Bishop:** Blessed are You, O Lord of our fathers, who sent our father Abraham to shave the hair of Your priest Melchisedech; Who were present at the blessing and tonsure of Your apostles, and granted to them blameless faith in every work; grant that Your servant, in accord with the tonsure of the just, keep an account of justice in his mind and respectable life; so that, having lived according to Your precepts, he may be held worthy of a place at Your right hand; and grant that he who has taken up the shorn hair in his hands may obtain the blessing of the just Simeon who raised You in his arms; and impart Your spiritual blessing to those who have gathered here. For You are blessed and sanctify everything, Christ our God, and we give glory to You, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

**People:** Amen.

*The newly ordained candle-bearer is clothed in the appropriate vesture, the tunic and phelonion, kissing the bishop's hand as he receives it. If he is a layman, he first receives from the bishop the cassock, kissing the bishop's hand.*

*A candle on a candlestick is brought to the bishop. He gives it to the candle-bearer, who takes it, kissing it and the bishop's hand.*

**Bishop:** Receive this candle and walk with it before the most-pure life-creating Mysteries of Christ. May it be pleasing to you to be like a candle shining on a candlestick. May your light be glorified before the people, and when they see your good deeds, may they glorify God our Father in Heaven. To Him be all glory now and ever and unto ages of ages.

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

**People:** Lord have mercy. *(After each petition)*

**Deacon:** For the peace from on high and for the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord.

-For peace in the whole world, for the well-being of the holy Churches of God, and for the union of all, let us pray to the Lord.

-For our bishop, *N.*, for his priesthood, protection, abiding, peace, health, salvation, and the work of his hands, let us pray to the Lord.

-For the servant of God, *N.*, who is now made to carry a candle before His Holy Mysteries, that having so longed, he may be strengthened and adorned, and that he be saved, let us pray to the Lord.

-Help, save, have mercy, and protect us, O God, by Your grace.

-Remembering our most holy, most pure, most blessed and glorious Lady, the Mother of God and ever-virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and one another, and our whole life, to Christ, our God.

**People:** To You, O Lord.

**Bishop:** For You are our sanctification, and we give glory to You, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto the ages of ages.

**People:** Amen.

**Bishop:** Christ God, our True Light, Who enlightens and sanctifies everyone who comes into the world, Yourself do now enlighten and sanctify your servant *N.* who walks in Your service, and mark on him the light of Your face, grant him to see the light of Your unapproachable glory, and that his feet may go in the way of Your commandants, through the prayers of Your most-pure Mother and of all the saints. Amen.

**Bishop:** Blessed be God. Behold, the servant of God, *N.*, is ordained a candle-bearer for the holy church of *N.*, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. Αξιως!

**People:** Αξιως! (*thrice*)

*The bishop then blesses and dismisses the candle-bearer.*

*If the Divine Liturgy will not be served, he gives the candlestick to a subdeacon, and removes the phelonian, and the dismissal is said.*

*If the Divine Liturgy will be served, the candle-bearer takes the lamp and stands before the iconostasis in the appointed place, holding the primary candle.*

### ***The Ordination of a Reader***

*Everything as shown above for candle-bearer, until:*

Come, let us adore the King, our God.

Come, let us adore Christ, the King and our God.

Come, let us adore and bow down to the only Lord Jesus Christ, the King and our God.

**And Psalm 48:** Hear this, all you peoples; give ear, all inhabitants of the world, both low and high, rich and poor together. My mouth shall speak wisdom; the meditation of my heart shall be understanding. I will incline my ear to a proverb; I will solve my riddle to the music of the harp. Why should I fear in times of trouble, when the iniquity of my persecutors surrounds me, those who trust in their wealth and boast of the abundance of their riches? Truly, no ransom avails for one's life, there is no price one can give to God for it. For the ransom of life is costly, and can never suffice, that one should live on forever and never see the grave. When we look at the wise, they die; fool and dolt perish together and leave their wealth to others. Their graves are their homes forever, their dwelling places to all generations, though they named lands their own. Mortals cannot

abide in their pomp; they are like the animals that perish. Such is the fate of the foolhardy, the end of those who are pleased with their lot. Like sheep they are appointed for Sheol; Death shall be their shepherd; straight to the grave they descend, and their form shall waste away; Sheol shall be their home. But God will ransom my soul from the power of Sheol, for he will receive me. Do not be afraid when some become rich, when the wealth of their houses increases. For when they die they will carry nothing away; their wealth will not go down after them. Though in their lifetime they count themselves happy—for you are praised when you do well for yourself—they will go to the company of their ancestors, who will never again see the light. Mortals cannot abide in their pomp; they are like the animals that perish.<sup>3</sup>

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, Glory be to You, O God. (*thrice*)

*If the Divine Liturgy will be served, then the candle-bearer who will be ordained a reader, standing in the middle of the temple wearing the tunic and phelonion, chants the troparia of the day.*

*If the Divine Liturgy will be served, he chants the following troparia:*

*To the Holy Apostles:* O holy Apostles, pray to the merciful God, that He may grant to our souls forgiveness of sins.

*To Saint Basil the Great:* Your word has gone forth throughout the world, and the world accepted it. With it You have instructed the world well; you have explained the nature of things, and have improved the conduct of man; O Royal Priesthood, holy Father Basil, pray to Christ God to save our souls.

*To Saint John Chrysostom:* From out of Your mouth the grace given you by God has shone forth like a beacon spreading its rays and illumining the world, bestowing upon the world the treasure of indifference towards money, and showing us the sublimity of humility. But as you continue to instruct us with your words, O Father John Chrysostom, so also pray to Christ our God, the Word, to save our souls.

*Glory be:*

*To Saint Gregory the Theologian:* The pastoral flute of your theology has confounded the trumpets of the rhetoricians, for having searched the depths of the Spirit, to you also was given the gift of eloquence. Therefore, O Father Gregory, pray to Christ our God to save our souls.

*Now and ever:*

*Theotokion:* O Lord, through the prayers of all your Saints and the Mother of God, grant us your peace and have mercy on us, since You alone are merciful.

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<sup>3</sup> Psalm 49 NRSVCE.

*After the troparia have been chanted, the candle-bearer is lead to the bishop by subdeacons. He bows before the bishop and the Holy Doors three times. He then stands before the bishop facing him and bows his head. With his hand, the bishop blesses the candidate on the head thrice, in the form of a cross, saying:*

**Bishop:** May the Lord bless you to be a reader of the holy church *N.* in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

**Deacon:** Let us pray to the Lord.

**People:** Lord have mercy.

**Bishop:** O Lord God Almighty, receive Your servant, *N.* and sanctify him; enable him with all wisdom and understanding to read and to study Your divine words, preserving his life spotless. Through the mercy and bounties, and loving kindness of Your only-begotten Son, with Whom You are blessed, together with Your all-holy, gracious, and life-giving Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

**People:** Amen.

*The bishop is handed the Book of the Epistles, who opens it on the head of the newly-ordained reader.*

**Bishop:** Receive this book of the holy epistles and divine readings of the Old Testament and other of church readings, and know that from this time you have the power to proclaim with all understanding and wisdom, adding nothing and taking away nothing, and to read the word of God with fear for the understanding and fruitfulness of all who listen. In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

*And he gives the book to the reader, who takes it, kissing it and the bishop's hand. The subdeacons lead the reader to the middle of the temple.*

**Deacon:** Let us be attentive!

**Bishop:** Peace be to all.

**Deacon:** Wisdom! Let us be attentive!

**Reader:** The Prokeimenon in the first tone. My mouth shall speak wisdom and the meditation of my heart will be understanding.<sup>4</sup>

**People:** My mouth shall speak wisdom and the meditation of my heart will be understanding.

**Reader:** Hear this, all you peoples; give ear, all inhabitants of the world.<sup>5</sup>

**People:** My mouth shall speak wisdom and the meditation of my heart will be understanding.

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<sup>4</sup> Psalm 49:1 *NRSVCE*.

<sup>5</sup> Psalm 49:2 *NRSVCE*.

**Reader:** My mouth shall speak wisdom

**People:** And the meditation of my heart will be understanding.

**Deacon:** Wisdom!

**Reader:** A reading from the Acts of the Holy Apostles. *Or*, from the Epistle of Saint Paul to the Romans, *or another*.

**Deacon:** Let us be attentive!

*And he reads a little wherever is indicated for him to read. And when he desires to do so, the Bishop interrupts him, saying:*

**Bishop:** Peace to you.

**Reader:** And to your spirit.

*And he intones the Alleluia, with the verse:* The mouth of the just speaks wisdom, and his tongue the truth.

*And after this is sung, he gives the Book of the Epistles to the subdeacons, who lead him to the bishop. And he stands there, facing East.*

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

**People:** Lord have mercy. (*After each petition*)

**Deacon:** For the peace from on high and for the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord.

-For peace in the whole world, for the well-being of the holy Churches of God, and for the union of all, let us pray to the Lord.

-For our bishop, *N.*, for his priesthood, protection, abiding, peace, health, salvation, and the work of his hands, let us pray to the Lord.

- For the servant of God *N.* now made a reader. That Our Lord God sanctify him and enable him with all wisdom and understanding to study and read the Divine Words, and preserve him in spotless life, let us pray to the Lord.

-Help, save, have mercy, and protect us, O God, by Your grace.

-Remembering our most holy, most pure, most blessed and glorious Lady, the Mother of God and ever-virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and one another, and our whole life, to Christ, our God.

**People:** To You, O Lord.

**Bishop:** For to You are due all glory, honor, and worship, to Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

**People:** Amen.

*The reader turns to the bishop, who blesses him as before, and declares:*

**Bishop:** Blessed be God. Behold, the servant of God, *N.*, is ordained a reader for the holy church of *N.*, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.  
Αξιως!

**People:** Αξιως! (*thrice*)

*The bishop then blesses and dismisses the reader.*

*If the Divine Liturgy will not be served, then the dismissal.*

### ***The Ordination of a Psalmist***

*Everything as shown above for candle-bearer, until:*

Come, let us adore the King, our God.

Come, let us adore Christ, the King and our God.

Come, let us adore and bow down to the only Lord Jesus Christ, the King and our God.

**And Psalm 46:** Clap your hands, all you peoples; shout to God with loud songs of joy. For the LORD, the Most High, is awesome, a great king over all the earth. He subdued peoples under us, and nations under our feet. He chose our heritage for us, the pride of Jacob whom he loves. God has gone up with a shout, the LORD with the sound of a trumpet. Sing praises to God, sing praises; sing praises to our King, sing praises. For God is the king of all the earth; sing praises with a psalm. God is king over the nations; God sits on his holy throne.<sup>6</sup>

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, Glory be to You, O God. (*thrice*)

*If the Divine Liturgy will be served, then the reader who will be ordained a psalmist, standing in the middle of the temple wearing the tunic and phelonion, chants the troparia of the day.*

*If the Divine Liturgy will be served, he chants the troparia shown above: to the Holy Apostles; to Saint Basil the Great; to Saint John Chrysostom; to Saint Gregory the Theologian; and, the Theotokion.*

*After the troparia have been chanted, the reader is lead to the bishop by subdeacons. He bows before the bishop and the Holy Doors three times. He then stands before the bishop facing him*

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<sup>6</sup> Psalm 47 NRSVCE.

*and bows his head. With his hand, the bishop blesses the reader on the head thrice, in the form of a cross, saying:*

**Bishop:** May the Lord bless you to be a psalmist of the holy church *N.* in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

**Deacon:** Let us pray to the Lord.

**People:** Lord have mercy.

**Bishop:** O Lord God Almighty, receive Your servant, *N.* and sanctify him; enable him with all wisdom and understanding to read and to study Your divine words, preserving his life spotless. Through the mercy and bounties, and loving kindness of Your only-begotten Son, with Whom You are blessed, together with Your all-holy, gracious, and life-giving Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

**People:** Amen.

*The bishop is handed the Psalter, who gives it to the candidate, saying:*

**Bishop:** Receive this book of psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs: know for yourself, that from this time will have the power with all attention and the fear of God to read and sing them in this church. In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

*The psalmist takes the Psalter, kissing it and the bishop's hand. He is then led by the subdeacons to the center of the temple, where he opens the Psalter and chants the first psalm: Blessed is the man, alleluia, who does not... to the end. And when he has finished chanting, he gives the Psalter to the subdeacons, who lead him to the bishop. He stands there, facing East.*

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

**People:** Lord have mercy. *(After each petition)*

**Deacon:** For the peace from on high and for the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord.

-For peace in the whole world, for the well-being of the holy Churches of God, and for the union of all, let us pray to the Lord.

-For our bishop, *N.*, for his priesthood, protection, abiding, peace, health, salvation, and the work of his hands, let us pray to the Lord.

- For the servant of God *N.* now made a psalmist. That Our Lord God sanctify him and enable him with all wisdom and understanding to study and read the Divine Words, and preserve him in spotless life, let us pray to the Lord.

-Help, save, have mercy, and protect us, O God, by Your grace.

-Remembering our most holy, most pure, most blessed and glorious Lady, the Mother of God and ever-virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and one another, and our whole life, to Christ, our God.

**People:** To You, O Lord.

**Bishop:** For to You are due all glory, honor, and worship, to Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

**People:** Amen.

*The psalmist turns to the bishop, who blesses him as before, and declares:*

**Bishop:** Blessed be God. Behold, the servant of God, *N.*, is ordained a psalmist for the holy church of *N.*, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.  
Αξιως!

**People:** Αξιως! (*thrice*)

*The bishop then blesses and dismisses the reader.*

*If the Divine Liturgy will not be served, then the dismissal.*

### ***The Ordination of a Subdeacon***

*Before the Divine Liturgy and after he has vested in all his episcopal vesture, the bishop stands before the Holy Table in the diakonikon, or in the center of the temple. The candidate who will be ordained a subdeacon is brought to him wearing the tunic and phelonion. And the bishop intones: Blessed is our God... And the usual beginning, until:*

Come, let us adore the King, our God.

Come, let us adore Christ, the King and our God.

Come, let us adore and bow down to the only Lord Jesus Christ, the King and our God.

**And Psalm 23:** The earth is the LORD's and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it; for he has founded it on the seas, and established it on the rivers. Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD and who shall stand in his holy place? Those who have clean hands and pure hearts, who do not lift up their souls to what is false and do not swear deceitfully. They will receive blessing from the LORD and vindication from the God of their salvation. Such is the company of those who seek him who seek the face of the God of Jacob. Lift up your heads, O gates and be lifted up, O ancient doors that the King of glory may come in. Who is the King of glory? The LORD, strong and mighty, the LORD, mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O gates! and be lifted up, O ancient doors! that the King of glory may come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory.<sup>7</sup>

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, Glory be to You, O God. (*thrice*)

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<sup>7</sup> Psalm 24 NRSVCE.



*The candidate stands before the bishop and bows his head. With his hand, the bishop blesses the candidate on the head thrice, in the form of a cross, saying:*

**Bishop:** In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

*The bishop places his right hand on the candidate's head.*

**Deacon:** Let us pray to the Lord.

**People:** Lord have mercy.

**Bishop:** O Lord, our God, Who through one and the same Spirit, distribute Your gifts to each of those whom You have chosen; Who have given Your Church different Orders and different degrees of ministry for the service of your holy and pure Mysteries; Who in your unspeakable foreknowledge foreordained that Your servant, *N.*, be made worthy to serve in Your Holy Church, we humbly beseech You, keep him above reproach in all things. Grant him to love the beauty of Your house; to watch over the doors of your holy temple, and to light the lampstand of the dwelling place of Your glory. Plant him in Your Holy Church like a fruitful olive tree, that he may bear the fruit of righteousness. Render him perfect, so that in the time of Your coming he may receive the reward of those who strive at all times to please You. For Yours 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 the ages of ages.

**People:** Amen.

*And the bishop removes from him the phelonion and tunic. And to the bishop is handed the sticharion and sticharion-belt. The bishop blesses them, and clothes the newly-ordained subdeacon in them. When he receives them, the subdeacon kisses the vestments and the bishop's hand. And he stands in front of the bishop facing East.*

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

**People:** Lord have mercy. *(After each petition)*

**Deacon:** For the peace from on high and for the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord.

-For peace in the whole world, for the well-being of the holy Churches of God, and for the union of all, let us pray to the Lord.

-For our bishop, *N.*, for his priesthood, protection, abiding, peace, health, salvation, and the work of his hands, let us pray to the Lord.

-For the servant of God *N.*, who is now being made a subdeacon for the service of holy and immaculate mysteries in His holy church, let us pray to the Lord.

-That the Master and lover of mankind, keep him above reproach in everything, and grant him to love the beauty of His house and to stand before the doors of the church of His holy glory, let us pray to the Lord.

-Help, save, have mercy, and protect us, O God, by Your grace.

-Remembering our most holy, most pure, most blessed and glorious Lady, the Mother of God and ever-virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and one another, and our whole life, to Christ, our God.

**People:** To You, O Lord.

**Bishop:** For You are our sanctification, and we give glory to You, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto the ages of ages.

**People:** Amen.

*The subdeacon turns to the bishop, who blesses him as before, and declares:*

**Bishop:** Blessed be God. Behold, the servant of God, *N.*, is ordained a subdeacon for the holy church of *N.*, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.  
Αξιως!

**People:** Αξιως! (*thrice*)

*A ewer with water, and a towel are then brought to the bishop. He first takes the towel and places it on the shoulders of the subdeacon, then the bishop gives the bowl with water to the subdeacon. The subdeacon takes them, then kisses the bowl, the ewer and the bishop's hand. Then he pours water over the bishop's hands, saying three times: Those who are faithful. The bishop washes his hands, praying the usual prayer: I will wash my hands among the innocent... He blesses the subdeacon, and dismisses him, and begins the Divine Liturgy.*

*The subdeacon takes the ewer and basin to the prothesis room, where he leaves them. And he stands among the subdeacons to serve the bishop.*

*At the Cherubic Hymn, the subdeacon takes up the ewer and basin, leaves the Holy Place, and stands before the Holy Doors. There he washes the bishop's hands, saying "Those who are faithful" three times. And the bishop blesses the water three times, and anoints the subdeacon's eyes, nose, ears, and lips with the blessed water. And the subdeacon enters the Holy Place, and walks in the Great Entrance after the last of the other ministers carrying the Holy Water. And when the Bishop has received the gifts, the subdeacon brings the blessed water to the right and left klirosi, and to all the people, who anoint themselves with it. And he enters the Holy Place, and pours out the blessed water in the sacristy drain. And he receives the bishop's blessing and stands and serves in the Holy Place with the other subdeacons.*