

consecration of Holy Chrism, and the consecration of antimensia. Presbyters, appointed by bishops at the head of parish communities, celebrate the divine services and teach and lead the flocks entrusted to them. They celebrate the Mysteries of Baptism, Chrismation, Eucharist, Repentance, Holy Anointing, and Crowning, and also other blessings and consecrations for the needs of the faithful. The deacons are placed by the bishop for liturgical service with the bishop or presbyter, but also for other ministries related to teaching and assisting the People of God in their needs, especially the poor and the sick.

493 In the Church hierarchy's pastoral ministry, that is, in the hierarchy's royal ministry (leadership), prophetic ministry (teaching), and priestly ministry (sanctifying), it is the pastorship of Christ that is realized. the Church's hierarchy fulfils these three ministries within the community and for the community. It does so in the name of Christ and his Church.

4) *The Rites of Ordination of Deacon, Presbyter, and Bishop*

494 The ordination of a deacon, presbyter, or bishop takes place during the Divine Liturgy. This is accomplished by the bishop's laying on of hands (in Greek, *cheirotonia*) and the prayer of the Church. Laying his hand on the man being ordained, the bishop invokes upon him the grace of the Holy Spirit. Ordaining a presbyter, the bishop declares: "Divine grace, which always heals the infirm and completes that which is lacking, places the devout deacon in the presbyterate. Let us therefore pray that the grace of the Holy Spirit descend upon him, and let us all say: Lord, have mercy." The prayer of the bishop is joined by the prayer of the Church. By the repeated acclamation *Axios!* (in Greek, meaning worthy), the community affirms that through divine grace the one ordained has become worthy of the presbyteral ministry. Just as Baptism and Chrismation, ordination to any hierarchical order confers an indelible seal of grace; therefore, such ordination can be received only once in a lifetime.

495 In the prayers for a deacon's ordination,³⁶⁸ the Church asks that the newly ordained deacon, following the example of the protomartyr and archdeacon Stephen, be abundantly granted the faith, love, strength, and sanctity needed to fulfil his ministry in the community. As a sign of this ministry, the bishop gives to the newly ordained: diaconal vestments, a censer, a ripidion (liturgical fan), and, according to custom, a Gospel Book.

³⁶⁸ *Arhieratikon*, Ordination of a Deacon.

- 496 A particularity of a presbyter's ordination is that before the ordination the candidate professes the Symbol of Faith and makes a vow of obedience to his bishop. The presbyteral ministry consists of the following: "to stand worthily and blamelessly before the holy altar, proclaim the Holy Gospel, offer gifts and spiritual sacrifices, and renew the people in the font of rebirth, and perform other ecclesial ministries."³⁶⁹
- 497 At the ordination of a bishop, which requires no less than three other bishops, the candidate declares a profession of faith in which he expounds in detail the Church's doctrine about the Most Holy Trinity, the Incarnation, and the Holy Mysteries. This is because the bishop is the teacher and the one who proclaims the Gospel to his flock. Through the ordaining bishop, the Church asks Christ that the one receiving the grace of the high-priesthood may become "an imitator of the true Shepherd, who laid down his life for his sheep; a guide to the blind; a light to those in darkness; discipline for the unwise and a teacher to children; a beacon in the world; that he may lead to perfection the souls entrusted to him."³⁷⁰ Symeon of Thessalonica explains that through ordination, the bishop, as the head of the local Church entrusted to him, "accepts as a bride the one who is the bride of Christ," that is, the Church. "This is because [Christ] taught us that pastoral care and concern for her is evidence of love for him."³⁷¹ The close bond established between the newly ordained shepherd and his flock is expressed several times during his ordination by the explicit naming of the local Church (eparchy) to which he is ordained. The presence of no less than three ordaining bishops, that is, bishops of other eparchies, bears witness to the bond that exists between local Churches. The Church's unity is thus manifested.
- 498 Besides the hierarchical ministry, the Church also established other ministries. The established ranks of these are: candle-bearer, lector or singer (cantor), and subdeacon. these individuals are all called ministers of the Church. those who have received ordination to a lower order and have attained perfection in that ministry may be ordained into a higher order. Each of the orders is an expression of the variety of gifts of the Holy Spirit for service in the Church.

³⁶⁹ *Arhieraticon*, Ordination of a Presbyter.

³⁷⁰ *Arhieraticon*, Ordination of a Bishop, Prayer after the Litany of Peace.

³⁷¹ SYMEON OF THESSALONICA, On Holy Ordination, 196: PG 155, 436.