

## **Appointment to Minor Order of Cleric During Acceptance into a Religious Order**

*This service is intended to introduce candidates onto the path of minor clerical progression. It is the only minor order which can be conferred without the laying on of hands and can be conferred by video call in certain circumstances. It must not be conferred unless the bishop or a Superior of the religious order can see the candidate in real time. Both Superior and candidate should have access to these words.*

*The Old Catholic Apostolic Church (OCAC) accepts this service as validly appointing the first minor order only if all following minor orders are conferred by ordination with laying on of hands at each stage. OCAC does not accept ordinations which do not include the laying on of hands by a bishop. This service is an appointment and not an ordination. This service may only be performed by a bishop of OCAC or by a superior of a religious order within OCAC.*

*The charter of the Religious Order is read, and the admission requirements repeated. The candidate acknowledges that they will obey the requirements of the Religious Order and any conditions of belonging to the order.*

**The Superior says to the candidate:** What is it you desire?

**Candidate:** I desire to become part of [name of religious order] within The Old Catholic Apostolic Church.

**Superior:** Do you accept the yoke of obedience to Christ in the [Name of Religious Order] as set out in our rules?

**Candidate:** I accept them: I do.

**Superior:** Will you truthfully and diligently serve in [Name of Religious Order] without hindrance or secret intent and will you be obedient to the bishops of the wider church, particularly the Old Catholic Apostolic Church and their clergy?

**Candidate:** Before God, I accept them: I will do.

**Superior:** As part of our order we will treat you likewise and spiritually support and encourage your serving in this ministry.

**The Superior addresses the candidate:**

Those who in ancient days desired to dedicate their lives to the service of Christ's holy church were admitted, as a preliminary step, to the order of cleric. In those days it was expected that worldly distractions and secular desires were to be abandoned and the cleric lived a life separated from the rest of the world. The cleric no longer wore secular clothing and the head was shaven. You, who now come before us, also wish to dedicate yourselves to the service of Christ. However, of you it is pertinently not expected to isolate yourself from daily life, but rather to embrace it ever more fully. The service of Christ is primarily a service of life in general and all of humanity in particular. In taking this step you desire to let Christ's work take pre-eminence over the fulfilment of personal desires.

In this grade of cleric you set before yourselves a great and glorious ideal: To become fellow creators with God, to co-operate in God's plan for the perfection of creation. For this you need to develop self-control and to acquire additional powers. Instead of allowing your personality to direct and enslave you, you should endeavour to live the life of the soul, remembering that you are that soul and that your personality is its vehicle. In this first step of cleric it is your task to rightly express yourselves through the physical body. In the subsequent minor orders, and if you feel so called to the major orders, you have the progression of developing obedience to Christ's calling to serving. So then, in this grade of cleric, you should concentrate your efforts on right expression via your physical body.

It is your task to strive for accuracy and grace, keeping your body healthy and clean and devoting its energies to God's service in harmony and rhythm. In your gesture, in your manner and in your speech strive to show forth the ideal of beauty, never forgetting that our physical bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit. Moreover, as you learn to respect your own body, so should you scrupulously respect the bodies of others, picturing them ever as the temple of the eternal beauty.

**The Superior says:** Let us pray.

**Superior:** O Lord Christ, You are ever ready to receive and to strengthen the earnest aspirations of your children, look down in love upon these faithful servants who desire to become worthy to serve You as clerics in Your holy church. Sanctify him/her, O Lord, with your heavenly grace that, growing continually in virtue, he/she may rightly practise the duties of this order and so serve You ever better, O great King of love, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

The Superior prays:

**Superior:** May you be clothed with the vesture of holiness and trust that you will diligently develop the powers you have within you, that your service may be pleasing and effective.

### **The Blessing of the Habit**

**Superior:** O Lord Christ, you made no reputation for yourself in the clothing you wore for your ministry. We clothe ourselves in your example and your obedience and we also adopt the vestment of the [white/grey/brown] habit as an outward sign of your inner grace to us in the charism of [name of order]. Bless this candidate now taking this vow and accepting our charism [Name of Candidate] and empower them to serve you ever more fully; not in their strength, but in yours.

The Superior clothes the candidate. Saying:

**Superior:** Take this vestment as a sign of your serving, in the + Name of the Father, and of the + Son and of the + Holy Spirit. Amen.

The Superior signs the cross toward the candidate, saying:

**Superior:** + In the name of Christ our Lord, I appoint you to [Name of Religious Order] and the minor order of cleric, in the wider Old Catholic Apostolic Church.

**The Superior says:** Welcome to the [Name of Religious Order] part of the Old Catholic Apostolic Church.

**Candidate:** Amen.

The Old Catholic Apostolic Church

*The Superior of the Religious Order will notify the Bishop of the Old Catholic Apostolic Church of this admission, and the candidate becomes a part of the Old Catholic Apostolic Church in minor orders and may progress in minor and Holy Orders of OCAC if desired.*

*Please pray for the candidate clothed in habit today, and for the Religious Order, and for the Old Catholic Apostolic Church.*

*Please also pray for yourself regularly.*