



Happy Anniversary Bishop Daniel



ON THE 7TH OF JUNE THE MONASTERY CELEBRATES THE 1ST ANNIVERSARY FOR THE ORDINATION OF OUR BELOVED FATHER BISHOP DANIEL, BISHOP OF ST SHENOUDA MONASTERY. THE MONKS OF THE MONASTERY WOULD LIKE TO WISH HIM A MANY FRUITFUL YEARS TO COME.

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY AND PRIESTHOOD

By: Fr Anthony St Shenouda

First of All I want to wish Bishop Daniel a very Happy and Blessed Anniversary of his Ordination as a Bishop of our monastery. I also want to congratulate my blessed fathers, Fr Wissa, Fr Shenouda, and Fr Theodore for their ordinations. It is definitely a great and joyous occasion to see my honored fathers serving the altar. I also want to say that St Shenouda is also very happy and proud of his sons seeing them growing in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Despite the fact that most monastic fathers have a negative view on the priesthood within monasticism yet St Shenouda is unique in his vision. The saint sees that the ascetical life is a superior model of parenting. Meaning that as an ascetic grows in his spiritual life it is expected that he should hold a fatherly role in the community. He even once reproached a nun who refused to hold the position of a housemaster (*in charge of a number of nuns*) accusing her of "Choosing to be barren" since she refused this maternal position.

"It is greater foolishness and an evil hardening of the heart, when some among you choose for themselves to be barren through God and argumentatively and ignorantly refuse to do things that they are able to do to take care of people, or to take care of services or any other good deed that you should do for one another in the fear of the Lord."

For St Shenouda holding such a post is not as seen as authoritative but rather as a great responsibility that is equivalent to parenting. Therefore to be identified as a true monk one must become (*when called*) a father to others who are in the community.

May God keep your priesthood for many years to come.



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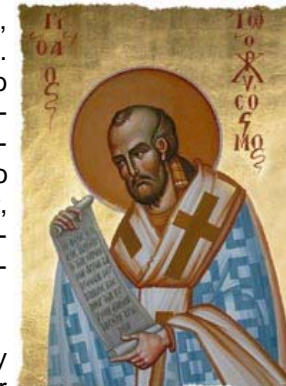
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THE GLORY OF THE PRIESTHOOD

By: St John Chrysostom

The work of the priesthood is done on earth, but it is ranked among heavenly ordinances. And this is only right, for no man, no angel, no archangel, no other created power, but the Paraclete himself ordained this succession, and persuaded men, while still remaining in the flesh to represent the ministry of angels. The priest, therefore, must be as pure as if he were standing in heaven itself, in the midst of those powers.



The symbols which existed before the ministry of grace were fearful and awe inspiring : for example, the bells, the pomegranates, the stones on the breastplate, the stones on the ephod, the mitre, the diadem, the long robe, the golden crown, the Holy of Holies, the deep silence within. But if you consider the ministry of grace, you will find that those fearful and awe inspiring symbols are only trivial. The statement about the Law is true here also: "The splendor that once was is now no splendor at all; it is outshone by a splendor greater still." When you see the Lord sacrificed and lying before you, and the High Priest standing over the sacrifice and praying, and all who partake being stained with that precious blood, can you think that you are still among men and still standing on earth? Are you not at once transported to heaven, and, having driven out of your soul every carnal thought, do you not with soul naked and mind pure look round upon heavenly things? Oh, the wonder of it! Oh, the loving-kindness of God to men! He who sits above with the Father is at that moment held in our hands, and gives himself to those who wish to clasp and embrace him which they do, all of them, with their eyes. Do you think this could be despised? or that it is the kind of thing anyone can be superior about?

Would you like to be shown the excellence of this sacred office by another miracle? Imagine in your mind's eye, if you will, Elijah and the vast crowd standing around him and the sacrifice lying upon the stone altar. All the rest are still, hushed in deep silence. The prophet alone is



praying. Suddenly fire falls from the skies on to the offering. It is marvelous; it is charged with bewilderment. Turn, then, from that scene to our present rites, and you will see not only marvelous things, but things that transcend all terror. The priest stands bringing down, not fire, but the Holy Spirit. And he offers prayer at length, not that some flame lit from above may consume the offerings, but that grace may fall on the sacrifice through that prayer, set alight the souls of all, and make them appear brighter than silver refined in the fire. Can anyone, not quite mad and deranged, despise this most awe inspiring rite? Do you not know that no human soul could ever have stood that sacrificial fire, but all would have been utterly annihilated, except for the powerful help of God's grace?

For earth's inhabitants, having their life in this world, have been entrusted with the stewardship of heavenly things, and have received an authority which God has not given to angels or archangels. Not to them was it said, "What things so ever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound also in heaven ; and what things so ever ye shall loose, shall be loosed." (*Matt18:18*) Those who are lords on earth have indeed the power to bind, but only men's bodies. But this binding touches the very soul and reaches through heaven. What priests do on earth, God ratifies above. The Master confirms the decisions of his slaves. Indeed he has given them nothing less than the whole authority of heaven. For he says, "Who so ever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven, and whose so ever sins ye retain, they are retained." (*Jn 20:23*) What authority could be greater than that? "The Father has given all judgment unto the Son." (*Jn 5:22*) But I see that the Son has placed it all in their hands. For they have been raised to this prerogative, as though they were already translated to heaven and had transcended human nature and were freed from our passions.

Again, if a king confers on one of his subjects the right to imprison and release again at will, that man is the envy and admiration of all. But although the priest has received from God an authority as much greater than that, as heaven is more precious than earth and souls than bodies, some people think he has received so slight an honour that they can imagine someone entrusted with it actually despising the gift. God save us from such madness! For it is patently mad to despise this great office without which we cannot attain to salvation or God's good promises.

For if a man "cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven except he be born again of water and the spirit," (*Jn 3:5*) and if he that eats not the Lord's flesh and drinks not his blood is cast out of everlasting life,' and all these things can happen through no other agency except their sacred hands (the priests' I mean), how can anyone, without their help, escape the fire of Gehenna or win his appointed crown ? They are the ones—they and no others who are in charge of spiritual travail and responsible for the birth that comes through baptism. Through them we put on Christ and are united with the Son of God and become limbs obedient to that blessed Head. So they should properly be not only more feared than rulers and kings, but more honored even than fathers. For our fathers begot us "of blood and the will of the flesh" (*Jn 1:13*); but they are responsible for our birth from God, that blessed second birth, our true emancipation, the adoption according to grace.



✠ Priesthood is a great honor: No one takes this honor upon himself, this honour is granted and given by God, just as He granted the honour to Aaron. Likewise, Christ did not glorify Himself to become high priest, but the Father said to Him, "You are My Son. Today I have begotten You." And also, "You are a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek" (Hebrews 5:4-6)



Fr Shenouda Praying part of the liturgy



Fr Theodore Praying part of the liturgy



Bishop Daniel with the newly ordained priests and the fathers who attended the ordination



THE HONOR OF THE PRIESTHOOD

By: Bishop Mettaos



Priesthood is a great honor as it is a consecration of the work with God for the salvation of the souls of the people of God.

✠ Priesthood is a divine call: *“And Jesus went up on the mountain and called to Him those He wanted, and they came to Him. Then He appointed twelve that they might be with Him and that He might send them out to preach, and to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out demons”* (Mark 3:13-15)

✠ Divine choice: *“Now it came to pass in those days that Jesus went up to the mountain to pray and continued all night in prayer to God, and when it was day, He called His disciples to Him and from them He chose twelve whom He also named apostles”* (Luke 6:12,13)

“You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain” (John 15:16)

✠ Appointment: *“After these things the Lord appointed seventy others also and sent them two by two before His face into every city and place where He Himself was about to go”* (Luke 10:1)

✠ Selection: *“As they (disciples) ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Now separate for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.’ Then having fasted and prayed and laid hands on them, they sent them away”* (Acts 13:2,3). That is why our teacher St. Paul boasted saying, *“But when it pleased God who separated me from my mother’s womb and called me through His grace to reveal His son in me, that I might preach Him among the gentiles”* (Galatians 1:15,16)

✠ Consecration: *“And for their sake I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth”* (John 17:19). To sanctify means to consecrate. Christ consecrated Himself for the ministry and our redemption. All the ranks of the priesthood are consecrated for ministry, according to the example of Christ, the High Priest.

✠ Faithfulness and stewardship: *“Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his master will make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of food in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes”* (Luke 12:42,43)

“Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the Mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful” (1 Corinthians 4:1,2)



But, to return to the topic from which I digressed, God has given greater power to priests than to natural parents, not only for punishment, but also for help. The difference between the two is as great as between the present and the future life. Parents bring us into this life; priests into the life to come. Parents cannot avert bodily death nor drive away the onset of disease; priests have often saved the soul that is sick and at the point of death, by making the punishment milder for some, and preventing others from ever incurring it, not only through instruction and warning, but also through helping them by prayer. They have authority to remit sins, not only when they make us regenerate, but afterwards too *“Is any among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith shall save him that is sick, and the Lord shall raise him up, and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.”* (Jas 5:14)

(St John Chrysostom, On The Priesthood. St Vladimir’s Seminary Press)

A MESSAGE FROM BISHOP DANIEL



Bishop Daniel laying hands on fathers Shenouda and Theodore

How wonderful and joyful day it was, on Saturday: 15/5/2010. It was one of the historical days of the Monastery. The joy and the peace were in the hearts of everybody. The main aim in their hearts from coming to the Monastery was to praise the name of The Lord Jesus Christ, and whenever our aim to praise the Lord, joy & peace are abound.

Saying thank you to the Lord is not enough for all His Gifts that He gives us every new day and especially what He bestowed upon us last Saturday. While we are yet dust and ashes, He allowed us to ordain new Priests to serve His Altar, whom He is Almighty, Holy and Eternal.

It was a beautiful mere coincident that on this day, was the feast day of the birth day of St Shenouda, whom he is our Patron Saint , that coincided with the ordination of his sons the Monks.

We thank H.H. Pope Shenouda III, for establishing this Monastery and granting my weakness the gift of being a Bishop, so we can ordain priests and cover up all the needs of the Monastery. We also thank His graces: Anba Athanasius, Anba Suriel and Anba Daneel for their con-gratulation. All the Fathers, all the beloved congregations. All who prepared the Food and Aghapy TV channel Team.

Our Deepest congratulation to, Fr Wissa, Fr Shenouda and Fr Theodore for their ordination. May Our gracious Lord Jesus Christ support, bless and sanctify them for the glory of His Name. Amen.

Your servant: Bishop Anba Daniel. Monday: 17/5/2010.



PRIESTHOOD IS A SPECIFIC CALLING

By: Pope Shenouda III



In The Transitional Period Between The Old And New Testaments John the Baptist Was Commissioned by God (*John 1:6-7*) *There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light that all through him might believe.*

If Priesthood Is A Specific Calling, Selection And A Mission From God, Then It Is Not For Every Person, But For Those Selected And Called By God. In God's Kingdom, and as the

Sovereign King, selects His servants. He calls and commissions them so that they would not work on their own but according to His command. (*Exo 25:9*) *"According to all that I show you, that is, the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furnishings, just so you shall make it.*

This commandment, did not only apply to apostolic rank only, but to their successors the bishops as well. Here we see Saint Paul commanding the bishops at Ephesus; (*Acts 20:28*) *"Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.*

THE HOLY BREATH

The Lord Jesus ordained His disciples granting them the Holy Spirit and the Episcopal Authority. The Lord describes such ordination as: (*John 20:20-23*) *When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you." And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit." If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."*

This Holy Breath Still Upheld And Is Handed Over From Generation To Generation In the ordination of priests, the ordained opens his mouth while the chief priest (bishop) breathes on him and says, "Receive the Holy Spirit". The new priest then recites a portion from psalm 119 which says "I opened my mouth and for myself, I attracted a Spirit".

By The Laying Of Their Hands, The Apostles Ordained Bishops, Priests And Deacons and Gave Them The Holy Spirit Laying on of the hands on specific people shows that the priesthood is not for all. Refer to Acts Chapter 6, on how the seven deacons were ordained.



THE LAYING ON OF HANDS

The Deacons Were Not Canonical Until The Disciples Laid Their Hands On Them

When the Church needed the service of the new deacons, did they volunteer themselves, or submit an application to be appointed?

It is obvious that this was never the case, but we see that the apostles set the rule for selection as stated by the Book of Acts; (*Acts 6:3*) *"Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business;*

Here we should also ask a couple of questions

- 1) Was it sufficient to just select the most qualified?
- 2) Did any say; "here we found and elected the most qualified, let them start serving?"

We see that none of the elected were authorised to commence their work until the apostles had laid their hands on them. Even the deaconship, no one can carry out its duties without canonical ordination. (*Acts 6:5*) *And the saying pleased the whole multitude. And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch, Stephen was not only full of the Holy Spirit, but he was also full of faith, however he still needed ordination. Stephen was a miracle performer with the gift of healing, but still required the "Laying on of Hands".* (*Acts 6:8*) *And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and signs among the people.*

The Church Is Of Principal Importance As The Only Channel To Canonise The Ministers Here we see that the being full of the Spirit and wisdom, full of faith and power, capable of performing miracles did not automatically admit Saint Stephen to assume the grade and the duties of deaconship. He had to first be canonised and sent by the Church. He had to receive the "Laying on of Hands" to assume his office and obtain the authority to serve. Hence it is not for those who desire it or those who seek after the position.



Bishop Daniel laying hands on father Wissa