

**The canons Regarding the Minor  
Clergy and their Implications for  
the Role and Life of these Clergy  
in the Orthodox Church Today**

# **The canons Regarding the Minor Clergy and their Implications for the Role and Life of these Clergy in the Orthodox Church Today**

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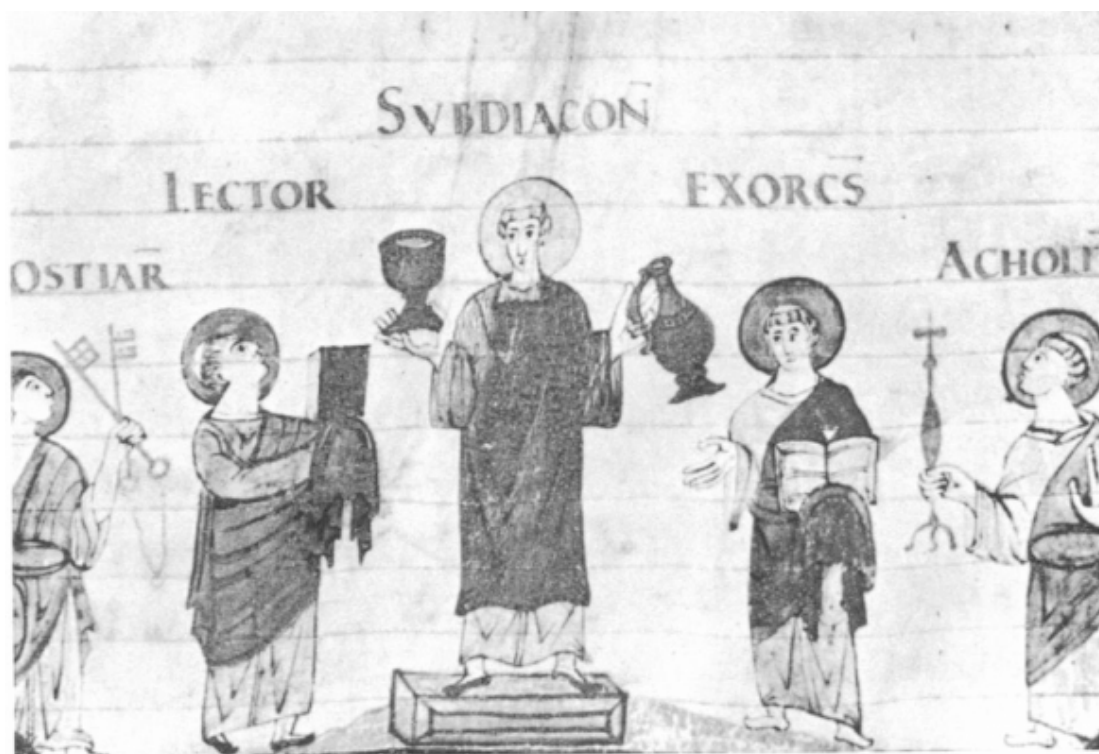
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## Introduction

It is perfectly plain to everybody that order reigns in the Church, and that it is pleasing to God for the transactions of the Priesthood to be maintained with rigorousness. Since, then, we behold some persons receiving the tonsure of the clergy from infancy and without imposition of hands, and reading from the pulpit at the assembly, but doing so in an uncanonical fashion, we forbid the doing of this from now on.<sup>1</sup>

This paper, being inspired by the quote above from Canon 14 of Second Nicaea is an examination of the canons that have universal recognition in the Orthodox churches; that is the canons of the seven Ecumenical Councils and the ninth century, which are applicable to ordering the transactions of the minor clergy in the Church. While the canons are not intended to be an instruction book on the minor orders they, nevertheless, provide a good picture of the functions and expected way of life of the minor clergy and they provide a large number of rules to enable these functions and way of life to be correctly ordered.



Detail of illustration of the minor orders as found in the western churches in the ninth century, from Roger E. Reynolds, “The Portrait of the Ecclesiastical Officers in the Raganaldus Sacramentary and Its Liturgico-Canonical Significance”, *Speculum*, Vol. 46, No. 3 (Jul., 1971), Medieval Academy of America, pp. 432-442, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2851907> (Ecclesiastical Officers with Symbols, Raganaldus Sacramentary. Autun, Bibliotheque Municipale 19 (19bis), fol. Iv (photo: Pontifical Institute)).

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<sup>1</sup> Canon 14 of Second Nicaea (787 AD).

This paper is not intended as a critique of the canons themselves, although such a critique could well be valuable, but rather an analysis of the content of the canons in regard to the minor clergy. As a clerical monk, who is deeply involved with the liturgical life of the Orthodox Church, it is not appropriate to challenge whether a particular canon, or the canons in general, are normative, so the paper is written with the assumption that the canons are normative and, as such, the questions to be addressed are: what is the expected behaviour, or practice, required in by canons; and how can this behaviour, or practice, be applied in the present time. Also, because the canons are relevant to the liturgical life of the Church, the research is also intended to assist development, or continuance, of best liturgical practice, consistent with the canonical tradition of the Orthodox Church. The analysis will be made in the context of the theological and liturgical traditions of the Orthodox Church, although it is beyond the scope of this paper to analyse these traditions in depth.

The paper is also written with the assumption that the various churches that were established across the Roman Empire shared a common tradition, including reference to shared canonical norms. While there is evidence of diversity in the early churches, there is also evidence of considerable consistency and uniformity.<sup>2</sup> Hence, the evidence of practice of churches in the West, such as England, is relevant to the research of this paper, even though the present Orthodox churches are descended from those located in the eastern part of the Roman Empire and the assumption of uniformity of tradition cannot be viably extended past the eleventh century.<sup>3</sup>

### **Context of the Examination**

There has been in recent times a movement against clericalism within various Christian groups including within the Orthodox Church. Such a movement argues that the laity have little role to play in the services and in management of the churches and

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<sup>2</sup> There is not the scope to go through this evidence here to establish the point, which is why the uniformity is left as an assumption in this paper. This assumption is not crucial to the validity of the paper but only for the relevance of evidence sourced outside the area of the churches of the eastern regions of the Roman Empire, which are now commonly known as Orthodox churches.

<sup>3</sup> The exact date is a matter of dispute and, even from the ninth century, the assumption can be considered tenuous. Nevertheless, the Ecumenical Councils were still recognised as normative in England in the late eighth and ninth centuries and there was an understanding in England of sharing a catholic and orthodox tradition with all other churches. Canon 1, Legatine canons (785 AD), Canon 1, Wulfred's canons (816 AD), in John Johnson, *A Collection of the Laws and canons of the Church of England*. (John Henry Parker: Oxford, 1850), p. 266 and p. 300, respectively.

that these things are being kept exclusively by the Priesthood. One major example, used to support the argument, is the lack of participation of the laity in the liturgical services in the Orthodox churches, especially not replying to the petitions of the Priest or Deacon, with this being done only by a Cantor or choir. In line with this movement, in a number of Orthodox parishes, especially in such places as in the United States and Britain, there has been a move to have congregational singing reestablished.

In the West, the minor orders of the Roman Catholic Church paralleled those in the Orthodox Church, with minor variations, both before and after the Schism. However, Roman Catholic scholarship has moved to the position where it is considered correct to express the following statement:

Several medieval theologians regarded minor orders as sacramental, this view is no longer held, for the fundamental reason that minor orders, also the subdiaconate, are not of Divine or Apostolic origin.

Thus, because there is no direct Scriptural evidence of the minor orders, they are no longer considered sacramental.<sup>4</sup> This opinion was influenced by a theological opinion of ordination, which developed from the twelfth century, that no longer recognises the ordination of minor clergy as ordination, thus undermining their clerical status as being distinct from the laity.<sup>5</sup> Finally, the minor orders were officially abolished in the Roman Catholic Church in 1972.

In the Anglican and the Reformed churches the minor orders are not recognised as orders of ministry and this is true of all Protestant churches. This has meant that there has been little or no continued scholarship in regard to the minor orders. There was some work done in the nineteenth century, by scholars such as Lightfoot and Harnack, but this was rather more a historical survey rather than an examining of their functions in regard to providing a normative guide for present day usage. Also, there has been little, if any, formal scholarship from the Orthodox Churches translated into English or conducted by Orthodox scholars in the West.

Also, the World Council of Churches in *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry - Faith and Order*, Paper No. 111, speaks of ministry in the church but it completely fails to

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<sup>4</sup> New Advent: *Catholic Encyclopaedia* <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/10332b.htm> (Accessed 8 March 2010).

<sup>5</sup> Gary, Macy. *The Hidden History of Women's Ordination - Female Clergy in the Medieval West*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008) pp. 27-33.

address minor orders and only recognises the three orders of Bishop, Priest and Deacon.<sup>6</sup> When there is mention of ministries apart from these, there is an assumption that they are not ordained: “What is it that distinguishes [the diaconate] from other ministries in the Church (catechists, musicians, etc.)? Why should Deacons be ordained while these other ministries do not receive ordination?”<sup>7</sup> So, the issue does not seem to have been addressed in ecumenical discussions, or, at least, not seen of sufficient importance to warrant addressing in the paper.

Contrary to this movement, this paper will argue that, in terms of the Canon Law of the Orthodox Church, there has been an overtaking of the clerical functions by the laity, which the laity are not permitted to perform. These functions include chanting, reading, door-keeping, exorcism and serving in the Altar. These roles are the roles that were performed by the minor orders of the clergy, that is the Subdeacons, Lectors, Cantors, Exorcists, Acolytes and Doorkeepers. There seems to be an opinion that these are lay functions and so laity are appropriate to perform them but this paper will demonstrate that these are clerical functions.

It will be argued that while there is indeed a good case for the return to the laity of their role in the liturgical services, this does not mean taking over clerical functions but rather performing their proper parts in the services that are appointed for the laity. Many of these lay functions have, in the course of history, been assumed by the clergy for various reasons, and, in turn, these offices have been increasingly performed by unordained laymen. This has resulted in a confusion of lay and clerical roles.

Another aspect that will be examined is the theological basis for the minor orders. It may be considered that the orders are merely functional and that they were established to ensure a quality of person that was capable of doing the function; thus, a Lector was to be capable of reading and a Cantor of singing. It will be argued in this paper that, while the clerical orders provide a mechanical function during the services, and

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<sup>6</sup> World Council of Churches, *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry - Faith and Order*, Paper No. 111, the “Lima Text”, accessed online at <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/wcc-commissions/faith-and-order-commission/i-unity-the-church-and-its-mission/baptism-eucharist-and-ministry-faith-and-order-paper-no-111-the-lima-text/baptism-eucharist-and-ministry.html#c10500> on 22 March 2010.

<sup>7</sup> World Council of Churches, “Ministry”, in *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry - Faith and Order*, Paper No. 111, §31.

this requires certain abilities, this function also has a theological or spiritual dimension that requires an ordination of the one performing the function, in a similar manner as ordination is required to the major orders of Bishop, Priest, and Deacon.

This paper is not intended as an analysis of the historical role of the minor clergy but, as highlighted in the introduction, is rather focused on understanding the place and functions of the minor clergy in a manner that is most consistent with Canon Law. The canons are understood to reflect a normative standard relevant for the present time, even if this requires reinterpreting them, rather than reflect only the historical practice at a particular time in history. Nevertheless, the historical evidence is invaluable in helping to interpret the Canon Law and to establish how the normative requirements were put into practice. The historical evidence will also be used to establish whether the minor orders are a necessary part of the church hierarchy.

### **Outline of the Examination**

The paper will begin with a brief overview of present practice, which will be largely drawn from observation of liturgical practice in various parish and monastic settings. This overview is not intended to be comprehensive but a snapshot that manifests how the minor clergy are understood in general practice today.

Next, the paper will include an analysis of the applicable canons regarding the minor clergy; that is those canons that apply to minor clergy because they are minor clergy. The section will briefly examine the penalties for breaching canons and then proceed to discuss the functions, qualifications, obligations and expected behaviour of minor clergy. The paper will draw on the established commentators of the canons, such as Theodore Balsamon and Nicodemus of the Holy Mountain. There will also be reference to collections of canons from Anglo-Saxon Britain that reflect practice in the western churches and also to the various laws of Justinian, who encoded many canons into Roman Law.

After the analysis of the canons, there will be some examination of the theological issues that have affect on the functions and appointment of the minor clergy. The works of Dionysius the Areopagite, or Pseudo-Dionysius, especially his work, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, will be used to help provide the theological basis and

arguments of Adolf Harnack, who challenges some theological assumptions that were based on Dionysius by theologians including Thomas Aquinas, will be addressed.

Then an examination of the functions of the minor clergy will be conducted that will draw on sources beyond the canon law. Next, there will be a brief investigation of historical evidence, especially in the early Church, to help to contextualise the relevant Canon Law and help develop a better sense of its interpretation by the historical evidence of the application of the canons. Historical evidence will also help to ascertain whether the minor orders are a continuing and integral part of Christian liturgy, and thus seen throughout the life and locations of the Church, or whether they were a development to meet a particular need at a certain time and place. The letters of Cyprian of Carthage will be an important part of this investigation because they provide some of the earliest evidence of the minor orders.

The place of women within the minor clergy will be examined because this is very relevant to modern concerns of involvement of women in official Church ministries and their ordination in some churches outside the Orthodox Communion. This examination will include both their participation in the minor orders in an equivalent manner as to men's participation and, also, the traditional role of Deaconess, which has always been a role specifically for women.

Finally, there will be an examination of the pastoral concerns and possible exceptions that need to be considered in the application of the canons to the churches today.

### **Terminology**

For the purposes of this dissertation the Greek word ἀναγνώστης will be translated as Lector, the word ψάλτης will be translated as Cantor. The choice of Lector rather than Reader and Cantor rather than Chanter are made to distinguish the clerical order of this name from one exercising the function of either reading or chanting, either with or without ordination to the minor clergy.<sup>8</sup> The other minor orders will be known as Subdeacons, Exorcists, Acolytes and Doorkeepers. The term “minor clergy”, or “minor orders”, is used to distinguish these offices from those of Bishop, Priest and Deacon, to which is applied the term “major clergy.” In the text of the canons there is

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<sup>8</sup> The terminology used in quotes from either translations of the canons or from other authors will be changed to conform to this pattern to avoid confusion.

no such terminology and commonly the “major clergy” are listed by name and then the term “clergy” is used for the remaining offices or orders. The term “clergy,” while generally used in the canons to identify all minor orders, can also be understood to incorporate both major and minor orders. The terms “priesthood”, or “sacred orders,” are also applied to all the orders in the canons, with the exception of the canons of the Council of Laodicea (364 AD), where it tends to be only applied to the major clergy and the minor clergy are classed under the term “servants”.

### **Present Practice**

The minor orders are still extant in the Orthodox churches today, although some orders are more predominant in some churches while other orders are stronger in other churches. For example the Russian churches still make extensive use of Subdeacons, especially when a Bishop is serving, whereas in Greek practice this order has somewhat fallen into disuse with Deacons taking over the functions of Subdeacons, most notably washing the Bishop’s hands during the Liturgy and vesting the Bishop. On the other hand the Greek Church still recognises the order of Canter, although this does not necessarily mean that those acting as Canters have been formally ordained as such, whereas the Russian churches, with polyphonic choirs, have largely lost this office. Most churches maintain the office of Lector but in practice the task of reading is often done by laity.

In a case study at the Monastery of Vatopedi on Mount Athos, Greece, it was asked whether the monastery keeps a record of the clerical ranks of the monks below that of Deacon. The answer was no. Also, while there were monks that were ordained as Lectors prior to coming to the monastery, there was no record of any being ordained in the monastery for service in the monastery other than immediately prior to being ordained to Subdeacon then to Deacon in the same day. When asked about reading during the services and in particular the Scriptural readings, the reply that there was no thought taken to ensure that the reader was an ordained Lector. The assumption of the monk questioned, the one in charge of the order of services, was that all monks, meaning all ranks of monks including novices wearing monastic garb, were inherently Lectors. There was also the opinion that because the Abbot has the power to ordain a Lector, he has the power to appoint someone to read by command. This latter opinion

has strong implications to the meaning of ordination and the right to ordain, as well as to how the canons are to be understood.<sup>9</sup>

As anecdotal evidence, during a discussion with a parish Priest of the Russian Orthodox Church outside Russia, it was raised as to whether a Lector should perform the reading in the services. The Priest replied that this was not necessary and that a Lector is only a mark of honour for those who are committed to helping serve in the Church.<sup>10</sup> During the services the ordained Lectors perform the reading of the Epistles but the reading of the rest of the service is shared among the laity. In Australia, while they have Lectors, this does not preclude a layman or laywoman from reading during the service, even from the Epistle Book.<sup>11</sup> This was also the case in parishes in England, both of Russian and Greek traditions.<sup>12</sup> In photos of the Patriarch's church in Constantinople, there can be seen one or two women in the choir during the Holy Week services, which is more likely to represent official thinking and policy, especially with a large choir and no necessity for their presence.<sup>13</sup>

Another item of anecdotal evidence to help understand present thinking, but not necessarily official policy, is a cover photo of the Church Calendar for New Zealand 2010 with a picture of a teenage girl at a chanter's stand and the caption, inside, "our little chanter". So, it would seem that the creators of this calendar believe that it is quite appropriate for a teenage girl to perform the function of a Cantor, although they are unlikely to consider that a Cantor is an ordained cleric but, rather, a layman or laywoman, who chants in services.

In the preceding paragraphs there were points made about the functions of the various orders. This dissertation will examine whether we can define particular functions of the various orders of the minor clergy and having done so examine whether these

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<sup>9</sup> Conversation with monk in charge of the services of the Holy Monastery of Vatopedi on 21-1-2010.

<sup>10</sup> The conversation took place in Auckland, New Zealand in late 2003.

<sup>11</sup> Observations in various parishes of the Russian Church Abroad in Australia in 2003.

<sup>12</sup> Observation of a parish of the Diocese of Sourozh (Moscow Patriarchate) and a parish of the Archdiocese of Thyateira (Ecumenical Patriarchate) in Cambridge, England from 2007-2009.

<sup>13</sup> The official Website of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, <http://www.patriarchate.org/multimedia/photos?setID=72157623663108945&title=04/03/10:%20Epitaphios%20Service%20at%20the%20Phanar> (Accessed 12 April 2010).

functions are such that they are only proper to the minor clergy. This examination will be done considering the canons of the Orthodox Church, the historical evidence and a theological perspective of the nature of the orders and their place in worship. The dissertation will then consider these aspects in the context of the churches of today considering the norms of practice as outlined earlier and then pastoral issues and canonical exceptions as to how the functions should be used today.

### **Canon Law**

An important source regarding norms of practice in the Orthodox Church is to be found in the canons of the Church. There are a number of canons that deal with the minor orders. These canons range from who may function in such orders to the way of life expected by clerics in these orders. The canons will be largely used to investigate two issues: one is the understanding of the functions as either clerical or lay and the second derives from this as to how this affects the conduct of the services of the Church.

The selection of canons, as seen in the appendix, is not exhaustive but provides all the canons that could be relevant today and provide a good picture of the qualifications, functions, obligations, and standards expected of the minor clergy. The canons will be grouped to help with the interpretations and also because a number of canons repeat earlier canons or overlap to some extent.

One point that needs to be made before the Canon Law is examined is that the minor orders are considered part of the clergy and they are not functions of laymen within the churches. Canon 6 of the council of Trullo (692 AD) states: "...of those being promoted to the Clergy only Lectors and Cantors may marry..." and Canon 69 of the Apostles (pre fifth century) states "If any Bishop, or Presbyter, or Deacon, or Subdeacon, or Lector, or Cantor fails to fast ..., let him be deposed from office." Thus, the canons rank Lectors, Cantors and Subdeacons in the clergy and they are liable for deposition from their office in the same manner as are major orders, that is a return to being a layman, which would not make sense if they were only considered laymen doing a function, in which case they would only be prohibited from the function not deposed from an order.<sup>14</sup> So, when the canons speak of the clergy they include the

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<sup>14</sup> cf. Canon 51 of Basil the Great (pre 379 AD).

minor orders as well as the major orders. This is also confirmed in the West where the practice of numbering the grades, or orders, of clergy, while varying in how many grades there were, always included the minor clergy with the major clergy in a continuous scale of clergy.<sup>15</sup>

In the West, Subdeacons were included into the major orders but this was a later development and early pictorial evidence, such as the illustration in the introduction saw them grouped with the other minor orders and not with the major orders. So, for the purposes of this paper Subdeacons are considered part of the minor orders even if this wasn't always considered to be the case.

### **Canonical Penalties**

Before discussing the various canons that are applicable to the minor clergy there will be a short examination of the potential canonical penalties for breaching the canons. There are four main penalties established in the canons that are applied to minor clergy. The first of these penalties is that of deposition.<sup>16</sup> This penalty is the most severe, applied singularly, that can be applied to an infringement of the canons. It means that the cleric is removed from his clerical office and that he can never function in that office again; he returns to being a layman. The next penalty is that of preventing promotion.<sup>17</sup> This penalty permits the cleric to continue in his present rank but he is not permitted to be raised to a higher rank. This penalty is also permanent. There can be a variation of this penalty in that a cleric may continue in his office but he is not permitted to serve. The third penalty is that of suspension.<sup>18</sup> This penalty is a temporary prevention of performing his office but after a set time he is permitted to continue as normal. The final penalty is excommunication.<sup>19</sup> This penalty is that which is the normal penalty for laity breaching a canon. It is a temporary removal from communion, as also service, until the cleric repents of a particular behaviour that has incurred the penalty. Once, he is permitted back to communion, his is also

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<sup>15</sup> Roger E. Reynolds, "At Sixes and Sevens'-And Eights and Nines: The Sacred Mathematics of Sacred Orders in the Early Middle Ages", *Speculum*, Vol. 54, No. 4 (Oct., 1979), pp. 669-684.

<sup>16</sup> E.g. Canon 55 of the Apostles.

<sup>17</sup> E.g. Canon 69 of Basil the Great and Gregory the Great, Book 1, Epistle 44 "To Peter, Subdeacon of Sicily" (c. 600 AD).

<sup>18</sup> E.g. Canon 9 of Trullo.

<sup>19</sup> E.g. Canon 54 of the Apostles.

permitted to serve again. For some infringements, usually minor, canons permit warnings to be given to allow the cleric to repent before a penalty is imposed.<sup>20</sup>

There is a general rule that only one penalty can be given for any offence.<sup>21</sup> So, that if one is deposed he cannot also be excommunicated. However, there are some exceptions to this rule for particularly serious offences where a cleric is to be both deposed and excommunicated.<sup>22</sup>

Most canons set which penalty is to be imposed but there are a number of canons where no penalty is set within the canon. There is no canon that explains what to do in this case but it can probably be assumed that the Bishop, or council of Bishops, would choose an appropriate penalty from above for the particular canon breached.

### **Functions of the Minor Orders**

The canons only provide a cursory glance at the functions of the minor orders. They were not written as instructions on what the orders were meant to do but to correct abuses in the practice, hence they are not comprehensive in nature but they do provide a few indicators.<sup>23</sup> The first function to be considered is that of reading. After this chanting will be considered, which in many ways overlaps with reading. Then door keeping will be considered with Subdeacons and finally the function of exorcism.

Apostolic Canon 60, although limited in scope, provides more information than is initially obvious when reading the text. It will be included in full:

If anyone reads to the public in churches the books of impious writers bearing false inscriptions and purporting to be holy, to the injury of laity and clergy, let him be deposed.

The initial function that is to be observed is the reading of books. The books to be read are those considered holy; this is in keeping with Canon 33 of Trullo, which speaks of reading divine words. However, apart from the qualification of being holy

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<sup>20</sup> Such as Canon 51 of the Apostles.

<sup>21</sup> Canon 25 of the Apostles.

<sup>22</sup> Canon 65 of the Apostles is a case for this.

<sup>23</sup> This is true of the canons regarded as Ecumenical and being examined in this paper but there are canons of the Church in England from 957 AD that explain the roles of ecclesiastical orders from door-keepers to Priests/Bishops.

there is nothing else in the canon that defines the books to be read. It can be implied though that the books are not restricted to the Holy Scriptures because it would have been appropriate to have defined that as a narrow limit in the canon. So, it appears that the range of books considered holy can extend beyond the Canon of the Scriptures. Another aspect of the canon is that it confirms that the task of reading is a clerical task because it only proscribes the penalty of deposition for those reading the books, which would only apply to clergy. If laymen had been permitted to read then it would have proscribed excommunication for reading those books, which is the normal penalty for inappropriate lay behaviour. So, it appears that the function of reading is clerical and that it extends beyond the reading of the Holy Scriptures.

Canon 33 of Trullo is an important canon regarding Lectors and to some extent Cantors. The key parts of the canon state:

...and that some of them do not even tonsure their Cantors and Lectors when installing them in the divine Temple, we have seen fit to concur in decreeing that from now on those who wish to promote certain persons to the clergy.... Nor, furthermore, shall they permit anyone to speak from the pulpit to the laity the divine words, in accordance with the order of enrolment in the clergy, unless such person has something to show in the way of a priestly tonsure and receives the blessing canonically from the proper pastor. If anyone be caught acting contrary to the rules prescribed, let him be excommunicated.

Here again we see the function of speaking to the laity the divine words and that this function is linked to the Lector and to an extent the Cantor, by chanting rather than reading. Again, this function is clearly clerical and if any layman is caught exercising this function then he should be excommunicated. That it is a layman, who is acting contrary to the rules, is evidenced by the penalty only being excommunication and not deposition. We can also see that the function is performed from the pulpit, or Ambo, which was a raised circular walled platform with book stands accessed by steps and located at the centre of the nave of early church buildings. The Lectors, Cantors and Deacons ascended it to read or chant. Later the book stands were moved to either side of the church, which better suited antiphonal chanting and cleared the centre for the entrance processions. Canon 14 of the Second Nicaea confirms Canon 33 and states that it also applies to services in Monasteries. However, there is no mention of the function within convents.

Chanting is also to be a clerical function and only performed by Cantors. This is implied in Canon 33 of Trullo but explicit in Canon 15 of Laodicea, which prohibits

anyone from singing from the Ambo, who is not a clerical Cantor.<sup>24</sup> These canons do not prohibit the custom of the laity responding to the petitions of the Deacons, exclamations of the Priests or to the verses of a Cantor but forbids the function of singing solo to the people.<sup>25</sup> Do the canons prohibit a layman reading from a place other than the Ambo? The canon is not specific on this point and it could be taken as a factor in needing to be a cleric but it would seem that reading or chanting is the principle part of the orders' functions rather than being on an Ambo, and so the canon would apply to such reading or chanting from any place in the church and not only that from the Ambo. Can there be lay choirs? This is a question that could be answered yes and no depending on further elaboration of what is meant. If the choir was formed to sing the lay responses as representative of the laity then the answer could be yes, although this would blur the distinction between Cantor and laity and remove an action of the lay order that unites them with the liturgy vocally, but if the choir is to sing the parts that are the function of the Cantor then the answer is no because this is a clerical function and only permitted to an ordained Cantor, or a choir of ordained Cantors.

When exercising the function of chanting the Cantors are not to use disorderly cries, or force nature to cry aloud nor to chant in a manner unbecoming to a church. They are to offer psalmodies with much attention and contrition to God, who watches the heart.<sup>26</sup> We know that this canon refers to Cantors because, in keeping with the other canons, it is they who attend church for the purpose of chanting. Thus, not only is the function restricted to ordained Cantors, these Cantors must exercise their function in all piety, with God in mind, and not simply mechanically nor inappropriate to the setting of the liturgy. A similar frame of mind would also apply to reading and other functions in the church.

Canons 22 and 43 of Laodicea speak of servants (ὑπηρέτας) and say that they must not desert the doors. Thus, the servants had a task of being stationed at the doors, presumably to prevent those who should not be in the temple from coming in and also

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<sup>24</sup> See also Canon 23 of Laodicea.

<sup>25</sup> Theodore Balsamon, Interpretation of Canon 15 of Laodicea, PG 137:1361.

<sup>26</sup> Canon 75 of Trullo.

to help usher out the catechumens and penitents when they were dismissed.<sup>27</sup> Balsamon and Zonaras equate this role to Subdeacons and mention that the Subdeacon also used to have the function of dismissing the catechumens and calling the faithful to prayer;<sup>28</sup> this function is still seen in the ordination rite of a Subdeacon, who calls out “As many as are of the faithful,” while washing the Bishops hands.<sup>29</sup> Nicodemus of the Holy Mountain maintains, rather, that these servants were Doorkeepers and that Subdeacons had a role of service in the Bema assisting the major clergy in the mysteries.<sup>30</sup> Due to the lack of specific mention of Doorkeepers, as being distinct from servants, in the canons of Laodicea and yet the inclusion, in these canons, of directions for servants to perform the function of door keeping, together with them being considered the lowest office, which was elsewhere the rank of the Doorkeepers,<sup>31</sup> the opinion of Nicodemus would seem to be the more accurate in this matter. Nevertheless, each order can be in a manner regarded as incorporating the lower orders, then it would not be wrong to ascribe door keeping to Subdeacons as one of their functions.<sup>32</sup>

Canon 20 of Laodicea forbids servants to handle the sacred vessels and Canon 25 forbids them from giving bread and blessing the chalice. As with door keeping, there is some conflict between the interpreters as to the meaning of “servants” in this canon, whether it includes Subdeacons or only lower servants, such as Acolytes and Doorkeepers.<sup>33</sup> Giving the bread and blessing the chalice is a function of the Priest and while the Deacon is permitted to do the former, although rarely, he is not able to bless the chalice, so the term servant can be legitimately extended to all minor clergy from Doorkeeper to Subdeacon because there is no evidence of them ever doing these

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<sup>27</sup> This role is supported by Canon 11 of Elfric which states that the Doorkeeper unlock the door for the faithful and locks it against the unbelievers. The Doorkeeper here is also in charge of ringing the bells to call the laity to church.

<sup>28</sup> Balsamon and Zonaras, Interpretations of Canon 22 of Laodicea PG 137:1369-1372.

<sup>29</sup> Ἀρχιερατικὸν, p.121.

<sup>30</sup> Agapius a Hieromonk and Nicodemus a Monk (Comp.), *The Rudder*, (D. Cummings trans.) (Chicago: The Orthodox Christian Educational Society, 1957; Repr., New York, N.Y.: Luna Printing Co., 1983). pp. 349-350.

<sup>31</sup> See canons 10 and 11 of Elfric (957 AD) and the Western ranking of clergy in general.

<sup>32</sup> This reason will be discussed further below.

<sup>33</sup> The difference of opinion can be seen between the interpretations of Balsamon and Nicodemus.

functions.<sup>34</sup> However, regarding touching the sacred vessels there is conflict with Subdeacons being forbidden to do this and other ancient evidence, especially in the West where it is an explicit duty of the Subdeacon to handle the sacred vessels.<sup>35</sup> This is one of the reasons for the position of Nicodemus in that the term servant does not mean Subdeacon.<sup>36</sup> See a fuller discussion of this below.

The function of exorcism is only to be done by those who have been appointed by the Bishop to do so.<sup>37</sup> Thus, only those appointed to the order of Exorcists or higher clergy, especially Priests, can perform exorcisms and, according to Nicodemus in his interpretation of the canon, also catechism,<sup>38</sup> which is connected to exorcism in the services in preparation for Baptism. Balsamon also interprets the canon similarly to Nicodemus.<sup>39</sup> Even, in a home, that is in private, is it forbidden to exorcise anyone unless one is appointed to the task by the Bishop and this appointment is not merely a blessing for the occasion but to the permanent office of Exorcist.<sup>40</sup> If indeed it also means catechism then it is interesting that laymen are not permitted to catechise even at home. Limiting exorcism to Exorcists could be so that the function is done by an official representative of the Church, who may also be considered to have a specific gift for this function. This would ensure that the exorcism is done in the name of Christ via the Church and it would help prevent abuse of this function to protect both the one being exorcised and the Exorcist. The Apostolic Constitutions says that Exorcists are not formally ordained but have a gift from God.<sup>41</sup> This may explain why they are not listed formally among the clerical ranks in Eastern canons but they are so ranked in Western canons, in which there does not seem to be the influence of the “traditions” that are reflected in the Apostolic Constitutions and in Eastern

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<sup>34</sup> cf. Nicodemus, *The Rudder*, pp. 350-351.

<sup>35</sup> This is also evidenced in the images of ordination rites in the west where the Subdeacon is seen being given the sacred vessels as a sign of his office. See Roger E. Reynolds, “The Liturgy of Clerical Ordination in Early Medieval Art,” *Gesta*, Vol. 22, No. 1 (1983), p. 33.

<sup>36</sup> Nicodemus, *The Rudder*, F.N., p. 193.

<sup>37</sup> Canon 26 of Laodicea.

<sup>38</sup> Nicodemus, *The Rudder*, p. 351.

<sup>39</sup> Balsamon, PG 137:1373.

<sup>40</sup> Nicodemus, *The Rudder*, p. 351.

<sup>41</sup> Apostolic Constitutions, Book 8, §3:26, although there is a recommendation that the Exorcist is ordained to the higher clergy.

“traditions” in general. Nevertheless, apart from details there is large amount of consistency between the “traditions” maintained in both western and eastern churches.

This is what can be seen in the canons regarding the functions. The functions will be discussed further below with regard to other source material.

### **Qualifications to be in Minor Orders**

The canons provide for a variety of qualifications to be ordained as a member of the clergy. These qualifications will be set out and analysed here. They will be ordered in terms of the order of canons as set out above. There is some overlap in the canons, so where another canon repeats a qualification already considered that canon will not be analysed separately.

The first qualification to be examined is that set out in the second Canon of the Apostles. It states that a clergyman must be ordained by a single Bishop. Primarily, this canon establishes that a clergyman must be ordained by a Bishop; one cannot be considered a clergyman without being ordained by a Bishop, although there is some qualifications to this mentioned below. Secondly, the canon, by implication, also sets a rule on the relationship required between the candidate and the Bishop and the candidate with other churches. Because the clergyman is ordained by a single Bishop, as opposed to a number of Bishops, he may only serve in the specific church of the Bishop who ordained him, he is not ordained to serve at large in any and every church.<sup>42</sup> This is evident because in context it follows a canon ruling the need for two or three Bishops, at least, to ordain a Bishop and the mention of a single Bishop contrasts with the mention of multiple Bishops, especially in reinforcing the number as a single Bishop rather than just saying “must be ordained by a Bishop.” It also reinforces the obedience of the clergyman to his Bishop, who is the sole source of his ordination, which fits well with the theology of Ignatius when he says that where the Bishop is there is the Church and that a clergyman is to do nothing without his Bishop.<sup>43</sup> So, it seems that one cannot be qualified to be a clergyman if he is not ordained by a single Bishop; that is he is ordained by Christ in the Church, there being

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<sup>42</sup> This does not prevent him from serving as a visitor in another church with the permission of the Bishops concerned.

<sup>43</sup> See Ignatius, *The Epistle of Ignatius to the Magnesians*, Chapter 7.

no higher organisation to which he can be ordained other than the local Church under a Bishop.

There are some qualifications for a clergyman to have to be ordained by a Bishop. One is that a clergyman, with the permission of the Bishop, may be ordained by an assistant, or country, Bishop. Also, according to Canon 14 of Second Nicaea, the Abbot of a monastery, who is a Priest and formally appointed Abbot by the Bishop, may ordain a Lector but only for his monastery. The Abbot may also ordain other minor clergy, that is Cantors and Subdeacons, within his own monastery according to Nicephorus the Confessor.<sup>44</sup> This is an interesting qualification to the rule of ordination can only be conferred by a Bishop. It suggests something about a monastery, which must be, in a manner, a small diocese in its own right under the Abbot, who within the monastery exercises the authority of a Bishop, including some part of the right to ordain. This is also seen in his appropriation of many ritual trappings of a Bishop, including sitting on the throne. However, it is only within and for the monastery that he exercises any episcopal functions and any minor clergyman that he ordains has no right to serve outside the monastery, without the blessing both of the Abbot and also of the Bishop of where he desires to serve, including service in another parish or monastery of the same diocese, just as if a clergyman is travelling to another diocese.

Another matter that concerns being qualified for the clergy is to not be demon possessed.<sup>45</sup> One who is possessed by a demon is considered unclean and, of greater concern, under control of an evil spirit thus they are not able to come under obedience to God through the Bishop and serve in the holy temples of the Church. Ordaining a demon-possessed man would also run counter to the Scriptural rule of not serving two masters.<sup>46</sup> Also, it is likely that a demon possessed cleric could act in an inappropriate manner during the service either blaspheming or causing a scandal and because the cleric has a public role this could bring disrepute to the Church. Once cleansed of the spirit then they are able, if otherwise worthy, to be ordained into the clergy.

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<sup>44</sup> Canon 6 of Nicephorus the Confessor (816 AD).

<sup>45</sup> Canon 79 of the Apostles.

<sup>46</sup> Matthew 6:24.

The next aspect of qualification is that the candidate should not be the slave of another man because it would cause upheaval in that household and it compromises the authority of the master.<sup>47</sup> The slave could not serve both his master and the Church, i.e. the Bishop, at the same time.<sup>48</sup> Nevertheless, if the slave is given his freedom then he may be ordained to the clergy. Due to the abolition of slavery, this aspect is not one that needs to be of concern at the present time because the relationship of slave master is no longer in place. The role of a paid servant, such as a butler, is different because the servant is free to leave and is not obliged to obey the master in all matters. Nevertheless, when ordaining a candidate it would seem to be appropriate for the candidate to give due notice of the intention to an employer, especially when he may resign from his job, and he should not to be taken without notice from his employer. This may also be beneficial to allow the employer to make provisions to allow the cleric time off work to attend the services on the major feast days that may fall on working days. Also, other forms of binding commitments to secular affairs, especially where the cleric is under obligation to another regarding time and/or place, may also mean it is inappropriate to ordain someone because he would not be sufficiently free to serve the needs of the Church. This is also reflected in the prohibition for a cleric to be engaged in certain secular affairs.<sup>49</sup> Ideally, a cleric should be free to attend the services of the Church daily and to be free of any secular commitments. However, it is often impossible due to the lack of finance to support the cleric from Church funds, so often a cleric will need some form of paid employment. It would be best to arrange employment so that the cleric has as much freedom or flexibility of time as possible to enable him to attend the service needs of the Church.

A man who has mutilated (castrates) himself cannot be a member of the clergy because he is considered a self-murderer and an enemy to the workmanship of God.<sup>50</sup> It seems that clergy, in particular, are to accept the entire life and bodily form that God has created for them; even destroying one part of oneself is here being equated to murder. This is in keeping with the instructions found in the Apostolic Constitutions

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<sup>47</sup> Canon 82 of the Apostles.

<sup>48</sup> Matthew 6:24.

<sup>49</sup> Canon 3 of Chalcedon (451 AD). Canon 10 of Nicaea 2 (783 AD). Also see the next section of this paper regarding obligations of clergy.

<sup>50</sup> Canon 22 of the Apostles and Canon 1 of Nicaea (325 AD).

where men are forbidden to shave off beards<sup>51</sup> and women to use make-up for adornment because to do so is an affront to how God has created us.<sup>52</sup>

One who has had a serious lapse of faith, that is denied Christ, cannot become a member of the clergy.<sup>53</sup> It would be inappropriate for one who denies Christ to take a public role that requires the proclamation of Christ.

The next matter is that one cannot be ordained to the clergy for money.<sup>54</sup> This was always a major concern through the history of the Church and there are a number of canons regarding this matter. Ordination is considered a free gift for those who are worthy and not something that can be bought with money. This follows the Scriptural account of Simon, who wanted to pay for the ability to confer the gift of the Holy Spirit and, because of this, he was chastised by Peter.<sup>55</sup> As Peter says that he “has no part [from the same word used in Greek for clergy] in the word,” thus, such a one cannot be a member of the clergy. There are also practical reasons for this in that those who come to such offices by wealth would not necessarily be worthy and if motivated by money would soon bring disrepute to the church and be unsuitable to serve in the charitable part of the Church life, which involves giving freely of the gifts of God either spiritual or material.<sup>56</sup>

Next, those who are to be promoted to the clergy cannot be married more than once nor to a widow, a divorced woman, a harlot, a slave girl nor an actress.<sup>57</sup> The purity required for the clergy extends to the candidate’s wife because she is considered to be one flesh with him.<sup>58</sup> Thus, as he cannot be married more than once,<sup>59</sup> neither can she

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<sup>51</sup> Apostolic Constitutions, Book 1, Section 2 (3).

<sup>52</sup> Apostolic Constitutions, Book 1, Section 3 (8).

<sup>53</sup> Canon 10 of Nicaea.

<sup>54</sup> Canon 2 of Chalcedon and Canon 22 of Trullo.

<sup>55</sup> Acts 8:18-21.

<sup>56</sup> cf. Matthew 10:8.

<sup>57</sup> Canon 18 of the Apostles and cf. Canon 3 of Trullo.

<sup>58</sup> Matthew 19:5 and Ephesians 5:31.

<sup>59</sup> cf. 1 Timothy 3:12.

have been married more than once nor can she have had premarital relationships.<sup>60</sup> Also, he cannot have married two sisters nor a niece.<sup>61</sup> If a candidate wants to get married then the marriage must take place before becoming a Subdeacon.<sup>62</sup> Here the rule applying to Priests and Deacons of no marriage after ordination is seen as extended to Subdeacons, perhaps due to their service with the holy vessels. For similar reasons that underlay developments in the West that led to clerical celibacy, in the East there was a level of continence required for those serving at the Altar and because a marriage was a public statement implying the contrary, marriage after ordination for Subdeacons and higher clergy was forbidden; clergy living in a married state seems to be something tolerated rather than considered an ideal state of life. Even though he may marry, if a Lector has relations with his betrothed wife before the wedding he cannot be advanced to a higher order but he can still read. However, if he has slept with a woman without betrothal then he is to be dismissed from the service, even if he has later married her.<sup>63</sup> In modern times the restrictions concerning marriage and sexual relationships make it difficult to find candidates eligible to serve as clergy and the increasing average age that men first get married, which is now over 25, tends to limit the number of men willing or able to serve as Subdeacons from the age of 20. For similar reasons care should also be taken regarding younger Lectors, for whom it is a challenge not to have premarital relations or to find wife who has not had such relations.

Another qualification concerns age. A candidate should be at least twenty years of age to be promoted to Subdeacon.<sup>64</sup> There is no canon setting the age that one may become a Lector or Cantor, although one canon requires a Lector to choose marriage or celibacy on reaching puberty, which implies that some Lectors were boys under the age of fourteen,<sup>65</sup> and some were even tonsured at infancy, although this practice was

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<sup>60</sup> See also Justinian, *Novels*, First Collection, Title 6, Chapter 5.

<sup>61</sup> Canon 19 of the Apostles.

<sup>62</sup> Canon 6 of Trullo.

<sup>63</sup> Canon 69 of Basil the Great.

<sup>64</sup> Canon 15 of Trullo.

<sup>65</sup> Canon 9 of the Council of Carthage (418 AD).

condemned.<sup>66</sup> The Novels of Justinian, however, set the age for a Lector to eighteen.<sup>67</sup> In the early period of Christianity, there seems to have been some variance in the age limits of clergy, so it may not be a matter of absolute importance. Nevertheless, having a certain level of maturity and stability is important and this is reflected by age, if not always guaranteed by age. The commitment to either be married or not to marry, as required of a Subdeacon, would be inadvisable to be applied to someone younger than twenty. Even a Lector should have a certain level of maturity before public speaker in the Church with a life which is under a stricter rule than required for laity.

When a candidate is being considered for the clergy his lineage is not to be taken into account but only whether he is otherwise worthy according to the canons.<sup>68</sup> This is to prevent the restriction to the clergy to only those children of clergy, such as was the practice with the Jews. It does not prevent children of clergy from becoming clerics and this is a common custom in places where the Orthodox Church has been well established. Clerical families are not forbidden but limiting clergy to only such families is forbidden. The churches in Russia, during the eighteenth century, were getting close to breaching the canon because, while there may not have been a formal restriction of clergy to clerical families, in practice the clergy were only taken from these families.<sup>69</sup>

If the candidate is already a cleric then he cannot be ordained to a higher rank, such as from a Lector to a Subdeacon, by a Bishop of a different church, unless he has permission from the candidate's first ordaining Bishop to do so.<sup>70</sup> This remains consistent with being only ordained by one Bishop, as mentioned above, which means not only one Bishop at the ordination but also to remain in the service of that one Bishop through all the ranks, or rather with that church,<sup>71</sup> should the Bishop die and

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<sup>66</sup> Canon 14 of Nicaea.

<sup>67</sup> Justinian, *Novels*, Ninth Collection, Title 6, Chapter 13.

<sup>68</sup> Canon 33 of Trullo.

<sup>69</sup> Gregory L. Freeze, "Social Mobility and the Russian Parish Clergy in the Eighteenth Century" in *Slavic Review*, Vol. 33, No. 4 (Dec., 1974), pp. 641-662.

<sup>70</sup> Canon 15 of Sardica and Canon 63 of Carthage.

<sup>71</sup> cf. Canon 98 of Carthage.

be replaced by another Bishop. This matches with canons regarding transfer between churches, see discussion of this below.

Those who are newly baptised are forbidden to be immediately ordained to the clergy.<sup>72</sup> This is in keeping with Paul's instruction to Timothy that one who is a new convert should not be a Bishop or Presbyter lest he fall into pride.<sup>73</sup> The only exception being where God commands or works it to be so.<sup>74</sup> (Knowing when God makes such an exception is fraught with difficulties, although some indicators could be a spontaneous and unanimous support for the ordination by the people<sup>75</sup> or a Bishop receiving a vision. The Bishop is responsible to the synod of neighbouring Bishops for maintaining the canons<sup>76</sup>, so he would need sufficient evidence that God is intending an exception to justify such an ordination to the synod, should the ordination be challenged.) Also, those who are magicians, enchanters, astrologers, numerologists or makers of amulets are forbidden to become clergymen because such as these do not rely on God but on other things for their protection or foretelling the future, which demonstrates a lack of faith in God.<sup>77</sup>

A man who is from a wealthy or influential background must pass a good length of time in the lower orders, particularly that of Lector, before passing to the higher orders, especially if he desires to be a Bishop.<sup>78</sup> This is to enable his faith and character to be tested to ensure that he is worthy of holy orders and to ensure he is doing so for the love of God and not for his own status and power.

A candidate for the clergy is also required to be taught the decisions of the Councils in regard to the Faith and in regard to the canons so that they know the rules by which

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<sup>72</sup> Canon 3 of Laodicea.

<sup>73</sup> 1 Timothy 3:6

<sup>74</sup> Canon 80 of the Holy Apostles. If one can be excepted to be a Bishop then one can also be excepted to be a minor cleric, which is much lower than a Bishop and less liable for pride.

<sup>75</sup> Such as the election of Ambrose of Milan, although this was to the Episcopate.

<sup>76</sup> cf. Canons 9 and 19 of Chalcedon.

<sup>77</sup> Canon 36 of Laodicea.

<sup>78</sup> Canon 10 of Sardica (347 AD).

they are to live.<sup>79</sup> This is to minimise the possibility of their breaching the canons and therefore being liable for being deposed from the clergy. It also helps to ensure that they do not bring scandal to the church and that they serve in all good order. A Bishop needs to make a careful examination of the life of each candidate to ensure that it is suitable for the clergy and especially that they are free from any accusations so that the conscience of the Bishop remains clear and the liturgy free from any accusation.<sup>80</sup> This is a very relevant rule in terms of the issues that are present today, such as child abuse in the Roman Catholic Church. Also, these measures are applied in secular government positions, such as teaching and social care, to prevent abuse of those who are vulnerable, and it would be expected that the Church do likewise to ensure its ministers are suitably qualified for the position.

### **Obligations of the minor clergy**

Once someone has been promoted to the clergy, he has certain obligations regarding what he must do and what he cannot do in respect to his office that are not matters of morality or behaviour. The cleric has been set apart for the service of the Church and, as such, he is no longer free in his movements or as to how he can engage with secular life.

As seen in considering the qualifications to be a member of the minor clergy, marriage is controlled by the canons. As mentioned above, a Lector or Cantor is permitted to marry but once someone has been promoted to Subdeacon he is no longer able to become married, although he may already be married.<sup>81</sup> The Council of Carthage held in Canon 36 that a cleric serving at the mysteries should abstain from ever having sexual relations his wife, although there is no requirement in the canon that the such a cleric be unmarried or that he has not had previous sexual relations with his wife prior to being ordained. The Council of Trullo qualified this canon,<sup>82</sup> to keep it consistent with Apostolic Canon 51, so that it only forbids a cleric from having sexual relations with his wife on the days when he is serving, such as the night before and the day of serving at the liturgy, and not as an absolute prohibition on having lawful relations

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<sup>79</sup> Canon 24 of Carthage.

<sup>80</sup> Canon 4 of Cyril of Alexandria (pre 444 AD).

<sup>81</sup> Canon 26 of the Apostles, Canon 6 of Trullo and Canon 11 of the First-Second Council (861 AD).

<sup>82</sup> Canon 13 of Trullo.

with his wife at other times, which remains the practice to this day in Orthodox churches. Even though Lector or Cantor is permitted to become married, his wife to be must be orthodox and not a heretic, as well as having the other qualifications mentioned above.<sup>83</sup> Also, not only whom he marries is restricted but whom his children are permitted to marry is also restricted; they are neither to be given to heretics nor heathen in marriage.<sup>84</sup> This may seem rather a difficult rule in today's culture of children being free to marry whom they will, once they come of legal age, but it is consistent both with the Scriptural rule that a Bishop should rule his house well with children in submission,<sup>85</sup> and with the earlier understanding of the father's authority at home, especially in deciding matters of marriage.<sup>86</sup> Finally, a youth who has been ordained to a Lector as a boy, shall on reaching puberty be obliged to choose either the married or the celibate life according to Canon 19 of Carthage. This rule does not seem to have been enforced beyond Africa and, perhaps because Justinian (sixth century) made in Imperial Law that Lectors could not be ordained until they were 18 years old, the canon has become redundant. Nevertheless, a Lector will still need to choose between the two options should he wish to advance further in Holy Orders.

A cleric is bound to follow the Church's fasting rules, particularly the forty days of Lent and Wednesday and Friday fasts.<sup>87</sup> He is also not permitted to fast on Saturdays and Sundays except Holy Saturday.<sup>88</sup> This fasting is relative, though, and during Lent the rule of not fasting on Saturday and Sunday does not permit eating meat, dairy products or eggs,<sup>89</sup> but rather requires partaking of at least some food, at a particular hour,<sup>90</sup> or in common practice today, oil and wine, which are otherwise forbidden on strict fasting days. These fasting rules can be rather difficult to maintain in some

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<sup>83</sup> Canon 14 of Chalcedon.

<sup>84</sup> Canon 29 of Carthage and Canon 14 of Chalcedon, which says that the cleric is liable for a canonical penalty.

<sup>85</sup> 1 Timothy 3:4.

<sup>86</sup> This is not unknown in the West with the custom of the father giving away the bride and asking for his permission to marry. It is really only a very recent change that this is no longer expected.

<sup>87</sup> Canon 69 of the Apostles.

<sup>88</sup> Canon 64 of the Apostles and Canon 55 of Trullo.

<sup>89</sup> Canon 56 of Trullo.

<sup>90</sup> Canon 1 of Theophilus of Alexandria (pre 399 AD), who says to eat a few dates after the ninth hour.

cultures where there has not been a custom of maintaining such fasts, even though there are more appropriate foods available to meet health needs but they are usually relatively expensive. Perhaps in countries with a very high proportion of dairy intake and use of milk products in food some leniency can be made for products that contain minimal amounts of dairy products or even, following allowances observed in the West, to have some dairy products with meals.<sup>91</sup> There would seem little reason to allow meat during fasting periods due to the abundant food available for vegetarians.

A cleric is not permitted to be involved with secular affairs such as farming estates or holding government offices unless the need is unavoidable or they do so for the needs of the church.<sup>92</sup> They are also forbidden to take a post in the military,<sup>93</sup> excepting a post as a chaplain where they still serve the Church but in the context of ministering to soldiers and not as a combatant. If they come into the clergy with no property then any property that they obtain while serving in the clergy must be donated to the Church so that they are not guilty of making an inroad into the “Lord’s business.”<sup>94</sup> Thus, it seems that once entering the clergy the cleric is to serve the Church only and to live by her means, and if he happens to gain any surplus in this service he should return this to the Church. This does not forbid him having property of his own before entering the service and then passing this on to his family. In the present circumstances, with the lack of funds to support clergy, it seems that most minor clergy would need to work to support themselves.<sup>95</sup> Nevertheless, it is helpful to remember that they should canonically be free from secular affairs to serve the Church. Also, the canonical requirement for a Lector and Cantor to read in the services means that a member of one or both of these offices may be more appropriate to have as a full time cleric in a parish than a Deacon for whose services there is no canonical necessity in a parish because a Priest can minister them; it is rather more

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<sup>91</sup> Canon 40 of Theodulf’s Capitula (994 AD), in Johnson, *A Collection Of The Laws And Canons Of The Church Of England*, p. 476.

<sup>92</sup> Canon 3 of Chalcedon. Canon 10 of Nicaea 2.

<sup>93</sup> Canon 7 of Chalcedon.

<sup>94</sup> Canon 40 of Carthage.

<sup>95</sup> There is also evidence that this was necessary in early times. Adolf Harnack, “The Origin of the Readership and other Lower Orders” in *Sources of the Apostolic canons* (F. Norgate and Co.: London, 1895), p. 60, notes that 3 out of 7 Lectors also had a secular position.

difficult for a Priest to fulfil the functions of a Lector or Cantor while serving at the Altar.

An area of major importance, which is covered by a large number of canons, is the commitment of a cleric to his church. A cleric is not to depart his own church and go to another church.<sup>96</sup> He is to remain in the church into which he was first ordained.<sup>97</sup> Neither is a cleric permitted to serve two churches at the same time.<sup>98</sup> Nor are they even permitted to perform services in a different city without a letter of recommendation from their own Bishop.<sup>99</sup> These rules are proscribed for all the clergy from Priests down because they all serve one church under one Bishop following their ordination. A Lector, Cantor or Subdeacon is no more ordained at large than a Priest or Deacon. There are some exceptions to this general rule, such as having left one's church because one had to flee due to war or some other such situation.<sup>100</sup> However, a cleric is obliged to return to his former church should the reason for leaving have passed.<sup>101</sup> Also, a cleric may transfer churches if he has the consent of and a dismissal letter from the Bishop of the church that he is leaving.<sup>102</sup> Canon 15 of Second Nicaea, while reinforcing the requirement to only serve in one church for the reason that serving in more is a mark of greed, does permit clergy to engage in various occupations to supply for their needs. It also even permits some leniency on the rule against serving in two churches, where there is a lack of suitable clerics to provide the churches with their own clergy, such as in small towns.

Clerics are also restricted to whom they can go for disputes with other clergy. They are not permitted to take the matter before secular courts but before their own

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<sup>96</sup> Canon 16 of Nicaea. Canon 5 of Chalcedon. Canon 10 of Nicaea 2. Canon 3 of Antioch (341 AD) and Canon 15 of Sardica.

<sup>97</sup> canons 10 and 20 of Chalcedon.

<sup>98</sup> Canon 10 of Chalcedon.

<sup>99</sup> Canon 13 of Chalcedon.

<sup>100</sup> Canon 20 of Chalcedon.

<sup>101</sup> Canon 18 of Trullo.

<sup>102</sup> Canon 17 of Trullo. Canon 15 of Sardica.

Bishop,<sup>103</sup> or to referees with whom both parties and the Bishop agree.<sup>104</sup> Even if they are in the right in the matter at issue, the fact that they take a case before secular courts means that they are to be deposed from the clergy.<sup>105</sup> This is in keeping with Paul when he also forbids Christians in general from going before secular courts.<sup>106</sup> Clerics have the right of appeal to a regional synod of Bishops should they be displeased with the trial by the local Bishop.<sup>107</sup> Also, clerics are to appeal to a regional synod if they have a problem with their own Bishop.<sup>108</sup> A problem with the Metropolitan is to be referred to an Exarch or to the See of Constantinople.<sup>109</sup> The right of appeal is an important means of transparency and protection from arbitrary abuse of power by a Bishop. It is consistent with the Church being an institution that follows the rule of law, although not in a rigidly legalistic manner. Once a cleric has been excommunicated for a previous offence, he is not permitted to bring a case against another cleric.<sup>110</sup> Also, those clerics, which are bringing accusations against their Bishop, are to have their own lives examined as to whether they are of sound reputation.<sup>111</sup> This is to prevent unjustified and slanderous cases being brought forward, which could cause unnecessary scandal.

Once a cleric has been excommunicated he is not to go to another Bishop and receive communion, especially one that knows about the situation.<sup>112</sup> The second Bishop is said to be insulting the first by communing the cleric and he is to be accountable to the assembly of Bishops of his Metropolis. This is consistent with the teaching that

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<sup>103</sup> Canon 9 of Chalcedon. Canon 28 of Carthage, which stipulates that only the local Bishop is necessary in the case of minor clergy.

<sup>104</sup> Canon 9 of Chalcedon.

<sup>105</sup> Canon 14 of Carthage.

<sup>106</sup> 1 Corinthians 6:1-8.

<sup>107</sup> Canon 36 of Carthage.

<sup>108</sup> Canon 9 of Chalcedon.

<sup>109</sup> Canon 9 of Chalcedon.

<sup>110</sup> Canon 137 of Carthage.

<sup>111</sup> Canon 21 of Chalcedon.

<sup>112</sup> Canon 13 of Sardica.

each local church is the full Catholic Church<sup>113</sup> and so if one is excluded from communion by one church then he is excluded from communion in all other churches. The Bishop has the responsibility to excommunicate those in his church, who are liable for such, so another Bishop, who ignores such an excommunication, is effectively denying the excommunicating Bishop's rightful position, thus insulting him. Likewise, even if the cleric is unjustly denied communion he must not commune until his trial is heard.<sup>114</sup> In this manner the cleric confirms the authority of a Bishop and that he is not himself rebellious.

Clerics are also obligated to attend church services regularly, as also are laymen. If they fail to attend for three consecutive weeks in a row, while they live near the church then they are to be deposed.<sup>115</sup> Clergy are also obliged to only serve with the Bishop's permission, especially regarding place.<sup>116</sup> The obligations imposed by these canons seem very reasonable because, just as one would expect in secular employment, when someone is appointed to a function, or duty, he is either expected to do it or to be removed from that function or duty.

There are restrictions as to whom a cleric can leave property or legacies. He may not do so to non-Orthodox Christians, even if they are his blood relatives.<sup>117</sup> He is also not permitted to make them a bequest or gift of property. Thus, it seems that a cleric's life is to be dedicated to the Church and all his possessions shall only pass onto the Church or to orthodox Christians. Thus, he may leave property to family members who are orthodox but those outside the Church are not to benefit from the Church. This was also reflected in Imperial laws.<sup>118</sup> This rule may be more difficult in a country where there are not many Orthodox and convert clergy have a number of non-Orthodox relatives. It may seem harsh that a cleric cannot leave legacies to these non-Orthodox relatives. However, if he has lived off the income of the Church then it

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<sup>113</sup> See John Zizioulas, *Eucharist, Bishop, Church: The Unity of the Church in the Divine Eucharist and the Bishop during the First Three Centuries*, (Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2001) and Ignatius, *The Epistle of to the Smyrnaeans*, Chapter 8.

<sup>114</sup> Canon 37 of Carthage.

<sup>115</sup> Canon 80 of Trullo.

<sup>116</sup> Canon 31 of Trullo.

<sup>117</sup> Canon 30 of Carthage.

<sup>118</sup> See F.N. 1 of the interpretation of Canon 30 of Laodicea by Nicodemus, *The Rudder*, pp. 622-3.

is only right that those outside the Church should not profit from the donations to the Church, which were used to support the clergy of the Church; the money should return to the Church, either directly or via its members. The rule also reflects the understanding that a Christian becomes one flesh with Christ in the Church<sup>119</sup> and that the other members of the Church are to be considered brothers and sisters in Christ, who are closer than natural relatives.

### **Expected Standards of Behaviour of Minor Clergy**

The minor clergy, having been officially appointed to serve the church, have to maintain a certain standard of life because their life is now identified with the Church.<sup>120</sup> This standard is, in general, not much different to what laymen are also expected to maintain and it is also shared with the higher clergy, as will be seen in examining the canons below.

A clergyman that commits fornication, perjury or theft is to be deposed from office.<sup>121</sup> These are behaviours that are inappropriate for a public figure in a Church that teaches chastity, honesty and alms giving. If a cleric is expected to be a virgin or married in chastity when he is to be ordained then it is entirely consistent that he does not behave otherwise after ordination. If they are to help purify the laity then they cannot be impure themselves.<sup>122</sup> Perjury, being a deliberate, public lie is also completely inconsistent with Christ, who say that he himself is “the truth”,<sup>123</sup> and a cleric who acts in such a manner cannot remain a public office of the Church without bringing disrepute to the Church. Theft is also a well recognised immoral act and contrary to the Ten Commandments, so a cleric who commits theft should not be in a public office in a Church where those who know God are to obey his commandments.<sup>124</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> Ephesians 5:31-32.

<sup>120</sup> See Nicodemus on his interpretation of Canon 42 of the Apostles, *The Rudder*, p. 63.

<sup>121</sup> Canon 25 of the Apostles.

<sup>122</sup> See discussion below on the theology of the minor orders.

<sup>123</sup> John 14:6.

<sup>124</sup> 1 John 2:3-4.

Apostolic Canons 42 and 43 are an interesting case of the various penalties. Minor clergy, along with major clergy and laymen are forbidden to waste time playing with dice or getting drunk. However, on this occasion minor clergy are excommunicated and not deposed as are the major clergy. It would seem that, perhaps, this crime is not very serious, especially at the level of minor orders, and some room is given them to repent and to overcome the practice. However, in Canon 50 of Trullo, a clergyman is deposed for gambling. It may be considered that this is a more serious case than playing with dice, which could include games, such as backgammon, which are not necessarily played with any money at stake but simply to pass the time. So, if the clergyman is just passing his time in this matter then he should be excommunicated but if he is taken to gambling for money then he should be deposed.

A cleric is not permitted to abstain from marriage, meat or wine for the reason of abhorring such things.<sup>125</sup> He is not forbidden to do so for ascetic reasons but only for abhorrence, as if these things are not good, and thus blaspheming God, who has said that these things are good. Transgressing this canon is particularly severely dealt with and the cleric is both deposed and excommunicated from the Church.<sup>126</sup> Also, no-one can require a Subdeacon, or other minor cleric, to stop having intercourse with his wife because doing so would be scornful of marriage, which is blessed by God.<sup>127</sup> This canon conflicts with canons and customs in the Western churches.<sup>128</sup> Nevertheless, the Bishops at Trullo deliberately opposed the Western customs, which required Subdeacons and higher ranks to no longer have conjugal relations with their wives, to protect the sanctity of marriage, even though the Western reason for refraining from intercourse wasn't intended to be scornful of marriage but to respect the sanctity of the Altar, or Holy of Holies.

Not only is a cleric not permitted to get drunk but he is also forbidden to eat in a place where intoxicating beverages are served such as in a pub or restaurant.<sup>129</sup> He is to be

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<sup>125</sup> Canon 51 of the Apostles.

<sup>126</sup> Canon 51 of the Apostles.

<sup>127</sup> Canon 13 of Trullo.

<sup>128</sup> See Canon 36 of Carthage.

<sup>129</sup> Canon 24 of Laodicea and Canon 47 of Carthage.

excommunicated for this offence.<sup>130</sup> However, he may stay the night in such a tavern due to necessity, such as while travelling.<sup>131</sup> Moreover a cleric is also forbidden to manage a tavern.<sup>132</sup> If he is not able to enter one then it is consistent that he may not operate one. He is to be suspended, that is prohibited from serving as a cleric, or even deposed for such a thing. Nicodemus says that Zonaras permits them to own a tavern but hire others to manage it but Nicodemus recommends that it is better to sell the property and buy a more appropriate property because ownership still supports and enables the functions of the tavern.<sup>133</sup> This canon if taken strictly could be difficult to follow in modern society where every restaurant sells intoxicating beverages, even if it is a family restaurant. Nevertheless, there is still an association of taverns and pubs with drunkenness and immoral relationships. Perhaps, a distinction is possible between a public restaurant principally for eating and a pub that is primarily for drinking and adult entertainment. The first could be suitable for clergy but the latter would be inappropriate based on the principles expressed in the canons.

A cleric is not permitted to insult the Bishop, a Priest nor a Deacon.<sup>134</sup> This is in keeping with the prohibition of such an insult found in Exodus 22:28, which Paul refers to in Acts 23:5. Insulting the Bishop is punished with deposition whereas insulting a Priest or Deacon is punished with excommunication.<sup>135</sup> Also forbidden, to a cleric, is to mock or jeer at someone who suffers a physical disability.<sup>136</sup> It would be unbecoming of a cleric to mock another when Christ was mocked without retaliation by his accusers and when each man is considered to be created in the image of God. Therefore, to mock or insult someone, especially the Bishop, would be considered the equivalent of insulting or mocking God.

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<sup>130</sup> Canon 54 of the Apostles.

<sup>131</sup> Canon 54 of the Apostles and Canon 47 of Carthage.

<sup>132</sup> Canon 9 of Trullo.

<sup>133</sup> See Nicodemus' interpretation of Canon 9 of Trullo in *The Rudder*, p. 302.

<sup>134</sup> Canons 55 and 56 of the Apostles.

<sup>135</sup> Canons 55 and 56 of the Apostles. Note: that we can see here that deposition is considered a more serious punishment than excommunication because the former is irreversible unless it was given unjustly.

<sup>136</sup> Canon 57 of the Apostles.

Denial of the name of Christ for fear of man is a serious offence for a cleric and if a cleric should do this then is both deposed and excommunicated. If he only denies the name of a clergyman then he is deposed but not excommunicated. This latter means denying that he is a cleric of the church such as a Lector or Subdeacon and because of such a denial he loses the office, which he denied.<sup>137</sup> This canon could have implication for those clergy who are expected to wear clerical garb and yet remove it for fear of man because this action is similar to a denial of being a member of the clergy and the reason for wearing the clerical garb. This, however, would not prevent removal of such garb for practical reasons such as necessary employment where such garb would be inappropriate.

Clergy are expected to follow the rules established in Council of Jerusalem found in the book of the Acts of the Apostles.<sup>138</sup> Thus, clerics, along with laymen, are not permitted to eat meat with blood in it, nor from an animal that has been killed by a wild animal, nor one that has died a natural death.<sup>139</sup> (This rule is an instance of the Church maintaining commandments from the Old Testament Law.)<sup>140</sup> Canon 67 of Trullo also forbids the eating of blood which has been made edible by some means. The cleric is to be deposed for so doing. Whether this canon should be followed to prevent the eating of rare meat may be questioned by some as being rather legalistic and pedantic. However, the Apostles certainly considered this matter to be of great importance to burden the gentiles with it. There seems to be a strong theological significance to the eating of blood, because blood is associated with life<sup>141</sup> and life should be taken from the blood of Christ<sup>142</sup> and no other source.<sup>143</sup> So, it would seem that despite present day views, according to which the matter is insignificant, that

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<sup>137</sup> Canon 62 of the Apostles.

<sup>138</sup> Acts 15:20 and 29.

<sup>139</sup> Canon 63 of the Apostles.

<sup>140</sup> Genesis 9:3-4.

<sup>141</sup> Genesis 9:4.

<sup>142</sup> John 6:53-54.

<sup>143</sup> Leviticus 17:11 and 14.

clergy follow the canon as best they are able in respect of the Apostles who wrote it, as recorded, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.<sup>144</sup>

Another serious offence is for a cleric to enter a synagogue or “church” of heretics to pray. If he does this then he is both deposed and excommunicated.<sup>145</sup> This action is very close to the act of denying Christ because both Jews and heretics deny Christ by their beliefs and because prayer can be considered a form of union with those with whom one prays. Thus, such a one unites with those denying Christ and thus joins them in the denial. Taken strictly the canon prohibiting this prohibits even entering the building to pray, even if it may not be with other heretics at the same time. Also, forbidden is to maintain any religious observances of the Jews with the Jews even if not actively praying with them. A cleric is neither to accept any religious gifts or favours from them. He is to be deposed for so doing.<sup>146</sup> This canon should not be taken to forbid attending a service as an observer but a cleric should be careful that in doing so his actions are not confused with joining in prayer and thus potentially causing scandal among the faithful.

Moreover a cleric is not permitted to have any familiarity with Jews, that is: he is forbidden to eat the unleavened bread made by the Jews; to call them in case of illness; to take medicines from them; or to publicly bathe with them.<sup>147</sup> This rule seems to forbid any interaction with Jews because they are Jews. It does not prevent interaction with someone such as a doctor who is a Jew but employed at a secular medical centre but only with such a doctor at a Jewish medical centre or perhaps one who is particularly well known publicly for identifying himself as a Jew. This ruling could also be extended to forbidding over familiarity with heretics but this is very difficult in a country where Orthodox Christianity is a small minority and it should not be enforced rigorously in this case.

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<sup>144</sup> Augustine seemed to think that the Canon was no longer applicable but this opinion runs counter to the canonical tradition as seen at Trullo. (*Contra Faustum Manichaeum*, Book 32 §13.)

<sup>145</sup> Canon 65 of the Apostles. There is some uncertainty about the meaning of this canon and some manuscripts only punish the cleric by deposition and the excommunication refers to the layman.

<sup>146</sup> Canon 70 of the Apostles.

<sup>147</sup> Canon 11 of Trullo.

A cleric who kills someone in a fight is to be deposed.<sup>148</sup> The canon prescribing this makes the emphasis on the insolence of striking a blow on someone rather than the weightier matter of killing someone. It would seem that, even if the killing could be excused as being in self-defence, the act of striking someone heavily is sufficient cause for the cleric to be deposed. A cleric is also to be deposed if he kills a robber because “all those who take the sword shall perish by the sword.”<sup>149</sup> It seems that clerics are to be completely non-violent. They are the providers of life to the laity and causing death is opposed to their office and purpose.

A cleric is not at liberty to take items from the church, in particular candles and oil.<sup>150</sup> The penalty is excommunication until the items are returned with a fifth part more. These items are dedicated to the service of the church and it seems that they are not to be used for anything outside the Church. Just because a cleric serves in the Church, he is not at liberty to use the Church’s possessions as his own much in the same manner as an employee cannot take the tools of his employment home as if they belong to him.

Clerics must be careful with whom they live so as not only to prevent them falling into temptation but also to cause a scandal among others. They must have a blameless reputation.<sup>151</sup> So, a cleric is forbidden to live with other women unless she be his wife, mother, sister, an aunt or other women above any suspicion.<sup>152</sup> This rule could also be extended to the practice of living in shared accommodation, such as students of whom a number may be Lectors, and that such accommodation should not include mixed flatting with men and women. This is also a way of living for younger people that is no longer practiced in society as a rule so it requires extra vigilance and support for them to maintain an appropriate place of abode.

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<sup>148</sup> Canon 66 of the Apostles.

<sup>149</sup> Canon 55 of Basil the Great.

<sup>150</sup> Canon 72 of the Apostles.

<sup>151</sup> Canon 5 of Trullo.

<sup>152</sup> Canon 3 of Nicaea.

Likewise, clerics are forbidden to publicly bathe with women because this can cause scandal to those outside the church.<sup>153</sup> At that time public bathing was often done naked, as still occurs in some countries today. However, publicly bathing or swimming at beaches should also be considered inappropriate because the minimal and close fitting clothing worn at such places is nearly equivalent to being naked and for a clergyman to appear here can still cause some scandal. Perhaps though at those beaches dedicated to families there is some room for clergy to go with their own families to swim or to sun bathe.

Clerics are not to pursue profits but only to live with what is sufficient for their needs. They are, therefore, forbidden to lend money with interest or with a commission.<sup>154</sup> They can only ask for return what they gave and should accept return in kind.<sup>155</sup> This has implications regarding putting money in an interest bearing bank account. Perhaps this is unavoidable in the modern banking system in some countries and should be allowed for practical purposes but the practice of investing in stock markets and other ventures of risk for the gain of profits should be prohibited because these investments are calculated risks especially for profits and not merely a means of storing money safely, as in a bank. This is in keeping with them being forbidden to hire estates for profit or to negotiate secular affairs.<sup>156</sup>

Causing factions or conspiracy is also forbidden to clerics, who are to be deposed from office for such offences.<sup>157</sup> This is in keeping with Paul who says: “that there be no divisions among you, but you be made complete in the same mind and in the same opinion.”<sup>158</sup> Similarly, they are not permitted to leave their own dioceses and go to the Imperial city to stay a long time and meddle in church affairs, so causing disturbance in some households.<sup>159</sup> Although, the Imperial city is no long a Christian city, this canon has application to any city of a chief See, such as Moscow or Athens, where

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<sup>153</sup> Canon 77 of Trullo and Canon 30 of Laodicea.

<sup>154</sup> Canon 17 of Nicaea.

<sup>155</sup> Canon 20 of Carthage.

<sup>156</sup> Canon 3 of Chalcedon.

<sup>157</sup> Canon 18 of Chalcedon and Canon 34 of Trullo.

<sup>158</sup> 1 Corinthians 1:10.

<sup>159</sup> Canon 23 of Chalcedon.

there are decisions made about church affairs that may invite meddling from such clerics.

Clerics may not take women by force under the pretence of marriage.<sup>160</sup> Such a thing was then and now forbidden by secular laws and is completely inappropriate for Christians, let alone clergy. They are to be deposed for such an offence. Neither are they permitted to have intercourse with a nun, who is a woman consecrated to God.<sup>161</sup> Again they are deposed for such a thing because it is a form of adultery because the nun is given to God and she is no longer free to have relations with men.

Attending horse races and other such pastimes is forbidden to the minor clergy, who must cease such things or be deposed from office.<sup>162</sup> They must also leave weddings in protest if fraudulent games are introduced. Neither are clerics permitted to witness spectacles at weddings or suppers but must leave before-hand when the actors appear.<sup>163</sup> All Christians are forbidden to waltz or dance at weddings, which would also include clergy.<sup>164</sup> It would be suitable to extend this rule to forbid attending spectacles such as circuses and theatre, including many movies, for similar reasons.<sup>165</sup> Clerics are also forbidden to hold banquets by contributions such as collecting money from those attending.<sup>166</sup> Clerics rather should offer free hospitality, especially to the poor.<sup>167</sup> A cleric though should not hold banquets in a church and only eat there of necessity if having to stay while travelling.<sup>168</sup> The social life of clerics is rather restricted and they cannot participate in general public entertainment. To follow these rules may be a little difficult at times especially where a young cleric is rather isolated socially in a location with few, if any, other clergy. The rules make good sense when

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<sup>160</sup> Canon 27 of Chalcedon.

<sup>161</sup> Canon 4 of Trullo.

<sup>162</sup> Canon 24 of Trullo. Note that in this canon there is time for repentance before deposition.

<sup>163</sup> Canon 54 of Laodicaea.

<sup>164</sup> Canon 53 of Laodicaea.

<sup>165</sup> See F.N. 2 of Nicodemus in his interpretation of Canon 24 of Trullo, *The Rudder*, p. 318. See also the commentary of John Chrysostom on 1 Thessalonians 4:8.

<sup>166</sup> Canon 55 of Laodicea.

<sup>167</sup> Luke 14:13.

<sup>168</sup> Canon 49 of Carthage.

the spiritual values of orthodox Christianity, especially as exemplified by monastics, are understood but in practice some leniency may be required because maintaining the spiritual values in a modern society can be rather socially isolating and difficult for younger clerics. Nevertheless, the rules should not be entirely neglected otherwise it could have a negative affect on the spiritual lives of the clergy.

Clerics are expected to wear appropriate clothing, that is such clothing as has been assigned to those enrolled in the clergy whether than are in the city or travelling abroad.<sup>169</sup> This rule is considered relatively minor because breach only incurs excommunication for a week. Although no particular items of clothing are mentioned, Canon 16 of Nicaea 2 prohibits clergy from wearing expensive and conspicuous clothing. They are rather to wear what is moderate and decent of necessity rather than clothes for show or embellishment. These rules seem to refer mainly to clothing outside the services and not to vestments used in conducting the divine services. There does not seem to be any rule that a cleric must wear a cassock, although if this is what is considered to have been assigned to the clergy then he is obliged to wear it, even as a minor cleric.<sup>170</sup> There is also no distinction in the rules between major and minor clergy and the present situation of minor clerics commonly dressing as laymen may not be appropriate regarding the rule but then it is not forbidden if this is the directive of the Bishop or Metropolitan. Nevertheless, there should be some consistency between churches to enable recognition of each others clergy and minor clergy should also be dressed to distinguish them from the laity; a fact that contributes to the present misunderstanding of many that the minor clergy are laymen.

Training prostitutes or harlots, or generally being involved in such business, is prohibited to clergy, who are to be both deposed and excommunicated for such a thing, so it is to be regarded as a very serious offence.<sup>171</sup> If fornication is subject to deposition then training women for the purpose of fornication must be completely inappropriate for clergy. Also, such things are commonly forbidden by secular laws

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<sup>169</sup> Canon 27 of Trullo. This was also the practice in the Western Churches. New Advent: Catholic Encyclopaedia.

<sup>170</sup> Canon 28 of Cuthbert's canons at Cloves-Hoo (747 AD) makes a similar point for clergy and monastics in England. Johnson, *A Collection Of The Laws And Canons Of The Church Of England*, p. 260.

<sup>171</sup> Canon 86 of Trullo.

and it would cause great scandal to those outside the church if this should be known to happen.

Clerics, especially young clerics, are also forbidden to come into the presence of widows and virgins, or nuns, without the permission of the Bishop, unless a number of other clerics or honourable Christians are also present. Even with permission, they should be accompanied by others who are suitable to come into the presence of such women.<sup>172</sup> It seems particularly important in the case of women pledged to virginity that clerics should not come to them alone to avoid any scandal or damage of reputation, let alone provide any opportunity for temptation. It is important that everything is seen to be done above suspicion, such as the case of other professions, such as teaching when a male teacher is not permitted to be alone with a female student.

This completes the examination of the various canons that are applicable to the minor clergy as minor clergy. Now, there will be an investigation of the theology and the history of the minor orders.

### **Theology of the Minor Orders**

In recent scholarship the minor orders are generally seen primarily in terms of function, for example Lectors were appointed because there “...was the need of some persons sufficiently educated to be able to read the books in church, for the Christians continued the Jewish practice of reading the Sacred Books publicly.”<sup>173</sup> The focus is on the function of reading and the qualification is being educated and able to read aloud. As seen above in considering the canons, the qualifications required are broader than education, which is not even considered in the canons. The aspect that will be considered in this section is whether the orders were merely to provide someone to perform a function, such as reading or singing a text, or whether the orders also manifested a broader theological meaning.

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<sup>172</sup> Canon 45 of Carthage.

<sup>173</sup> New Advent, *Catholic Encyclopaedia*, <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/09111a.htm> (accessed 8 March 2010).

The theology of the minor orders is best seen in the works of Dionysius the Areopagite, especially his work on the *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*. Within this work Dionysius describes three ranks of Hierarchy, the Hierarch, who corresponds to the Bishop, the Priests, and the Leitourgoi. When describing the ordination of these latter orders he describes the ordination process of a Deacon, so this last order equates with that of the Deacon. No mention is made of the minor orders as separate ranks. This may not be very helpful when trying to find the theology of the minor orders but what is of interest is not the ordination prayers but the functions of the Leitourgoi. The functions that are described by Dionysius conform to the various functions of the Deacon and also of the Lector, Canter and even Doorkeeper. Thus, it can be seen from this that these functions belong properly to the hierarchical order and not to the laity. It seems that the minor orders are in effect subclasses of the diaconate and servants of the Deacons.<sup>174</sup>

The whole rank of the Leitourgoi, within which we may place the minor orders, is described as the purifying rank. That is through the reading and chanting of the divine words they lead the people, especially the catechumens, to purification.<sup>175</sup> They perform a role of teaching,<sup>176</sup> which in many ways parallels the prophetic task that Paul records in his epistle to the Corinthians, that a sinner entering and hearing the prophecy will be convicted of his sins.<sup>177</sup> The prophetic nature of the task is also reinforced by both functions being described as the speaking of “divine words.”<sup>178</sup> This aspect of the prophetic character of the functions of Lector and Canter are found in the ordination prayer in the Apostolic Constitutions and so they can be considered to have a gift of the Holy Spirit.<sup>179</sup> There is some counter evidence for the Lector

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<sup>174</sup> This opinion was also expressed by western theologians such as Gasparri see New Advent: *Catholic Encyclopaedia* <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/14320a.htm> (accessed 8 March 2010).

<sup>175</sup> Dionysius, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, Chapter 3, §3:4-6.

<sup>176</sup> Michael Arranz, “The Functions of the Christian Assembly in ‘The Testament of Our Lord’” in Matthew J. O’Connell, (trans.), *Roles in the Liturgical Assembly* (New York: Pueblo Publishing Company, 1981), pp. 29-59, p. 52.

<sup>177</sup> I Corinthians 14:24-25.

<sup>178</sup> cf. Canon 33 of Trullo.

<sup>179</sup> See Harnack, “The Origin of the Readership and other Lower Orders”, pp. 63-64, 69-70. Also, Canon 12 of the Canons of Athanasius of Alexandria, refer to the Cantor as singing in the Holy Spirit, Wilhelm Riedel, and Walter E. Crum, (trans.), *The canons of Athanasius of Alexandria* (London: Williams and Norgate, 1904), p. 24.

being a subclass of the Diaconate because in one source the Lector is mentioned before the Deacon.<sup>180</sup> Harnack argues that the Lector cannot have developed out the the diaconate because in one source the Lector is ranked between Priest and Deacon.<sup>181</sup> He argues that originally the Lector held a higher, prophetic type role alongside Presbyters but were later degraded to minor clergy.<sup>182</sup> There is some merit to this argument and it is particularly interesting that reading of inspired texts also requires one who has a spiritual gift. Both are required for the reading to achieve its purpose in the mystery of the Liturgy, which extends beyond the consecration of the Body and Blood during the Eucharist. Also, in support of Harnack is the reference to the Lector reading the Gospels in Cyprian<sup>183</sup> would point to him as teaching as Christ and so he could be ranked above a Deacon in this aspect, however, other evidence in Cyprian suggests that a Lector is below a Subdeacon.<sup>184</sup> Harnack also says that the comment of Cyprian, where he says that he intends for a Lector to be raised to be Priest, without mentioning first being a Deacon, supports his theory.<sup>185</sup> The lack of mention of steps to becoming a Priest could be attributed to a number of reasons, such as the irrelevance of that point in the context of Cyprian's comment. Nevertheless, the Lector is still performing a service in the church that does not imply a leadership role and as such is still within the role of the Deacon, which is confirmed when it becomes the universal practice for the Deacon to read the Gospel Book and in the West the Subdeacon reading the Epistle Book, which could not be the case if the function of reading was theologically separate from the diaconate.

Because the order of Lector and Canter perform a teaching role,<sup>186</sup> these orders should not be permitted to women, whom are forbidden by Paul to teach.<sup>187</sup> Paul also commands that women are also forbidden to speak in churches,<sup>188</sup> this would

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<sup>180</sup> See Harnack, "The Origin of the Readership and other Lower Orders", p. 57.

<sup>181</sup> Harnack, "The Origin of the Readership and other Lower Orders", p. 60.

<sup>182</sup> Harnack, "The Origin of the Readership and other Lower Orders", p. 83.

<sup>183</sup> See below in section on historical practice.

<sup>184</sup> Cyprian, Letter 23.

<sup>185</sup> Harnack, "The Origin of the Readership and other Lower Orders", pp. 59-60.

<sup>186</sup> This is further supported by Canons 58 and 59 of Athanasius, p. 39.

<sup>187</sup> 1 Timothy 2:12.

<sup>188</sup> 1 Corinthians 14:34.

effectively mean that could not perform the functions of reading and chanting because they require speaking in church. It is interesting that the commandment forbidding women to speak in church is immediately connected to instructions about prophecy in church, which as seen above was parallel to the tasks of reading and chanting the divine words. If one was to argue that Paul speaks elsewhere of women prophesying,<sup>189</sup> so that women can therefore read or chant in Church, then it would be responded that women did prophesy but at home in private or in a place apart from men, such would be the case in a convent. This fits well with the commentaries of Paul by John Chrysostom, who makes the distinction between private and public, thus allowing women to teach at home, especially to other women but not in the churches to both men and women.<sup>190</sup> Also, Miriam, in the OT, took the women aside from the camp to lead them in songs to the Lord.<sup>191</sup>

The roles of the minor clergy and the whole clerical order are also found in the Law of the Old Testament (OT). This Old Testament Priesthood with the Levites prefigured the Priesthood of the New Testament according to Dionysius. Other Fathers have also understood the parallels between the two Priesthoods, which in many ways are rather one Priesthood. That of the OT was via parental lineage and that of the NT according to ordination of those worthy for the task. Many scholars have agreed that many of the functions are a continuation of the OT practices.<sup>192</sup>

When we examine the roles of the Levites, we find that the functions that they carried out closely parallel the functions of the Church clergy. The Levites were set in charge of serving at the temple.<sup>193</sup> Among their duties were, caring for the vessels of the temple, chanting and door-keeping, three functions maintained in the Church.<sup>194</sup> They were vested in white linen.<sup>195</sup> The age of serving in the tabernacle was set in the Law

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<sup>189</sup> 1 Corinthians 11:5.

<sup>190</sup> John Chrysostom, Homily 4 on Titus.

<sup>191</sup> Exodus 15:20.

<sup>192</sup> See "Excursus on the choir offices of the early church," in Philip Schaff, *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Series 2, Volume 14, p. 194.

<sup>193</sup> Numbers 18:6, 1 Chronicles 6:48.

<sup>194</sup> Numbers 1:50; I Chronicles 9:26, 33 and 15:16; II Chronicles 8:14.

<sup>195</sup> I Chronicles 5:12, II Chronicles 34:12-13, 35:14-15.

at 25 years old the same as the canons proscribe for a Deacon.<sup>196</sup> However, later we see the Levites serving from twenty,<sup>197</sup> which is the same age as for service as a Subdeacon.<sup>198</sup> It seems that even the age of ordination in the Church was not something arbitrary but in keeping with the ages as found in the Old Testament thus demonstrating the continuance of worship with that of Israel. This is reinforced in the first epistle of Clement, which extols that things to be done in order using terms of reference for ministry from the Law, that is those of High-Priest, Priest and Levites.<sup>199</sup> This sense of order is also seen in the Apostolic Constitutions, where the parallel to the Old Testament Priesthood is clearly made and, although developing much of the parallel based on the major orders, reflecting the work of Dionysius, when it refers to Moses ordaining the High-Priest, Priest and Levites, it parallels this in the church with the ordination of Bishops, Priests, Deacons, Subdeacon and Lectors, thus confirming the minor orders within the ordained ministries.<sup>200</sup>

### **Functions of the Minor Orders**

Subdeacons perform a number of functions in the church. Subdeacons are to serve at the Mysteries of Christ,<sup>201</sup> although not in offering the Gifts nor giving communion to the laity.<sup>202</sup> They seem to be considered as servants of the Deacons<sup>203</sup> and in the West, at least, the evidence is strong that they served in the Bema, meaning the tribunal or court, or the area often referred to in English as the Chancel. However, as mentioned earlier, the meaning of the word “servant” in the canons of Laodicea is the cause of some confusion regarding the function of Subdeacon in terms of handling holy vessels. Balsamon and Zonaras equate servants with Subdeacons which causes a

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<sup>196</sup> Numbers 8:24 and Canon 14 of Trullo.

<sup>197</sup> Ezra 3:8.

<sup>198</sup> Canon 15 of the Council of Trullo.

<sup>199</sup> I Clement Chapters 40-43.

<sup>200</sup> Apostolic Constitutions, Book 8, Section 5.

<sup>201</sup> Canon 33 of Carthage. Note: this canon only appears in some collections such as used in *The Rudder*.

<sup>202</sup> Apostolic Constitutions, Book 8, §3:28.

<sup>203</sup> See ordination rite in the services of Hippolytus of Rome, where Subdeacons are described as servants of the Deacons. They are also so called in the Apostolic Constitutions, Book 8, §3:28.

problem because Canon 21 of Laodicea forbids servants to handle the holy vessels.<sup>204</sup> Yet, according to the ordination prayer found in Book 8 of the Apostolic Constitutions, Subdeacons are said to be keepers of the holy vessels and the prayer asks that they may be worthy to handle them,<sup>205</sup> and in western ordination rites this function is seen as central to the Subdeacon, who is handed an empty paten and chalice.<sup>206</sup> Nicodemus of the Holy Mountain in his commentaries on the canons also makes this argument quoting eastern Fathers, such as Symeon of Thessalonika (twelfth century) in support.<sup>207</sup> Balsamon makes a distinction between handling the sacred vessels during the liturgy and handling them when empty, which could reconcile the canon with other evidence and it fits with common liturgical practice today if we are to hold the word servant in Canon 21 as meaning Subdeacon.<sup>208</sup> Nevertheless, a better solution, following Nicodemus, is to interpret the word “servant,” referred to in the canons of Laodicea, as referring to Doorkeepers, who are generally considered the lowest rank of clergy, and not to Subdeacons specifically, even though Subdeacons could come under the general category of servants. Even with Balsamon’s interpretation of Subdeacon, the evidence shows that one function of Subdeacons is to handle, prepare and guard the holy vessels, at least while empty.<sup>209</sup> Subdeacons may also have attended the doors, which would be consistent with Balsamon’s interpretation of “servant”, and this function is also mentioned in the ordination rites for a Subdeacon.<sup>210</sup> Another principle function of Subdeacons is washing the hands of the Bishop and/or Priests. This is attested both in the Apostolic

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<sup>204</sup> These include the paten and chalice and other utensils used in the preparation and offering of the Eucharist.

<sup>205</sup> Apostolic Constitutions, Book 8, §3.21.

<sup>206</sup> Reynolds, “The Liturgy of Clerical Ordination in Early Medieval Art,” pp. 32-33.

<sup>207</sup> Nicodemus, *The Rudder*. Note 1 on Canon 15 of Trullo, pp. 309-310.

<sup>208</sup> Balsamon, PG 137:1369.

<sup>209</sup> According to Gabriel of Philadelphia, as quoted by Nicodemus, *The Rudder*. Note 1 on Canon 15 of Trullo, p. 310.

<sup>210</sup> St Tikhon’s Monastery (trans.), “The Office for the Ordination of a Subdeacon”, *Great Book of Needs* (St Tikhon’s Seminary Press: South Canaan, 2000), Volume 1, p. 243.

Constitutions<sup>211</sup> and in the ordination rites found in the West,<sup>212</sup> so it seems that this function was universally considered that of the subdiaconate. They also looked after the vestments<sup>213</sup> and can assist in vesting a Bishop.<sup>214</sup> Subdeacons also take part in processions, especially carrying the cross.<sup>215</sup> In the letters of Cyprian we also witness Subdeacons carrying letters to other churches, sometimes accompanied by other minor clergy, so it may be implied that one of their functions was to act as official messengers between the churches.<sup>216</sup> The letters also suggest that a Subdeacon was a “teacher of the hearers,”<sup>217</sup> that is teaching the catechumens.<sup>218</sup> This function also has a connection to the ordination rites of a Subdeacon, mentioned earlier, when the Subdeacon says “As many as are of the faithful,” because this comes immediately after the dismissal of the catechumens in the order of liturgy. This latter point is, however, of limited value because we do not know the exact rites in Carthage at the time of Cyprian, where there may not be such a connection in the Liturgy.

The next functions to be considered are those of the Lectors and Cantors. They ascended the Ambo to read or sing the divine words. The Lectors primarily read from the Old Testament and Apostle, that is the New Testament writings apart from the Gospels, which were read by the Deacons or Priests.<sup>219</sup> The Cantors lead the laity in

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<sup>211</sup> Apostolic Constitutions, Book 8, §2.11.

<sup>212</sup> Roger E. Reynolds, “The Liturgy of Clerical Ordination in Early Medieval Art,” *Gesta*, Vol. 22, No. 1 (1983), p. 33.

<sup>213</sup> Gabriel of Philadelphia as quoted by Nicodemus, *The Rudder*. Note 1 on Canon 15 of Trullo, p. 310.

<sup>214</sup> Witnessed practice in Russian Hierarchical services where Subdeacons are present.

<sup>215</sup> According to Symeon of Thessalonika as quoted by Nicodemus, *The Rudder*. Note 1 on Canon 15 of Trullo, p. 310.

<sup>216</sup> See Cyprian, Letters 28, 29 and 41, although others also provide evidence of the same function.

<sup>217</sup> Cyprian of Carthage, Letter 23.

<sup>218</sup> This is not in keeping with Harnack’s reading of the text where he assigns this function to Lectors (Harnack, “The Origin of the Readership and other Lower Orders”, pp. 59-60,) but the letter say that Optatus was ordained to be a Subdeacon and was appointed from among the Lectors to be a teacher of the hearers, that is his appointment to be a Subdeacon was also his appointment to be a teacher of the hearers.

<sup>219</sup> The book of Revelation is also not in the Apostle because it is not read in the churches, at least in eastern practice.

chanting the Psalms and other hymns. Both ideally preformed solo<sup>220</sup> but later Cantors tended to sing together in choirs.

One question that arises from the canons is the use of the phrase “divine words.”<sup>221</sup> Taken most narrowly they could only refer to the words of Jesus Christ Himself as found in the Gospels. However, this seems unlikely since by the time of these canons only Priests and Deacons read from the Gospels. So, we must look to a broader meaning of these words. Another meaning could be any passages from Scripture. This would widen the scope to include the Epistle Book and Old Testament readings that the Lector is primarily appointed to read. It would also include the Psalms which make up the bulk of the framework of the services. Also, many of the other hymns of the Church include Scriptural references, so the text of the hymns could also be considered to be divine words. Thus, we have a rather broad range of services that seem proper to the Lector and Cantor. However, there is clear evidence from the early Church that the whole congregation participated in the singing of the Psalms and other hymns. So how is this to be reconciled with the broader interpretation of the meaning of “divine words?” The key here is not only the meaning of the words themselves because Dionysius calls the chanting by the entire assembly “divine chants”<sup>222</sup> but also the manner in which these words are sung or read. Thus, the canons specifically speak of the reading or chanting that is “from the Ambo”. Thus, it is not all singing nor divine words that are forbidden to the laity but only those read or chanted from the Ambo. Why the difference? In the early Church it seems that it was common practice for solo Cantors to chant the Psalms from the Ambo and the laity as a whole to respond to this Cantor. This is well expressed in the following quote from John Chrysostom:

Therefore both he that reads utters his voice alone, and the Bishop himself is content to sit in silence; and he who chants, chants alone; and though all utter the response, the voice is wafted as from one mouth.<sup>223</sup>

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<sup>220</sup> John Chrysostom, “Homilies on the First Epistle of St Paul to the Corinthians”, in Philip Schaff, (Editor), *Saint Chrysostom: Homilies on the Epistles of Paul to the Corinthians*, Homily 36, p. 304.

<sup>221</sup> Canon 33 of Trullo.

<sup>222</sup> Dionysius the Areopagite, “Ecclesiastical Hierarchy” in John Parker, (trans.) *Dionysius the Areopagite: Works*, §3.1, p. 150.

<sup>223</sup> John Chrysostom, “Homilies on the First Epistle of St Paul to the Corinthians”, Homily 36, p. 304.

Although this quote focuses on only one voice to be uttered at a time in the services, which has more to do with the exercise of chanting and reading, it nevertheless, testifies to the laity responding as one whole body, “as from one mouth” to the solo Cantor, who, one assumes, would have ascended the Ambo to be heard by all. Thus, the difference between the two types of chanting is one is performed by a soloist and the other by the laity all together. Thus, it seems that the canons do not forbid the laity from singing all together but a layman performing the role of a solo Cantor, or serving in a choir of Cantors. Even, with present churches, where the central Ambo has disappeared, this interpretation still fits well with the chanting from the lecterns at either side of the church that permit better antiphonal singing by the Cantors but are still the place for the Cantors and Lectors to read alone and lead the laity in chanting. It is still customary in some places for Scripture readings to be read from the centre of the nave where the Ambo was located.<sup>224</sup> Also, it would seem that the canons forbid the laity to do that reading that is done alone in Church, which is properly the task of the Lector and this is evidenced in most service books that label these readings, not done by higher clergy, for the Lector. This is also confirmed in the Novels of Justinian where the order of Lector is identified as “readers of the service, or of ecclesiastical or canonical books.”<sup>225</sup> So, the Lector not only reads the Scriptures, his primary role, but also all the read parts of the services that are read alone from the Ambo, or presently other suitable reading stands.<sup>226</sup> There is also evidence from the lives of the Saints that a reader also read the lives of Saints in the Church.<sup>227</sup>

Canon 23 of Laodicea addresses whether Lectors or Cantors should wear an orarion (a stole), which was a mark of the Deacons, and forbids them from so doing. Canon 22 also forbids servants from doing so. Although this is not conclusive, it does suggest that the Lector and Cantor were wearing some form of vestments while serving even

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<sup>224</sup> Especially in the practice of Russian churches and on Mt Athos.

<sup>225</sup> Justinian, *Novels*, First Collection, Title 6, Chapter 4.

<sup>226</sup> This is also supported by canons of the Church in England in Johnson, *A Collection Of The Laws And Canons Of The Church Of England*, p. 381 (or 392).

<sup>227</sup> Makarios, *The Synaxarion: The Lives of the Saints of the Orthodox Church*, (Maria Rule & Joanna Burton trans.), (Ormylia: Holy Convent of the Annunciation of Our Lady, 2005), Volume 5, p. 26.

if not the stole.<sup>228</sup> This is supported by a canon attributed to Hippolytus that requires Priests and Deacons to be dressed in white when serving with a Bishop and a Lector is to be vested in a like manner.<sup>229</sup> This practice is followed today in the Russian churches and it is also known in Greek churches, even if not commonly practiced.

The functions of the Exorcists and the Doorkeepers is rather evident in their names. The Exorcists had a spiritual gift of exorcism, that is expelling demons from those who are possessed or potentially possessed, which was probably exercised in conjunction with preparing people for being catechumens, and Doorkeepers, who keep watch of the doors forbidding entry to those not permitted and helping direct people to an appropriate place. Although door-keeping may seem a relatively minor function, there must have been more importance attached to the role of door-keeping than may meet the modern eye. Perhaps this function was a remnant from the time of persecution and the need to ensure that persecutors did not enter the church. However, this is nowhere mentioned in the canons and if the persecutors were at the door intending to apply force, then the office of Doorkeeper would not be any more beneficial than not having such an office, unless the Doorkeeper was chosen for being particularly strong but no evidence exists for this. The reason should be sought rather in a theological manner and should be in line with the practice of sending out catechumens and other who were not to partake of communion and excluding unbelievers. This is further emphasised when one considers the image in the introduction of this paper, where the Doorkeeper holds keys. This image is reminiscent of those of the Apostle Peter with the keys to heaven. So, it appears that the Doorkeeper participates in the Apostolic function of the Bishop in permitting access to the “Kingdom of Heaven”. Thus, it could be argued that Doorkeepers were necessary because it was important that only certain persons were in the church, or certain parts of it, during various parts of the services and that this aspect was part of the liturgical service in that the proper performance of the service required that only appropriate persons were present in the service. This fits well with the symbolism of the “Kingdom of Heaven” and the parable of the wedding feast from which the improperly dressed man was cast out. The nave can be considered the location of that

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<sup>228</sup> There is evidence from the *Regularis concordia* of tenth century England that requires a Cantor to wear some form of vestments during services. Margot E. Fassler, “The Office of the Cantor in Early Western Monastic Rules and Customaries: A Preliminary Investigation”, p. 39.

<sup>229</sup> Canon 37 of Hippolytus (c 220 AD).

feast during the Eucharist and so those, who are not permitted to the feast should be excluded. Formally appointing permanent Doorkeepers would ensure that there was both someone with the obligation to keep the doors and also, importantly, someone who is doing so on by the authority of the Bishop, who holds the keys to Heaven as a successor of the Apostles.<sup>230</sup> Setting laymen to do the task would not be sufficient for having an official representative because of the liturgical significance of the function, and to prevent scandal if someone objected to being excluded, such as could be the case if a layman took it upon himself to refuse entry to someone. Considering that there seems to be a liturgical aspect to the function of Doorkeeper, which would still apply in present times because the Church continues to serve the Liturgy, then it would seem that it would be appropriate to reinstate the office of Doorkeeper in places where the entire population is not Orthodox and there is a high likelihood that persons not permitted to attend the liturgy or parts of the liturgy may wish to do so.

Finally, the Acolyte, or candle-bearer, seemed to have the primary function of carrying candles before processions. The term “Acolyte” is not found in Eastern writings but the function of the candle-bearer appears to be similar to the function of the Acolyte, who is shown receiving a candle-stick in western ordination rites.<sup>231</sup> They were not doorkeepers and later pictorial evidence in the West suggests that they played a role serving in the Bema and, yet, they are clearly distinct from Subdeacons. Some commentators believe that the Acolyte may have initially been a personal servant of the Priest deriving from pagan practice.<sup>232</sup> They could also have been responsible for lighting candles, especially in the Bema.

### **Historical Evidence**

This section of the essay will consider the historical evidence of the minor orders in the Church, principally in the early Church with some reference to later evidence. This is in attempt to establish whether the minor orders were a development later in

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<sup>230</sup> See Cyprian, *Treatise 1: On the Unity of the Church*, §§4 and 5, and Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, Book 3, Chapters 2 and 3.

<sup>231</sup> Reynolds, “The Liturgy of Clerical Ordination in Early Medieval Art,” *Gesta*, Vol. 22, No. 1 (1983), pp. 32-33.

<sup>232</sup> Excursus on the minor orders in “Seven Ecumenical Councils” in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Series 2, Volume 14, p. 206.

the life of the Church or whether they were an integral part of Church life from the earliest evidence available. Also, the evidence will be examined to consider the functions and how these can reflect on understanding the Canonical evidence. This will help in considering how the canons are to be applied in the present day.

One of the first items of evidence we have of the minor orders is from the mid-second century in Justin the Martyr's description of the Liturgy found in his *Apologies*. He simply says: "when the reader has ceased,"<sup>233</sup> without any further elaboration about whether the word "reader" means the person who happens to be reading or whether it refers to someone in the order of Lector. It is clear though that the function of this reader, as with the office of Lector, is to read "the memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets."<sup>234</sup> This function is also testified to even earlier in the Revelation of John where John writes that "[b]lessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy."<sup>235</sup> The change from singular for the reader and plural for the hearers is strong evidence that the reading is within an assembly and not in private, which is reinforced by the next part which addresses the revelation to the seven churches. Harnack argues the distinction between the one reading and the hearers would be "empty pedantry" unless the reader had a "peculiar and prominent position in the congregation",<sup>236</sup> in other words that someone has been appointed apart from the general hearers to read in the congregation on a continuing basis, that is the office of Lector. The function of reading is also testified by Paul in his epistle to the Colossians where he asks for his epistle to be read to the church, which is exactly the same primary function of Lectors today, which is to read Paul's epistles.<sup>237</sup> In the late second century we have evidence in Tertullian that reading was an office because he mentions Lector with Priest and Deacon as distinct from laymen when complaining that heretics permit laymen to do the functions of the priesthood and are easily, in a confused manner, promoted to various offices.<sup>238</sup> Mentioning Lector would only make sense if it was considered an office of the priesthood distinct from being a

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<sup>233</sup> Justin Martyr, "First Apology", Chapter 67.

<sup>234</sup> Justin Martyr, "First Apology", Chapter 67.

<sup>235</sup> Revelation 1:3.

<sup>236</sup> Harnack, "The Origin of the Readership and other Lower Orders", p. 77.

<sup>237</sup> Colossians 4:16.

<sup>238</sup> Tertullian, "The Prescription Against Heretics", Chapter 41, p. 366.

layman. So, it would seem that the function of the Lector was present from very early in the life of the Church at the time of the Apostles and there is no reason to suggest that the office itself was not also a formal order from these times, even if it is not explicitly mentioned as such in the New Testament.

The third century provides more evidence regarding the minor orders. Commodianus (240 AD) addresses instructions to various groups including “readers”, which in context before addressing Deacons and Shepherds can be justifiably recognised as those in the office of Lector.<sup>239</sup> The letters of Cyprian of Carthage provide a good insight into the minor clergy at this time, especially in the letter of Cyprian to Cornelius in the mid-third century in which are mentioned the orders of Lector and Subdeacon.<sup>240</sup> In a letter from some confessors to Cyprian there is clear evidence that a Lector and an Exorcist are considered members of the clergy.<sup>241</sup> In another letter, Cyprian mentions the need for having various clergy and then speaks of the appointing of a Lector and a Subdeacon to assist with daily duties, the functions of the latter appear to include being “a teacher of the hearers.”<sup>242</sup> The candidates were chosen after careful examination both by the Bishop and also the Priests. The ranking of the orders is apparent as is the system of passing through one order to the next because Optatus was appointed Subdeacon from among the Lectors.<sup>243</sup> In Letter 27 there is mention of an Acolyte who in the context appears to be considered a member of the clergy because he is not to be deprived of his ministry.<sup>244</sup> In Letters 32 and 33, which concern the ordination of Lectors, we also find that they were to read the Gospel to the people as well as the other Scriptures.<sup>245</sup> This is a practice that does not seem to have continued beyond the fourth or fifth century and may even only have been a local practice.<sup>246</sup> In Letter 74 from Firmilian, the Bishop of Caesarea, there is

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<sup>239</sup> Commodianus, “Instruction 67”, in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Volume 4.

<sup>240</sup> Cyprian of Carthage, Letter 41.

<sup>241</sup> Cyprian, Letter 16.

<sup>242</sup> Cyprian, Letter 23.

<sup>243</sup> Cyprian, Letter 23.

<sup>244</sup> Cyprian, Letter 28.

<sup>245</sup> Cyprian, Letters 32 §2 and 33 §4.

<sup>246</sup> There is no later evidence of Lectors reading from the Gospel which is a task given to the Deacon in later sources.

mention of a man, who was one of the Exorcists. The letter sets the story of the Exorcist twenty-two years before the letter dated 256, so it seems that Exorcists were an established office in Cappadocia at latest by the early third century.<sup>247</sup> Exorcists are also mentioned by Cyprian in Letter 75,<sup>248</sup> so the office seems to have existed by the mid-third century in Africa and it would seem most likely that if present in these areas at different ends of the Empire then it would exist in the other areas between and around them.

There is further evidence of Lectors and Subdeacons in the third century with ordination rites from Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus of Rome<sup>249</sup> and there is the famous letter of Pope Cornelius listing the clergy of Rome, which includes Subdeacons, Lectors, Exorcists, Acolytes and Janitors as members of the clergy.<sup>250</sup> By the fourth century there is abundant evidence of the minor orders in the canons of local and Ecumenical Councils. Also, the work called the Apostolic Constitutions provides very clear instructions on ordaining the minor orders and some guidelines regarding their functions. These writings can be placed either late third or early to mid-fourth century and probably incorporate material that goes back much further.

From the evidence it seems that the minor clergy were from early times common to the various churches across the Empire, and undoubtedly beyond, with the very similar names and functions. There is no evidence of this being organised at any stage but only evidence of the various orders being an established part of the clergy, which would mean that any such organisation must have taken place at least a generation, if not more, before the mention of the orders. Any novelties would surely have roused opposition or, at least, mention, especially in matters such as the priesthood and service in the temples/churches of tradition orientated Christians.<sup>251</sup> This is entirely lacking and raises doubts that the minor orders were developed much after the establishment of the major orders. Due to the persecutions until the early fourth

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<sup>247</sup> Cyprian, Letter 74, §10.

<sup>248</sup> Cyprian, Letter 75, §15.

<sup>249</sup> Lucien Deiss (Benet Weatherhead, trans.), *Early Sources of the Liturgy* (Collegeville, MI: The Liturgical Press, 1975), p. 50.

<sup>250</sup> Eusebius, "Church History", Book 6, Chapter 43.

<sup>251</sup> See Tertullian, *De Corona*, Chapters 3 and 4.

century, it seems hard to see when the considerably uniform organisation across all the churches took place apart from the time before the churches spread extensively, which is the time of the Apostles. This at least seems to be the belief of those who composed writings claiming to be of the Apostles, or their immediate followers, such as the Apostolic Constitutions and a letter of Ignatius, generally thought spurious, which mentions the minor orders, because they would not have attributed these offices to the mouths of the Apostles, or to Ignatius, if they knew that the minor offices developed later and that this was also the opinion of their intended audience.<sup>252</sup> Thus, the evidence seems to be consistent with the minor orders being a formal part of the “priesthood” of the Church from Apostolic times. Even though the first written evidence is only in works dated a century after Paul mentions the offices of Bishop and Deacon and clear evidence is another century later in the mid-third century, the lack of very early mention of the orders is not a serious concern because the purpose of much of the early literature was such that mention of the minor orders was not relevant. Also, the functions may have been grouped under the term Deacon, which took a more specific meaning, as did Presbyter and Bishop, during the second century. Not until we get sets of episcopal letters, such as those of Cyprian, do we see the clear evidence of these orders, as we may expect, by which time it appears that the orders are well established in churches from Africa to Rome to Asia minor.

Evidence of early ordination rites of the minor clergy vary from merely giving them the “tools of trade,” such as a basin and pitcher for a Subdeacon or the Epistle Book for a Lector,<sup>253</sup> to also including the laying on of hands with prayers. All forms are properly performed by the Bishop, although in later times permission was also given to assistant Bishops and Abbots, only within their own monasteries.<sup>254</sup> The historical words used for ordination are instructive. The Greek term for the ordination of minor orders in early times was the same for all orders<sup>255</sup> but later two distinct terms were used in Greek speaking churches; one term used for the major orders of Bishop, Priest

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<sup>252</sup> cf. J. B. Lightfoot, *The Apostolic Fathers: Part 2* (2nd edn., Macmillan and Co: London, 1889), Volume 1, p. 258.

<sup>253</sup> Ordination rite found in *The Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus* (215 AD).

<sup>254</sup> cf. Canon 14 of Second Nicaea.

<sup>255</sup> This is clear considering the Apostolic canons 2 and 82, which apply the same term to all orders of clergy.

and Deacon and the other for minor orders.<sup>256</sup> This distinction in wording does not seem to have been made in the West. The historical evidence from ordinations supports that the minor orders were set apart from laymen and were part of the priesthood, even if understood as distinct from the major orders.

By the fifth century, there have been established schools of Lectors in Rome, which later evolved into schools of Cantors as hymns started to replace readings as the predominant part of the services.<sup>257</sup> In the sixth century there are recorded 110 Lectors and 25 Cantors for the Church in Constantinople.<sup>258</sup> Here the predominant part of the services still seems to be read by the Lectors, who outnumber the Cantors more than 4 to 1. This is quite the reverse today where the number of Lectors is less than those chanting in most churches. The large number of Lectors for the Church in Constantinople would also suggest that not only the reading of the Law, Prophets and Apostles was conducted by Lectors but most of any other reading. This would correspond with present service books, which assign most read parts of the service to a Lector.

By the eighth century, we find the clerical orders numbered as seven in canons of the Church in England.<sup>259</sup> Thus, we have the first order as the Doorkeeper (or Ostiary), then the Lector, next the Exorcist, fourth the Acolyte, then the Subdeacon followed by the Deacon and finally the Priest, including Bishop.<sup>260</sup> It is interesting that the Exorcist is ranked above a Lector, unlike the position in the East, where he is not ordained.<sup>261</sup> Also, the canons specify that all the orders are gifts of the Holy Spirit.<sup>262</sup> So, the minor orders were considered part of the ecclesiastical orders across the all the churches from Britain to Asia Minor and to Africa. The functions were also the same with only the order of Acolyte being established in the West but not in the East.

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<sup>256</sup> Both terms were used for Deaconesses.

<sup>257</sup> M. Kovalevsky, "The Role of the Choir in the Christian Liturgy," in Matthew J. O'Connell, (trans.), *Roles in the Liturgical Assembly* (New York: Pueblo Publishing Company, 1981), pp. 29-59, p. 52.

<sup>258</sup> Justinian, *Civil Law*, Title 3, Chapter 1.1.

<sup>259</sup> Johnson, *A Collection Of The Laws And Canons Of The Church Of England.*, p. 155-157. The date of the canons is not certain and some put them as tenth century.

<sup>260</sup> Johnson, *A Collection Of The Laws And Canons Of The Church Of England.*, p. 157.

<sup>261</sup> Apostolic Constitutions, Book 8, §3.26.

<sup>262</sup> Johnson, *A Collection Of The Laws And Canons Of The Church Of England.*, p. 156.

Regarding more recent historical practice, there is an argument that because certain canons and practices in the Church have not been enforced in most local churches for some time, these canons and practices have been laid aside in the mind of the Church as no longer being required. It is clear that the canons have not been uniformly maintained in the Church and regarding the minor clergy it seems that the rigour that the canons command is not being observed in present times. While there may be grounds of necessity why this is so, it seems rather that these canons have been neglected by many if not most Bishops. Does this mean that they are no longer relevant? Or that the mind of the Church has decided that they no longer have force? These questions are worthy of papers in themselves, nevertheless briefly, the mind of the Church is generally expressed through formal councils and there appears to be on conciliar decision to overturn these canons, especially at an Ecumenical level, so there are no formal grounds to determine that they have become officially redundant. There is abundant evidence through history that the canons were not uniformly maintained, even by whole regions of the Church, for considerable amounts of time but this did not lessen the requirement to obey the canons, which were at times repeated in later Councils to re-establish practices which were neglected or mistaken.<sup>263</sup> The situation at present is probably better understood in this manner rather than a change of the mind of the Church or that the canons are no longer relevant.

### **The Place of Women in the Clergy**

The place of women among the clergy is a particularly pressing topic today, especially with moves in groups, such as the Anglican Communion, to ordain women into the Priesthood. This paper will only address the matters pertaining to the minor clergy rather than the issue of Priesthood. It will also include within its scope the Deaconess, who, although perhaps considered a female Deacon, is in some places referred to as a servant of the Deacons along with the other minor clergy.<sup>264</sup>

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<sup>263</sup> Many canons of the Council of Trullo were written, or rewritten from earlier councils, for this reason.

<sup>264</sup> Apostolic Constitutions, Book 8, §3:28, p.731 and see E. Braniste, "The Liturgical Assembly and Its Functions in the Apostolic Constitutions" in O'Connell, M.J. (trans.), *Roles in the Liturgical Assembly* (New York: Pueblo Publishing Company, 1981), pp. 73-100, p. 85.

There is generally silence among the canons regarding women's ordination to the ranks of the minor clergy.<sup>265</sup> There is an assumption in the canons that the clergy are male because all the canons regarding marriage assume that the cleric is male.<sup>266</sup> The only reference to female ordinations or clerical roles in the canons is that of the Deaconess, so it would seem from the silence and assumptions that only males were chosen for the minor orders.<sup>267</sup> This seems to be consistent with historical evidence that only men were chosen for the minor orders<sup>268</sup> and the only role permitted to women with official sanction was that of Deaconess.<sup>269</sup> This is also supported with the evidence from the extant ordination prayers for a Deaconess, which specifically mention that it has been "granted not only to men but also to women the grace and visitation of the Holy Spirit" and "you do not reject women who offer themselves, and by divine counsel, to minister as is fitting to your holy houses, but you accept them in the order of ministers." It would seem superfluous to mention that women were also permitted to minister in the holy houses in this rite, unless this was the only ministry open to women. Also, of significance in this issue, which will be referred to later in regard of the functions of a Deaconess, is Paul's canon that women are to remain silent in the churches.<sup>270</sup> This would be particularly inconsistent with them serving as

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<sup>265</sup> The only exception is an Arabic translation of the Apostolic canons that may have provisions for women being ordained as minor clergy. Johannes Quasten, *Music & Worship in Pagan & Christian Antiquity* (Washington DC: National Association of Pastoral Musicians, 1983), pp. 80-81.

<sup>266</sup> For example Canon 3 of Nicaea forbidding clergy to have a strange woman living in his house and Canon 14 regarding marriage of Lectors and Cantors mentions them taking a wife but nothing of having a strange man nor taking a husband. Also, the Apostolic Constitutions when instructing about the order of receiving communion says: "...let the bishop partake, then the presbyters, and deacons, and sub-deacons, and the lectors, and the cantors, and the ascetics; and then of the women, the deaconesses, and the virgins, and the widows; then the children; and then all the people in order, ...." The phrase "then of the women" is only relevant if those mentioned earlier were orders only of men. Apostolic Constitutions, Book 8; §2:13.

<sup>267</sup> The Chaldean Church of the East presently allows females to serve in minor orders. [http://www.kaldu.org/2007/12\\_Dec/weeklynews\\_Dec07\\_07\\_E2.html](http://www.kaldu.org/2007/12_Dec/weeklynews_Dec07_07_E2.html) (accessed 16 April 2010) and this practice may have been inherited from early Syrian practice, see article here: <http://www.stnina.org/online-journal/feature-articles/altar-girls> (accessed 16 April 2010) but there is no evidence that this was anything other than a local practice.

<sup>268</sup> There are some rare exceptions but these were often condemned by others or a cause of scandal.

<sup>269</sup> There is some evidence that could be seen as women serving in the functions of Priests or even Bishops but most of these were contrary to the official position. Service by women in other clerical functions can only be recognised as officially sanctioned, that is not condemned by a Council or senior Bishop, in convents of nuns. See more below. See also Macy, Gary. *The Hidden History of Women's Ordination - Female Clergy in the Medieval West*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008) for a discussion of the evidence.

<sup>270</sup> 1 Corinthians 14:34-35.

Lectors or Canters, whose primary function is to speak aloud the divine words either in plain voice or by song for the congregation to hear.

The functions of a Deaconess seem to have been focused on ministry to women. The Apostolic Constitutions give the clearest statement and state that “A Deaconess does not bless, nor perform anything belonging to the office of Presbyters or Deacons, but only is to keep the doors, and to minister to the Presbyters in the baptising of women, on account of decency.”<sup>271</sup> Here there is no mention of any service at the Altar but only assistance at the doors and with baptism such as anointing the body of an adult female with oil before the baptism and helping her into the water.<sup>272</sup> She may also have been able to take communion to women at home who were unable to come to Church.<sup>273</sup> This may explain why the Deaconess is permitted to take the chalice after her communion and place it on the Altar, an interesting action not found in any of the other ordination rites.<sup>274</sup> Being a minister of the Eucharist would be consistent with her being permitted to enter the Sanctuary. However, there is no mention of her giving the chalice to communicants during the liturgy, as was done by the male Deacons, so her ministry seems only to have been taking communion to women outside church gatherings.<sup>275</sup> Even though the ordination of Deaconesses was performed in the liturgy at the same time as a Deacon’s ordination (unlike the ordinations of minor clergy, which are generally performed outside the liturgy,) and apart from speaking of her ministry as being in the diaconate and as receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit, the extant ordination rite does not include mention of ministry at the Holy Mysteries but only in the holy house, which is similar to the prayer for a Subdeacon. Also, the rite does not include any circling, nor kissing of the Holy Table, nor is there any

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<sup>271</sup> Apostolic Constitutions, Book 8, §3:28, p.731.

<sup>272</sup> Anne Field, *From Darkness to Light*, (2<sup>nd</sup> edn., Chesterton, IN: Conciliar Press, 1997) and Valerie A. Karras, “Female Deacons in the Byzantine Church”, *Church History*, Vol. 73, No. 2 (Jun., 2004), p. 277. *Apostolic Constitutions*, Book 3, § 2.

<sup>273</sup> Arranz, “The Functions of the Christian Assembly in ‘The Testament of Our Lord’”, p. 57.

<sup>274</sup> The rite of ordination of a Subdeacon in Rome included handing him a chalice, so such an action does not imply the ability to perform the functions of a Deacon. New Advent: *Catholic Encyclopaedia*.

<sup>275</sup> There is some evidence of giving communion during a service but this could be interpreted from the evidence to being a communion service for nuns from pre sanctified Gifts in the context of a convent when a Priest is not available. See Macy, *The Hidden History of Women's Ordination - Female Clergy in the Medieval West*, p. 63.

exclamation of “Axios” by the people.<sup>276</sup> She receives a stole but put around her neck and not worn in the same manner as a Deacon. She doesn’t have any other vestments. She does not kneel but only stands, which according to Dionysius the Areopagite,<sup>277</sup> means that she does not have a position of leadership in the Church. This conforms with her being a servant to the Deacons, as mentioned in the Apostolic Constitutions and also with the writings of Paul, who in his epistle to Timothy says that a woman is not permitted to have authority over a man.<sup>278</sup> Finally, she does not say any litanies as does a male Deacon after his ordination, which means that her role is a silent one and does not involve leading the congregation in prayer.<sup>279</sup> Again, this fits with the commandment given by Paul for women to be silent in the Church. Thus, the evidence indicates that the role of a Deaconess is different than that of a male Deacon, even if she is considered a member of the major clergy.<sup>280</sup>

Other requirements for a Deaconess include that she is 40 years of age or older at her ordination,<sup>281</sup> again unlike a male Deacon who is required to be 25 years old,<sup>282</sup> and she must be unmarried: either a virgin,<sup>283</sup> that is a nun, or a widow.<sup>284</sup> There are severe penalties for breach of this requirement.<sup>285</sup> This is again different from the male

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<sup>276</sup> During the ordination of Bishops, Priests and Deacons the people proclaim “axios” or “worthy”. This is not done for the minor orders. Part of the reason for this is that the three orders mentioned have leadership roles and as such the people have a right to consent or otherwise to those to whom they will come under obedience thus maintaining the principle that obedience is always given freely and not forced. The lack of such a proclamation implies that the role is not that of leadership but only of service.

<sup>277</sup> Dionysius the Areopagite, “Ecclesiastical Hierarchy” in John Parker, (trans.) *Dionysius the Areopagite, Works*, §6.3.1, p. 173.

<sup>278</sup> I Timothy 2:12.

<sup>279</sup> There is some evidence of Deaconesses chanting in the Great Church, Karras, “Female Deacons in the Byzantine Church”, pp. 283-5 but not of leading the service.

<sup>280</sup> Karras, “Female Deacons in the Byzantine Church”, pp. 290-6, makes a strong case to say that Deaconesses were part of the major orders but notes the difference from male Deacons.

<sup>281</sup> Canon 15 of Nicaea and canons 14 and 40 of Trullo.

<sup>282</sup> Canon 14 of Trullo.

<sup>283</sup> The ordination rites for Deaconess generally include an expectation or symbols of virginity. Macy, *The Hidden History of Women's Ordination - Female Clergy in the Medieval West*, pp. 70-73.

<sup>284</sup> Braniste, “The Liturgical Assembly and Its Functions in the Apostolic Constitutions”, p. 86.

<sup>285</sup> Canon 15 of Nicaea.

clergy, who are permitted to be married and continue married at ordination.<sup>286</sup> It is difficult to know exactly why there are these differences but it is clear that remaining free of martial or sexual relations is beyond what is expected of male clergy, at least in the East. The maturity required for her to serve is also greater than required of a Deacon. This may relate the requirement for her to remain unmarried with some parallel to the age restriction for widows. It would also suggest that the Deaconess was not ordained for mechanical functions in the services but a range of functions for women including teaching, which would require her to be more mature. Her freedom from a husband would help prevent a conflict of interest regarding obedience to the Bishop and permit to live in communities of women. The sexual purity being unmarried is no more than expected of an unmarried male clergyman.

### **Canon Law and Pastoral exceptions**

According to the canons, they are required to be kept strictly,<sup>287</sup> especially those in regard to the Priesthood:

It is perfectly plain to everybody that order reigns in the Church, and that it is pleasing to God for the transactions of the Priesthood to be maintained with rigorousness. Since, then, we behold some persons receiving the tonsure of the Clergy from infancy and without imposition of hands, and reading from the pulpit at the assembly, but doing so in an uncanonical fashion, we forbid the doing of this from now on.<sup>288</sup>

From this quote it is clear that matters concerning the functions of the minor clergy are to be maintained rigorously, that is the canons, on these matters, can be considered normative rules for the functions and positions of the minor clergy within the Orthodox Church that are required to be followed closely; they are not mere guidelines or recommendations for best practice, which a Bishop can follow at his discretion. As such it can be assumed that they have continuing basis and cannot be considered redundant unless formally made so. Since, they have not been officially overturned, as they have been in the Roman Catholic Church, they can be considered to remain in force today, even if they have not been consistently followed. The normative value and expected rigorousness of maintaining the canons applicable to the clergy must therefore be the context of considering any exceptions to the canons regarding the minor orders.

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<sup>286</sup> Canon 6 and 13 of Trullo.

<sup>287</sup> Canon 1 and 11 of Second Nicaea.

<sup>288</sup> Canon 14 of Second Nicaea.

The functions of the Lector and Cantor require ordained Lectors and Cantors according to Canon Law, yet, finding suitable candidates to be ordained for the function can be difficult, especially in mission contexts with new parishes and recent converts, who may not be ready for service.<sup>289</sup> In such a case do they not hold the divine services because there is no-one canonically able to perform the function? This would not be a satisfactory solution because public services are important part of the communal nature of Christianity. A question arises though whether an uncanonical service is better than no service. This question may have varied answers depending on other factors but it is better to avoid an uncanonical service if possible. One solution is for the functions to be conducted by higher clergy, such as reading the Apostle. However, some functions are impractical to be done by higher clergy so there may be need to use a layman for the function, even though this would be uncanonical. In such as situation, it would seem best to conduct matters as closely to the canonical practice as possible. For example, a layman, who could be ordained but has not yet been so, could perform the function with the hope of ordination later. The canonical rules should take precedence over talent. For example a pious man with a weak voice, who does not know how to sing well, would be more suitable than an accomplished singer who is living a manner of life inappropriate for clergy.

What happens in a situation where there are no men present, apart from a Priest, such as in a convent of nuns? In such a case there would need to be allowances for the nuns to perform some of the functions of Lector and Cantor. The reading of the Apostle could be done by the Abbess of the monastery, as the teacher of the other nuns, and it would seem inappropriate for a junior nun to do this function, especially when monks are forbidden to do so without ordination as Lectors. The rule of silence for women<sup>290</sup> can be interpreted to apply when in a gathering with men present and not absolutely. So by this interpretation, when they are separate from men then they could be permitted to sing and speak, even without being in the Priesthood.<sup>291</sup> In regard to chanting by nuns the same argument as for monks can apply because nuns also share

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<sup>289</sup> Canon 2 of Nicaea.

<sup>290</sup> 1 Corinthians 14:34 and Canon 70 of Trullo.

<sup>291</sup> This argument can only be taken so far because they nor permitted to serve as Priests with no men present.

the angelic habit.<sup>292</sup> The best Scriptural example of this is when Miriam took the women apart from the men to sing praises to God in the book of Exodus.<sup>293</sup> Nevertheless, it would seem inconsistent with the teaching of Paul and the canons for women to speak in the presence of men and so it would seem inappropriate for convent services with nuns chanting to be attended by men. A mixed congregation should for consistency always have canonical clergy, including Lectors and Cantors, and nuns present should be silent, as the rest of the women, although there is evidence contrary to this with some limited chanting of nuns, not other women or girls, in the Great Church and in St Demetrios church in Thessaloniki but in a manner separate from the other Cantors and only in the early part of Matins.<sup>294</sup> This appears however not to have been a common practice because a visitor to St Demetrios made particular mention that “it was not only men who were singing; the holy nuns in the left wing of the church, divided into two antiphonal choirs, also offered up the Holy of Holies to the martyr.”<sup>295</sup> This is evidence that the rule concerning women may be qualified in the case of nuns.

There is historical evidence that, in monasteries of men, the monks chanted in monastic choirs.<sup>296</sup> Yet, the monks in these choirs do not seem to have necessarily been all ordained as Cantors. Canon 14 of the Second Nicaea only specifically mentions the ordination of Lectors but not Cantors. Canon 33 of Trullo mentions Cantors, as well as Lectors, and then speaks of those who ascend the Ambo to speak the divine words to the laity without further distinguishing between the two offices. This may mean that for the purposes of speaking, or singing, in the assemblies of the faithful that the two are the same, both speak, or sing, divine words. Thus, they may both be named by one name, which, if either, is the name of Lector.<sup>297</sup> The ordination

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<sup>292</sup> See below when discussing practice in male monasteries.

<sup>293</sup> Exodus 15:20-21.

<sup>294</sup> Karras, “Female Deacons in the Byzantine Church”, pp. 283-4, it is uncertain whether these nuns were also Deaconesses.

<sup>295</sup> Karras, “Female Deacons in the Byzantine Church”, p. 284.

<sup>296</sup> See Rosemary Dubowchik, “Singing with the Angels: Foundation Documents as Evidence for Musical Life in Monasteries of the Byzantine Empire”, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, Vol. 56, (2002), pp. 277-296.

<sup>297</sup> Cantors were sometimes grouped with Lectors in western rankings of clergy. Reynolds, “‘At Sixes and Sevens’ - And Eights and Nines: The Sacred Mathematics of Sacred Orders in the Early Middle Ages”, pp. 672 and 675.

prayers in many service books use the same prayer for both the Lector and the Cantor, which supports this opinion. Nevertheless, one could argue, in the case of monks and nuns, that the angelic habit that they have assumed permits them to share in the praises and hymns of the angels and so to participate in the chanting of the services, even if the reading of the Scriptures still requires the monk to be canonically ordained.<sup>298</sup> The Abbot is specifically given permission to ordain a Lector in his own monastery to ensure that those reading do so canonically.<sup>299</sup> Perhaps, the Abbot is also expected to ordain the Cantors. A questioner of Nicephorus the Confessor assumes the latter but the answer of Nicophorus, accepted as a canon, only confirms the need to ordain a Lector and is silent about Cantors.<sup>300</sup> Nevertheless, the evidence shows that some were interpreting the canons, within 30-40 years of the passing of Canon 14 of Second Nicaea, such that Abbots must also ordain Cantors. The Rule of Benedict in the West states that only monks authorised by the Abbot may chant, which may point to the need for ordination but the evidence is not conclusive.<sup>301</sup> There is further evidence in an early biography of Benedict of Aniane, of the ninth century, which states that he established Cantors when he established monasteries: “He taught a useful standard and wholesome custom for monasteries which he transmitted to his own monks to be observed. He established cantors, taught lectors, secured grammarians, and scholars in Scriptural knowledge.”<sup>302</sup> It seems that, at least in the Western monasteries of the ninth century, the monasteries had formally appointed Cantors, which suggests that this could have been the case in other regions.

So, while canonically ordained clergy should conduct the services, if there is pressing need for an exception then the practice should follow as closely as possible to the correct procedure. In the case of monks and nuns there may be a qualification in regards to chanting because of the angelic habit.

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<sup>298</sup> Dubowchik, “Singing with the Angels: Foundation Documents as Evidence for Musical Life in Monasteries of the Byzantine Empire”, p. 282.

<sup>299</sup> Canon 14 of Nicaea.

<sup>300</sup> Question 1 of Nicephorus the Confessor.

<sup>301</sup> Margot E. Fassler, “The Office of the Cantor in Early Western Monastic Rules and Customaries: A Preliminary Investigation”, *Early Music History*, Vol. 5, (1985), Cambridge University Press, pp. 29-51, pp. 30-31. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/853918>.

<sup>302</sup> Fassler, “The Office of the Cantor in Early Western Monastic Rules and Customaries: A Preliminary Investigation”, p. 33.

In regard to the functions of the Subdeacon, similar considerations need to be made. Generally, these functions can be practically done by higher clergy and so there is much less need for laymen to be involved. A Deaconess can attend to some matters of the Subdeacon such as handling the Holy Vessels and even giving reserved communion in a convent and it seems that often an Abbess was ordained a Deaconess for this purpose.<sup>303</sup> The use of laymen to serve in the Altar is difficult to justify, especially when on Mt Athos the Priests manage to serve alone in the Altar. In monasteries it is common practice for a lay monk or nun to lead a procession with a candle from outside the Altar and not by entering it. This could be followed in parishes.

### **Conclusion**

Having examined the canons regarding the minor clergy along with the theological and historical evidence of the minor clergy, there are good grounds to counter the movement of anti-clericalism and to re-establish the canonical rigour of various functions being performed by ordained clergy rather than by laymen. This would not only be more consistent canonically but also theologically and historically, even if in recent times laymen have performed the functions of minor clergy. Thus, there should at least be a Lector or Cantor in each parish to read and chant the services. If the Priest requires assistance at the Altar then a Subdeacon should be ordained for this, if not a Deacon. The office of Doorkeeper is still relevant and those carrying candles in a procession should be appointed as Acolytes. The functions of the Exorcist have largely been taken over by Priests and canonically there is no need to reinstate them as a distinct order.

However, even if the rigour of the canons is reinstated, there are a number of areas where a strict application of the canons maybe difficult to implement at the present time, especially with the ability to support a number of minor clergy financially. There is also a concern regarding the number of potential candidates available to fill the functions of minor clergy because of a shortage of Priests, which are a priority. However, the lower level of obligations required of minor clergy could see a wider range of potential candidates, who may be able to serve in such functions but may not

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<sup>303</sup> Macy, *The Hidden History of Women's Ordination - Female Clergy in the Medieval West*, p. 85.

be suitable, nor desire, to serve as Priests or Deacons. It may be particularly appropriate to ordain those who are already chanting and reading regularly in their parishes.

Another issue that needs to be addressed is a return to the laity of the parts of the liturgy that are properly theirs, such as the responses to the petitions and the “Amen” of the prayers. This would leave the Cantor to focus on his proper functions, such as chanting the variable and communion hymns. The importance of reading should be reemphasised, rather than being subordinated to the sung hymns, and it should be performed by Lectors. The reading of the Epistle Book is, nevertheless, a function for which Lectors are still commonly used but there needs to be a developed awareness that this task is a clerical task only permitted to Lectors, rather than being a lay task, for which some are honoured with the title of Lector.

Where it is impossible to follow the canonical rules exactly, there is a need for leniency, or economy, in applying the canons in these situations. However, the understanding of what is the appropriate application of economy and the issues involved seems to be becoming misinformed and influenced by principles sourced outside the canonical rules and a theological understanding of the functions of the minor orders. While, it may be necessary for a layman to exercise the function of a Cantor when one is not available, it is not appropriate to have a lay choir, especially a mixed choir, chanting those hymns proper to a Cantor from the Ambo, or present day Cantor’s lectern because this is contrary to the canonical order and not a matter of necessity. It would also be more appropriate to have a man read the hymns than a woman chant them because women were not ordained to the office of Cantor.

In order to maintain canonical and theological consistency, the churches should reinstate the minor clergy to perform their various functions of the liturgy, which laity are not permitted to perform, and to encourage the laity to perform the parts of the services proper to them. This will help both to engage the laity with the service and to maintain the understanding that the liturgy is a mystical synergy of human and divine acts.<sup>304</sup> Perhaps the full reality of the Liturgy can only be realised in its correct performance with properly ordained clergy performing their appropriate functions.

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<sup>304</sup> See the liturgical theologies of Schmemmann, Meyendorff and Zizioulas.

## Appendix - Holy canons

### Canons of the Apostles

Canons 2, 25, 26, 43, 51, 54, 55, 56, 57, 60, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 69, 70, 72, 79, 82.

2. A Presbyter must be ordained by a single Bishop, and so must a Deacon and other Clergymen.
18. No one who has taken a widow, or a divorced woman, or a harlot, or a house maid, or any actress as his wife, may be a Bishop, or a Presbyter, or a Deacon, or hold any other position at all in the Sacerdotal List.
19. Whoever marries two sisters, or a niece, may not be a clergyman.
25. Any Bishop, or presbyter, or Deacon that is taken in the act of committing fornication, or perjury, or theft, shall be deposed from office, but shall not be excommunicated. For Scripture says: "Thou shall not exact revenge twice for the same offence." The same rule applies also to the rest of clergymen.
26. As to bachelors who have entered the clergy, we allow only Lectors and Cantors to marry, if they wish to do so.
43. Let any Subdeacon, or Lector, or Cantor, who does like things either desist or be excommunicated. Likewise any Layman.
51. If any Bishop, or Presbyter, or Deacon, or anyone at all on the sacerdotal list, abstains from marriage, or meat, or wine, not as a matter of mortification, but out of an abhorrence thereof, forgetting that all things are exceedingly good, and that God made man male and female, and blasphemously misrepresenting God's work of creation, either let him mend his ways or let him be deposed from office and expelled from the Church. Let a layman be treated similarly.
54. If any clergyman be caught eating in a tavern or any restaurant where intoxicating beverages are served, let him be excommunicated, except only in case it happens to be at a wayside inn where he has put up for the night by necessity.
55. If any Clergyman should insult the Bishop, let him be deposed from office. For "thou shall not speak ill of thy people's ruler."
56. If any Clergyman should insult a Presbyter or a Deacon, let him be excommunicated.
57. If any Clergyman jeers, fleers, or flouts, or contumeliously or scurrilously or derisively or mockingly scoffs or sneers at anyone who is lame or maimed, or who is deaf, or who is blind, or who is a cripple, let him be excommunicated. The same rule applies also to a layman.
60. If anyone reads to the public in churches the books of impious writers bearing false inscriptions and purporting to be holy, to the injury of laity and clergy, let him be deposed.

62. If any Clergyman, for fear of any human being, whether the latter be a Jew or a Greek or a heretic, should deny the name of Christ, let him be cast out and rejected, or if he deny the name of clergyman, let him be deposed, and if he repent, let him be accepted as a layman.
63. If any Bishop, or Presbyter, or Deacon, or anyone else on the sacerdotal list at all, eat meat in the blood of its soul, or that has been killed by a wild beast, or that has died a natural death, let him be deposed. For the Law has forbidden this. But if any layman do the same, let him be excommunicated.
64. If any Clergyman be found fasting on Sunday, or on Saturday with the exception of one only, let him be deposed from office. If, however, he is a layman, let him be excommunicated.
65. If any Clergyman, or Layman, enter a synagogue of Jews, or of heretics, to pray, let him be both deposed and excommunicated.
66. If any Clergyman strikes anyone in a fight, and kills by a single blow, let him be deposed from office for his insolence. But if he be a layman, let him be excommunicated.
69. If any Bishop, or Presbyter, or Deacon, or Subdeacon, or Lector, or Cantor fails to fast throughout the forty days of Holy Lent, or on Wednesday, or on Friday, let him be deposed from office. Unless he has been prevented from doing so by reason of bodily illness. If, on the other hand, a layman fail to do so, let him be excommunicated.
70. If any Bishop, or Presbyter, or Deacon, or anyone at all who is on the list of clergymen, fasts together with Jews, or celebrates a holiday together with them, or accepts from them holiday gifts or favours, such as unleavened wafers, or anything of the like, let him be deposed from office. If a layman do likewise, however, let him be excommunicated.
72. If any Clergyman, or Layman, takes a wax candle or any oil from the holy church, let him be excommunicated and be compelled to give back what he took, together with a fifth part of its value to boot.
79. If anyone is possessed of a demon, let him not be made a Clergyman, nor even be allowed to pray in company with the faithful. But after he has been cleansed thereof, let him be received, and if worthy be made one.
82. We do not permit house servants to be ordained to the clergy without the consent of their masters, to the sorrow of the masters owning them. For such a thing causes an upheaval in the households. But if any house servant should appear to be worthy to be ordained to any rank, as our own Onesimus did, and their masters are willing to permit it, and grant them their freedom (by liberating them from slavery), and allow them to leave home, let him be so ordained.

### **Ecumenical Councils**

First Nicaea (325 AD): canons 1, 3, 10, 16, 17,

Chalcedon (451 AD): canons 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 14, 15, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 27.

Trullo (692 AD): canons 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 11, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 22, 24, 27, 31, 33, 34, 50, 54, 55, 67, 75, 77, 80, 86.

Second Nicaea (787 AD): canons 10, 14, 15, 16.

### **First Nicaea**

1. If anyone has been operated upon by surgeons for a disease, or has been excised by barbarians, let him remain in the clergy. But if anyone has excised himself when well, he must be dismissed even if he is examined after being in the clergy. And henceforth no such person must be promoted to holy orders. But as is self-evident, though such is the case as regards those who affect the matter and dare to excise themselves, if any persons have been eunuchized by barbarians or their lords, but are otherwise found to be worthy, the Canon admits such persons to the clergy.
3. The great Council has forbidden generally any Bishop or Presbyter or Deacon, and anyone else at all among those in the clergy, the privilege of having a subintroducta. Unless she is either a mother, or a sister, or an aunt, or a person above suspicion.
10. As many persons as have been guilty of serious lapses and have been ordained in ignorance thereof, or even after the ordinator has become aware thereof, will not be admitted under the ecclesiastical Canon. For when they have become known, they shall be deposed.
16. Any Presbyters or Deacons, or other persons covered by the Canon, who take the risk, without having the fear of God before their eyes, or keeping aware of the ecclesiastical Canon, of departing from their own church, they must not be admitted at all in another church, but they must be stringently forced to return to their own parish, or, in case they insist, it is proper for them to be excluded from communion. If, on the other hand, anyone should surreptitiously snatch away one belonging to another and ordain him in his own church, without the consent of his Bishop, from whom the one covered by the Canon departed, let the ordination be invalid.
17. Because of the fact that many persons covered by the Canon, out of greed and in pursuit of shameful profits (wilfully) forgot the divine passage of Holy Writ saying "who hath not lent out his money at interest" (Ps. 15:5), and in lending demanded a percentage commission or profit, the holy and great Council has deemed it just and right that in case anyone is found after the adoption of this definition receiving interest for the use of money, or otherwise exploiting the matter, or demanding commission, or through any other subterfuge contriving to exact shameful profits, he shall be deposed from the clergy and shall be an alien to the Canon.

### **Chalcedon**

2. If any Bishop ordain anyone for money, and make merchandise of the unvendible grace, and perform the ordination of a Bishop, Chorepiscopus, Presbyter, Deacon, or any one on the roll of the Clergy, with a view to gain; or nominate any Steward, Ecclicus, or Paramonarius, or anyone else that belongs to the canon, for money, with the object of making a shameful profit for himself: let him who is found guilty of having undertaken this stand in peril of his office; and let him who has been thus ordained have no benefit from such traffic in ordinations or nominations, but, on the

contrary, let him be without any claim upon the dignity or job which he has thus obtained by means of money. If, in fact, anyone even appear as a middleman or factor or intermediary for such shameful and illicit deals, let him too, if he be a clergyman, forfeit his office, but if he be a layman or a monk, let him be anathematized.

3. It is come to the (knowledge of the) Council that some of those who had been listed in the roll of the Clergy hire other men's estates for the sake of filthy lucre, and undertake to negotiate secular affairs, to the neglect of the Divine liturgy, and betake themselves to the families of secular men, whose estates they undertake to manage out of love of money. Therefore the holy and great Council decrees that no Bishop, Clergyman, or Monk shall henceforth be allowed to farm any estate or office, or to involve himself in secular cares, unless he be unavoidably called by laws to the guardianship of minors, or the Bishop permit him to take care of the affairs of the church, or of those of orphans or widows unprovided for, and of persons in especial need of ecclesiastical assistance, for the fear of God. If anyone presume to transgress hereafter any of the rules herein decreed, that per son shall be liable to ecclesiastical penalties (or penances).
5. As regards Bishops or Clergymen who go from city to city, it has seemed fitting that the canons laid down by the Holy Fathers should remain in effect and be enforced.
6. It is decreed that no one shall be ordained at large either a Presbyter or a Deacon, nor anything else at all in the ecclesiastical ranks unless he be particularly assigned to the church of some city, or to a martyr, or to a monastery. As for those ordained at large the holy Council has determined that any such chirothesy shall be null and void, and that such ordines shall not be allowed to officiate anywhere, to the dishonour of the ordainer.
7. We have decreed in regard to those who have once been enrolled in the Clergy or who have become Monks shall not join the army nor obtain any secular position of dignity. Let those be anathematized who dare to do this and fail to repent, so as to return to that which they had previously chosen on God's account.
8. As for the Clergymen attached to poor houses or monasteries or martyrries, let them remain under the authority of the Bishop of the city in question, and not disrespectfully desert their own Bishop, in accordance with the teaching imparted by the holy Fathers. As regards those who dare to defy any such formal ruling, in any manner whatever, and who refuse to submit to their own Bishop, in case they are clergymen let them be liable to the penalties prescribed by the canons, but if they are monks or laymen, let them be excluded from communion.
9. If any Clergyman has a dispute with another, let him not leave his own Bishop and resort to secular courts, but let him first submit his case to his own Bishop, or let it be tried by referees chosen by both parties and approved by the Bishop. Let anyone who acts contrary hereto be liable to Canonical penalties. If, on the other hand, a Clergyman has a dispute with his own Bishop, or with some other Bishop, let it be tried by the Synod of the province. But if any Bishop or Clergyman has a dispute with the Metropolitan of the same province, let him apply either to the Exarch of the diocese or to the throne of the imperial capital Constantinople, and let it be tried before him.

10. Let no clergyman be entitled to be on the roll of the churches of two different churches at the same time, i.e., of that in which he was originally ordained, and of that to which he has resorted on the plea that it appeals to him more than the other because of its being a larger church, when in reality he is actuated by vainglory. As for those who do so, let them be reinstated in their own church, wherein they were originally ordained, and let them officiate there only. If, on the other hand, anyone has been already translated from one church to another, let him have nothing to do with the affairs of the former church, as regards the martyr connected to it, or the poorhouses, or the inns, administered by it. As for those who dare to do anything hereby prohibited, after the definition of this great and ecumenical Council, this holy Council has decided that he shall forfeit his own rank.
13. Strange Clergymen and Lectors are not to be allowed to conduct services anywhere in a different city without having letters recommendatory from their own Bishop.
14. Inasmuch as Lectors and Cantors in some provinces have been permitted to marry, the holy Council has made it a rule that none of them shall be allowed to take a wife that is of a different faith. As for those who have already had children as a result of such a marriage, if they have already had their offspring baptised by heretics, let them bring them into the communion of the catholic Church. But if they have not baptised them, let them no longer have any right to baptise them with heretics, nor, indeed, even to contract a marriage with a heretic, or a Jew, or a Greek, unless they first promise and undertake to convert the person joined to the Orthodox Christian to the Orthodox faith. If, on the other hand, anyone transgresses this rule of the holy Council, let him be liable to a Canonical penalty.
15. Let no woman be ordained a Deaconess before the age of forty, and even then after a strict test. But if she, after receiving the gift of chirothesy and remaining for some time in the ministry, proceeds to give herself in marriage, thus insulting the grace of God, let any such actress be anathematized together with the man who has joined himself with her in marriage.
18. The crime of conspiracy, or of faction (i.e., of factious partisanship), already prohibited by secular laws, ought still more to be forbidden to obtain in the Church of God. If, therefore, there be found any Clergymen, or Monastics, to be conspiring or to be engaged in factiousness of any kind, or hatching plots against Bishops or Fellow Clergymen they shall forfeit their own rank altogether.
20. As we have already decreed, it is not permissible for clergymen officiating in a church to be given a church in another city; but, on the contrary, they must rest content with the one in which they were originally deemed worthy to conduct divine services: except those who have gone over to another church as a result of their having been forced to flee from their own country. If any Bishop nevertheless admits a clergyman belonging to another Bishop, after promulgation of this rule, it has been decided that both of them, i.e., the Clergyman so admitted and the Bishop admitting him, are to be excluded from communion until such time as the Clergyman who has left his own city see fit to return to his own church.

21. Clergymen or laymen accusing Bishops or Clergymen are not to be allowed to file charges against them promiscuously and without investigation until their own reputation has been examined into.
22. Clergymen, after the death of their own Bishop, shall not be allowed to seize his effects, as is prohibited even by the canons of old, on pain of being shorn of their own offices.
23. It has come to the ears of the holy Council that certain Clergymen and Monastics, without being handed any permission by their own Bishop, and in fact, sometimes even after he has excluded them from communion, have resorted to the imperial city of Constantinople, and stay there a long time, causing disturbances and meddling the ecclesiastical situation, and engender upheavals in the households of some persons. Hence the holy Council has decreed that they first be reminded, through the Defensor of the most holy Church of Constantinople, to take their departure from the imperial city. But if they impudently persist in doing the same things, they are to be expelled from the city even against their will through the same Defensor, and are to betake themselves to their own regions.
27. The holy Council has made it a rule regarding those who take women by force under pretence of marriage, and their accomplices and abettors, that if they should be Clergymen, they shall forfeit their own rank, but if they are laymen, they shall be anathematized.

### **Trullo**

3. Whereas our Pious and Christ-loving Emperor, in his address to this holy and Ecumenical Council, has suggested that those enlisted the Clergy and conveying to others the Divine truths should be pure and faultless ministers, and worthy of the intellectual sacrifice of the great God and victim and high Priest, and eliminate the hatred due to friction resulting from illicit marriages; and, in addition to this, seeing that the most holy Church of the Romans is disposed to observe the Canon of strict conformity; while, on the other hand, we under the throne of this God-guarded and imperial capital city, have neither carried meekness to excess nor have left on acrid impression of austerity; and especially in view of the fact that failure due to ignorance extends to a multitude of not a few men — therefore we concur in decreeing that, as regards bigamists who have been enslaved to sin and have not chosen to recede therefrom, as of the fifteenth day of the month of January last past, in the last fourth Indiction, in the year six thousand one hundred and ninety, they are to be subjected to canonical deposition; but as for those bigamists who have taken cognisance of their own interest before we had notice of their doing anything wrong, and who cut out the evil besetting them, and chased this foreign and spurious engagement far away; or even those whose wives by a second marriage have died, if they too have seen their way to return to good sense after later learning sobriety, and have quickly come to forget their former misdeeds and violations of the law, whether they happen to be Presbyters or Deacons — it has seemed best to us for these men to be dismissed from every sacerdotal office, or priestly activity, having already been penanced for an express length of time. But we have decided that in the case of those who have committed the iniquitous act unwittingly and who are weeping to the Lord to be pardoned therefore, they deserve to share in the honour of standing and sitting in the place reserved for the presidency: for to bless one that ought to take care of his own wounds is

inconsistent. But, on the other hand, as for those who have contracted but one marriage, and this with a woman that was a widow, and likewise as for those who after ordination have involved themselves in an illegal marriage, that is to say, Presbyters and Deacons and Subdeacons, not long ago excluded from the sacred liturgy and penanced, we order them to be restored to their former ranks, without being in any way promoted to any higher rank, it being obvious that their illegal marriage has been dissolved. We have made these decrees effective as of the said fifteenth day of the month of January, in the fourth Indiction, in regard to those guilty of the offences before specified and in priestly offices; but besides this we henceforth decree and renew the Canon prescribing that anyone who has become involved in two marriages after baptism, or has acquired a concubine, “cannot become a Bishop, or a Presbyter, or a Deacon, or anything else in the roll of the priesthood. Likewise in regard to anyone that has taken a widow, or a divorcee, or a harlot, or house servant, or an actress to wife, we decree that he cannot be a Bishop, or a Presbyter, or a Deacon, or anything else in the roll of the priesthood.”

4. If any Bishop, or Presbyter, or Deacon, or Subdeacon, or Lector, or Cantor, or Janitor (Doorkeeper), has (carnal) intercourse with any woman that has been consecrated to God, let him be deposed from office, on the ground that he has contributed to the delinquency of a bride of God. If, on the other hand, he is a layman, let him be excommunicated.
5. Let no one on the sacerdotal list acquire a woman or housemaid except persons mentioned in the Canon as being above suspicion, but let him safeguard his reputation in this respect. Let even eunuchs safeguard themselves in this very same situation too, by providing themselves with a blameless character. As for those who transgress this injunction, if they are Clergymen, let them be deposed from office; but if they are laymen let them be excommunicated.
6. Inasmuch as it has been declared in the Apostolic canons that of those being promoted to the Clergy only Lectors and Cantors may marry, we too, in keeping with this prohibition, decree that henceforth no Subdeacon, or Deacon, or Presbyter at all, after the ordination bestowed upon him, has permission to contract a matrimonial relationship for himself: if he should dare to do this, let him be deposed from office. But if anyone wants to contract a legal marriage with a woman before being admitted to the Clergy as a Subdeacon, or a Deacon, or Presbyter previous to ordination, let him do so.
9. No clergyman shall be allowed to operate a tavern or dramshop. For if such a person is not permitted to enter a tavern, much less is he permitted to serve others in one and do what it is not lawful for him to engage in. But assuredly if he should perpetrate such an enormity, let him either be suspended, or be deposed from office.
11. Let no one enrolled in the sacerdotal list, or any layman, eat the unleavened wafers manufactured by the Jews, or in any way become familiar with the Jews or call them in case of sickness, or take any medicines from them, or even bathe with them in public bathing beaches or bathhouses. If anyone should attempt to do this, in case he is a clergyman, let him be deposed from office; or, in case he is a layman, let him be excommunicated.
13. Since we have learned that in the church of the Romans it is regarded as tantamount to a canon that ordinands to the diaconry or presbytery must solemnly

promise to have no further intercourse with their wives. Continuing, however, in conformity with the ancient canon of apostolic rigourism and orderliness, we desire that henceforward the lawful marriage ties of sacred men become stronger, and we are nowise dissolving their intercourse with their wives, nor depriving them of their mutual relationship and companionship when properly maintained in due season, so that if anyone is found to be worthy to be ordained a Subdeacon, or a Deacon, or a Presbyter, let him nowise be prevented from being elevated to such a rank while cohabiting with a lawful wife. Nor must he be required at the time of ordination to refrain from lawful intercourse with his own wife, lest we be forced to be downright scornful of marriage, which was instituted by God and blessed by His presence, as attested by the unequivocal declaration of the Gospel utterance: “What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder” (Matt. 19:6); and the Apostle’s teaching: “Marriage is honourable, and the bed is undefiled” (Heb. 13:4), and: “Art thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be freed” (1 Cor. 7:27). We are cognisant, though, that those who met in Carthage and made provision of decency in the life of ministers declared that Subdeacons and Deacons and Presbyters, busying themselves as they do with the sacred mysteries, according to their rules are obliged to practice temperance in connection with their helpmates, in order that we may likewise keep the injunction handed down through the Apostles, and continued from ancient times in force, well knowing that there is a proper season for everything, and especially for fasting and praying. For those who assist in the ceremonies at the sacrificial altar have to be temperate in all things at the time when they are handling holy things, so that they may be able to gain whatever they ask God for. If, therefore, anyone acting contrary to the Apostolic canons require any person who is in sacred orders — any Presbyter, we mean, or Deacon, or Subdeacon — to abstain from intercourse and association with his lawful wife, let him be deposed from office. Likewise, if any Presbyter or Deacon expel his own wife on the pretext of reverence, let him be excommunicated; and if he persist, let him be deposed from office.

14. Let the Canon of our holy and God-bearing Fathers be observed also in respect to this, that a Presbyter may not be ordained before he is thirty years old, though the man be thoroughly worthy; but, instead, let him be obliged to wait. For our Lord Jesus Christ was baptised when He was thirty years old, and then He began teaching. Likewise, let no Deacon be ordained before he is twenty-five years old, nor a Deaconess before she is forty years old.
15. Let no one be ordained a Subdeacon if he is less than twenty years old. If anyone should be ordained in any sacerdocy whatever without having reached the years decreed, let him be deposed from office.
17. Inasmuch as Clergymen of various churches have abandoned their own churches, in which they were ordained, and have run over to other Bishops, and without the consent of their own Bishop have had themselves enrolled in the others’ churches, and as a result of this they came to be insubordinate, we decree that, beginning with the month of January of the last fourth induction, not a single one of all the clergymen, regardless of what rank he happens to be in, has permission, unless furnished by a written dismissory of his own Bishop, to be enrolled in a different church. For, whoever fails to abide by this rule hereafter, but, on the contrary, so far as lies in his power disgraces him who bestowed the ordination on him, let both him and the one who illogically accepted him be deposed from office.

18. Clergymen who on the pretext of an incursion of barbarians, or as a result of any other circumstance, have emigrated, whenever their exigency has ceased, or the incursions of barbarians, on account of which they made their departure, are commanded to return to their own churches, and not to stay away from them for a long time without a good excuse. If anyone fails to conduct himself agreeably to the present Canon, let him be excommunicated until he returns to his own church. Let this same rule apply also to the Bishop who is keeping him.
22. We command that those men be deposed from office, whether they be Bishops or Clergymen whatsoever, who have been ordained or are being ordained for money, and not in accordance with a test and choice of life.
24. Let none of those enrolled in the sacerdotal list, nor any Monks, attend horse races or become involved in pastimes. But if any Clergyman should be invited at a wedding, whenever fraudulent games are introduced, let him rise up and protest, and thereupon let him depart, since the teaching of our Fathers thus commands. In case anyone is caught and found guilty of this, let him either cease or be deposed.
27. Let no one on the Clerical List don inappropriate clothing, either when living in the city or when walking the road; but, on the contrary, let him wear costumes that have already been assigned to the use of those who are enrolled in the Clergy. If anyone should commit such a violation, let him be excommunicated for one week.
31. As for those Clergymen who hold a liturgy in oratories or prayer houses or in private residences, or who carry out a baptism therein, without having obtained the consent of the local Bishop to do this, we decree that if any Clergyman fail to guard against doing this, let him be deposed from office.
33. Since we have learned as a matter of fact that in the country of the Armenians only those who are of hieratical (or priestly) lineage are eligible to the clergy, pursuantly to Jewish customs, in an attempt to practice these, and that some of them do not even tonsure their Cantors and Lectors when installing them in the divine Temple, we have seen fit to concur in decreeing that from now on those who wish to promote certain persons to the clergy are not allowed to pay any regard to the lineage of the ordinee. But, on the contrary, after first testing them as to whether they are worthy according to the definitions laid down in the sacred canons to be enrolled in the clergy, they shall ordain them ecclesiastics, whether they have been born of ancestors who were priests, or not. Nor, furthermore, shall they permit anyone to speak from the pulpit to the laity the divine words, in accordance with the order of enrolment in the clergy, unless such person has something to show in the way of a priestly tonsure and receives the blessing canonically from the proper pastor. If anyone be caught acting contrary to the rules prescribed, let him be excommunicated.
34. In view of the fact that the sacerdotal Canon clearly states that as the crime of conspiracy or of faction is utterly forbidden even by civil laws, it is much more fitting still that this be prohibited from occurring in the Church of God, we too are sedulous to insist that if any Clergymen or Monks be found either conspiring together or engaging in factional intrigues or hatching plots against Bishops or fellow Clergymen, they shall forfeit their own rank altogether.

50. From now on nobody, whether a clergyman or a layman, is permitted to gamble (or to play dice). In case anyone be caught doing this, if he be a clergyman, let him be deposed from office, but if he be a layman, let him be excommunicated.
67. Divine Scripture has commanded us to “abstain from blood, and strangled flesh, and fornication” (Gen. 9:3–4; Lev. ch. 17 and 18:13; Acts 15:28–29). We therefore suitably penance those who on account of their dainty stomach eat the blood of any animal after they have rendered it eatable by some art. If, therefore, anyone from now on should attempt to eat the blood of any animal, in any way whatsoever, if he be a clergyman, let him be deposed from office; but if he be a layman let him be excommunicated.
75. We wish those who attend church for the purpose of chanting neither to employ disorderly cries and to force nature to cry out aloud, nor to foist in anything that is not becoming and proper to a church; but, on the contrary, to offer such psalmodies with much attentiveness and contriteness to God, who sees directly into everything that is hidden from our sight. “For the sons of Israel shall be reverent” (Lev. 15:30), the sacred word has taught us.
77. That those who have been admitted to the priesthood, or clerics, or ascetics ought not to bathe in public baths with women, nor ought any Christian layman do so. For this is the first thing heathen find to condemn. In case, however, anyone be caught in the act of committing this impropriety, if he is a clergyman, let him be deposed from office; but if he is a layman, let him be excommunicated.
80. In case any Bishop, or Presbyter, or Deacon, or anyone else on the list of the Clergy, or any layman, without any graver necessity or any particular difficulty compelling him to absent himself from his own church for a very long time, fails to attend church on Sundays for three consecutive weeks, while living in the city, if he be a Cleric, let him be deposed from office; but if he be a layman, let him be removed from Communion.
86. As for those who procure and train prostitutes and harlots to the detriment of souls, if they should be Clerics, we decree that they be excommunicated and deposed from office; but if they be laymen, that they be excommunicated.

### **Second Nicaea**

10. Inasmuch as some of the Clergymen, flouting the canonical ordinance and leaving their own parish, run off into another parish, and for the most part into this God-guarded and imperial city, and become attached to civil magistrates, conducting services in their oratories, it is therefore not allowable to receive these persons in any house or church without the permission of their own Bishop and of that of Constantinople. If anyone should do so persistently, let him be deposed from office. As for any of the Priests who do this notwithstanding what has been said in the foregoing, it is not for them to undertake secular and mundane cares, as they are forbidden to do so by the divine canons. But if anyone be caught red-handed in the employ of the so-called magnates (meizoteri), let him be dismissed, or let him be deposed from office. To come at once to the point, therefore, let him keep re-reading the divine Scriptures with the object of teaching children and servants and slaves. For it was to this that he was called when holy orders fell to his lot.

14. It is perfectly plain to everybody that order reigns in the Church, and that it is pleasing to God for the transactions of the Priesthood to be maintained with rigorousness. Since, then, we behold some persons receiving the tonsure of the Clergy from infancy and without imposition of hands, and reading from the pulpit at the synaxis, but doing so in an uncanonical fashion, we forbid the doing of this from now on. The same rule is to be observed also with reference to Monks. As for the appointment of an Lector by imposition of hands, each Abbot is given permission to do this but only in his own Monastery, provided that imposition of hands has been laid upon that very same Abbot himself by a Bishop to enable him to have the presidency of an Abbot — that is to say, more plainly speaking, if he is a Presbyter (or Priest). Likewise also in accordance with the ancient custom, Auxiliary Bishops may only with the permission of the Bishop appoint Lectors (with imposition of hands).
15. From now on let no Clergyman be attached to two churches. For this is a mark of commerciality and of greediness for profits, and is alien to ecclesiastical usage. For we have been told by the voice of the Lord Himself that “no one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will cling to the one, and despise the other” (Matt. 6:24). Each person, therefore, in accordance with the Apostolical utterance, wherever he happens to be, ought to stay there and serve in one church. For things done on account of greediness for profits in connection with ecclesiastical matters are alien to God’s institutes. To supply the needs of this life there are various occupations. Let anyone, therefore, who so wishes gain the needs of the body from them. For the Apostle has said, “these hands have ministered unto my needs, and unto those of them who were with me” (Acts 20:34). Accordingly, what is said here is to be applied in this God-guarded city; but in small towns outside of it, for want of men, let there be concessions.
16. Every luxury and adornment of the body is alien to the sacerdotal order. Bishops or clergymen, therefore, who adorn themselves with splendid and conspicuous clothes need to be corrected; but if they insist upon it, they must be condemned to a penance. Likewise as regards those who anoint themselves with perfumes. But inasmuch as a root of bitterness growing up, the heresy of Christianocategori (i.e., accusers of Christians), has become a pestilence, and those who have joined it not only have deemed iconic representations in paintings to be an abomination, but have even rejected every form of reverence, being inclined to loathe those who live decently and piously, and that which has been written has been fulfilled in them, viz., “Godliness is an abomination to a sinner” (Sirach A.28) I’m not sure what the true citation for this verse is. If, therefore, persons are found laughing at those clothed in cheap and decent vestments, let them be corrected with a penance. For ever since the days of old every priestly man has contented himself with moderate and decent vestments. For everything that is worn not because of any real need or necessity, but for embellishment incurs the discredit of being frippery, as Basil the Great has said. But neither did they put on any garments made of silk fabrics and embroidered with various designs; nor did any of them add any differently coloured appendages to the edges of their vestments. For they had been told by the Speaker of God’s language that those who wear soft raiment are in the houses of kings (Matt. 11:8).

## **Local Councils**

Antioch: canons 3, 10.

Laodicea: canons 3, 15, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 30, 36, 41, 42, 43, 54, 55.

Sardica: Canon 10, 13, 15.

Carthage: canons 4, 14, 19, 20, 22, 24, 28, 29, 30, 33, 36, 37, 39, 40, 45, 47, 49, 63, 98, 137.

First-Second Council: 11.

## **Antioch**

3. If any Presbyter, or Deacon, or anyone else at all of those who belong to the priesthood, shall depart for another parish after leaving his own, and subsequently, having changed his position altogether, tries to stay in another parish for a long time, let him no longer celebrate liturgy, especially in case he is summoned by his own Bishop and admonished to return to the parish he belongs to, and fails to obey. But if he persists in the irregularity, he must be utterly deposed from liturgy, on the ground that there is no longer any possibility of his being reinstated. If, after he has been deposed from office for this reason, another Bishop admits him, the latter too shall be punished by a common Synod, on the ground that he is violating the ecclesiastical laws.

10. As for Auxiliary Bishops in villages or country towns, or so-called Chorepiscopi, even though they have received ordination by the laying on of hands, it has seemed best to the holy Council that they should recognise their own limitations, and govern the churches subject to their jurisdiction, and be content with the cure and guardianship of these, and, on the other hand, to appoint Lectors, and Subdeacons, and exorcisers, and be content with their promotion, and not venture to ordain a Presbyter or even a Deacon, without the concurrence of the Bishop in the city to whom he and his district are subject. But if anyone should dare to transgress the rules laid down, let him be deposed from office and even from whatever honour he has been enjoying. An Auxiliary Bishop is to be made such by the Bishop of the city to which he is subject.

## **Laodicea**

3. Concerning the need of not admitting to holy orders those persons who have been illuminated (i.e., baptised) recently.

15. Concerning the necessity of not permitting any longer persons to chant in church other than those who are canonical Cantors ascending the pulpit (or ambo) and chanting from parchments.

20. That a Deacon must not sit down ahead of a Presbyter, but must take his seat only when bidden by the Presbyter. Likewise Deacons are entitled to be honoured by their servants [Subdeacons?] and all Clerics.

21. That servants must not have any place in the diaconicum, or touch the sacred vessels.

22. That a servant must not wear an orarium, nor desert the doors.

23. That Lectors and Cantors must not wear oraria, and thus read or chant.

24. That members of the sacerdotal order, from Presbyters to Deacons and so on, of the ecclesiastical order, down to servants, and Lectors, and Cantors, and Exorcists, and Doorkeepers, and those belonging to the order of ascetics, must not enter a tavern.
25. That servants must not give bread, nor bless a chalice.
26. That those who have not been duly promoted by Bishops must not exorcize anyone, either in churches or in private houses.
30. That members of the Sacerdotal order, or Clerics, or Ascetics ought not to bathe in public baths with women, nor ought any Christian or layman. For this is the first thing heathen are prone to condemn.
36. That members of the Sacerdotal order and Clerics must not be magicians or enchanters, or mathematicians (i.e., numerologists), or astrologers, or make what are called amulets, which are shackles for their souls; accordingly, we have bidden those wearing these things to be thrown out of the Church.
41. That no member of the Sacerdotal order or Cleric ought to travel without letters canonical.
42. That no member of the Sacerdotal order or Cleric ought to travel without the bidding of a Bishop.
43. That servants must not desert the doors, even for a moment, and attend prayer.
54. That members of the Sacerdotal order and Clerics must not witness spectacles at weddings or suppers, but, before the actors taking part in theatricals enter, they are to rise and leave.
55. That members of the Sacerdotal order and Clerics must not hold banquets by contributions, but neither must laymen do so.

### **Sardica**

10. Due care must be taken to investigate with all accuracy and diligence so that, if any rich man or man of eloquence from the forum should demand to be made a Bishop, he shall not be appointed unless he first performs services of an Lector, and of a Deacon, and of a Presbyter, in order that, if he be deemed worthy with respect to each grade, he may progress by promotion to the apex of the episcopate. The grade, this means, in each rank shall not be of too short a length of time to enable his faith and the kindliness of his manners, and his solidity, and his blandness to become patent, and he himself, after being deemed worthy of holy orders, shall enjoy the highest honour. For neither is it right, nor does science or good usage approve one's proceeding boldly and lightly to this point so as to be appointed either a Bishop, or a Presbyter, or a Deacon offhand; for in such a case he would naturally be deemed a neophyte, since indeed even the most blissful Apostle, who also became a teacher of the heathen, appears to have prohibited premature appointments. For the test of the longest possible time will be able to elicit the habit and the manner of each man without much uncertainty.

13. If any Deacon, or Presbyter, or even any one of the Clerics is excluded from communion, and resorts to another Bishop acquainted with him and knowing that he has been denied communion by his own Bishop, it pleases us to assert that he ought not to offer an insult to the Bishop who is his brother by affording him communion. If, nevertheless, he should dare to do so, let him know that when the Bishops have assembled, he will render himself answerable for his conduct.
15. We enact that if any Bishop from a different diocese wants to appoint another's servant, without the consent of his Bishop, to any grade or rank, any such appointment shall be deemed invalid and ineffective. If any of us should permit themselves to do this, they ought to be both reminded and corrected by their brethren and fellow Bishops.

### **Carthage**

4. It is decided that Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons, and all men who handle sacred articles, being guardians of sobriety, must abstain from women.
14. It has pleased the Council to decree that if anyone whatsoever among the Bishops, or Presbyters, or Deacons, or Clerics, is charged with any ecclesiastical or political crime in the Church, and, flouting the ecclesiastical court, resorts for justification to civil courts, even though a verdict be pronounced in his favour, he shall nevertheless lose his position. And this applies to the matter of the charges, as for the civil aspect of the case, he shall lose what he has won, if he tries to keep his position. (Ap. c. LXXIV; c. VI of the 1st; c. IX of the 4th; c. XII of Antioch; c. CXV of Carthage.)
19. It has pleased the Council to decree that care should be taken to see that Lectors, upon arriving at the age of puberty, either take a wife or choose to vow celibacy and continence.
20. It has pleased the Council to decree that if any Cleric lends or gives any money for the use of others, he shall receive the amount thereof in kind.
22. It has pleased the Council to decree that Lectors must not bow down in adoration or pay obeisance to the people.
24. It has pleased the Council to decree that when a Bishop or a Cleric is to be ordained, the decisions arrived at by the Councils as official pronouncements shall first be dinned into their ears, lest, when acting in accordance with the rules of the Council, they should come to repent.
28. If Presbyters or Deacons be accused, the legal number of Bishops selected from the nearby locality, whom the accused demand, shall be empaneled — that is, in the case of a Presbyter six, of a Deacon three, together with the Bishop of the accused — to investigate their causes; the same form being observed in respect of days, and of postponements, and of examinations, and of persons, as between accusers and accused. As for the rest of the Clerics, the local Bishop alone shall hear and conclude their causes.
29. It has pleased the Council to decree that children of Clergymen shall not enter into a matrimonial union with heretics or heathen.

30. It is decreed that Bishops and Clerics shall not leave any legacy to non-Orthodox Christians, even though these be blood relatives, nor shall Bishops or Clerics make such persons any gift of property of their own by bequest, as has been said.
33. It is decreed that Subdeacons who attend to the Mysteries, and Deacons and Presbyters, and even Bishops, on the same terms, must abstain from their wives, so as to be as though they had none; which if they foil to do they shall be removed from office. As for the rest of the Clerics, they shall not be compelled to do this, unless they be of an advanced age; but the rule ought to be kept in accordance with the custom of each particular church.
36. It has pleased the Council to decree that in the event that Presbyters and Deacons and the rest of the lower Clerics complain about the courts of their own bishops in reference to whatever causes they may have, the neighbouring Bishops shall hear their cases, and with the consent and approval of the same Bishop, the Bishops invited by them shall dispose of their differences. Wherefore, though they may think that they have a right to appeal in regard thereto, let them not carry the appeal to courts overseas, but only to the primates of their own provinces, as has been prescribed many times in regard to Bishops. As for those men who do take an appeal to overseas courts, let them be admitted, by no one in Africa to communion.
37. It has pleased the whole Council to decree that in regard to anyone on account of his indolence, whether a Bishop or any Cleric whatsoever, who has been denied communion, if during the time of his communion before he has been heard he should dare to participate in communion, let him himself be judged to have pronounced sentence upon himself.
39. It has pleased the Council to decree that if any Clerics or Deacons whatever to obey the orders of their Bishop when the latter wishes to advance them to a higher position for cogent reasons of their churches, then and in that case neither shall they serve in the capacity of the rank which they refused to leave.
40. It has pleased the Council to decree with regard to Bishops, Presbyters, Deacons, or any Clerics whatever, who owned nothing to begin with, that if in the course of their service in an episcopate or during their office, they buy any fields or any territories whatever in their own name, they are to be considered as though guilty of having made an inroad upon the Lord's business or the Lord's things, unless they should therefore when reminded of this agree to donate these things to the Church. If, on the other hand, the liberality of anyone or succession by descent should bring them anything personally, even of that they shall bestow upon the Church whatever portion they are willing to give her. But if even after offering it to her, they should backslide, or go back on their word, being unworthy of ecclesiastical honour, let them be judged to be reprobates.
45. Clerics or continent men shall not, except by special permission and consent of their own Bishop, or of the Presbyters, come into the presence of widows or of virgins. And let them not do so by themselves (i.e., all alone), either, but only when accompanied by fellow clerics or by persons with whom Bishops and Presbyters alone have admission to women of that description, or where there are present Clerics or some honourable Christians.

47. It is decreed that Clerics shall not enter taverns for the purpose of eating or drinking, unless when driven to them for shelter.
49. It is decreed that Bishops or Clerics must not banquet in church, unless it should happen that while passing through they have to put up there as guests. Even laymen must be prevented as far as possible from holding such banquets.
63. It is decreed that no Bishop shall appropriate another's Cleric contrary to the wishes of his former Bishop. But if any Bishop should do so nevertheless, let him not commune any longer with others.
98. It has pleased the Council to decree that if anyone has acted even once as a Lector in church he shall not be accepted as a candidate for the clergy in any other church.
137. It has pleased all to decide that inasmuch as it has been decreed in the foregoing decisions of the Councils concerning clerical persons that ought not to be allowed to bring charges against Clerics, and it was not further determined what kind of persons are not to be admitted, on this account we decree rightly that that person shall not be allowed to bring charges who has become excommunicated and is still in the state of exclusion from the benefits of the Church, whether he be a Cleric or a layman who wishes to lay charges against any Clerics.
11. The divine and sacred canons impose the penalty of deposition on Presbyters or Deacons who undertake secular offices or worldly cares, or the so-called curatories in the households of civil magistrates. We too confirm this, and as concerning the rest of those who are included among the Clergy we decree that in case any one of them is being employed in secular offices, or undertakes or accepts so-called curatories in the households of civil magistrates or in the suburbs, that person shall be ousted from his own Clergy. For, according to the most veracious utterance pronounced by Christ Himself, our true God, "no one can serve two masters" (Matt. 6:24; Luke 16:13).

### **Fathers**

Basil the Great: canons 51, 55, 69.

Nicophoros the Confessor: 6.

Cyril of Alexandria: 4

51. As regards Clerics the canons have been promulgated indiscriminately, prescribing a single punishment for those who commit offences of any kind, namely, expulsion from the service, whether they be possessed of any rank or are simply awaiting one in the service while unordained.
55. As for those who resist robbers, if they themselves are outside of the Church, they are to be excluded from communion with the good boon; but if they are Clerics, they are to be deprived of their rank. For every man, it says, who takes to the sword shall die by the sword (Matt. 26:52).
69. As for an Lector, if he has had anything to do with his betrothed before the wedding, after being suspended from duty for one year he shall be permitted to read, though he shall forfeit his right to be advanced to any higher status; but if he

has stolen his wife without first betrothing her, i.e., by marrying her clandestinely, he shall be dismissed from the ecclesiastical service. The same treatment shall be given to any other servant of the Church.

6. Any Presbyter who has the prayer of an Abbot (or Hegoumenos) is competent to ordain an Lector and a Subdeacon for his Monastery.
  
4. Care must be taken to do everything useful and necessary for the edification of laities and contributive to the repute of the Holy Churches. For it is written, that “ye shall make the sons of Israel reverent” (Lev. 15:31). Thus Fathers of monasteries all over the province of Thebes, who are pious men and have a way of life that is not unwonderful, having come to Alexandria and being asked by me regarding the condition of the monasteries there, reported that many persons were being scandalised on account thereof. Some newlyweds as though just stepping down from their bridal chambers grab some of the very reverent Bishops without there being anyone round to tell what was going on they get themselves ordained Clerics, or, at any rate, Presbyters. Some others, moreover, being ousted from the monasteries as disorderly, again succeed in undergoing ordination, and, becoming Clerics, re-enter even the monasteries whence they had been expelled. And they insist upon offering whatever services it is customary for Clerics to perform, and to do these, to such an extent as to disgust those knowing them and to cause them to abandon even the synaxes and not to bear to commune when those persons are officiating at the liturgy. Since, therefore, for the edification of laities, as I have said, everything must be done by us, let your reverence bear these facts in mind; and if anyone should be about to be ordained a Cleric, let your reverence scrutinise his life, and see whether he ever had a wife or not, and how and when he got her, and when he might have abstained from her, and whether he may not be one of the men ousted either by some other very reverent Bishop or by some Monastery; and let him be ordained only after he is found to be free from any and every accusation. For let us thus keep our own conscience clear, and the sacred and venerable liturgy free from any and every accusation.

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