

An Office of Institution of Ministers into Parishes or Churches

- ¶ The Bishop having received due notice of the election of a Minister into a parish or church, as prescribed by the Canons of the Reformed Episcopal Church, and being satisfied that the person chosen is a qualified Minister of this Church, may proceed to institute him into the parish.
- ¶ The following Office may be used with the Order for the Holy Communion, or at Morning Prayer or Evening Prayer, or separately.
- ¶ And note, That Psalm 122, Psalm 132, or Psalm 133 may be read; and further, That the appointed Lessons shall be Ezekiel 33:1-10 and St. John 10:1-18.
- ¶ In any Diocese, the concluding paragraph in the following Letter of Institution may be omitted, where it interferes with the usages, laws, or charters of the church in the same.

To our well-beloved in Christ, *N.N.*, Presbyter, Greeting.

WE do by these presents give and grant unto you, in whose learning, diligence, sound doctrine, and prudence, we do fully confide, our License and Authority to perform the Office of a Presbyter, in the parish (*or church*) of _____. And also hereby do institute you into said parish, (*or church,*) possessed of full power to perform every act of pastoral function among the people of the same; you continuing in communion with us, and complying with the rubrics and canons of the Church, and with such lawful directions as you shall at any time receive from us.

And as a canonically instituted Presbyter into the Office of Rector of _____ parish, (*or church,*) you are faithfully to feed that portion of the flock of Christ which is now entrusted to you; not as a man-pleaser, but as continually bearing in mind that you are accountable to us here, and

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to the Chief Bishop and Sovereign Judge of all, hereafter.

And as the Lord hath ordained that they who serve at the altar should live of the things belonging to the altar; so we authorize you to claim and enjoy all the accustomed temporalities appertaining to your cure, until some urgent reason or reasons occasion a wish in you, or in the congregation committed to your charge, to bring about a separation, and dissolution of all pastoral relation, between you and them; of all which you will give us due notice; and in case of any difference between you and your congregation, as to a separation and dissolution of all pastoral connection between you and them, we, your Bishop, with the advice of our Presbyters, are to be the ultimate arbiter and judge.

In witness whereof, we have hereunto affixed our episcopal seal and signature, at _____, this _____day of _____, A. D. _____, and in the _____year of our consecration.

¶ At the time designated for the new Incumbent's Institution, the Bishop, or the Institutor appointed by him, attended by the new Incumbent, and by the other Clergy present, shall enter the Chancel. Then, all the Clergy present standing in the Chancel or Choir, except the Bishop, or the Presbyter who acts as Institutor, who shall go within the rails of the holy Table; the wardens (or, in case of their necessary absence, two members of the vestry) standing on the right and left of the Table, without the rails; the senior warden (or the member of the vestry supplying his place) holding the keys of the church in his hand, in open view, the Bishop, or the Presbyter who acts as the Institutor, shall say,

DEARLY beloved in the Lord, we have assembled for the purpose of instituting the Rev. *N.N.* into this parish, (*or* church,) as Presbyter and Rector of the same; and we are possessed of your vote that he has been so elected; as also of the prescribed Letter of Institution. But if any of you can show just cause why he may not be instituted, we proceed no further, because we would not that an unworthy person should minister among you.

¶ If any objection be offered, the Bishop, or the Presbyter who acts as the Institutor, shall judge whether it afford just cause to suspend the Service.

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- ¶ No objection being offered, or the Institutor choosing to go on with the Service, then shall be read the Letter of Institution.
- ¶ And then shall the senior warden (or the member of the vestry supplying his place) present the keys of the church to the new Incumbent, saying,

IN the name and behalf of ____ parish (*or church*) I do receive and acknowledge you, the Rev. *N.N.*, as Presbyter and Rector of the same; and in token thereof, give into your hands the keys of this church.

- ¶ Then the new Incumbent shall say,

I *N.N.* receive these keys of the house of God at your hands, as the pledges of my Institution, and of your parochial recognition, and promise to be a faithful shepherd over you; In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

- ¶ Here the Instituting Minister shall begin the Office, saying,

The Lord be with you.

Answer. And with thy spirit.

Minister. Let us pray.

DIRECT us, O Lord, in all our doings, with thy most gracious favour, and further us with thy continual help, that in all our works begun, continued, and ended in thee, we may glorify thy holy Name, and finally, by thy mercy, obtain everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who hath taught us to pray unto thee, O Almighty Father, in his prevailing Name and words,

OUR Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy 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 evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

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¶ Then shall the Institutor receive the Incumbent within the rails of the holy Table, and present him the Bible, Book of Common Prayer, and Books of Canons of the General Council and Diocese, saying,

RECEIVE these Books; and let them be the rule of thy conduct in dispensing the divine Word, in leading the Devotions of the people, and in exercising the Discipline of the Church; and be thou in all things a pattern to the flock committed to thy care.

¶ Then shall be said or sung *Exsurgat Deus*, Psalm 68, or *Judica me, Domine*, Psalm 26.

Minister. The Law was given by Moses;

People. But Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ:

Minister and people. Who is God over all, blessed
for evermore. Amen.

Minister. Let us pray.

MOST gracious Father, the Giver of all good and perfect gifts, who of thy wise providence hast appointed diverse Orders in thy Church; Give thy grace, we beseech thee, to thy servant, to whom the charge of this congregation is now committed; and so replenish him with the truth of thy doctrine, and endue him with innocency of life, that he may faithfully serve before thee, to the glory of thy great Name, and the benefit of thy holy Church; through Jesus Christ, our only Mediator and Redeemer. *Amen.*

OHOLY Jesus, who hast purchased to thyself a universal Church, and hast promised to be with the Ministers of Historic Succession to the end of the world; Be graciously pleased to bless the ministry and service of him who is now appointed to offer the sacrifices of prayer and praise to thee in this house, which is called by thy Name. May the words of his mouth, and the meditation of his heart, be always acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, our Strength and our Redeemer. *Amen.*

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O GOD, Holy Ghost, Sanctifier of the faithful, visit, we pray thee, this congregation with thy love and favour; enlighten their minds more and more with the light of the everlasting Gospel; graft in their hearts a love of the truth; increase in them true religion; nourish them with all goodness; and of thy great mercy keep them in the same, O blessed Spirit, whom, with the Father and the Son together, we worship and glorify as one God, world without end. *Amen.*

Benediction

THE God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, the great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant; Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight; through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. *Amen.*

¶ Then shall the Instituted Minister kneel at the holy Table, to present his Supplication for himself, in this form.

O LORD my God! I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof; yet thou hast honoured thy servant with appointing him to stand in thy House, and to serve at thy holy Table. To thee and to thy service I devote myself, body and soul, with all my powers and faculties. Fill my memory with the words of thy Law; enlighten mine understanding with the illumination of the Holy Ghost; and may all the wishes and desires of my will center in what thou hast commanded. And, to make me instrumental in promoting the salvation of the people now committed to my charge, grant that I may faithfully administer thy holy Sacraments, and by my life and doctrine set forth thy true and lively Word. Be ever with me in the performance of all the duties of my ministry; in prayer, to quicken my devotion; in praises, to heighten my love and gratitude; and in preaching, to give a readiness of thought and expression suitable to the clearness and excellency of thy holy Word. Grant this for the sake of Jesus Christ thy Son our Saviour. *Amen.*

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¶ The Instituted Minister, standing up, shall say,

The Lord be with you.

Answer. And with thy spirit.

Minister. Let us pray.

O ALMIGHTY God, who hast built thy Church upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone; Grant that, by the operation of the Holy Ghost, all Christians may be so joined together in unity of spirit, and in the bond of peace, that they may be an holy temple acceptable unto thee. And especially to this congregation present, give the abundance of thy grace; that with one heart they may desire the prosperity of thy holy Apostolic Church, and with one mouth may profess the faith once delivered to the saints. Defend them from the sins of heresy and schism; let not the foot of pride come nigh to hurt them, nor the hand of the ungodly to cast them down. And grant that the course of this world may be so peaceably ordered by thy governance, that thy Church may joyfully serve thee in all godly quietness; that so they may walk in the ways of truth and peace, and at last be numbered with thy saints in glory everlasting; through the merits of the same thy blessed Son Jesus Christ, the gracious Bishop and Shepherd of our souls, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the same Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

¶ Then shall follow the Sermon, and after that, if there be a Communion, the Instituted Minister shall proceed to that Service, and to administer the holy Eucharist to his congregation; and after the Benediction, (which he shall always pronounce,) the wardens, vestry, and others shall salute and welcome him, bidding him God-speed.

¶ When the Bishop of the Diocese is present at the Institution of a Minister, he shall make to him the address, as prescribed in this Office in the form of a letter.