



Monastic Musings

Fall 2013

Greetings to All

By: Right Rev. Barb Martzall

Once again we have come into the season of Fall. The leaves are changing their colors and slowly falling to the ground. Everything is readying itself for the long winter's sleep and their rebirth in the Spring. Soon the snow will start to fall, covering the areas in a bed of white here in the Northeast – making things pure once more. Nature has a way of making everything change to bring forth even greater wonders. Are you preparing yourself for the rebirth? I sure hope so since there is still much to do in this world to bring God's words and love to everyone who hungers to hear and learn.

With this newsletter, we will have finished the topic concerning *Church -- Liturgy/Mass and Spirituality*. Much of the information given in the Role of Holy Orders and their Spirituality section is taken from the Old Catholic Missal edited by Archbishop Matthew of England's Old Catholic Church. I believe that the words of the Missal really expressed the teaching very well in the prayers used within the different ordinations. As you read/study the different clerical rank ordinations, you will gain a better understanding of what each of the ranks mean within the church. Their spirituality is difficult to comprehend when you only hear the words during the ordinations. That is why we chose to present the prayers here to you. Yes, there is so much more that can be written, but hopefully we have given you some helpful information and insight as you walk your spiritual walk inside and outside of the Church.

We will share with all of you again in 2014! Until then may the blessings of the Holy Trinity be upon you each and every day. May you be able to see Christ in everyone with whom you come into contact - no matter who they may be. Remember, everyone is a child of God, and we must not be judging them as that is not our role here on earth. God is our judge, and He has judged us to be worthy of salvation!

Spirituality of the Laity

By: Right Rev. Barb Martzall & Rev. Mother Myrella LeClair

Within the church, there are two "groups" of people. One group is the laity and the other is the clergy. Each group has a specific role within the church but all have one goal: worshiping God.

The laity of the church are truly the "building blocks" of the church. Without them, there would not even be a church and therefore no need for clergy. The assembly of laity bears the permanent responsibility of being the earthly representatives of Christ's royalty, priesthood and prophethood. As a consequence of our baptism and Chrismation/Confirmation, every Christian continues the saving work of Christ in some form.

The laity must be the representatives of Christ in this world and continue His saving work. The laity become His hands and feet as well as his mouth and ears. The role of laity in Our Church is to reach out and minister to each other's needs. A poem by Annie Johnson Flint helps us to realize what it means to be Christ's ministers in the Church:

*"Christ has no hands but our hands to do His work today;
He has no feet but our feet
To lead men in His way;
He has no tongue but our tongues
To tell men how He died.
He has no help but our help
To bring them to His side."*

Through these words of the poem, we see that the role of the laity in the Church is to be Christ's representatives. The laity are to minister to each other and to love one another as we love ourselves. The laity are called to reach out a helping hand, but one of the saddest things about the hands of many of us is that they are withered from lack of use. Yet withered hands, brought to Christ, are made whole. When Jesus saw the man with the withered hand He said, *"Stretch out your hand."* and He restored it to wholeness.

The role of the laity, together with the clergy, in the Church is to create open, loving, and caring communities. Just as a healthy family nurtures each family member, getting involved in each other's lives and making each member feel the Love of God in their lives is one of the most, if not the most important, mission of the laity in the Church. A church is a family first, not simply an organization that one joins or attends when one feels like it. Something that I once heard when I was studying for the priesthood: *"Things will not change until we begin to live outside of the church walls what we profess inside the church walls."*

People who share a common direction and sense of community can get where they are going more quickly and easily because they are traveling on the strength of one another. We are all heading in the same direction, hopefully, in the church, towards salvation. Our role then as laity is to work together and build a sense of community, helping one another to grow and reach their full potential in Christ. There is no room for personal agendas in the Church. The only agenda we should be pursuing is that of Christ's.

The clergy has "extra" roles that they carry out within the church. These roles are determined by where they desire to be as clergy. Do they want to remain in the Minor Orders, or become a Deacon, or maybe a Priest? These roles are added to their laity roles and do not replace their laity roles within the church. The clergy are expected to be the role models when it comes to spirituality and how they live their daily lives. It is also the responsibility of the clergy to help the laity grow in their spirituality on a daily basis.

Role of Holy Orders and their Spirituality

By: Right Rev. Barb Martzall & Rev. Mother Myrella LeClair

In this section, the Holy Orders are laid out as taught by the church. Here you will gain a basic overview of each Order and also understand what the ancient teachings are for each of the Orders. Please note that not all Orders are used in all Churches. We here in the Ohio Orthodox Catholic Church have reinstated the Cleric and Minor Holy Orders as a pathway to the Major Holy Orders. As you read through the information, you will gain an understanding of the role and spirituality of each of the Orders. These Orders are not to be entered lightly but with full conviction of what one is about to take upon their selves.

General Information concerning Holy Orders:

Those who are Clerics and of the Minor Orders are not obligated to pray the Divine/Daily Office and they do not take vows; however, once the Major Orders are entered into, there is no going back, and from the level of deacon on up, the actual Sacrament of Orders is received. Deacons receive partial fruits of the Sacrament, priests receive the totality of the Sacrament, with only Bishops having more authority.

Cleric:

A person who is to receive Holy Orders first receives the "tonsure" -- i.e., he/she is received into the clerical state by being given a surplice and having hair shorn away at the crown of the head. With the tonsure, he/she becomes a cleric but still has not received the Sacrament of Orders.

The tonsured cleric is then ordained to each of the Orders, one at a time as they are spiritually ready, receiving the power of each office, and ascending up through the ranks until he/she is raised to the dignity of the priesthood (if he/she wishes to go beyond the Deaconate), at which time he/she receives the fullness of the Sacrament of Holy Orders.



Minor Orders (starting from the lowest to the highest)

Porters (Doorkeepers or Ostiaries or Sextons):

The duties of the porter are to ring the bells, to open the church and sacristy, and to open the book for the priest. Most of these duties have passed to the laity, such as sacristans, etc., but in traditional priestly orders, this clerical order is kept as an office and is a stepping-stone toward the priesthood. The symbol for this order is keys.

As given in the ordination service in the Old Catholic Traditions:

“Take heed, then, lest through your negligence any of the church furniture be lost; and at the appointed times open the House of God to believers, but keep it ever closed to unbelievers. Endeavour also, as you open and close the visible church with material keys, to close the unseen dwelling of God, to wit, the hearts of believers, by word and example, against the devil, and to open them to God, that they may keep in their hearts and fulfill in their doings the Divine words they have heard.”

Lectors (Readers):

The duty of the lector is to chant/read the Epistle when Mass is sung without a deacon and subdeacon. The symbol of this order is the Book of the Epistles.

As given in the ordination service in the Old Catholic Traditions:

“It behooves the Reader to read for him who preaches, to intone the Lessons, to bless bread and all first-fruits. Strive, then, to set forth the words of God, the sacred Lessons, to wit, distinctly, plainly, for the instruction and edification of the faithful, without blunders or mistakes, lest by your carelessness the

truth of the Divine Readings become useless for the instruction of your hearers. What you read with your lips do you believe in your hearts, and fulfill in your doings, so as to teach your hearers both by word and example. Wherefore, when you read, you will stand in the ambo/lectern of the church, that you may be heard of all, and that your bodily position may betoken to all beholders the sublime degree of virtue to which you should have attained, in order to set forth to all by whom you are heard and seen the pattern of a heavenly life.”

Exorcists:

In the early Church, the duty of the exorcist was to cast out demons. Now that duty belongs to the priest alone, but this minor order is kept in traditional priestly societies nonetheless. The symbol for this order is the book containing the Rite of Exorcism.

As given in the ordination service in the Old Catholic Traditions:

“It is the duty of the Exorcist to cast out devils, to warn the people that non-communicants should make room for those who are going to Communion, and to pour out the water needed in Divine service. Thus you receive power to lay hands on demoniacs, and by this laying-on of your hands, together with the grace of the Holy Ghost, and the words of exorcism, the unclean spirits are cast out from the bodies of those they molest. Strive earnestly, therefore, that as you cast out devils from the bodies of others, to rid your own minds and bodies of all uncleanness and wickedness, lest ye be overcome by those whom ye drive out of others by your ministry. Let your office teach you to control your evil habits, lest the adversary justly claim as his own aught in your behavior. For then only will you safely exercise mastery over the demons in others, when you shall first have overcome their manifold wickedness within yourselves.”

Acolytes:

The duties of the acolyte are to light the Altar candles, carry the candles in procession, prepare the water and wine for the Mass, and assist the priest during the Mass. The symbols of this order are the candle, the cruet, and a linen bag. (Note that altar boys/girls are sometimes designated "acolytes" and fulfill the duties of the acolyte during the Mass.)

As given in the ordination service in the Old Catholic Traditions:

“It belongs to the Acolyte to carry the candlestick, to light the tapers and lamps of the church, and to present wine and water for the Eucharistic Offering. Endeavour then, meetly to perform the office you have undertaken. For you cannot be pleasing to God, if, bearing in your hands a light before Him, you be enslaved to the works of darkness, and so set to others an example of faithlessness. Rather, as the Truth says: “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father Who is in heaven” (St. Matt. v. 16). And as the Apostle Paul speaks: “In the midst of a crooked and perverse generation (Deut. xxxii. 5), among whom shine ye as stars in the world, holding fast the word of life” (Phil. ii. 15,16). “Let then your loins be girded about, and lamps burning in your hands,” “that ye may be the children of light” (St. Luke xii. 35; St. John xii. 36). “Cast off the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light” (Rom. xiii. 12). “For you once were darkness, but now are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (Ephes. v. 8). What is meant by this light so earnestly insisted upon by the Apostle, he shows by adding: “For the fruit of light is in all goodness, and justice, and truth” (Ibid. 9). Be you, then, earnest in all justice, goodness, and truth, that you may enlighten yourselves, and others, and the Church of God. For then will you meetly present wine and water at the Sacrifice of God, when by a chaste life and good works you shall have offered yourselves as a sacrifice to

God...These servants of His in the Order of Acolyte, that while bearing a visible light in their hands, they may by their behavior shed a spiritual light.”

Major Orders (starting from the lowest to the highest)



Subdeacons:

The duties of a subdeacon are to serve the deacon at Mass; to prepare the bread, wine, and sacred vessels for the Sacrifice; to present the chalice and paten at the Offertory, and pour water into the wine for the Eucharist; to chant/read the Epistle; and to wash the sacred linens. This office is non-sacramental. The symbols of this order are the dalmatic, the empty Chalice and the paten, basin and towel, two little cruets, and the book of epistles.

As given in the ordination service in the Old Catholic Traditions:

“It belongs to the Subdeacon to provide water for the service of the altar, to minister to the Deacon, to wash the altar-cloths and corporals, to present to the Deacon the chalice and paten to be used at the Sacrifice. The offerings laid on the altar are called the loaves of proposition. Of the bread and wine thus offered, so much only should be laid on the altar, as may suffice for the people, lest aught be left to decay in the piscina. The under altar-cloths should be washed in one vessel, the corporals (on which the Body of the Lord is laid) in another. No other cloth should be washed in the vessel used for the corporals, and the water in which they are washed is to be thrown into the Baptistry. Endeavour, then, by fulfilling these visible ministries we have mentioned, with neatness and diligence, to realize by your example the invisible things they typify. For the Altar of Holy Church is Christ Himself, as John bears witness, who in his Apocalypse tells us, that he beheld a golden Altar (Apoc. viii. 3) set before the throne, on and by which the offerings of the faithful are made acceptable to God the Father. The cloths and corporals of this Altar are the members of Christ, God’s faithful people, with whom, as with costly garments, the Lord is clad, according to the Psalmist: “The Lord reigns, He is clothed with majesty” (Psalm xcii. 1). The same blessed John in his

Apocalyptic visions, saw the Son of Man girt about the breasts with a golden girdle (Apoc. i. 13), that is, with the company of the Saints. If then, by human frailty, the faithful should in any wise be defiled, yours will it be to supply the water of heavenly teaching, that being cleansed thereby, they may again become an ornament of the Altar, and take part in the Divine Sacrifice. Be ye then such as may meetly minister at the Divine Sacrifice, and to the Church of God, which is the Body of Christ, being grounded in the true and Catholic faith; for, as the Apostle says : "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin" (Rom. xiv. 23), is schismatical, and without the unity of the Church. Wherefore, if hitherto you have been remiss in your attendance at church, henceforth be diligent. If hitherto you have been drowsy, be ye now watchful. If intemperate, from this time forth be sober. If hitherto unchaste, be henceforth chaste."

Deacons:

The duties of the deacon are to handle the sacred vessels, to be of service to the priests and Bishops (inside and outside of the liturgy), to read the Epistle and Gospel at the Mass, to be general stewards, and to serve the widows and orphans. This Order is Sacramental, and the first of the three divinely-instituted grades of the hierarchy of Orders, the others being the priesthood and the episcopate. The Deacon is also the "protector" of the priest and bishops. The Deacon must be willing to lay down his/her life if necessary in defending the priest or bishop. The symbols of this office are the dalmatic, the stole (worn over the left shoulder, as opposed to around the neck as priests wear them, and under the dalmatic), and the Book of the Gospels.

As given in the ordination service in the Old Catholic Traditions:

"It behooves the Deacon to minister at the altar, to baptize, and to preach. In the Old Law, among the twelve tribes, that of Levi alone was chosen by an irrevocable ordinance to be exclusively employed in the service of God's Tabernacle, and in the sacrifices offered to Him. Such was the dignity bestowed upon it, that no one, unless of that race, could be promoted to the office of ministering at Divine worship, so that it claimed, as a grand hereditary privilege, to be both in deed and in name the Tribe of the Lord; their name and office, dearly-beloved sons, become yours to-day, since you are now chosen to minister in the rank of Levites in the Tabernacle of the Testimony, that is, the Church of God, which, ever girded for the fight, wages truceless war against its foes. Wherefore the Apostle says: "The adversaries with whom we wrestle are not flesh and blood, but the principalities, the powers, the world-rulers of this present darkness, the hosts of evil spirits in the heavens" (Ephes. vi. 12). It behooves you to bear and defend this Church of God, His Tabernacle, so to speak, by your holy deportment, your divine preaching, and blameless example. Levi, forsooth, is interpreted to mean "adhering to," or "taken up": Wherefore, dearly-beloved sons, as you inherit your forefathers name, be ye raised above carnal desires and earthly lusts, which war against the soul. Be seemly, undefiled, pure, chaste, as befits the ministers of Christ, and stewards charged to dispense the mysteries of God, that you may worthily take rank in the ecclesiastical hierarchy, and may deserve to be the heritage and favoured tribe of the Lord. And as you now have a share in offering and dispensing the Body and Blood of the Lord, be ye averse from every allurement of the flesh, as Holy Writ has it: "Be ye clean, ye that bear the vessels of the Lord" (Isaias lii. 11). Think of blessed Stephen, chosen by the Apostles for this office in reward of his singular chastity. Be it your care to set forth to others, by living deeds, the Gospel your lips will proclaim to them, that of you it may be said: "How beautiful are the feet of those that bear glad tidings of peace, that bear glad tidings of good things" (Isaias lii. 7). Have your feet shod with the examples of the Saints as ready messengers of the Gospel of peace (cf. Ephes. vi. 15)."

Priests: The Second Degree of the Priesthood

The duties and powers of the priest are to celebrate the Eucharist at the Mass; offer the Sacraments of Penance, Communion, and Unction; to *preside* at the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony; to *solemnly* baptize; to preach; to teach, guide, and sanctify his sheep. With ordination to the priesthood, a man/woman has received the fullness of the Sacrament of Order. The symbols of this office are the stole, the chasuble, a paten with bread on it, and a Chalice filled with wine.

As given in the ordination service in the Old Catholic Traditions:

“Dearly beloved brethren, as both the captain of a ship and the passengers it carries have equal cause for security or for fear, it behooves them whose interests are common to be of one mind. Nor was it without a purpose that the Fathers decreed that the people also should be consulted touching the election of those who are to be employed in the service of the altar, for what is unknown of the many concerning the life and conversation of those who are presented, may oft times be known to a few, and all will necessarily yield a more ready obedience to one when ordained, to whose ordination they have signified their assent. Now the conversation of the Deacons, whom, by God’s help, we are about to ordain Priests, is (as far as we can tell) approved, pleasing to God, and deserving of an increase of ecclesiastical dignity. But lest favor, or partiality deceive, or hoodwink one, or a few, the opinion of the many must be sought for. Wherefore, do ye freely set forth what you may know of the actions, or behavior of these men, what you think of their worth, and testify to their fitness for the Priesthood, rather on account of their deserts, than from any partiality to them. If then any one has ought to their prejudice, for God’s sake, and in God’s Name, let him boldly come forward and speak; howbeit, let him be mindful of his own estate. It appertains to the Priest to offer Sacrifice, to preside, to preach, and to baptize. With great awe, then, is so lofty a dignity to be approached, and care must be taken that they who are chosen thereunto, should be commendable for heavenly wisdom, blameless conduct, and a persevering practice of justice. Wherefore, when the Lord commands Moses to gather unto him seventy men of the elders of all Israel, to be his helpers with whom he might share the gift of the Holy Spirit, He adds : “Whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people” (Numb. xi. 16). Now, you likewise are fore shown by these seventy men and elders, if through the sevenfold Spirit, you keep the Ten Commandments of the Law, and be blameless and mature both in knowledge and in work. In accordance with the same mystery, and the same type, the Lord, in the New Testament, chose the seventy-two, and sent them forth in pairs to preach before Him, thus teaching both by word, and by deed, that the Ministers of His Church should be perfect in faith and action; that is, well grounded in the virtue of the twofold love of God and of their neighbor. Do you, then, strive to be such as may meetly be chosen by God’s grace to assist Moses, and the twelve Apostles, that is, the Catholic Bishops who are represented by Moses and the Apostles. Of a truth, with this wondrous variety is holy Church, so to speak, clad, adorned and governed; wherein men of divers ranks are set apart, some Bishops, others Priests of a lower grade, Deacons and Subdeacons, and thus of many members differing in dignity is the one Body of Christ compacted. Wherefore, dearly beloved sons, whom the award of our brethren has chosen that you may be consecrated as our helpers, do you maintain in your conduct the integrity of a chaste and holy life. Consider what you do, imitate that which you handle ; and for as much as you celebrate the Mysteries of the Lord’s Death, be earnest in ridding your members by mortification of all vices and lusts. Let your teaching be a spiritual remedy for God’s people; let the fragrance of your lives be a delight to the Church of God, that both by preaching and example you may build up the house, that is to

say, the house hold of God, so that neither we may deserve to be condemned of the Lord for promoting you to so sublime an office, nor you for taking it upon yourselves, but rather to be rewarded.”

Bishops: The First Degree of the Priesthood:

Bishops have the greatest authority and jurisdiction (aside from Popes and Patriarchs), and have the powers to ordain men and women into the diaconate and priesthood, and to offer the Sacrament of Confirmation (this last power they can delegate to a priest), to dedicate churches and altars, to consecrate chalices and patens and bells, and to preside at the benediction of abbots. They are said to exercise the fullness of the priesthood. The symbol of this office is the mitre.

As given in the ordination service in the Old Catholic Traditions:

“O God, who in the privacy of familiar converse, didst, amongst other lessons of heavenly training, instruct Thy servant Moses as to the form of the priestly vesture, and command Aaron, thy chosen Priest, to be clad, when offering sacrifices, in mystic garb, that after generations might gain understanding from the customs of preceding ones, and that the knowledge of Thy teachings might fail in no age ; as the visible emblem won the reverence of our ciders, so our experience of the reality is still more trustworthy than those obscure foreshadowings. For the garb of that elder Priesthood prefigured the adornment of our souls, and with us the Pontifical dignity is set off, not by gaudiness of vesture, but by excellence of soul. Nay even the priestly ornaments, which in those days dazzled the eyes of the carnal-minded, were meant to inculcate the virtues of which they were the emblems. Do Thou then, we beseech Thee, O Lord, bestow on Thy servant, whom Thou hast called to minister as high-priest, the grace that what those garments prefigured, by sheen of gold, flashing of gems, and cunning of varied embroidery, may shine forth in his conversation and actions. Fulfill in Thy chosen Priest the perfection of Thy service, and having decked him with the ornaments of the supreme dignity, do Thou sanctify him with the outpouring of the unction from above.... By Thy gift, may his feet be beautiful in publishing peace, in bearing good tidings of Thy mercies. Grant him, O Lord, the ministry of reconciliation, in word, and in deed, and in the power of signs and wonders. May his speech and preaching be not in the persuasive words of the wisdom of man, but in the showing forth of the Spirit and of power. Bestow on him, O Lord, the keys of the kingdom of heaven, that he may meetly use, and not boast of the power Thou givest him for edification and not for destruction. Whatever he shall bind on earth, may it be bound in Heaven; and whatever he shall loose on earth, may it be loosed in Heaven. Whose sins he shall retain, may they be retained; and whose so ever he shall remit, do Thou remit them. Let him that curses him be accursed, and may he that blesses him be filled with blessings. Let him be that faithful and prudent servant whom Thou, Lord, mayest set over Thy household, that he may give them food in due season, and may present every man perfect. May he be in care unwearying, in spirit fervent, hating pride; and a lover of humility and truth, which may he never forsake by yielding either to flattery or menace. Let him not put light for darkness, nor darkness for light, nor call evil good, and good evil. May he be a debtor both to the wise and unwise, that he may gain fruit from the progress of all. Grant to him, O Lord, the Episcopal Chair to rule Thy Church, and the people committed to his charge. Be Thou unto him authority, power, and steadfastness.... We set on the head of this Bishop, O Lord, Thy Champion, the helmet of defense and of salvation, that with comely face and with his head armed with the horns of either Testament, he may appear terrible to the gainsayers of the truth, and may become their vigorous assailant, through the abundant gift of Thy grace, who didst make the face of Thy servant, Moses,

to shine after familiar converse with Thee, and didst adorn it with the resplendent horns of Thy brightness and Thy truth, and commandedst the Mitre to be set on the head of Aaron Thy high priest.”

As you can see each Holy Order builds up from the previous one. When one receives a new Holy Order, it does not mean the previous one is removed but actually it is added to. For example: a Bishop actually carries within himself/herself all of the Holy Orders and can actually function in any of the Holy Orders when called upon. In the olden days, the person ordained into a new holy order would put the new vestments over the old holy order vestments. Can you imagine the physical weight of the vestments by the time you reach the level of Bishop? In the winter it may not have been too bad given it would keep you warm. Over time, the churches changed the rules so that one only wore the vestment of the highest Order one had received.

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Holy Theotokos of Mercy Community

All writings are the views of the author(s) on a particular subject and are meant to challenge your thinking so as to help you grow in your spiritual walk with God.

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