

Ordination to the Priesthood



2. Investiture with Priestly Vestments:

“Receive the yolk of the Lord; for His yolk is sweet and His burden light.”

“Receive the priestly vestment, by which charity is signified: for God is powerful to increase unto thee charity and perfection of work.”



3. Anointing of Hands:

“Vouchsafe, O Lord, to consecrate and sanctify these hands by this unction and by our ✠ blessing...that whatsoever they may bless may be blessed, and whatsoever they may consecrate be consecrated and sanctified, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.”

1. *The Priesthood: The third major order is the priesthood. It is the greatest gift that can be bestowed on a man in a state of grace. It is a sacrament by which he becomes ‘another Christ’. By receiving this sacrament, a man has a character imprinted on his soul which assimilates him to Christ, the eternal High Priest, giving him power over the physical Body of Christ by offering the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and giving him power over the Mystical Body of Christ by being able to forgive sins and perform constitutive blessings.*

The first part of the ceremony—the ‘Call’ of the candidates by the archdeacon, the ‘Postulation’ in which the bishop is requested to ordain the candidates, the ‘Scrutiny’ by which the bishop verifies that the candidates are worthy, the ‘Consultation’ of the people to see if there are any known impediments, the ‘Instruction’ of the candidates by the Bishop and the ‘Prostration and Litany of the Saints’—is common with the ordination to the diaconate. After the epistle of the ordination Mass, but before the last Alleluia of the Gradual, the most important part of the ceremony commences: the transformation of the ordinands into “priests forever according to the order of Melchisedech.”

The matter of the sacrament of Orders is the imposition of hands by the Bishop. The form of the sacrament are particular words of the “Order Preface” which are sung immediately after the imposi-

“We beseech Thee, Almighty Father, invest these Thy servants with the dignity of the priesthood. Renew in their hearts the spirit of holiness, that they may hold the office, next to ours in importance, which they have received from Thee, O Lord, and, by the example of their lives, indicate a rule of conduct.”

All the other ceremonies are not necessary for the validity of the sacrament, but they have been part of the ordination ceremony for at least 1000 years to express more fully what is bestowed by the sacrament.

tion of hands:

Ordination to the Priesthood



4. Touching the chalice filled with wine and paten carrying an unconsecrated host:

“Receive the power to offer sacrifice to God and to celebrate Mass for the living as well as for the dead. In the name of the Lord.”



5. The First Mass: The first Mass of the newly ordained priest is the Mass of his ordination (not the day after). Kneeling before a missal and accompanied by an assistant priest, each new priest pronounces in a low voice the prayers of the Mass from the offertory until the Post Communion. At the words of consecration, each new priest raises his right hand as he exercises his supernatural power of consecration for the first time.



6. Unfolding the chasuble: After the ablutions following Holy Communion, the ordination ceremony continues with a profession of faith and then the symbolic bestowal of the power to forgive sins:

“Receive the Holy Ghost; whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; whose sins you shall retain, they are retained.” And then unfolding the chasuble, **“May the Lord clothe you with the robe of innocence.”**

8. Kiss of Peace:

“Pax Domini sit semper tecum.”
“Amen.”

9. Conclusion: The ceremony concludes with a final instruction, a solemn blessing, the concluding prayers of the Mass, the last blessing, an admonition and, of course, a heartfelt Te Deum.



7. Promise of obedience:

“Do you promise to the Bishop, your Ordinary, reverence and obedience”

