

Chapter 28 – Sacrament of Holy Orders

- Up to this point we have studied five sacraments. Baptism, Confirmation, the Eucharist, Penance, and Anointing of the Sick.
- The first three sacraments are called the **Sacraments of Initiation**.
- They are called this because they bring us into the Church and give us full participation in it.
- The Other two sacraments (Penance and Anointing of the Sick) are called the **Sacraments of Healing** because they heal our soul and restore us to God's grace.
- The last two sacraments are called the **Sacraments of Service** because they directly serve or help the salvation of others.
- The last two sacraments are Holy Orders and Marriage.
- Holy Orders → Makes men ordained ministers (Priests, Bishops, and Deacons) who serve others by proclaiming the Gospel. They serve by administering the Sacraments.
- Holy Matrimony → Makes a man and a woman husband and wife who serve others by having children and raising families who are witnesses to Jesus Christ and His Church's Teachings.
- The Sacraments of Service → Builds up the Church through the service of others.
- Today we will discuss Holy Orders and how important it is to the Mission of Christ.

Jesus Gives Us the Sacrament of Holy Orders

- At the Last Supper Jesus made the Twelve Apostles the first Priests of His Church.
- While instituting the Holy Eucharist He said to them: "Do this is remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19).
- The command "Do this" meant that Christ had given them a share in His own priestly power so that they could offer up the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.
- The Apostles were also made the first Bishops of the Church.

- Bishops receive the fullness of the priesthood. They have the power to ordain other worthy men to the priestly ministry.
- The Apostles were to pass on the priesthood by appointing other men.
- They could only do this because Jesus gave them the power and authority to do so. This authority is only found in the Church Jesus founded → The Holy Catholic Church!
- **The passing on of Holy Orders is called Apostolic Succession.** Only the Catholic Church can trace its roots back to Jesus Christ. All others must go through the Catholic Church if they want to do this.
- **Today we call our current Bishops the Successors of the Apostles!**
- Recall that Jesus did not leave His Apostles a Bible and tell them to read it and create their own churches based on their own personal beliefs.
- Jesus promised His apostles that He would send them the Holy Spirit who would guide and protect His Church from teaching false doctrines and error.
- *“And I will pray the Father, and he will give you another Counselor, to be with you forever, (John 14:16) The Holy Spirit will be with the Apostles and the Church forever. The Holy Spirit cannot teach error.*

A Royal Nation of Priests

- While not everyone shares in the **Ministerial Ordained Priesthood (Priests, Bishops, and Deacons)** we still share in the priesthood of Christ through our baptism.
- At baptism we are made Christians and become part of Christ’s Church. We are then called to spread the Gospel.
- There are different ways to share in the priesthood.
- Lay people, nuns, and brothers in religious life all share in the priesthood by attending Mass and worshipping God through prayer. → Known as the **Priesthood of the Faithful.**

- Being a priest is very demanding and those who receive the sacrament of Holy Orders must be first called by God.
- No one can simply declare themselves a priest or a minister. We see this happening today outside of the Catholic Church through the false doctrine of Sola Scriptura (Bible Alone) created by Martin Luther.

The Levels in Holy Orders

- The Church has a hierarchy (sacred order) concerning Holy Orders.
- The highest order is the **Bishop**.
 - They are the successors to the apostles.
 - Bishops can ordain other men to the priesthood.
 - Bishops are the official teachers of the faith in their diocese.
- The next order is the **Priest**.
 - They are the Bishop's helpers.
 - They preach the word of God in their parish.
 - They act as the administrator of the Parish.
 - They baptize, teach the faith, offer up the Holy Mass and Eucharist, hear confessions, witness marriages, and anoint the sick.
 - With special permission they can administer the Sacrament of Confirmation.
- The Last order and lowest order is the **Deacon**.
 - Deacon means "minister" or "servant". They serve their local parish and priest or Bishop.
 - We see the order of Deacon in the New Testament.
 - They carry our works of mercy.
 - They assist the Bishop/Priest at Mass.
 - They administer the Sacrament of Baptism, distribute the Eucharist at Mass, officiate at funerals, bless marriages, and instruct people in the faith.

- A priest becomes a Deacon before being ordained a Priest.
- Not all parishes have a Deacon.
- **Apologetics**: All protestant churches claim to be based solely on the Bible Alone. Why then do they not have priests, bishops, or deacons when they are so clearly visible in the Bible?

BIBLE VERSES:

- “The saying is sure: If any one aspires to the office of bishop, he desires a noble task.” (1Tim.3)
- “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, that you may declare the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.” (1 Peter 2:9)
- The priesthood was never done away with. It was there in the OT and it is there in the NT. No protestant can cite a verse that says the priesthood was abolished with the death of Jesus.

The Sign and Effects of Holy Orders

- We see from Saint Luke that the apostles ordained men by praying over them and laying hands upon them. This is the same way it's done today.
- The laying on of hands is an ancient symbol of passing on a spiritual gift.
- **The laying on of hands is the sign of Holy Orders.**
- The sacrament puts a sacramental seal on the soul of the priest or deacon.
- “For this I was appointed a preacher and apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.” (1 Tim 2:7) ***These positions require being appointed! We cannot simply make ourselves a priest or bishop.***

A Wonderful Calling

- The call of God to be a priest is a wonderful calling. It's a great honor.
- We should pray for our priests everyday and also ask Jesus to send the Church more good and holy men to become priests. Today we have a shortage of Priests.
- We should always respect our priest even if they are less than perfect. Priest are human to!
- Priests spend their days celebrating Mass, hearing confessions, counseling people, and attending to the needs of a busy parish.

Apologetics: Can and Should Woman be Priests?

- Today many people outside the Church and even within the Church are insisting that it is time for woman to be ordained. These people do not understand the nature of the priesthood not the nature of men and women.
- When celebrating the sacraments the Priest acts in "Persona Christi" meaning in the Person of Christ. A woman cannot act in the Person of Christ since Christ was a man. Saint Paul acts in Persona Christi: "Indeed, what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, I have done for your sakes, in the person of Christ." (2 Corinthians 2:10)
- Nowhere in the Old or New Testament is there any evidence of woman priesthood.
- Nowhere in the History of the Catholic Church do we see any women proclaiming to be Priests. None of the greatest woman Saints (St. Mary Magdalene, St. Catherine of Sienna, St. Teresa of Avila, St. Elizabeth, etc.) ever claimed to be a priest.
- The fact that we haven't had any woman priests in the last 2000 years means that either God hasn't called any women to the priesthood or He did and they all said no. If God were to call women to the priesthood they would have said yes.

- The only religions (prior to the reformation) which ever had a female priesthood were the pagan religions.
- "Furthermore, the fact that the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God and Mother of the Church, received neither the mission proper to the Apostles nor the ministerial priesthood clearly shows that the non-admission of women to priestly ordination cannot mean that women are of lesser dignity, nor can it be construed as discrimination against them. Rather, it is to be seen as the faithful observance of a plan to be ascribed to the wisdom of the Lord of the universe." (Encyclical of Pope John Paul II, *Ordinatio Sacerdotalis*, Paragraph 3)
- We must always remember that just because woman cannot be priests this does not mean that woman are not as important to the church as men. They are! Look at Mary's role.
- The fact is men and women are equal, but different.
- God simply has made the role of men and woman different. Men cannot have children. Women are typically smaller and are not as strong as men. These differences are God's plan and we cannot change them.
- Today's society is doing everything it can do diminish or even eliminate the differences God created between men and woman.