

## **Concerning persons, who fulfill the church services and serve at them**

### **Dedicated-servers**

Divine services of the Orthodox Church are served by special lawfully ordained persons for this purpose (Council of Gangra canon 6; 6th Ecumenical Council canon 33). Jesus Christ himself established such order, when, having accomplished the work of redemption and set the means of grace for the continuation and its adoption in the church, had the good will to bestow all power and the grace of celebration of services to the Apostles, in view of the direct commands (Mt. 28:19, 20) and the special gifts of grace (Jn. 20:22, 23). The Apostles, in building up the Church of God on earth, preached on the power and grace of the church hierarchy, having distinguished three sacred actions in it, unequal in the power and grace of the religious rite, the ranks of bishop, presbyter and deacon

### **Bishop**

According to the earliest organization of the church of God on earth the bishop was the head of the society, of the believers. In just that meaning the name bishop is already used many times in the New Covenant of the Holy Scripture (Acts 20:28; 1 Tim. 3:2. Titus 1:7, etc.). Over the years bishops received various titles, such as: patriarchs, metropolitans, archbishops, vicars; but all of them are equal among themselves in serving the divine services<sup>1</sup>. In relation to the Divine Services the bishop is the sovereign and independent distributor of the gifts of grace. Therefore he is the first and main officiant of the Divine Services so that the Divine Services done without his presence or without his blessing cannot be recognized as correct. Actually the bishop possesses the right, as the heir of apostolic authority, to administer the Mystery of the Priesthood, to consecrate chrism for the Mystery of Chrismation and the holy table or antimensia for administering the Mystery of the Eucharist. The offices and the features of Hierarchical Church Services are found in a special book, called the "The Bishop's Chinovnik [Offices]". The church Ustav [Typikon] and equally The Priest's Service Book does not mention the bishops.

### **Presbyter**

The presbyter is the officiant of divine services dependent on the bishop. Through the episcopal mystery of ordination the presbyter acquires the grace and right to teach a society of believers, to serve all the church services for believers, to impart blessings to the believer and to administer the mysteries. Together with this he is also the administrator of the mysteries; but he cannot administer the mystery of the priesthood. The grace of the mystery of Chrismation is propagated through the chrism consecrated by bishops, and the mystery of the Eucharist may be done only on the antimension consecrated by the bishop<sup>2</sup>.

When dedicated-servers are suspended they lose the right to serve the divine services<sup>3</sup>. Priests, during travel on vacation, cannot serve the divine services without the permission of the local diocesan hierarch (Ukase [Decree] of the Holy Synod 1774, XI, 3).

Those on leave for the veneration of the holy places in the East dedicated-servers are supplied, irrespective of the passport, certificates with the necessary seal and certainly with the signature of a Hierarch, with the designation of the vacation terms in these certificates, the time of the ordination of the one on leave in the sacred rank and the last places of service, and with the explanation that the one on leave is not suspended from the celebration of services, but is why, from the decision of a competent Orthodox spiritual authority, he can perform a religious rite during the time of his leave<sup>4</sup>. Dedicated-servers, who are suspended from the celebration of services, are forbidden to give foreign dismissals (Definition of the Holy Synod 1882, VI, 9-23; 1889-1890, XII-I, 22-12). Supernumerary Dedicated-servers from time to time may serve a sacred service in a parish church with the consent of the local priest, excluding, of course, whatever sacred service is forbidden (Ustav Dukhovnikh Konsistorii [Rule of the Theological Consistories], 79).

The priest is completely responsible for the order of the divine service. He sees that the reading and singing is reverent and the holiness of the place is decent. He also has the right decide or to forbid using hymns of one or another chant (see the Tserkovnyi Vestnik [Church Messenger] 1890, 17; 1898, 2). His responsibility is that, during the serving of the divine services, "all things be done decently and in order" [1 Cor. 14:40]<sup>5</sup>.

At some churches the clergy will consist of two and more priests. Common legislation does not distinguish between the rights and duties of older and younger priests. According to the explanation of the Poltava Diocesan Authority, although the Ukase of the Holy Synod dated March 4, 1885 (see note 3) existing by the rule of 1869 the division of the priests into rectors and their assistants is destroyed (except for the clergy of the capitol cathedral churches<sup>6</sup> and some districts which are found in a special position). But the right of the senior priests per representation and management of church affairs is not cancelled<sup>7</sup>, as equally it is not given to second or third priests to have equal rights with senior priests and especially the willful orders on the church or parish (see Tserkovnyi Vestnik [Church Messenger] 1890, 33; Refer to 1891, 27). In some dioceses special canons are created for the local diocesan authority for the establishment of proper relationships between older and younger priests.

So, for ex., in the Don Diocese, by the way, the following canons are established:

Where there are two, three or more priests at a church, the senior priest presides during all cathedral services, even though such services don't fall in the week of his turn.

Younger priests preside during their weeks, but generally the eldest of them acts for the dean in the church as the authorized director of the church services, but also equally that the bells for the divine services would be rung at one determined time, instead of arbitrary times by each of the priests serving at the church.

By agreement of all the clergy the order on church and parish made by the senior priests, the week of the youngest priest cannot be canceled without the knowledge of the senior priest.

The senior priest in general, and the younger priests in their weeks, supervise and from that which follows, demand, that the church vestry room, utensils, service books and other priestly appurtenances are stored in proper order, the best of the items being found in a chest or the keys of the church in a case, the starosti [wardens] or one of the members of the clergy who, by consent of the clergy and the wardens [starosti], will be assigned this duty.

The psalm readers in their turn under the supervision of the priests of that week prepare, but after the divine services they tidy up the vestry room and supervise the neatness and cleanliness of the holy sanctuary.

In case of illness or long-term absence of the senior priest, a younger priest in his turn replaces him in every respect<sup>8</sup>.

The priest of the week should keep the key of the church, and the watchman should keep the key to the bell tower.

The lowest members of the clergy: deacons and psalm readers, received their education without discrimination, being in established submission to their priests, will stand at the same time in the knowledge also of the senior priest and consequently should incontestably fulfill all his lawful requirements.

In the case of an observed negligence, the senior priest, after meeting with the other priests, gives an explanation, an observation to the deacon and psalm readers, and if he finds it necessary, he records this observation in the journal given for this purpose by the dean.

Concerning the more important wrongdoings and non-fulfillment of service duties by the lowest members of the clergy together with the parish priests, but in the case of a disagreement in this between the latter and the eldest of them brings it to the dean's notice without concealment (Donskiia Eparkhialniia Vedomosti [Don Diocesan News] 1892, 8-9)<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Concerning the vestments, the Metropolitans in our Church for a long time had the right to wear a white klobuk, with a precious cross on it; Archbishops and Bishops wear black klobuks; the adornment of a klobuk with a cross is given as a special highest award (Obozrenie Tserkovno-grazhdanskikh Uzakonenii [Review of the Church-Civil Government Legislation, 191).

<sup>2</sup> The name President or Rector in the Typikon is understood as being the Archimandrite, the Hegumen and in general the head of the monastery (Tserkovnie Vedomosti [Church News] 1896, 2). The "Ecclesiarch" mentioned in the Typikon has to administer the common order of the service in the exact fulfillment of the Ustav [Typikon]. The cycle of duties of the ecclesiarch included also the supervision, that those monks and laymen standing in the Narthex did not enter the church during the singing so that each of the brethren assigned to the service was in his own place and corrected the assigned obedience. As the second person after the rector, he assumed his place in case of absence and fulfilled the parts of the service assigned to him, beginning and ending its more important parts. (Mansvetov, 203).

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<sup>3</sup> The priest, who temporarily is removed from duties in a sacred service and among the clergy should not wear the rasson [long robe] in this position, is lower than some sacred servers (Ustav Dukhovnikh Konsistorii, 176, note 2). He also cannot bless parishioners of that church at which he acts as a psalm reader (Tserkovnyi Vestnik [Church Messenger] 1892, 33).

<sup>4</sup> Dedicated-servers, sent on a pilgrimage to Palestine, for serving divine services there should certainly have on a separate sheet the certification that they are not under suspension. This certificate is presented to the Patriarch of Jerusalem, who in turn gives a special certificate (in Greek) of permission to serve divine services in the holy places. If the above mentioned certificate is registered on one sheet with the certificate for departure abroad, that, ordinarily, together with the marked certificate remains with the agency giving out passports for travel abroad, and the church-server, who does not have the certificate giving him the right to serve divine services, loses the opportunity to perform those services in the holy places of the East. (For details see: Tserkovnie Vedomosti [Church News] 1894, 2).

<sup>5</sup> Deacons and clergymen should honor their priest as the rector of the church and their teacher, also obey him and not to offend him by word or deed. But if they were offended by him, they would complain to the dean, and if they wish, also to the Diocesan Authority, and wait for the decision (Instruktsiia Blagochinnim [Instruction for the Deans] § 25). The deacons or clergy are not to offend the priest and not to hold back their income and he dare not beat them; but if they were incompetent in anything or were disobedient to him, then he is to complain to the dean or to the Diocesan Authority (§ 26). The priest may fine the deacon and clergymen, for one and other reprimands, besides this, also with prostrations of clergymen in church. He is to write down all cases of their disobedience and negligence in the dean's journal given out for this, and if by these measures they will not learn and not be corrected, then he informs the dean (§ 27).

Deacons and clergymen should unfailingly be at the divine service (§ 13), and earlier than the priest (Polnoie Sobranie Zakonov [Complete Collection of Laws], № 21544). For the record of their non-fulfillment of duties due to negligence, self-will, or without the knowledge of the priest of the deacon and clergy leaving, the dean supplies each church with a journal with the journal for his own signature and, during the inspection of churches, witnesses this (Instruktsiia Blagochinnim [Instruction for the Deans] § 12).

The decree of the Holy Synod of March 22, 1800 prescribes that in churches of two-staff and three-staff clergy, when they take turns doing the sacred services, all the remaining priests, deacons and psalm readers go to church alternately singing and reading on the kliros, being obligated to do that "by rank and conscience", and on the eve of feasts it follows that they practice in their own homes (Polnoie Sobranie Zakonov [Complete Collection of Laws], № 19337).

The dean, who has removed the deacon without the consent of the priest from festal services, is not right, but the priest by his own authority, without the permission of the Diocesan Authority, in any case cannot deprive the deacon of the income, received in his absence (Tserkovnyi Vestnik [Church Messenger] 1893, 14).

The Orenburg bishop prescribed to all the priests of his diocese that they not arbitrarily keep the deacons from the sacred services under any pretext. Otherwise they, like breathing hatred and with malice toward neighbor and consequently are unworthy to bring the bloodless sacrifice to the Lord God, for one this anti-Christian mood and for impudent arbitrariness in the clergy, will immediately be forbidden in the sacred service and banished to a monastery for long time (Orenburgskiiia Eparkhialniiia Vedomosti [Orenburg Diocesan News] 1892, 5). It should be understood by this, that this order means those cases, when priests assign to themselves the right to punish deacons not belonging to them and of other members of the clergy with suspension from the sacred services, therefore depriving them also of their incomes. But certainly, this does not apply to those cases when, for ex., the deacon appears for the service in a state of intoxication. In similar cases the priest is obliged not to admit the deacon or other member of the clergy to the sacred services, having reported, however, his order to the dean (Tserkovnyi Vestnik [Church Messenger] 1893, 15).

For not being in the parish for Matins or for ringing the bell late the priest has the full right to write up the psalm reader in the divine service journal and to reprimand him, but not at the people and not with sharp expressions (Tserkovnyi Vestnik [Church Messenger] 1894, 46).

The clergy do not answer for the unlawful actions of the priest in relation to the Divine Services. The responsibility of the clergy can arise only for not reporting on those actions (Tserkovnyi Vestnik [Church Messenger] 1893, 14).

<sup>6</sup> The rector of the cathedral answers to the Authority for the welfare and the good order in the temple (Tserkovnie Vedomosti [Church News] 1896, 23).

The obligated official of the cathedral is the Protopope [Archpriest] of the district cathedral. The law about two staff priests to bear the Sunday turns at the cathedral and to perform all the occasional offices equally with the other priests does not exist. But as there is also no general law, the protopope [archpriest] is freed from the appointed duties, that he, according to the opinion of the "Tserkovnyi Vestnik [Church Messenger]", should perform

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these duties with the other priests (Tserkovnyi Vestnik [Church Messenger] 1894, 3). As far as it is known, there, where on this account there are no special local rules, the protopopes [archpriests] of district cathedrals, usually, exercises his Sunday turn in the services equally with other priests.

The cathedral protopope [archpriest] not only should not evade completing the divine services and taking his turn, whenever possible, but should be in every respect an example for his concelebrants of the cathedral and the city clergy. If he carries another obligation (for ex. a member of the Consistory), then, in view of the overlapping obligations, he may be relieved of taking his turn in the cathedral. Added to this should be that the rights of the cathedral protopope [archpriest] should be defined differently everywhere where there are local orders on this account (Tserkovnyi Vestnik [Church Messenger] 1815, 8).

In cathedral churches the rector usually manages the members of the clergy and watchmen, which may harmlessly for the business part of his authority in this respect, extend also to the sacristan. But there is no general legislation in this regard (Tserkovnyi Vestnik [Church Messenger] 1897, 14).

<sup>7</sup> In the same sense the above-named decree [ukase] of the Holy Synod has also been explained by some other diocesan authorities. So, by the explanation of the Novgorodian, Kostroman and Lithuanian Diocesan Authorities, the primacy in the services, the main administration of church property, the closest supervision over the behavior and correctness of the clergy in the service, the accuracy of church - parish reporting and timely presentation of urgent reports on the church, the time and good order of the divine services should belong to the rectors or senior priests (see Novgorodskiiia Eparkhialniia Vedomosti [Novgorod Diocesan News] 1885, 23; Rukovodstvo dlia Selskikh Pastyrei [Manual for Village Pastors] 1889; 35; Tserkovnie Vedomosti [Church News] 1890, 7).

<sup>8</sup> The responsibility for the cathedral during the illness of a very old protopope [archpriest] falls on the remaining clergy. The staff priest temporarily appointed to the cathedral, if he is not authorized by the Diocesan Authority to fulfill all the duties of the rector, can serve only for the rector, receiving half of his income (Tserkovnie Vedomosti [Church News] 1896, 28).

<sup>9</sup> The composition of similar kinds of canons, other than the necessity of ordering the relationships between older and younger priests, is also invited by the practical necessity of the Diocesan Authority to have some kind of supervisor person mainly responsible for order in each of the clergy. However, while composing such canons one should not forget that the above-stated decision of the Holy Synod to categorically speak about eliminating the divisions of priests against the rectors and assistants, not pointing out that this division should not remain (for the indicated exceptions) in any way among the parish clergy. Therefore the explanation of the given decision of the Holy Synod in the sense that it has a relationship to former connected parishes, and based on this explanatory edition for rectors of instructions not existing in law (increasing, for ex. shares of income for the senior priests or putting the younger priests in full dependence on them) is activity that is not only wrong, but also harmful to mutual relationships among the clergy (see Tserkovnyi Vestnik [Church Messenger] 1897, 4).

*S. V. Bulgakov, **Handbook for Church Servers**, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 1274 pp. (Kharkov, 1900), pp. 0678-0682.  
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