

HOLY ORDERS



Name: _____

The Story of Simon

Simon was a married man, a fisherman by trade. He lived an ordinary life fishing with his brother Andrew daily to provide food and supplies for his family. It had been a long day, and they hadn't caught many fish. They were tired and hungry too. They were out on the sea, in their fishing boat casting nets when a man called to them from the shore inviting them to go with him. Both men, intrigued by the invitation, left their nets and boat, and went with him. This is the start of a three-year friendship.

Simon invited this man back to his house for dinner, after all, he was a stranger to town. His mother-in-law was under the weather, and so she couldn't help with the dinner preparations. This man went in to visit with her to show his care for the sick, and she came out healed, ready to serve Simon's guest. Simon knew this man was different - he felt there was a mystery about this man. He decided to leave all he had to follow him as a student, as a friend and as a witness.

To Simon's amazement, this man was loved by many, and people would follow him wherever they went. He gathered a group of students around him, who would listen to his stories, learn about God, and wonder in awe at the greatness of this man. He caused the blind to see, the deaf to hear; he even raised the dead. To many he was a prophet, some even said he was one of the Biblical prophets of old... but Simon knew better.

One day their group was walking in the rocky terrain, and he asked them, "Who do people say that I am", and Simon in faith and conviction said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God". And he was right. Jesus though he was a man, was God incarnate. Jesus blessed him and said, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter (Rock), and upon this rock (Peter) I will build my church, and the powers of hell shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven." This changed Simon's life - and name!

Simon was called at first to be a follower of Our Lord, to be a disciple. Jesus called him not only to be a priest (as he would at the Last Supper), but to be the head of his Church on earth, the pope! Simon, now Peter, was not perfect, in fact he had many flaws. He tried to walk on water, but sank because of lack of faith. He was rebuked for trying to get in the way of God's will. He denied the Lord three times! Yet, he loved Jesus, and served him faithfully until his death on a cross - only he died upside-down, because he knew he was not worthy of the same death that Our Lord suffered.

God called a fisherman from a boat and made him a fisher of men, the pope of his Church. Some men are called still today by our Lord to serve His Church - to feed the sheep of the Good Shepherd. Jesus calls all of us to a vocation - and some are called to Holy Orders. Though we are imperfect, we are asked to respond in faith and conviction, to recognize his voice, and answer his call in humility and simplicity, like this fisherman.

The Story of Simon - Questions

1. Who was Simon?
2. What kind of man was Simon?
3. What happened that changed Simon's life?
4. How did Simon know who Jesus was?
5. What was the blessing Jesus bestowed on Simon?
6. What does "Peter" mean?
7. What special call would Peter have?
8. Did Simon plan to serve God in this way?
9. Why was Simon called by Christ?
10. Are we called too? Are some today still called to serve Christ in Holy Orders?

Sacrament of Holy Orders

Holy Orders is the Sacrament Christ instituted at the Last Supper: “And He took bread, and when He had given thanks He broke it and gave it to them, saying, “This is My body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of Me.” (Luke 22:19).

At the Last Supper Christ, the perfect High Priest, offered to God the Spotless Lamb of the Sacrifice - Himself. This sacrifice established the new and everlasting covenant - a sacrifice that would be lived in a bloody manner the next day on the Cross. At the Last Supper, He gave his power to the apostles to consecrate the Eucharist and bring to present (remember) the Sacrifice of Christ.

Those who receive the Sacrament of Holy Orders are consecrated in Christ’s name (CCC 1539) to feed the Church by the Word (Bible and Eucharist) and grace of God. Holy Orders is the sacrament through which the mission Christ entrusted to His apostles continues to be exercised in the Church until the end of time (CCC 1536).

There are three degrees of Holy Orders in the apostolic ministry: episcopate (bishops), presbyterate (priests) and diaconate (deacon) (CCC 1554). Ordination to Holy Orders is a religious and liturgical act of consecration (CCC 1538) which integrates a man into the order of episcopate, presbyterate or diaconate. (CCC 1538). Holy Orders confers the gift of the Holy Spirit and permits exercise of a sacred power which can come only from Christ Himself through His Church through the laying on of hands by the bishop (CCC 1538).

In the Old Testament the chosen people, as God’s inheritance, were appointed to act on behalf of men in relation to God to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. In the New Covenant, Christ is the one mediator between God and men, offering the unique sacrifice of the Cross (CCC 1544). Only Christ is the true priest, and all others are His ministers (CCC 1545).

The Holy Orders are at the service of the common priesthood and is directed at unfolding the baptismal grace of all Christians (CCC 1547). In the Ecclesial service of ordained ministers, it is Christ Himself who is present to His Church (In Persona Christi) (CCC 1548). The Priest is Christ’s instrument, and also represents the Church before God (CCC 1552).

The ordination of bishops confers the fullness of the Sacrament of Holy Orders (Thus he can ordain priests). Bishops have an unbroken succession going back to the beginning of the Church and are transmitters of the apostolic line (CCC 1555). They pass on Holy Orders through the laying on of hands and calling down of the Holy Spirit (CCC 1556). Bishops share in the high priesthood of Christ (CCC 1557). Several bishops together consecrate a new bishop, invited to join the “College of Bishops” by the Bishop of Rome, the Pope (CCC 1559).

In the line of the apostles, bishops hold the office of sanctifying, teaching and ruling (CCC 1558). Bishops are entrusted the pastoral care of the diocese. They witness to Christ in their vocation as head of their diocese.

Sacrament of Holy Orders - Questions

1. Who instituted Holy Orders and when?
2. How was the Sacrament of Holy Orders instituted?
3. How is the priesthood of Jesus different from the priesthood of the ministers of Christ?
4. What does Jesus as the High Priest sacrifice?
5. What do priests today sacrifice?
6. What does it mean for Jesus to work in and through the priest?
7. What are the three degrees of Holy Orders, and what differentiates them?
DIACONATE:

PRESBYTRATE:

EPISCOPATE:
8. Who does the priest represent?
9. What does it mean for the bishop to have the fullness of the priesthood?
10. What is apostolic succession?

Bishop of Rome, the Pope

The Bishop of Rome is St. Peter's Successor (CCC 880). Christ established St. Peter to be head of His Church saying: "You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the powers of death shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven" (Mt. 16:18-19). Jesus also appeared to St. Peter after the Resurrection, telling St. Peter three times to "feed my sheep" instituting Peter as pastor or shepherd of His Church (Jn. 21:15-19). From Scripture, it is clear that Jesus had chosen twelve men and placed Peter at the head (CCC 880).



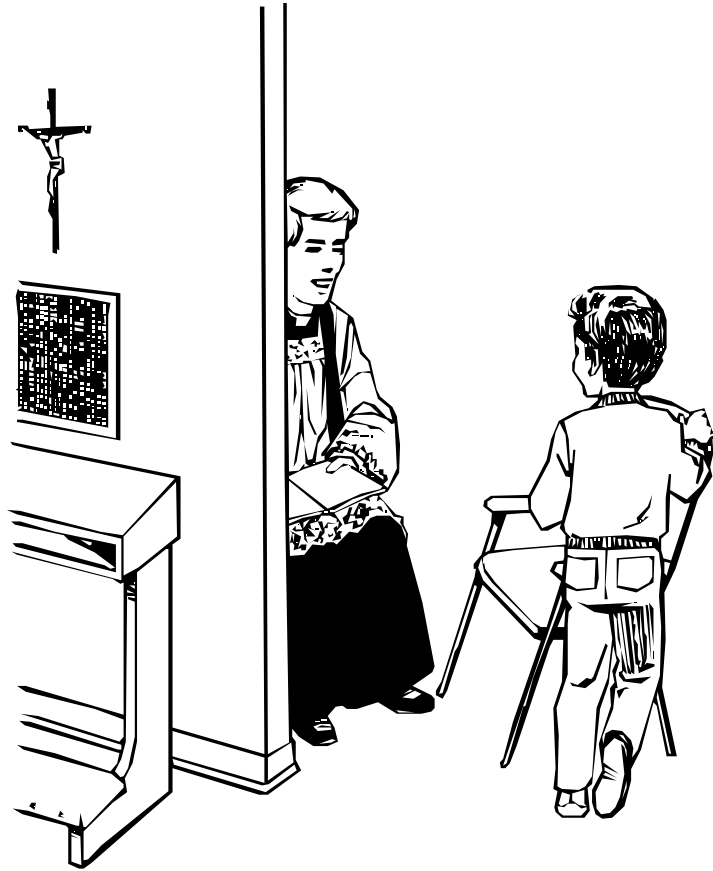
The Pope is the Vicar of Christ (Christ's visible representative here on earth). He is pastor of the entire Church and has full, supreme and universal powers over the whole Church (CCC 882).

To lead the Church of Christ faithful in Church teachings on matters of faith and morals, the Pope has the charism of infallibility. This means that He will be prevented from teaching error. When the Pope teaches faith and morals, and speaks as supreme pastor and teacher of all the faithful, he is teaching infallibility.

The magisterium, the teaching and ruling office of the Church - personified in the Pope and all the bishops united with the Pope, may also exercise infallibility in two ways: ordinary and extraordinary. Ordinary infallibility is when the bishops throughout the world uphold the teachings of the Catholic Faith in union with the Pope. Extraordinary Infallibility is when all the Bishops of the world meet with the Pope, or with the Pope's authority, and define teachings of the Church based on faith and morals. The Pope is essential to the infallible charism of the Church.

The bishops are ordained to the fullness of the priesthood in the Episcopal college in union with the Bishop of Rome (CCC 887). The Bishop is a steward of grace for the entire priesthood (CCC 893). The College of Bishops with the Pope exercise infallibility through ecumenical councils and by upholding the Church's teachings in union with Rome (CCC 891). Bishops and their helpers, the priests, sanctify the Church through their prayers and work, by ministry of word, sacraments and example. This is symbolized by the Book of the Gospels (the word of God), the ring (authority), mitre and crozier (pastor or shepherd) he receives at his ordination.

The Presytrate - The Priests



Priests are the co-workers of the bishops. The function of the bishop's ministry was handed over in a subordinate degree to priests so that they could be appointed in the order of the priesthood and be co-workers of the episcopal order (CCC 1562). Priests are consecrated to preach the Gospel, shepherd the faithful as well as celebrate Divine Worship (Mass) and the Sacrament of Penance (CCC 1564). His supreme dignity is in celebrating the Mass, where he makes present the Body and Blood of Christ in the person of Christ (In person Christi) (CCC 1566). This is symbolized in the reception of the chalice and patten at his ordination (CCC 1574). A priest takes promises of obedience to his Bishops (CCC 1567).

The Diaconate - The Deacons

The Deacon is ordained to the order of service, but not to the priesthood. He is ordained by the laying on of hands to the diakonia. The Deacon assists bishops and priests in the Divine Mysteries, at the Eucharist He may proclaim the Gospel and assist with the liturgy. This is symbolized by the Gospels he receives at his ordination (CCC 1574). He may distribute Holy Communion, assist at blessings of marriages, presiding at funeral and performing ministries of charity. His ministry is in serving the faithful, especially the poor.



Holy Orders

It should be noticed that Holy Orders may be received by MEN ONLY. This is because Jesus chose twelve men as His apostles, and it was the apostles with whom He celebrated the Last Supper. It was to the Apostles that Jesus gave the power of Holy Orders, and this has been upheld in Tradition for 2000 years. The Church does not have the authority to change this teaching or Tradition.

Make a chart showing the power of the priesthood coming from Jesus, bestowed on the apostles, and the primacy of Peter. Next show the apostolic succession of the bishops, and the ordination of priests and deacons as the bishops helpers.

Who can receive Holy Orders?

1. One must be called by God to receive Holy Orders. He cannot choose to become a priest, but is faithful to a call from God. (CCC 1578).
2. Only men can receive Holy Orders (CCC 1577). This is following the Tradition and teaching example of Christ who chose twelve men to be His apostles and first priests and bishops.
3. The man must be baptized (CCC 1577)
4. The man (in the Roman/Latin rite) must choose to be celibate for the Kingdom of heaven. A deacon may be married before he receives the order of the diaconate. He cannot marry after his ordination. However, priests and bishops may not marry.

The Rite of Holy Orders

When there is an ordination, it is a great Liturgical celebration. As many faithful as possible should be present (CCC 1572). It is usually held on Sunday at the Cathedral of the Diocese (The Bishop's parish).

The actual sign of the Sacrament is the anointing with Chrism and laying on of hands by the Bishop, as he invokes the Holy Spirit to come down upon the man being ordained.

During the Rite, the candidate for ordination is presented to the faithful who "elect" him, usually by applauding him (CCC 1574). The bishop will then give him instruction, and there will be an examination of the candidate.

The candidate will prostrate himself, during a recession of the Liturgy of the Saints. The Bishop then anoints the candidate with chrism (consecrated balsam and olive oil), laying his hands upon him and invoke the coming of the Holy Spirit (epiclesis). When a bishop is ordained, several bishops will lay hands upon him.

The newly ordained then receives the sign of his degree of ordination. A bishop will receive the book of the Gospels, a ring, a mitre (hat) and a crosier (staff). A priest will receive a patten and chalice. A deacon will receive the book of the Gospels (CCC 1574).

The priest will usually not celebrate his first Mass until a few days after his ordination, and usually it is in his home parish, before he is assigned to a parish. When a priest is ordained, a plenary indulgence may be obtained by kissing his hands, also one may be received by receiving his blessing during the first year of his ordination. It is very common when a bishop is ordained, for people to kiss his ring. Blessings are bestowed by all three orders upon the day of their ordination (note, a deacon may only give blessings to more than one person at a time).

The Effects of Holy Orders

- 1) The Sacrament of Holy Orders will place an indelible character or seal upon the soul of the ordained. He is marked as a minister of God (CCC 1581).
- 2) The Sacrament of Holy Orders confers the grace of the Holy Spirit (CCC 1585).
- 3) Bishops will receive the sacramental grace to guide and defend the Church as father and pastor. He will be given a love especially for the poor, sick and needy. He will also be given the grace to be a model for all in his diocese (CCC 1586).
- 4) Priests will receive the sacramental grace to proclaim the gospel and fulfill the ministry of the word of truth, and to offer special gifts and sacrifices (CCC 1587).
- 5) Deacons will receive the sacramental grace to be dedicated to the People of God in service of liturgy and works of charity (CCC 1588).



Chart the similarities and differences between the different levels of Holy Orders.

BISHOP	PRIEST	DEACON
Service to the Church		
Sign of Sacrament (form and matter) and symbols received		
Who can receive?		
Effects of Sacrament		

