

THE ORDINAL

Archbishop Thomas Cranmer's preface to the Ordinal, written in 1550, makes it clear that the Church of England holds to the historic threefold ministry of Bishops, Priests and Deacons, which is foreshadowed in the New Testament, if only given its final expression in the early Christian centuries.

It is clear from both Acts 6 and the usage of the Early Church that Deacons possessed a freestanding servant role within the Christian community, which differed from the public role of the Presbyters. The Lord Jesus Christ was Himself the ultimate Deacon from the beginning of His public ministry until the very last hours of His earthly life, only becoming the great High Priest as He hung upon the cross for our redemption on Good Friday. In our own times the Roman Catholic Church has pioneered the revival of the Diaconate as a permanent and valuable order of ministry in its own right. We see every reason to commend this development with enthusiasm. In an age when everybody is striving desperately to be somebody, the unique servant role of the Deacon is perhaps now needed more than ever. And if clergy go on to become priests or even reach the episcopate, they still remain deacons too.

At the Reformation the Church of England continued the mediaeval practice of using the Diaconate as a sort of beginner's apprenticeship, making it the first step up the ministerial ladder. Although there would have been nothing intrinsically wrong with including this practice alongside a more "normal" permanent Diaconal order, it had the unhappy effect of killing off the "real" Diaconate and exposing the first order to being considered a merely temporary and junior role, through which the ordinand was forced to slog on his way to bigger and better things. BCP 2020 has attempted to address this misunderstanding of the Diaconal function by a slight rewording of the 1662 rite, which now makes it crystal clear that the Diaconate is essentially a lifelong office for all ministers, even for the large number who go on to the Priesthood or the tiny minority who reach the dizzy heights of the Episcopate.

We have decided to let the term 'priest' remain in the Ordination service for Presbyters, simply because this old word is readily recognized by English speaking peoples everywhere, not because we consider the second order to be even remotely sacerdotal in its nature. However, in a small change to the 1662 rite, the congregation to whom the new priest is appointed are now given a public part in the service, which helps to underwrite the essential principle that the clergy exist primarily to undertake the care, nurture and expansion of the local Christian community, whether it is a geographical, social, ethnic or sector unit. The local church is indeed the primary building block of the Church of God and ought to be recognised as the proper focus of all ministerial activity.

We have also included within the rite the giving of the chalice to new priests. They are given authority to minister both Word and Sacrament, so it makes sense to put the giving of the chalice alongside the giving of the Bible as a visual sign of what differentiates the Presbyteral from the Diaconal ministry.

The service of Consecration to the Episcopate proceeds from the basic Reformed assumption that a Bishop is a first among equals – a sort of overseer or foreman among the Presbyters. We have therefore given physical expression to this principle by allowing representative priests to join the canonical minimum of three bishops in the laying on of hands. Having done this, we are also more than happy to subscribe to that part of the Catholic view which teaches that Bishops are in some senses meant to be successors to the Apostles. It is the bishops, who since the earliest days of the Church, have laid hands upon new clergy in symbolic, maybe even in actual Apostolic succession.

But still more importantly, Bishops are called to be solid, dependable guardians of that Apostolic faith which was 'once delivered to the saints,' and is faithfully recorded in Holy Scripture and summarised in the three Catholic Creeds. This Apostolic function requires them to lead the Church from the front in terms of teaching wholesome doctrine and scriptural morality, and also calls them to lead from the front when it comes to the vital contemporary tasks of winning unbelievers to Christ and undertaking the public defence of the Christian faith. These fundamental Episcopal responsibilities are given splendid expression in the old 1662 Consecration rite, but significantly downplayed in modern revisions. Therefore BCP 2020 largely amounts to an exercise in the linguistic adaptation of 1662 to meet the needs of the 21st century. However, in order to underline the partnership that ought to exist between Bishop, clergy and people, an opportunity is now provided for the clergy and laity of the new

bishop's diocese to give him a formal welcome and pledge him their prayer and support for the difficult tasks he faces in his new ministry.

THE MAKING OF DEACONS

The opening hymn is announced, during which the Ordinands process to their places at the chancel steps, followed by the clergy and the Bishop. The Ordinands wear only cassock, surplice and academic hood.

When all have taken their seats and the Bishop is in his chair, a sermon is preached on the duty, office and character of Deacons.

The Senior Priest then presents to the Bishop those who are to be ordained, saying:

Reverend Father in God, I present to you these persons present to be admitted to the Office of Deacon.

He reads the names of the Ordinands and the places in which they are to serve:

The Bishop then says:

Take care that the persons you present to us are suited by their learning and godly way of life to exercise their ministry properly, to the glory of God and the good of His Church.

Senior Priest:

I have examined them and enquired about them, and I believe them to be fit for this Office.

The Bishop then addresses the people:

Brothers and sisters, if any of you know an impediment, or grave reason, why any of these persons presented to us should not be ordained Deacon, come forward in the Name of God and declare to us what your objection may be.

If any serious objection is alleged, then the Bishop shall postpone that Candidate's ordination until such time as the allegation is proved unfounded.

Then the Bishop commends the Candidates to the prayers of the congregation and leads them in singing or saying the relevant portions of the LITANY.

After this the Communion Service follows, the Collect and Epistle being these:

THE COLLECT

Almighty God, by Your divine providence You have appointed various orders of ministry in Your Church, and inspired Your Apostles to choose the first martyr Saint Stephen to be a Deacon. Look in mercy on these Your servants now called to this same important office and responsibility; so fill them with the truth of Your doctrine, and adorn them with holiness of life, that both by word and good example they may faithfully serve You in this ministry all their lives, to the glory of Your Name and the

good of Your Church; through the merits of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, now and always. Amen.

THE EPISTLE

1 Timothy 3, vv.8 – 13

Likewise deacons must be reverent, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy for money, holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience. But let these also first be tested, then let them serve as deacons, being found blameless. Likewise, their wives must be reverent, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things. Let deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own families well. For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a good standing and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

or Acts 6, vv. 2 – 7

Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, “It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve at table. Therefore brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit 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 the Holy Spirit, and Philip. Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch, whom they set before the apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid hands on them. Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith.

The Bishop then stands to publicly examine those who are to be ordained. They stand before him:

Bishop:

Do you believe that you have been inwardly moved by the Holy Spirit to take upon you this office and ministry, to serve God for the promoting of His glory, and the nurturing of His people?

Answer: I believe so.

Bishop:

Do you think that you are truly called to this ministry, according to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, and according to the rules of this Church?

Answer: I think so.

Bishop:

Do you believe wholeheartedly and without any doubt all the Canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments?

Answer: I believe them all.

Bishop:

Will you carefully read and explain them to the people assembled in the church where you are appointed to serve?

Answer: I will.

Bishop:

The duties of a Deacon, in the church where he is appointed to serve, are to assist the Priest in divine worship, especially when he administers the Holy Communion, to read and teach out of the Holy Scriptures, to instruct young people in the Christian faith, to baptise and to preach. It is also his task to search for the poor, needy and disabled people of the parish and to ensure that they are helped and supported by the love and care of the congregation and others. Will you do this gladly and willingly?

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

Bishop:

Will you apply all your energy to frame and fashion your own lives, and the lives of your families, according to the doctrine of Christ; and will you make both yourselves and them, as much as you can, good examples to the flock of Christ?

Answer: I will do so, with the Lord as my helper.

Bishop:

Will you reverently obey your Bishop and other senior ministers of this Church, and those to whom the charge and government over you is given, following with a glad mind their godly advice?

Answer: I will try to do so, with the Lord as my helper.

The candidates then kneel before the Bishop and he lays his hands upon the head of each of them in turn, saying:

Take authority to carry out the office of a Deacon in the Church of God now committed to you; in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Then the Bishop invests the newly ordained deacon with the ministerial scarf, and gives each kneeling candidate the New Testament, saying:

Take authority to read and preach the Gospel in the Church of God and to serve the Lord's people.

One of the newly ordained Deacons, chosen by the Bishop, reads the Gospel:

Let your belt be tightened and your lamps burning; and you yourselves be like men who wait for their master, when he returns from the wedding, that when he comes and knocks they may open to him immediately. Blessed are those servants whom the master, when he comes, will find watching. Assuredly, I say to you that he will gird himself and have them sit down to eat, and will come and serve them. And if he should come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants.

The Bishop then proceeds with the Communion, the newly ordained Deacons joining him in the distribution of the bread and wine. Each new Deacon has the privilege of communicating those members present of the church in which he is to serve.

Once the Communion is ended, immediately before the blessing, these two prayers are said, the first by the Bishop, the second by all:

Almighty God, giver of all good things, in Your great goodness You have promised to accept and receive these Your servants into the office of Deacon in Your Church: we beg You, O Lord, to make them modest, humble and faithful in their ministry of service; and give them a ready will to observe all spiritual discipline. May they always have the testimony of a good conscience and keep them stable and strong in Your Son Jesus Christ. To You, with all the heavenly hosts, we offer our praise and honour now and for ever. ***Amen.***

Go before us, O Lord, in all that we do with Your most gracious favour, and further us with Your continual help; so that in all our work, begun, continued and ended in You, we may glorify Your holy Name, and finally, by Your mercy, we may obtain everlasting life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Bishop then pronounces the blessing.

During the final hymn, the collection is taken for the training of future ministers, while the new Deacons, the clergy and the Bishop process to the west end of the church to meet the congregation.

THE ORDINATION OF PRIESTS

The opening hymn is announced, during which the Ordinands process to their places at the chancel steps, followed by the clergy and the Bishop. The Ordinands wear cassock, surplice, scarf and academic hood.

When all have taken their seats and the Bishop is in his chair, a sermon is preached on the duty, office and character of Priests.

The Senior Priest then presents to the Bishop those who are to be ordained, all of them standing. He says:

Reverend Father in God, I present to you these persons present to be admitted to the order of Priesthood.

He then reads the names of the Ordinands and the places in which they are to serve.

Bishop:

Take care that the persons you present to us are suited by their learning and godly way of life to exercise their ministry properly, to the honour of God and the good of his Church.

Senior Priest:

I have examined them and enquired about them, and I believe them to be fit for this office.

The Bishop then addresses the people:

Good people, these are the candidates we intend, God willing, to receive today into the holy office of Priesthood. After careful examination we cannot find that they are anything other than lawfully called to this function and ministry and that they are fit to perform these responsibilities. However, if any of you know an impediment, or grave reason, why any of these persons should not be received into this holy ministry, come forward in the Name of God and declare to us what your objection may be.

If any serious objection is alleged, then the Bishop shall postpone that candidate's ordination until such time as the allegation is proved unfounded.

Then the Bishop commends the Candidates to the prayers of the congregation and leads them in the singing or saying of the relevant portions of the LITANY.

After this follows the Communion Service, the Collect, Epistle and Gospel being as follows. The Bishop chooses two of the Ordinands to read the Epistle and Gospel:

COLLECT

Almighty God, giver of all good things, by Your Holy Spirit You have appointed various orders of ministry in Your Church: look in mercy upon these Your servants now called to the office of Priesthood: so fill them with the truth of Your doctrine, and adorn them with innocency of life, that both by their word and good example, they may faithfully serve You in this office to the glory of Your Name, and the good

of Your Church; through the merits of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever. *Amen.*

THE EPISTLE
Ephesians 4, vv. 7 – 13

But to each of one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore He says, "When He ascended on high, He made a captive of captivity, and gave gifts to men." Now this "He ascended" – what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things. And He himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the building up of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to be a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

THE GOSPEL
St. Matthew 9, vv. 36-38

But when Jesus saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd. Then He said to His disciples, the harvest truly is plentiful, but the labourers are few. Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into His harvest.

or St. John 10, vv.1 – 16

Most assuredly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way, is a thief and a robber. But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, because they know his voice. Yet they will certainly not follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.

Jesus used this illustration, but they did not understand the things which He spoke to them. Then Jesus said to them again, Most assuredly I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All who ever came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep. But a hired man, he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them. The hired hand runs away because he is a hired hand and does not care about the sheep. I am the good shepherd; and I know my sheep, and I am known by my own. As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. And I have other sheep which do not belong to this fold; I must

bring them also, and they will hear My voice, and there will be one flock and one shepherd.

Then the Bishop, sitting in his chair, addresses the Ordinands. They stand before him::

You have heard, brothers, both in private, and now in the sermon and the readings taken from the holy Gospel and the writing of the Apostles, just how great and important is the office to which you are called. So yet again, we ask you in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to remember into how great a dignity and how weighty an office and responsibility you have been called. That is to say, you must be messengers, watchmen and stewards of the Lord: you must teach and warn, you must feed and provide for the Lord's family, and you must search for Christ's sheep scattered afar, and for his children lost in the middle of this wicked world, so that they may be saved through Christ for ever.

Therefore have it always printed upon your memory just how great a treasure is committed to your charge. For these are the sheep of Christ, which He bought with His death, and for whom He shed His precious blood. The Church and people you are about to serve, are His spouse and His body. Should the Church, or any member of it, be hurt or hindered by your negligence, you know the greatness of your fault, and also the horrible punishment that will follow. So consider within yourselves the purpose of your ministry towards the children of God, towards Christ's spouse and His body. Make sure that you never cease your careful and diligent labours until you have done everything possible, according to your bounden duty, to bring all those who are or will be committed to your charge, to such perfect agreement in the faith and knowledge of God, and to such a level of maturity in Christ, that no room is left for error in religion or for nastiness in life.

Seeing then that your position is of such great excellency and of such great difficulty, you will understand what great care and study you must bring to every one of your tasks, being always thankful to that Lord who has placed you in so vital a ministry. Beware that neither you yourselves give offence, nor cause others to offend.

However, you cannot make all these good intentions by yourselves: that will and ability is given by God alone. Therefore you must pray earnestly for His Holy Spirit. And seeing that you cannot any other way take on so weighty a responsibility to do with the salvation of the human race, except by doctrine and teaching from the Holy Scriptures, and by leading a life agreeable to them, you must consider how studious you should be in reading and learning these Scriptures, and framing the lives of both yourselves and your families by the rule of these same Scriptures. For that reason, you ought to abandon or set aside, as much as you can, all worldly cares and studies.

We are confident that you will have weighed up and pondered all these things within yourselves long before this time, and that you have clearly decided, by God's grace, to give yourselves wholly to this office and ministry into which God has been pleased to call you, so that, as far as you can, you will apply yourselves completely to this one thing, drawing all your cares and studies in this direction. Continually pray to God the Father, by the mediation of our only Saviour Jesus Christ, for the heavenly assistance of the Holy Spirit, so that by daily reading and weighing of the Scriptures, you may grow stronger and more mature in your ministry. Make the effort to sanctify

and shape your lives, and those of your families, according to the rule and doctrine of Christ, so that you may be wholesome and godly examples and patterns for the people to follow.

And now, so that this congregation of Christ's people here present may be sure of your minds and wills in these things, and that your public promise may the more encourage you to fulfil your duties, you must give plain answers to these questions that we, in the Name of God and His Church, now put to you:

Do you think in your heart that you are truly called, according to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the rules of this Church, to the order and ministry of Priesthood?

Answer: I think so.

Bishop:

Are you persuaded that the Holy Scriptures contain all doctrine that is necessary for eternal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ? And are you determined to teach the people committed to your charge from those same Scriptures, and to teach nothing as necessary for eternal salvation except that which may be concluded and proved by the Scriptures?

Answer: I am so persuaded, and have determined to do so, by God's grace.

Bishop:

Will you then, with all faithful care, minister the doctrine and sacraments, and the discipline of Christ, as the Lord has commanded, and as this Church has received it, according to the commandments of God? And will you teach the people committed to your charge to keep and observe them with all diligence?

Answer: I will do so, by the help of the Lord.

Bishop:

Will you be ready, with all faithful diligence, to banish and drive away all incorrect and strange doctrines that are contrary to God's Word? And will you use both public and private warning and encouragement, to the sick no less than to the healthy, whenever the need arises and the opportunity is given?

Answer: I will, with the Lord as my helper.

Bishop:

Will you be diligent in prayer, in the reading of the Holy Scriptures, and in such studies as will help you to better know and understand them, putting aside the study of wordly and fleshly matters?

Answer: I will try to do so, with the Lord as my helper.

Bishop:

Will you be careful to frame and shape your own selves, and your families, according to the doctrine of Christ, so that, as far as is possible, both you and they may be wholesome examples and patterns to the flock of Christ?

Answer: I will apply myself to this, with the Lord as my helper.

Bishop:

Will you maintain and promote, as much as you can, quietness, peace and love among all Christian people, and especially among those who are or will be committed to your charge?

Answer: I will do so, with the Lord as my helper.

Bishop:

Will you respectfully obey your bishop and other senior clergy, who have charge and government over you, following their godly advice with a glad mind and will, and submitting yourselves to their godly decisions?

Answer: I will do so, with the Lord as my helper.

Then the Bishop stands up and says:

Almighty God, who has given you the will to do all these things, give you strength and power to perform them, so that He may complete the work He has begun in you; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

During a period of silence the congregation are asked to pray that God will grant all these things:

After this, Veni Creator Spiritus is sung by the candidates, the Bishop, the clergy and the congregation, all of them kneeling:

***Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire,
And lighten with celestial fire;
Thou the anointing Spirit art,
Who dost Thy sevenfold gifts impart.***

***Thy blessed unction from above
Is comfort, life and fire of love;
Enable with perpetual light
The dullness of our blinded sight.***

***Anoint and cheer our soiled face
With the abundance of Thy grace;
Keep far our foes, give peace at home;
Where Thou art guide no ill can come.***

***Teach us to know the Father, Son,
And Thee, of both, to be but One;***

***That through the ages all along
This may be our endless song:***

***Praise to Thine eternal merit,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.***

The Bishop then stands and says:

Let us pray

Almighty God and heavenly Father, in Your infinite love and goodness towards us, You have given us Your only and most dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ to be our Redeemer and the author of everlasting life. After He had perfected our redemption by His death, He ascended into heaven and sent out into the world His Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Teachers and Pastors, by whose ministry He gathered together a great flock in all parts of the world, to proclaim the eternal praise of Your holy Name. For these great benefits, and because You have promised to call these Your servants to the same office and ministry, appointed for the salvation of mankind, we give You our most hearty thanks, we praise and worship You. And we pray that, by the power of the Holy Spirit, we may daily increase and go forwards in the knowledge and faith of You and Your Son. Through these Your ministers, as well as through those they serve, may Your holy Name always be glorified, and Your blessed kingdom enlarged, through Your Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and for ever. ***Amen.***

The Bishop and the Priests lay their hands upon the heads of all the kneeling Candidates in turn, the Bishop saying over each one individually:

Receive the Holy Spirit for the office and work of a priest in the Church of God, now committed to you by the laying on of our hands. Whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven; whose sins you retain, they are retained. And be a faithful minister of the Word of God and of His holy Sacraments; in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. ***Amen.***

The Bishop gives each newly ordained Priest the Bible and chalice and says:

Take authority to preach the Word of God, and to minister the holy Sacraments in the congregation to which you have been appointed.

The Wardens of the churches to which the Priests are appointed then come forward to welcome their new Priest and say together:

We thank the Lord for sending you to us. We promise to pray for you, help you and encourage you in your ministry. We will gladly share its burdens with you.

They then take him to be welcomed by their congregation. This part of the Ordination service may be as informal and as joyful as the occasion deserves.

The Bishop calls order and then proceeds with the Communion, commencing at the Nicene Creed. The new Priests join him in the saying of the Consecration Prayer and the distribution of the bread and wine. Each new Priest has the privilege of communicating those members present of the church where he is to serve.

Once the Communion is ended, immediately before the blessing, these two prayers are said, the first by the Bishop, the second by all:

Most merciful Father, we ask You to send down upon these Your servants Your heavenly blessing. May they be clothed in righteousness and may Your word spoken by their mouths be so successful that it is never spoken in vain. Give them grace to hear and receive the message that they are to deliver from Your most holy Word as the means of our salvation. In all our words and deeds may we seek Your glory, and the increase of Your kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. ***Amen.***

Go before us, O Lord, in all that we do with Your most gracious favour, and further us with Your continual help; so that in all our work, begun, continued and ended in You, we may glorify Your holy Name, and finally, by your mercy, we may obtain everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Bishop pronounces the blessing:.

During the final hymn, the collection is taken for the training of future ministers, while the new Priests, the clergy and the Bishop process to the west end of the church to meet the congregation.

THE CONSECRATION OF A BISHOP

The opening hymn is announced, during which the Bishop-elect, vested only in his rochet, processes to his place in the chancel, followed by the clergy and the Bishops.

The Senior Bishop begins the Communion service, in which this is

THE COLLECT

Almighty God, by Your Son Jesus Christ You gave Your holy Apostles many excellent gifts, and commanded them to feed Your flock. Give Your grace, we pray, to all Bishops, the pastors of Your Church, so that they may diligently preach Your Word, and rightly administer its godly discipline: grant that Your people may obediently follow it, so that all may receive the crown of everlasting glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Another Bishop reads

THE EPISTLE

1 Timothy 3, vv.1 – 7

This is a faithful saying: if a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behaviour, hospitable, able to teach; not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous; one who rules his own family well, having his children in submission with all reverence. For if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God? Not a new convert, in case being puffed up with pride he falls into the same condemnation as the devil. Moreover he must have a good reputation among those who are outside, in case he falls into reproach and the snare of the devil.

or

Acts 20, vv.27 – 35

I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God. Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you bishops, to shepherd the church of God, which He purchased with His own blood. For I know this, that after my departure, savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears. So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. I have coveted no one's silver or gold or clothes. Yes, you yourselves know that these hands of mine have provided for my own necessities, and for those who were with me. I

have shown you in every way, by labouring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, when He said, “It is more blessed to give than to receive.”

Another Bishop reads

THE GOSPEL

St. John 20, vv.19 – 23

Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, “Peace be with you,” When He had said this, He showed them His hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. So Jesus said to them again, “Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.” And when He had said this, He breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.”

or

St. Matthew 28, vv. 18 – 20

And Jesus came and spoke to them saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and look, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

After the Gospel and the Nicene Creed are ended, the Bishop elect is presented by two Bishops to the Senior Bishop, who sits in his chair before the holy table. The presenting Bishops say:

Most reverend Father in God, we present to you this godly and learned man to be ordained and consecrated bishop.

The Senior Bishop then calls the congregation to prayer, saying:

Brothers and sisters, it is written in the Gospel of Saint Luke that our Saviour Christ spent the whole night in prayer before he chose and sent out His twelve Apostles. It is also written in the Acts of the Apostles that the disciples at Antioch fasted and prayed before they laid hands on Paul and Barnabas and sent them out. Let us therefore follow the example of our Saviour Christ and His Apostles and get down to prayer before we admit and send out this person to the work to which we believe that the Holy Spirit has called him.

The relevant parts of the LITANY are then said or sung.

Then the Senior Bishop says this prayer, while the candidate remains standing:

Almighty God, giver of all good things, through Your Holy Spirit You have appointed various orders of ministry in Your Church. Mercifully look upon your servant who is now called to the work and ministry of a Bishop. So fill him with the truth of Your doctrine, and adorn him with holiness of life, that by word and deed he may faithfully serve You in this office, to the glory of Your Name, and the sound teaching and good government of Your Church. We ask this through the merits of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever. *Amen.*

The Senior Bishop continues:

Are you persuaded that you have been truly called to this ministry, according to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the rules of this Church?

Answer: I am so persuaded.

Senior Bishop:

Are you persuaded that the Holy Scriptures contain all doctrine that is necessary for eternal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ? And are you determined to teach the people committed to your charge from these same Scriptures, and to teach nothing as necessary for eternal salvation, except that which may be concluded and proved by these Scriptures?

Answer: I am so persuaded, and have determined to do so, by God's grace.

Senior Bishop:

Will you then faithfully exercise your mind and heart in these same Holy Scriptures, asking God in prayer to give you true understanding, so that by them you will be able to teach and encourage the Church with wholesome doctrine and to withstand and convince those who speak against it?

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

Senior Bishop:

Will you be ready, with all faithful diligence, to banish and drive away all incorrect and strange doctrines that are contrary to God's word? And will you be willing, both privately and publicly, to call upon and encourage others to do the same?

Answer: I am ready to do so, with the Lord as my helper.

Senior Bishop:

Will you turn away from all ungodliness and worldly desires, and to live a sober, righteous and godly life in this present world, so that in all things you may be a good example to others, being able to shame the enemy, who will find nothing to say against you?

Answer: I will do so, with the Lord as my helper.

Senior Bishop:

Will you maintain and promote, as much as you can, quietness, peace and love among all people, and will you correct and discipline the disorderly, disobedient and criminal within your diocese, according to the authority given you by God's word?

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

Senior Bishop:

Will you be faithful in ordaining, commissioning, or laying hands upon others?

Answer: I will, by the help of God.

Senior Bishop:

Will you show yourself gentle, and be merciful for Christ's sake to poor and suffering people, and to all who are destitute or in need of help?

Answer: I will, by the help of God.

Senior Bishop:

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who has given you the will to promise all these things, give you also the strength and power to perform them; so that He may complete in you the good work that He has begun, and you may be found perfect and without blame at the last day; through Jesus Christ our Lord. ***Amen.***

The Bishop Elect then puts on the chimere, academic hood and scarf and kneels down. The Senior Bishop and the other Bishops stand, the clergy and congregation kneel and all sing the Veni Creator Spiritus:

***Come Holy Ghost, our souls inspire,
And lighten with celestial fire.
Thou the anointing spirit art,
Who dost Thy sevenfold gifts impart.***

***Thy blessed unction from above
Is comfort, life, and fire of love.
Enable with perpetual light
The dullness of our blinded sight.***

***Anoint and cheer our soiled face
With the abundance of Thy grace.
Keep far our foes, give peace at home:
Where Thou art guide, no ill can come.***

***Teach us to know the Father, Son,
And Thee, of both, to be but One.
That, through the ages all along,
This may be our endless song.***

***Praise to Thy eternal merit,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.***

The Senior Bishop says:

Lord, hear our prayer.

Answer: And let our cry come before You.

Almighty God and most merciful Father, in Your infinite goodness You gave Your only and dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ to be our Redeemer and the Author of everlasting life. After He had made perfect our redemption by his death, and ascended into heaven, He poured down His abundant gifts upon men, making some Apostles, some Prophets, some Evangelists, some Pastors and Teachers, for feeding and perfecting His Church. We pray that You will give this Your servant such grace, that he may always be ready to spread the Gospel, the good news of how You have reconciled Yourself to sinful men. Give him grace also to use the authority You have bestowed upon him, not for destruction, but for salvation, not for hurt, but for help; so that as a wise and faithful servant, he may feed Your people generously, and at last be received into everlasting joy: through Jesus Christ our Lord, who reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever. ***Amen.***

Then the Senior Bishop and all the other Bishops present, together with up to three representatives of the priests of the diocese, lay their hands upon the head of the Bishop Elect, who remains kneeling, the Senior Bishop saying:

Receive the Holy Spirit for the office and work of a Bishop in the Church of God, now committed to you by the laying on of our hands; in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. ***Amen.*** And remember to stir up the grace of God now given you, for God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and love and self control.

Then the Senior Bishop gives him the Bible and the Episcopal staff saying:

Give much attention to reading, doctrine and the encouragement of your own faith. Think on the things contained in this book. Be diligent about them, so that what you have learnt may be obvious to all people. Apply the lessons of Scripture to yourself, and teach them to others, for by doing so you will save both yourself and those who hear you. Be a shepherd to the flock of Christ, not a wolf; feed them, do not devour them. Support the weak, heal the sick, bind up the broken-hearted, bring back the outcasts, and search for the lost. Be merciful, without being lax. Administer discipline, without forgetting mercy; so that when the chief Shepherd appears, you may receive the never-fading crown of glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord. ***Amen.***

A representative group of clergy and laity from the new bishop's diocese come forward to welcome him and say:

We thank the Lord for sending you to us. We promise to pray for you, help you and encourage you in your ministry among us. We will gladly share its burdens with you.

They then take him to be welcomed by the congregation. This part of the Consecration service may be as informal and joyful as the occasion deserves.

The Senior Bishop then continues the Communion service, in which the new Bishop has the privilege of himself reading the Prayer of Consecration. He and the other Bishops distribute the bread and wine to the congregation.

Once the Communion is ended, immediately before the blessing, these two prayers are said, the first by the Senior Bishop, the second by all:

Most merciful Father, we ask you to send down Your heavenly blessing upon this Your servant: so fill him with Your Holy Spirit, that as he preaches Your word, he may not only be ready to rebuke and encourage, with all patience and doctrine; but also to be a good example, in word, in love, in faith and in holiness. Grant him so to fulfil his ministry that at the last day he may receive the crown of righteousness laid up by the Lord, the righteous Judge, who lives and reigns, one God with the Father and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever. *Amen.*

Go before us, O Lord, in all that we do with Your most gracious favour, and further us with Your continual help, so that in all our work, begun, continued and ended in You, we may glorify Your holy Name, and finally, by Your mercy, we may obtain everlasting life: through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The new Bishop takes the pastoral staff, which he holds in his left hand as he pronounces the blessing:

During the final hymn, the collection will be taken for the missionary work of the Church, while the new Bishop, the other Bishops and the clergy process to the west end of the church to meet the congregation.