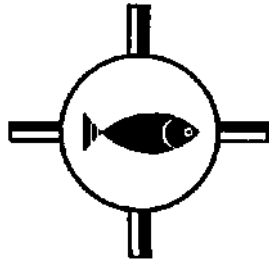


LIBERAL CATHOLIC INSTITUTE OF STUDIES



Unit 14

THEOSOPHIA AND THEOLOGY

Paper 2

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ORDINATIONS

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Part I



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UNIT 14

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ORDINATIONS

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CHAPTER III: THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ORDINATIONS

THE DIACONATE AND THE RESERVOIR OF POWER

We have found, insofar as we have been able to trace things, that the Lord makes use of six methods to prepare the members of His clergy for the carrying on of their respective offices. In the lower Orders He finds it sufficient: (1) to infuse certain spiritual forces from without; (2) to quicken the generating of greater spiritual development within, and (3) to point out (by means of the respective Charges) the special way in which the ordinand should employ these forces. In the higher Orders there are added to these: (4) the awakening of certain dormant higher principles in the candidate; (5) the linking of the candidate to certain reservoirs of spiritual power in higher worlds for use in his ministry, and (6) the joining of certain principles in the candidate's being to the Lord's own corresponding principles. The Subdiaconate, as we shall see, is an intermediate stage not yet partaking of the final three methods of preparation.

In Chapter II we visualized, in a general way, how this infusion of spiritual forces and the stimulating of inner channels for their use took place, and how a sustained special effort aimed in a certain direction is necessary for their proper development. Now we have to gain a wider view of the circulation of the sun force, the earth force and the primary life force, which, as we have seen, emanate from the First, Third and Second Aspects of the Trinity, respectively, combine and flow through the etheric body of the ordinand.

This same kind of function which we have studied in the etheric body appears also in the body of the emotions (astral body), and yet again in a more tenuous way in the mental body. Here again we have a primary vital force which descends from God into the centers or *chakras* on these levels (for corresponding chakras exist on all three levels); *pranas* which absorb emotional (astral) or mental energized particles from the atmosphere; and again corresponding layers of the serpent fire or *kundalini* which burn out the dross of the emotional and mental systems and can be made to activate dormant abilities for future development in these systems.

In these subtler worlds also it is true that we have not only the vital and energizing streams coming into us from God, but again a combining and assimilating of these forces and their modification by that mysterious personal equation which is so peculiarly a part of each of us; and here also the resulting personalized energy is radiated from us. For it is not only Priests and Bishops who send out radiating force when they speak and when they bless, pouring streams laden with blessing on their surroundings; every human being, whether he speak or be silent, emanates continuously streams of his own magnetism, his own personal life force, and radiates also emotions and thought-forms whenever he feels or thinks.

(See "Thought Forms" by Dr. Annie Besant and Bishop Leadbeater for a thorough, illustrated exposition of this phenomenon.)

With less evolved people the degree of *absorption* is much greater than the degree of *radiation*; with the average evolved human being, however, there is more or less of a balance between that which he absorbs for his own nourishment, benefit and pleasure, and that which he sends out which is of spiritual value. But with the spiritually evolved man there is a surplus, he gives more than he receives; he is creative of good.

Consider for example the scientist. He breathes, nourishes himself, draws life force from the sun and fire from the *kundalini* power of the Holy Spirit, in his physical body; he does the same in the astral world of his feelings, his emotions, and also with his mental body, as when teaching. But when he *thinks*, he is creating his visions, and he radiates streams of thought- energy which can go to enrich the surrounding thought atmosphere. If he be a vain or self-centered person, however, those thought streams curve and return to him to be consumed by himself; but as soon as love of one's neighbor comes into action, and one begins to give without asking, to work without expecting a reward, to love because one is actuated from the heart and not with a view of obtaining something in return, then the paths of those outflowing streams are changed and they no longer return to their sender. A spiritual "profit" then accrues to the higher worlds from the lower; the honey of immortality is secreted; a spiritual elixir is distilled from the lower spheres, drop by drop; Angels bear this essence to the heavenly realms, and the Guardians of humanity garner it into golden casks in the high heavens for the use of those who are "in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity."

Here we catch a glimpse of the living side of the idea of an "abundance of good works", in contrast to the usual view that it is a matter of heavenly bookkeeping, with so much on this side of the ledger, so much on that.

Here lies the spiritual reality behind a "good turn", a gift, a living sacrifice, which are transformed into spiritual force for the benefit of all. In this way the unselfish scientist, the social reformer full of burning love for humanity, the pious Nun, the nurse, the Priest, the enthusiastic congregation, all add their contribution to that golden reservoir.

You recall how, in the Mass, we pray that the Lord shall command His holy Angel to bear our oblation to His altar on high, there to be offered by Him who is the Eternal High Priest. This Angel (of the Presence) gathers all the acceptable material which we have generated in these lower worlds by our worship, and bears it upwards; and as Bishop Leadbeater tells us, it is indeed used in those higher worlds. In this way we have the privilege, on however small a scale, of adding to this great reservoir of spiritual force from which the Priests of Christ draw their power when they administer the Holy Sacraments. And not we only, but also others far greater than we, the Holy Ones, and Angels who have a power of devotion reaching far beyond ours and who can touch higher spheres than we, add continually to this reservoir of spiritual force for the helping of humanity, and have been doing so for thousands and tens of thousands of years. (Accounts of Saints continually "casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea" are quite possibly attempts to describe visions of the work in which these perfected beings engage, in generating power for this great reservoir.) And, as Bishop Leadbeater writes, not only do unselfish thoughts and loving emotions serve to keep open the gates of Heaven, but the most elevated and noblest part of the oblations rises to the throne of God Himself, and the exquisite answering blessing which pours down in immediate response is also received by the reservoir for the aiding of all humanity.

In establishing His new religion the Lord Christ sequestered a special part of this reservoir of power in order that certain duly appointed individuals could be enabled to draw upon it for the spiritual welfare of their congregations. The means established for doing this were the use of the Sign of the Cross and the uttering of certain words of power. This was an entirely new departure, applied for the first time in the Christian Religion. The unique feature of His provision is that even if neither priest nor congregation know anything about it, they nevertheless take part in this daily descent and distribution of spiritual forces through the Eucharist. From this golden reservoir of

stored up blessing the Deacon, Priest and Bishop derive their ability, each in his own Order, to bless, to baptize, to confirm, to ordain, to consecrate, to administer the sacraments of matrimony and absolution. And at the same time the services themselves, and the active assistance of the Angels present, generate new forces for this reservoir, which in turn call out from Christ the Lord and from God Himself more and more blessing. The available power grows with use.

The Deacon is connected with this golden reservoir on the plane of the emotions or *astral* world; the Priest is further connected to it on the plane of thought or mental world, and the Bishop on the highest levels of all - - those of the intuition (*buddhi*) and of the spiritual will *atma*. For the Deacon, it is more in the nature of an aid to his personal self, to assist his progress in preparation for a higher office, but with the Priest it is his immortal soul which is thus joined. This confers on him the power, amongst others, of absolution - - the rectification of distortions which have taken place in the psyche of people through "wandering from the path which leads to righteousness." This connection also gives the Priest the power of blessing and of celebrating the Holy Eucharist; and the further connection of the Bishop enables him to confirm and to bestow Ordination, as well as to give a very high order of blessing - - which is why he in some instances makes three signs of the cross where a Priest would make but one.

Each clergyman who has been validly ordained by a Bishop who has himself received valid ordination, that is, who is connected with this reservoir, can carry on these sacramental ministrations. This quality is the minimum which all validly ordained Priests possess, irrespective of whether they understand it or not, or of what dogmas they may follow, or even of what manner of life they may lead. As Bishop Leadbeater tells us, it is of course in all ways better that the Priest should be someone of noble character and filled with devotion, and that so far as possible he understands this or not, the key unlocking a certain door is placed in his hands and it is the opening of that door with which we have principally to do. This key they receive at the solemn moment of the laying on of hands - - with the Priest, at the second imposition - - and the pronouncement of the words: "Receive the Holy Ghost for the office and work of a Deacon (Priest) (Bishop) in the Church of God." Except for the words of consecration in the Holy Eucharist, they are the most momentous words which are uttered in the Liturgy, and the descent of divine power which they bring about is tremendous and beyond description.

To make possible the sacramental work of drawing power and blessing from the golden reservoir, it is necessary not only to give an impulse to the etheric circulation of the candidate, but also to modify the relation between his principles on various levels. In the chart (Fig. 1-11) these principles and their relative relationships are indicated diagrammatically. (Also see Appendix to Chapter II.) (For a full exposition of what happens in the various Orders, the student should carefully study the diagram in "The Science of the Sacraments", pages 396-397, Second Edition.) In the Minor orders no change is caused in the relationship between principles, although the Ordination of Acolyte tends to awaken the intuitive principle (5) - - unless this has already occurred through his own spiritual efforts, such as meditation. With the Ordination to the Diaconate, what Bishop Leadbeater calls a great "surgical operation" takes place, in this ordination the previously slender connection (8) (Fig. 1-11) between (7) and (9) is considerably widened - - the link between the immortal soul and the personality, between the real man in the higher, more spiritual worlds and the personal man as he thinks, feels and acts in these lower worlds - - the only worlds in which, as yet, he can be said to have evolved "self-consciousness." It is through this connection channel, called the *antahkarana* in Eastern philosophy, that there descend the powers drawn from the reservoir by the Deacon, as also later the powers of the Priest and of the Bishop,

which come from the reservoir, from their own higher principles, and from their connection with the Lord Himself.

This enlargement of the *antahkarana* channel is such an important action that in preparatory grade of Subdeacon was instituted, in which a preliminary stretching of this channel takes place in order to pave the way for the sudden expansion which comes at the Deacon's ordination. You will notice that the consecrating words of the Major Orders are not used in this preliminary grade of Subdeacon; the Bishop says only "In the Name of Christ our Lord, I admit thee to the Order of Subdeacon." The general object of this ordination is clear: The ego or soul is thereby given an opportunity to express itself more effectively through the personality.

It is noteworthy that in investing the Subdeacon with the four instruments of his Order - - Amice, Maniple, Tunicle and Book of Epistles - - the Bishop blesses him four times in the Name and with the assistance of the three Persons of the Holy Trinity. It is as though the four aspects of the "lower quaternary", the square base of the personality, were being cemented to the three aspects of the human pyramid, the triple spirit. (Fig. 1-11)

In addition to the enlargement of the channel between soul and personality, the Subdeacon Ordination has another very important function which should not be overlooked. The Subdiaconate is a testing ground, a "season of trial" as the Liturgy says. Can the personality respond to the wider and more intimate connection with one's soul? Will the often wayward personality submit to the soul's guidance? Hopefully, the adjustment will be made so that the candidate will be better fitted for higher office.

The Bishop says "we . . . shall now proceed in the exercise of our office to bring you as a holy oblation into the presence of Christ . . .". This is not a fanciful expression, but a sober fact. The attention of the Lord Himself is drawn to the candidate. The Lord looks at him, seeing, with His omniscient glance, all that the candidate has been, is now, and is able to become; and it may be expected that the Lord will do what can be done to open the candidate's nature for higher service. A veritable testing of the inner nature will ensue, a time in which the latent good will be strengthened, but also in which latent weaknesses may come to the surface and have to be faced and overcome. Some candidates find that they have not yet evolved sufficiently in character to enter upon a higher and a more demanding service, and wisely withdraw, or defer the taking of further Orders until they are better prepared.

The new Subdeacon should be fully aware that this process will take place, so that he can make the most of its possibilities and will embrace the opportunity which the two-fold stimulus will present for spiritual growth. A year in the Subdiaconate is not too long a time in which to prepare for that first permanent link which the Lord makes with Himself at the Deacon's Ordination.

In the Diaconate that channel between ego and personality is greatly expanded. (Fig.1-11). In this Order, in addition to the Litany, the *Veni Creator* is sung, while in the prayer preceding the laying on of the hand of the Bishop: "O Lord Christ, the Fountain of all goodness . . .", where one sign of the cross is made at the Subdiaconate, two are made at the Deacon's Ordination. With the first cross (note how clearly is pointed out what is taking place) is said in both Ordinations: "+ Open to Thy heavenly grace the heart and mind of this Thy servant", while with the second cross at the Diaconate it is asked that the Lord "hallow and strengthen" with His mighty blessing the ordinand whom the Bishop now "sets apart" for this special ministry.

The divine power is now focussed upon the ego or soul in order to carry through the expansion of the connecting channel. During the actual words of consecration the power of the Holy Spirit does not simply descend once, but oscillates up and down many times with incredible speed, as does the electric spark in a lightning flash. The channel between personality and ego is now pierced through, the link with his Lord and Master is made as far as Principle (7) - - the higher mind - - is concerned, the channel (8) or antahkarana is widened, and it is the ordinand's task to maintain it in that expanded and improved condition by continuously letting the divine grace pour through for the aiding of his fellow men.

In the final blessing over the newly ordained Deacon the Bishop makes another sign of the cross, asking that the fullness of the Lord's blessing be poured upon him. The special object of this blessing is to reinforce the wall of the extremely widened link (8) between soul and personality, so as to "harden" it and keep it more firmly in shape. Bishop Leadbeater says it is as though a kind of wainscot is made within that very plastic link which prevents the widened channel from shrinking again.

Two important changes are established in the candidate at this Ordination to the Diaconate: His higher mental principle (7) (Fig. 1-11) is indissolubly linked to that of the Lord, and it is possible that his intuitional principle (5) will be quickened and will start to gleam, thereby causing a thin connection to form between (5) and (7) so that through it his mentality will also be enlightened by the intuition. But the surgical operation, the widening of the channel between ego and personality, remains the essential effect. Such weight is given to this inward intervention, that the Church prescribes, where possible, that the Deacon should remain in that Order for one year before being admitted to the Order of the Priesthood.





SUBJECT: THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ORDINATIONS

THE PRIESTHOOD

Just as all of us are gradually being prepared to become worthy and capable of rightly partaking of the Body and Blood of our Lord, so also the Priests are prepared by a series of preceding ordinations to be brought into direct connection with the Lord.

Here on this earth, where we see everything according to the restricted intellectual concepts of the three physical dimensions, and observe everything with the elementary consciousness of worldly emotion and thought, we are likely to lose sight of the luminous, imposing and impressive vision of the spiritual realities beyond these limitations. But if, in one's higher principles, one comes into the presence of the Lord, or even before one of the mighty Hierarchy of the Holy Ones, His celestial helpers, one need not to have acquired the habit of kneeling - - one simply cannot keep from falling to one's knees at that Presence. And unless the Lord so wishes, one cannot gaze upon the brightness of His countenance, brighter as it is than the physical sun through which the ocean of spiritual powers enters our planetary system. And yet the Priest-to-be is actually presented before the Lord during his ordination!

Thus we sing in the Litany: "May they stand before Thy Face, Filled with love and heavenly grace; Grant them with Thy saints a place - - Near Thee, Lord and Master." And it is not without meaning that the newly ordained Priest reads in the Gospel from St. John 20:19 and Matthew 28:18 ". . . when the doors were shut . . . came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them: 'Peace be unto you'." And when He had directed them as to their mission, He breathed on them and said to them: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost", the reading of the Gospel concluding with: "and lo, I am with you always, even unto the consummation of the age."

The sacred moment in which the candidate is placed face to face before the Lord, even though his eyes are sealed or blindfolded in the higher world, is that of the silence during the first laying on of hands by the Bishop. If you have witnessed such an Ordination, you will remember this unforgettable moment; after which the Bishop and the Priests present stand in a circle around the candidate with hands outstretched in a gesture of blessing. The silence is a palpable manifestation of God's Presence. A truly holy silence, because the Lord is with us, we are in His Presence; and the Bishop softly murmurs the prayer: "O Lord Christ, Whose strength is in the silence, grant that this Thy servant whom now Thou dost join unto Thyself in the holy bond of the Priesthood may henceforward minister faithfully of the priestly power to those who ask in Thy Name."

Bishop Leadbeater says about this: "It is not merely that there is the Christ principle in the Priest, as there is in every man; so great is the wonderful love and condescension of the great World-Teacher that by the act of ordination He draws His Priests into a close personal union with Him, creating a definite link through which the divine force can flow, making them channels for Him

in imitation, at an almost infinitely lower level, of the mysterious and wonderful way in which He is a channel for the Second Aspect, the Second Person of the Ever-blessed Trinity."

You will remember the course of a priestly ordination. In the special Collect the Bishop prays God to "pour forth Thy sanctifying grace into the heart of this Thy servant" (bear in mind the golden reservoir of power which the Lord has made available to His Bishops for just such purpose) ". . . that with pure heart and open mind he may faithfully receive Thy blessing from on high . . ." It is as though he says to the candidate: "Forget yourself, open and purify your heart, have faith, be receptive" while at the same time he draws upon the reservoir to create that which is necessary for this preparatory operation.

Then a little later as the Ordination ceremony begins, there comes that wonderful Charge where the Bishop solemnly and for the last time, before the irrevocable act is accomplished which lays upon the candidate "the sweet but heavy burden of the Priesthood", points out the dignity and the responsibility of the office. There is that deep, mystical expression: ". . . that you may be almoners of Christ's blessing and bearers of His love to the hearts of mankind"; they are called upon "to offer the Holy Sacrifice before the throne of God" -- which is the Altar of the Church -- and to "celebrate the sacred mysteries of the Lord's love". And the Bishop solemnly exhorts the candidate that "both by word and deed you fashion the temple of God" (his own inner nature) "so that neither shall we appear blameworthy before the Lord, who in His Name shall thus advance you, nor you who shall thus be advanced . . ."

After his pledge to "strive to use worthily the powers entrusted" to him, the Litany used for the Ordination of Deacons and Priests (and for the consecration of a Bishop) is now sung, wherein (as also in the different Litany used in ordaining Subdeacons) appear the three verses which are sung by the Bishop alone, and in which he makes respectively one, two and three signs of the cross over the prostrate candidate with the words "bless", "hallow", and finally "consecrate". No one who has experienced this moment is likely to deny that it is an unforgettable experience. It is the final act of purification. One cross is made for the physical body (especially its etheric component); two crosses for the emotional body, and, in the third verse, three for the mental body. It is here that the *personality* of the candidate is directly worked upon (he is lying prostrate to take advantage of the earth's magnetic field, for one thing;) and this working is as a rule quite perceptible to the ordinand. After the explanation of the life streams in Assignment II, the prana, the fiery force of the upward-surging Holy Spirit, you will now understand how this may be visualized as a cascade of sparkling, bright gold and red and multi-colored atoms and atomic combinations surging through the ordinand.

Following this comes the prayer, mentioned in Assignment III as occurring in the Ordinations of Subdeacon and Deacon (and in the consecration of a Bishop also): "O Lord Christ, the fountain of all goodness . . ." -- the wording which follows differing in each Order. But whereas during this prayer in the Subdiaconate the Bishop makes the sign of the cross once, and in the Diaconate two very significant uses of that sign, there is no cross made in the version used for the Priest's Ordination. Evidently this prayer, said as the Bishop stretches out both hands towards the ordinand (but not touching him), is leading up to the actual ordination by Christ Himself, since immediately upon the conclusion of this prayer there follows the laying on of hands in utter silence. As Bishop Leadbeater tells us, during this silence the supreme power available to the Bishop is used to draw the new Priest into the closest possible relation to the Lord. The three principles of *atma* or will (2), intuition (5) and intelligence (7) (See Figure 1) are made to glow with indescribable fervor. The line of connection between these three descending aspects of the triple spirit is opened up into activity and enlarged so that not only is the spiritual man now more one with the Christ-spirit, but is also able to

express himself better through his intuition and intelligence. Whether he will do so, or not, depends upon himself; but the possibility is there for him to develop.

The complete aura of the ordinand expands tremendously due to this direct descent of the power of the Lord Christ. All the atoms in his being are affected as their *spirellae* of the different orders are enlivened. (N.B. - - Each "primary atom" is composed of ten *spirellae*, spirally interwoven lines of force or energy. These atoms themselves are evolving, along with the whole universe; as they evolve, an increasing number of their *spirellae* are quickened into fuller activity. See "The Science of the Sacraments, pp. 640- 647, especially Diagram 20, p. 644 - Second Edition.) The stream of Christ- power descends through principles (2), (5) and (7) through the corresponding principles of the Bishop himself, therefore both his hands are laid on the head of the ordinand, instead of only the right hand as in the previous ordinations, in which the left hand drew power through the crozier.

The power of the Christ, says Bishop Leadbeater, comes always in the silence, and it is this descent which actually makes the man a Priest and gives him the power to celebrate the Holy Eucharist. Before a word is spoken, the Priests present share their individual gifts by laying their hands, in succession, on the head of the ordinand as one by one they come to stand for a brief moment before him. They do not *ordain*, but from soul to soul they give of their special spiritual gifts. They probably represent different *rays*, and in any case they differ in character, and each offers as it were of the very essence of his typical qualities, so that the new Priest may commence his work endowed as richly as possible. The Bishop again stretches forth both hands towards the new Priest, the assisting Priests forming a circle around the ordinand likewise holding out their hands, as the Bishop prays: "O Lord Christ, whose strength is in the silence, grant that this Thy servant whom now Thou dost join unto Thyself in the holy bond of the Priesthood may henceforward minister faithfully of the priestly power to those who ask in Thy Name."

The *Veni Creator*, ancient call of the Holy Spirit, is now sung. Those who can see clairvoyantly tell us that at its singing a majestic red color flows through the sanctuary, the chancel, and even on through the whole church, and that all sorts of healing balms and elixers appear in the spiritual atmosphere in wondrous combinations, which are offered to the ordinand. The Hymn takes note of this, and each verse contains an allusion to some special gift of grace, virtue, or whatever one wishes to call them. A typical phrase of deep significance is: "And sweet anointing from above". In the modification of the old Roman form of the *Veni Creator* for use in our Rite, Bishop Leadbeater inserted this phrase with beneficial result in this truly cosmic Invocation. The whole Hymn merits careful study and deep meditation on its various phrases.

Just as at the first laying on of hands in silence a descent of the Second Person of the Trinity is brought about, which qualifies the ordinand to celebrate the Holy Eucharist, the second laying on of hands, wherein the Holy Ghost is expressly named brings about, by the Holy Spirit's action, a direct connection of principle (6) in the new Priest with that same principle in his Lord. It will be noted that principle (7), so connected at the Diaconate, and principle (6) are in the direct line of descent from the "Activity" or Holy Spirit aspect of the individual's triple spirit, while principle (5), connected with the Lord at the first laying on of hands, is in the "Second Person" line of descent. The connection of principle (6) puts the new Priest in connection with the second section of the golden reservoir of power, at the mental level, and it is from this that he draws the power of absolution and that of blessing in the Name of the Holy Trinity. The connecting line between (2), (5) and (7) is further strengthened, and principle (7) is further opened to permit a freer flow of power coming down that line.

The "opening of the heart and mind" to the Lord's "heavenly grace" which is prayed for *before* the ordination of the Subdeacon and Deacon, is now petitioned, with the sign of the cross, in the prayer which follows this second imposition of hands. The explanation of this difference is, that whereas in the Deacon's ordination channel (8) was being opened between the higher mind (7), and the lower mind (9) of the new Deacon, now the connection is to be pushed on downward into the physical brain, to make the whole personality a responsive agent of the quickened higher faculties. The power in this prayer works through the pituitary gland, which is the physical center most closely connected with the physical brain, with its etheric counterpart, and the corresponding emotional or astral center, all of which are now more closely unified with the powers descending into and through the lower mind or intellect of the new Priest, so that, as the prayer says, "through him Thy power may abundantly flow for the service of Thy people."

There follows next the symbolical action of rearranging the stole, emblem of the "yoke of holy service", and crossing it over the breast, as it will be worn by the Priest in the celebration of the Eucharist. Next the new Priest is vested in the chasuble, "the priestly vestment", after which comes the anointing of the hands, by means of which they are made into special instruments for the giving of blessing and for the safe handling of the priestly powers. The working of these powers is like the conducting of electricity, and without the anointing this could very well be dangerous. Of the two crosses which the Bishop makes in the prayer which follows, the first is intended to arrange for the conducting and distribution of the powers which pour down along the line (2)-(5)-(7), and the second for dispensing the power which flows forth from the 6th principle.

As the action of the Oil of Catechumens takes a certain amount of time, the hands are tied together, palm to palm, while the service proceeds. With those newly consecrated hands the Priest accepts the further instruments of his office: the chalice containing wine and water, and the paten with a wafer upon it, while the Bishop says: "Take thou authority to offer sacrifice to God, and to celebrate the Holy Eucharist both for the living and for the dead. In the Name of the Lord." It is only after this that the hands are unbound, and the remaining oil - - which has served its purpose - - is cleansed from them.

Just before the Offertorium (what an appropriate place!) the new Priest kneels before the Bishop and offers him a burning candle, the symbol of his soul, which the Bishop accepts. You will note that from Cleric up to Deacon the candidate always comes bearing a burning candle, which is set aside as the ordination commences. We may see in this a symbolism, wherein they carried their souls in their hands as an offering to the Lord, that it is only now, at the priestly ordination, that the Bishop accepts the candle, in token perhaps that the Lord has now indeed accepted the offering of the ordinand's soul. It is a beautiful symbolism.

The celebration of the Eucharist is now continued by Bishop and new Priest in unison, wherein both are Celebrants - - a con-celebration, as it is called - - both saying the Mass word for word, making sign for sign, and together pronouncing the words of consecration over the Bread and the Wine, the new Priest thus exercising for the first time, in company with his ordaining Bishop, the sacramental power and authority. All the new channels and connections are thereby called into action. One may perhaps think of this as a formal introduction of the new Priest, by the Bishop, to the attending Angels, who will henceforth recognize him as the Lord's Priest and cooperate with him in his priestly work. In the Roman Church there is a lovely custom that, where possible, the newly ordained Priest should celebrate the Mass the next day in the presence of his mother and relatives.

When the consecration, the Communion and the Ablutions have taken place, the new Priest takes his formal oath of canonical obedience. He receives two solemn warnings, and between them a blessing called down from the Holy Trinity upon him in his new Order, and the prayer that he will be further blessed in the offering of sacrifice to Almighty God. The first warning is a caution to exercise all care in properly administering the Sacraments, and to adhere strictly to the forms established by the Church; the second warning is against forgetting the solemn obligation which the new Priest has assumed, that of a selfless service to his fellowman; at the same time it contains a promise that this service "is the golden pathway" to the Lord's most glorious Presence. The warning and promise concludes with the admonition: "Freely ye have received, freely give."

We know that this wondrous and complicated ordination arranges the inner being of the priest so that, whatever his own moral character, the essential sacramental powers will flow for the blessing of the people, and are bound to have some ennobling effect on the Priest himself; however, the development of high qualities, of nobleness of character, of spiritual enlightenment and all the virtues, give an additional value to his work. This automatic operation of power, regardless of character, is necessary in order that no doubt can ever exist as to the validity of a baptism, of the actual consecration of the Sacred Host, or the administering of various sacramental rites; but the Lord expects much more of the Priest, who is given the glorious privilege of a very real and permanent connection with Himself. The Ordinand would do well to consider the very appropriate parable of the talents, which appears in the Gospel for the Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany.

Bishop Leadbeater tells us that the ideal Priest can move far along in his spiritual evolution, with determination, and persistent work on himself and for the world. He can arouse his principles (2) and (5) to a state of powerful activity, and can strengthen the links made between his principles (6) and (7) and the Lord, so that he consciously lives in the Lord's Presence; he can develop them to as full a degree of connection with his Lord as that which occurs in the consecration of a Bishop. Such an ideal Priest, says Bishop Leadbeater, makes himself a channel of extraordinary power.

From what we have seen in this Assignment, it will be understandable that only the few may be called to such a high office as the Priesthood, and that a Bishop is constantly aware of his double responsibility towards his Lord and Master the Christ; a responsibility, first, that he ordain no one unqualified or unstable, who would later wander off or prove himself to be unworthy of his holy office; and second, that he does not withhold such a privilege and beautiful opportunity from anyone who *is* worthy of it. Therefore the unconditional right is given to the Ordinary (as the Regionary Bishop of a Province or the Suffragan Bishop of a Diocese is called) - - and to him alone - - to judge who shall be elevated to the office. And even should a Priest wander astray and neglect his most solemn obligation, the Lord never cuts him off, and is always ready to lead and to inspire his servant when the latter opens himself to his Lord.



CHAPTER V: THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ORDINATIONS

THE EPISCOPATE

THE CONSECRATION OF A BISHOP!

"As one ascends to the top of a mountain, the prospect widens, the view becomes greater, and at last it looks from below as if he who has reached the summit has gone on into the blue aether of space and has become as one of the gods living on Mount Olympus" - - this description which comes from a Pagan tradition contains more truth than is ordinarily thought. But the mountaineer himself - - his personality - - knows that he remains a human amongst the humans, a weak and fallible creature, and that the blue aether seen from the valley, though it seems now to surround him, also stretches out far above him and the summit of his mountain as a blue firmament, that which, according to the belief of the mediaeval Christian, covered the throne of God and the heavenly Salem.

Also, the one who thus attains is conscious that he did not obtain all those qualities and that spiritual elevation and majesty through his personal effort, but that they have been offered as gifts of grace from above, undeserved, not because of personal merit or for personal use but for mankind. He knows that he has been selected to receive the episcopal dignity because the Lord Christ needs earthly servants and representatives who, as it is said in the Liturgy, can "touch the hearts of men with the fire from heaven and bring them from the darkness of ignorance into His marvelous Light."

The inner side of the Bishop's consecration transcends our powers of understanding. All the spiritual connections made, the vitalization of higher centers of consciousness, conferring of spiritual capacities, are in such profusion that the human imagination, confined as it is to the physical world, fails of comprehension. If one may speak of something beyond all understanding by the powers of the mind, the supreme impression is of the utter *reality* of the glories appearing at this supreme ceremony.

The ritual tries to express this glorious spiritual reality by raising to the highest possible level the deep solemnity of action, the richness of symbolism and the mystical sense of the spoken word.

Although one consecrator alone can suffice, Catholic tradition demands if possible the cooperation of two assisting Bishops in the interest of absolute certainty that the Apostolical Succession is duly and truly handed on, and also perhaps to reduce the likelihood of clandestine or irregular consecrations.

The elect, as well as the Consecrator, celebrate the holy Eucharist, each at his own altar, each with his own assistants, up to the time of the Episcopal Consecration, and at the one High Altar thereafter. The head and the hands of the new Bishop are anointed with the most sacred and powerful of the Holy Oils, the Sacred Chrism; the staff, the cross and the ring are anointed and consecrated and solemnly presented to the new Bishop; he is crowned with the mitre as a king with his crown; during the singing of the *Te Deum* he makes a solemn tour through the cathedral to give his first episcopal blessing to all present. He is placed upon the episcopal throne. Everything is done with the greatest possible dignity. The entire service is like the playing on an organ of which all reg-

isters are brought into action, or like the performance of a symphony of Bruckner, where the maximum of expressive power is obtained with the use of all means available.

It would lead too far to follow the course of the entire ceremony in detail. (The student would do well to read over carefully the service as given in the Liturgy, accompanying each portion by reading the corresponding instructions given in the *Ceremonial Book*.) The essential part is the same as in the Priest's Ordination, though all details are now on a larger scale. First the Presentation, in the course of which the Protocol of Election and the Mandate for Consecration are read; then the promise of canonical obedience, the Charge, the Interrogation, and after the Gradual the actual consecration ceremony with the singing of the Litany and the *Veni Creator*.

Then comes the laying on of hands with the words of Consecration, the anointing, the presenting of the instruments of office: the staff, the cross and the ring. After the celebration of the Eucharist there follows the coronation with the mitre, the blessing procession and the enthronement, after which the new Bishop gives the final Benediction. The new Bishop then does homage to his Consecrator with the threefold salutation "*Ad multos annos*", and in turn receives the Salutation of Peace from each of the officiating Bishops.

Although this all happens with the greatest possible splendor and solemnity, the true meaning of this highest Ordination of the Catholic Church lies of course in the inner actions. When the hands are laid on the head of the Bishop-Elect and the consecration words "Receive the Holy Ghost. . ." are said, a channel is opened in the line of *Activity* from principle (6) (See Figure 1 in Assignment II) at the *buddhic* level to principle (4) at the level of the Triple Spirit; principle (4) is now also linked with the corresponding principle in the Lord's nature, and the existing channels between (7) and (6) and the Lord are enormously widened. Principle (5), the *intuition*, is also at the same time linked to that of the Lord. Principle (4) being at the level of the Triple Spirit, the Bishop is through this principle connected with the Triple Spirit of the Lord, for "these Three are One" in a very real sense. With his mind, intuition and spirit thus linked, the Lord's blessing from that triune level now flows through him; hence he blesses people with a triple cross where the Priest uses but one cross; and where the Priest blesses with the open palm of the hand, the Bishop uses three digits--the thumb and first two fingers--of his hand in making the sign of the cross.

The Priest, in blessing, draws down the power through the line (2)-(5)-(7) and sends it out through his ego. The Bishop, being more highly developed and more fully connected, can let the power flow through more directly and therefore more strongly.

The connection of principle (5) with the Lord is a new and entirely different channel. The *buddhic* principle is also called the Christ principle, representing the Second Person aspect (as 4-6-7 represent the Third), and it is the wonderful Christ-force flowing through this principle (5) which enables the Bishop to hand on his power to others. It also offers the Bishop an opportunity for wonderful spiritual development.

In the prayer which next follows, which is addressed to the Holy Trinity, the Consecrator asks that the new Bishop's heart and mind may be opened to heavenly grace, thereby opening the way down into the mental (9) and emotional (10) principles for the new power which has just been made available at the intuitional level (5).

The next step is the anointing of the whole top of the new Bishop's head with the sacred Chrism. The Chrism is especially the vehicle of the divine Fire. Though applied at the physical level,

its influence extends far into the higher realms. The anointing of the head brings about a strong direct connection with and a mighty quickening of the Triple Spirit so that this Spirit, which in the ordinary man has little influence over its reflection into his personality, can now have its influence greatly intensified. The anointing also helps to open the channel right down into the physical brain. The crown chakram (1, Figure 2) is also quickened and can become a radiating halo of blessing if the Bishop develops and uses his spiritual powers aright.

The prayer following this anointing beautifully expresses the action on the Triple Spirit: "Thou who art *wisdom*, *strength* and *beauty*, show forth Thy glory in this Thy servant. Let Thy wisdom dwell in his mind and enlighten his understanding . . . may he be strong and of good courage, sustaining his people . . . a tower of strength to them . . . let the beauty of holiness shine forth in his conversation and actions . . . Thou who livest and reignest, O Trinity of Might and Wisdom and Love, one holy God throughout all ages of ages."

The hands are now anointed with Chrism, the better to enable the new Bishop to handle his threefold power, which ultimately comes (through the Lord) from the Blessed Trinity. The hands are then blessed with three signs of the cross in a short consecration prayer. Another prayer follows during which the Consecrator makes the sign of the cross over the heart and then over the hands of the new Bishop. With the blessing of the heart: "Mayest thou abound with the fullness of spiritual + blessing", a direct line of communication is opened between the intuition (5) and the emotional body (10) so that if and when the intuition is developed, it may flash down immediately into its reflected agency in the personality. It remains for the Bishop to develop the possibilities of this connection.

Perhaps it will be helpful to consider here the beautiful prayers with which the staff, the cross and the Bishop's ring are blessed:

NOTE: the concerned pages are missing in the pdf scans!



CHAPTER VI: THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ORDINATIONS

THE APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION – A RECOMMENDED STUDY

Required Text Book: *THE APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION IN THE LIBERAL CATHOLIC CHURCH*
by the Rev. A. W. Cockerham

THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

To be studied very carefully and thoroughly as expounding the origin, in the early Church, of the Catholic Ministry of three Major Orders: Deacons, Priests and Bishops. Our Clergy must always be prepared to discuss this subject intelligently with inquirers and with Clergy of non-Catholic churches.

THE APOSTOLIC MINISTRY

Study Chapter IV very carefully and thoroughly as setting forth what the Catholic Church - - in the West at least - - has come to regard as the essential *Intent, Matter* and *Form* for the valid transmission of Holy Orders, and how the Liberal Catholic Rite meticulously complies with these essentials. A thorough grasp of this subject is necessary in order that our Clergy may be able to defend the validity of our Orders when questioned, especially by Clergy of other Catholic churches.

APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION

Study Chapters II and III. Although these two chapters deal with history and are not germane to the subject of this course, they should be read carefully so that the student will be familiar with the history of the derivation of the Apostolic Succession in the Liberal Catholic Church.

CONCLUSION

Study Chapter V of the text book carefully as an expression of the purpose of the Catholic Ministry.