

The Ordinal

being the Form and Manner of
Making, Ordaining, and Consecrating
Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons
according to the
Order of the Reformed Episcopal Church

THE PREFACE

IT is evident unto all men, diligently reading Holy Scripture and ancient Authors, that from the Apostles' time there have been these Orders of Ministers in Christ's Church; Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons. Which Offices were evermore had in such reverend estimation, that no man might presume to execute any of them, except he were first called, tried, examined, and known to have such qualities as are requisite for the same; and also by public prayer, with imposition of hands, were approved and admitted thereunto by lawful Authority. And therefore, to the intent that these Orders may be continued, and reverently used and esteemed in this Church, no man shall be accounted or taken to be a lawful Bishop, Presbyter, or Deacon in this Church, or suffered to execute any of the said functions, except he be called, tried, examined, and admitted thereunto, according to the Form hereafter following, or has had formerly Episcopal Consecration or Ordination.

And the Bishop, knowing either by himself, or by sufficient testimony, any person to be a man of virtuous conversation, and without crime; and, after examination and trial, finding him sufficiently instructed in the Holy Scripture, and otherwise learned as the Canons require, may, at the times appointed, or else, on urgent occasion, upon some other day, in the face of the Church, admit him a Deacon, in such manner and form as follows.

The Form and Manner of Making Deacons

¶ When the day appointed by the Bishop is come, there shall be a Sermon or Exhortation, declaring the duty and Office of such as come to be admitted Deacons; how necessary that Order is in the Church of Christ, and also, how the people ought to esteem them in their Office.

¶ Then, the people standing, a Presbyter shall present unto the Bishop, sitting in his chair near to the holy Table, such as desire to be ordained Deacons, each of them being properly vested, saying,

REVEREND Father in God, I present unto you *these persons* present, to be admitted *Deacons*.

¶ The Bishop.

TAKE heed that the *persons*, whom ye present unto us, be apt and meet, for *their* learning and godly conversation, to exercise *their* Ministry duly, to the honour of God and the edifying of his Church.

¶ The Presbyter shall answer,

IHAVE inquired concerning *them*, and also examined *them*, and think *them* so to be.

¶ Then the Bishop shall say unto the people,

BRETHREN, if there be any of you who knoweth any impediment, or notable crime, in *any of these persons* presented to be ordered *Deacons*, for the which he ought not to be admitted to that Office, let him come forth in the Name of God, and show what the crime or impediment is.

¶ And if any great crime or impediment be objected, the Bishop shall cease from Ordering that person, until such time as the party accused shall be found clear of that crime.

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¶ Then the Bishop (commending such as shall be found meet to be ordained, to the prayers of the congregation) shall, with the Clergy and people present, say the Litany.

¶ And note, That after the Suffrage, *That it may please thee to illuminate all Bishops*, etc., shall be said the following Suffrage.

THAT it may please thee to bless *these thy servants*, now to be admitted to the Order of Deacons, and to pour thy grace upon *them*; that *they* may duly execute *their* Office, to the edifying of thy Church, and to the glory of thy holy Name.

¶ And note further, That in the discretion of the Bishop, instead of the Litany appointed, may be said the Litany for Ordinations.

¶ Then shall be said the Service for the Communion, with the Collect, Epistle, and Gospel, as follows.

The Collect

ALMMIGHTY God, who by thy divine providence hast appointed diverse Orders of Ministers in thy Church, and didst inspire thine Apostles to choose into the Order of Deacons the first Martyr Saint Stephen, with others; Mercifully behold *these thy servants* now called to the like Office and Administration: so replenish *them* with the truth of thy doctrine, and adorn *them* with innocency of life, that, both by word and good example, *they* may faithfully serve thee in this Office, to the glory of thy Name, and the edification of thy Church; through the merits of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, now and for ever. *Amen.*

The Epistle. 1 Timothy 3:8-13

LIKEWISE must the deacons be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless. Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, rul-

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ing their children and their own houses well. For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

¶ Or this.

The Epistle. Acts 6:2-7

THEN the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch: whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them. And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.

¶ Then, the people being seated, the Bishop seated in his chair shall examine every one of those who are to be Ordered, standing before the Bishop, in the presence of the people, after this manner following.

DO you trust that you are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon you this Office and Ministration, to serve God for the promoting of his glory, and the edifying of his people?

Answer. I trust so.

Bishop. Do you think that you are truly called, according to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, and according to the Canons of this Church, to the Ministry of the same?

Answer. I think so.

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Bishop. Do you unfeignedly believe all the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments and are you persuaded that the Holy Scriptures contain all Doctrine required as necessary for eternal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ?

Answer. I do believe them and am so persuaded.

Bishop. Will you diligently read the same unto the people assembled in the church where you shall be appointed to serve?

Answer. I will.

Bishop. It appertaineth to the Office of a Deacon, in the church where he shall be appointed to serve, to assist the Presbyter in Divine Service, and specially when he ministereth the Holy Communion, and to help him in the distribution thereof; and to read Holy Scriptures and Homilies in the church; and to instruct the youth in the Catechism; in the absence of the Presbyter to baptize infants; and to preach, if he be admitted thereto by the Bishop. And furthermore, it is his Office, where provision is so made, to search for the sick, poor, and impotent people of the parish, that they may be relieved with the alms of the parishioners, or others. Will you do this gladly and willingly?

Answer. I will so do, by the help of God.

Bishop. Will you apply all your diligence to frame and fashion your own *lives*, and the lives of your *families*, according to the Doctrine of Christ; and to make both *yourselves* and them, as much as in you lieth, wholesome examples of the flock of Christ?

Answer. I will so do, the Lord being my helper.

Bishop. Will you reverently obey your Bishop, and other chief Ministers of the Church, and those to whom the charge and government over you is committed,

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following with a glad mind and will their godly admonitions?

Answer. I will endeavour so to do, the Lord being my helper.

¶ Then, the people standing, the Bishop shall lay his hands severally upon the head of every one to be made Deacon, humbly kneeling before the Bishop, and shall say,

TAKE thou Authority to execute the Office of a Deacon in the Church of God committed unto thee; In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

¶ Then shall the Bishop deliver to every one of them the Bible, saying,

TAKE thou Authority to read the Gospel in the Church of God, and to preach the same, if thou be thereto licensed by the Bishop himself.

¶ If the Deacons are to be vested, each one, with a stole, the following words shall be said by the Bishop immediately after the presentation of the Bible, *Receive and wear this stole, as a sign and symbol of the yoke of Christ, and be a faithful servant and Deacon in the Household of God.*

¶ Then one of them, appointed by the Bishop, shall read the Gospel.

The Gospel. St. Luke 12:35-38

LET your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately. Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them. And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants.

¶ Then shall the Bishop proceed in the Communion; and all who are Ordered shall tarry, and receive the Holy Communion the same day, with the Bishop.

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¶ The Communion ended, after the last Collect, and immediately before the Benediction, shall be said this Collect following.

ALmighty God, Giver of all good things, who of thy great goodness hast vouchsafed to accept and take *these thy servants* unto the Office of Deacons in thy Church; Make *them*, we beseech thee, O Lord, to be modest, humble, and constant in *their* Ministration, to have a ready will to observe all spiritual discipline; that *they*, having always the testimony of a good conscience, and continuing ever stable and strong in thy Son Christ, may so well behave *themselves* in this inferior Office, that *they* may be found worthy to be called unto the higher Ministries in thy Church; through the same thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and honour, world without end. *Amen.*

THE peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord: And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be amongst you, and remain with you always. *Amen.*

¶ And here it must be declared unto the Deacon, that he must continue in that Office of a Deacon the space of a whole year, (except for reasonable causes it shall otherwise seem good unto the Bishop,) to the intent he may be perfect and well expert in the things appertaining to the ecclesiastical administration. In executing whereof if he be found faithful and diligent, he may be admitted by his Diocesan to the Order of Presbyter, at the times appointed in the Canon; or else, on urgent occasion, upon some other day, in the face of the Church, in such manner and form as hereafter follows.