

THE CONSECRATION OF BISHOPS

The service begins with the first part of the order for the Lord's Supper, called the Preparation..

THE PRESENTATION OF THE BISHOP-ELECT

The Bishop-elect is presented to the Moderator or his deputy by three presbyters of the Diocese to which he/she is appointed, and one of the presbyters says:

Reverend Bishop in God, we present to you this godly and learned person to be consecrated Bishop.

The Moderator says:

Let the instrument of his election and appointment be read.

The Secretary of the Synod, or some other duly appointed person, reads the instrument.

The Moderator says to the people:

Beloved, this is he/she whom we intend, God willing, this day to consecrate Bishop. You have heard that he/she has been duly elected and appointed, and that the appointment has been confirmed by those who have authority to do so. We therefore ask you to declare your assent.

The people stand, and the Moderator says:

We are not sufficient of ourselves; our sufficiency is from God.
Do you trust that he/she is, by God's grace, worthy to be consecrated?

The people say:

We trust that he/she is worthy. To God be the glory.

THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD OF GOD

The Moderator says:

The Lord be with you:
And also with you.

Let us pray

The people kneel.

Almighty God, giver of all good things, who by your one Spirit has appointed a diversity of ministries in your Church: Mercifully look upon this your servant

now called to the office of Bishop; and so replenish *him/her* with the truth of your Gospel, adorn *him/her* with innocence of life, and fill *him/her* with the power of your Holy Spirit, that, both by word and good example, *he/she* may faithfully and joyfully serve you to the glory of your name and the building up of your Church; through the merits of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. **AMEN**

THE LESSONS

Old Testament: Ezekiel 34: 11-16 / Numbers 27: 15-20,22-23

Psalms 119: 105-112 or a hymn / lyric

Epistle: Acts 20:28-35 / II Timothy 4: 1-5

Gospel: John 20:19-23 / John 21: 15-17

(or other appropriate texts may be read)

The Sermon

The Nicene Creed

Hymn

THE EXAMINATION OF THE BISHOP-ELECT

The Bishop-elect stands before the Moderator, who sits. The Moderator says: In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord and Head of the Church, who being ascended on high, has given gifts unto men for the building up of his body, we are assembled here to consecrate you Bishop in the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church, by prayer and the laying on of hands.

In this act of consecration we believe that it is God who gives you the grace and the authority for the office and work to which you are called, and that he does so in answer to the prayers of his Church and through the actions and words of his appointed ministers. We act and speak as part of the universal Church, and in the faith that we have now with united voice declared in the words of the Creed.

A Bishop has the general pastoral oversight of all the people in *his/her* diocese and is called to uphold and care for *his/her* fellow ministers. A Bishop should know *his/her* people and be known by them. A Bishop must promote the spiritual unity of *his/her* diocese and with fellow bishops shares a special responsibility to maintain and further the unity of the whole Church, to uphold its discipline, and to guard its faith. A Bishop is to lead *his/her* people in the

study of the faith so that they may grow in the knowledge and love of God and be equipped to fulfil their various ministries. It should be the Bishop's constant concern to see that the worship offered to the almighty God by ministers and people is worthy of God's majesty and love. A Bishop is to share the fullness of the Gospel with those who live within the diocese and remind both ministers and people of this duty. A Bishop is to promote the Church's mission throughout the world. It is Bishop's duty to watch over and pray for all those committed to the charge, and to teach and govern them after the example of the Apostles, speaking in the name of God and interpreting the Gospel of Christ. A Bishop is to baptize and confirm, to preside at the Holy Communion and to lead the offering of prayer and praise. A Bishop is to ordain and send new ministers, guiding and enabling them to fulfil their ministry. In administering discipline a Bishop is to be gentle yet firm, and strict without forgetting mercy. A Bishop is to have a special care for the oppressed and the needy. A Bishop is called to equip the people of God in mission; to educate and call the Church to participate in the transforming and liberating mission of God in Christ, and to challenge the people of God to be a sign and sacrament of the reign of God with justice, peace and integrity of the whole creation. A Bishop is the visible sign of unity among the people of God in a diocese, calling them to closer ecumenical fellowship, communion, caring and sharing for the sake of the Gospel, striving to facilitate harmony among persons of all faiths in the neighbourhood, and thereby challenge the people of God to become agents of transformation and channels of grace and peace in their living contexts.

In order that we may know your mind and purpose, and that you may be strengthened in your resolve to fulfil your ministry, you must make the declarations we now put to you.

Do you believe, so far as you know your own heart, that you are called to the office of Bishop in the Church of God?

I am confident that I am so called.

Are zeal for the glory of God, love for our Lord Jesus Christ, and a desire for the salvation of all people, so far as you know your own heart, your chief motives for accepting this call?

So far as I know my own heart, they are.

Do you accept the holy Scripture as containing all things, necessary for salvation, and as the supreme and decisive standard of faith?

I do so accept them.

Do you accept the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds as witnessing to and safeguarding the faith which is set forth in the Scriptures?

I do so accept them

Will you be diligent in the study of the holy Scripture, praying for a true understanding of them, that you may be able to feed your people with the Bread of life, to lead them in accordance with God's will?

I will, God being my helper.

Will you always promote the unity and peace of the Diocese and of the whole Church of God?

I will, God being my helper.

Will you do all in your power to ensure that the worship offered by the ministers and people committed to your charge shall be worthy of God's majesty and love?

I will, God being my helper.

Will you see that Baptism, the Lord's Supper and Confirmation are duly and regularly administered in your diocese, and will you be faithful, careful and discreet in ordaining those who are called to the sacred ministry?

I will, God being my helper.

Will you faithfully administer discipline in accordance with God's words and the order of this Church?

I will, God being my helper.

Will you be a faithful witness of Christ to those among whom you live, and will you lead your people to obey our Saviour's command to make disciples of all peoples?

I will, God being my helper.

Will you for the sake of Christ be gentle and merciful to the poor and weak, and inspire your people to work for justice and peace on earth?

I will, God being my helper.

Will you diligently work to equip the local congregations in mission to show the love of Jesus to the community around them?

I will, the Lord being my helper.

Will you endeavour whole-heartedly to nurture the people of God through worship, preaching, Christian education and pastoral care to build fellowship among the congregations, deepen' spirituality and empower them to be fruitful instruments in mission?

I will, the Lord being my helper.

Will you educate and empower the congregations' in *diakonia*, mission in Christ's way, and exhort the people of God to seek to engage themselves in the service of the people with love and compassion?

I will, the Lord being my helper.

Will you continually stir up the people of God to an active involvement through participation in the work of the kingdom of God in order to seek a just, reconciling society in Christ?

I will, the Lord being my helper.

Will you strive to create awareness among the people of God that Christian faith demands commitment to environmental issues and ecological concerns, and thereby care for God's creation and the practice of responsible stewardship?

I will, the Lord being my helper.

Will you promote unity, peace, harmony and love among all people, and especially among those whom you serve?

I will, God being my helper.

You believe that you are called to exercise this ministry within the Church of South India. Do you therefore promise to fulfil the duties of your office in accordance with the Constitution of this Church and of the diocese to which you are appointed?

I will, God being my helper.

All kneel, and the Moderator says:

The almighty God, who has given you the will to undertake all these things, give you also the strength to perform them; that he may complete that work which he has begun in you; Faithful is he that calls you, who also will do it through Jesus Christ our Lord. **AMEN**

THE CONSECRATION

The Moderator calls the people to silent prayer. The bishop-elect kneels The hymn inviting the presence of the Holy Spirit such as 'Come, Holy Ghost' is sung kneeling.

The Moderator and the Bishops (and Presbyters) who are taking part in the laying on of hands come forward and stand around the Bishop-elect.

The Moderator, standing together with the Bishops (and Presbyters), says:

We praise and glorify you, most merciful Father, because to fulfil your plan for the salvation of the human race you have raised up in every land a holy people, a royal priesthood, a universal Church. In your great love you have given Jesus Christ, your only Son, to be the Apostle and High Priest of our faith, and the Shepherd and Guardian of our souls.

He took on himself our human nature, and by dying for us destroyed the power of death. Now, seated in Majesty at your right hand, he pours forth upon us the manifold gifts of his grace. He makes some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, that they may equip your people for work in your service, and may build up his Body the Church. And now we give you thanks that you have called this your servant, whom we consecrate in your name, to share this ministry entrusted to your Church.

Therefore, we humbly ask you:

(here the Moderator and the Bishops (and Presbyters) lay their hands upon the head of the Bishop-elect; and the Moderator repeats the following words:)

SEND DOWN YOUR HOLY SPIRIT UPON YOUR SERVANT...
..... WHOM WE,
IN YOUR NAME, AND IN OBEDIENCE TO YOUR MOST BLESSED WILL,
DO NOW ORDAIN AND CONSECRATE BISHOP IN YOUR CHURCH.

The people say: **AMEN**

And the Moderator continues:

Grant that, like your Apostles, *he/she* may be endowed with the abundance of your grace. Make *him/her* a true shepherd to his people, careful to feed and govern your flock, and eager to promote love and unity among all. Inspire *him/her* to guide them in worship, and with them to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to you. *May he/she* proclaim Christ and his reconciling work in all *his/her* words and actions in the power of the Holy Spirit. Give *him/her* wisdom and humility that *he/she* may use *his/her* authority to heal, not to hurt; to build up, not to destroy. As chief pastor in *his/her* diocese, enable *him/her* with understanding and love to guide and encourage *his/her* fellow-presbyters in their sacred ministry. Enable *him/her* as a true shepherd to feed and govern your flock; make *him/her* wise as a teacher, and steadfast as a guardian of its faith and sacraments. Guide and direct *him/her* in presiding at the worship of your people. Defend *him/her* from all evil, that as a servant of the servant Lord over your household and an ambassador for Christ *he/she* may stand before you blameless, and finally, with all your servants, enter your eternal joy; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who with you, Father, and with the Holy Spirit, lives and reigns, and is worthy of all honour, glory and blessing, now and always. **AMEN**

THE PRESENTATION OF THE BIBLE AND THE PASTORAL STAFF

The Moderator delivers to the new Bishop, kneeling, a copy of the Bible, saying:

Take this Book, a token of the authority, which you have received as a Bishop in the Church of God. Devote yourself to reading the Scripture and expounding its message; and meditate continually on him who speaks therein.

The new bishop stands. The Moderator delivers the pastoral staff, saying:

Be to the flock of Christ a good shepherd; feed them, exercising the oversight, not under compulsion but willingly, as God would have you do it - not for sordid gain but eagerly. Do not lord it over those in your charge, but be an example to the flock. Hold up the weak, heal the sick, bind up the wounded, restore the marginalized, seek the lost. Be gentle yet firm; be strict without forgetting mercy; that when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, you may with all the faithful receive the never-fading crown of glory.

The Moderator gives him/her the right hand of fellowship and says:

We give you the right hand of fellowship, and receive you to take part with us in this ministry.

The Moderator or one of the Bishops may place a cross around the neck of the Bishop, either without any words, or saying some such words as:

Jesus says: Take up your cross and follow me.

The Moderator or one of the Bishops may place a ring on the finger of the right hand of the Bishop, either without words, or saying some such words as:

Receive this ring, a token and pledge of fidelity.

WELCOME TO THE EPISCOPATE

All stand

All the assisting Bishops welcome the new Bishop by giving the right hand of fellowship or some other greeting, according to the local custom and welcome the new bishop to the council of Bishops, each one saying:

We receive you with joy to take part with us in Episcopal ministry.

The new Bishop turns and faces the people.

The Moderator says:

We declare that is a Bishop in the **Church** of God, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All answer in a loud voice.

Amen, Thanks be to God.

A doxology is sung by all.

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise him all creatures here below;
Praise him above, you heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.**

THE INSTALLATION OF THE BISHOP

The newly consecrated Bishop is led to his/her episcopal chair. As he/she assumes his seat, the people sit.

The Lay Officers of the Diocese or other appointed Lay Representatives will come forward and the Lay Secretary may say:

Reverend Bishop in God, we rejoice that you have been lawfully appointed, consecrated and installed, as Bishop of this diocese. You have promised to fulfill the duties of your office in accordance with the Constitutions of the Church of South India and of this diocese. We therefore present to you these copies of the Constitution of the Church of South India and the Constitution of the Diocese of and as representatives of the whole diocese we promise you all due honour and obedience.

If insignia and other gifts are to be presented, he/she says:

We also give you this further token of our love and loyalty.

Representatives of various groups in the Diocese, such as Presbyters and Deacons/Deaconesses, Evangelists, Women Workers, Laity, may also come before the Bishop and say:

On behalf of the of the Diocese, we accept you, (Name) duly consecrated and installed Bishop of the Church of South India in the Diocese of and acknowledge the authority committed to you lawfully to exercise your office, and promise you all due honour and obedience, praying that every member of the Church in this place maybe a faithful servant of Christ and a witness to his resurrection.

The Bishop stands and says:

In thankfulness to God, and trusting his grace I renew the promise which I have made to fulfil the ministry committed to me this day in accordance with the Constitution of the Church of South India and the Constitution of the Diocese of so help me God. **AMEN**

*The order for the Lord's Supper continues at the **Intercession**. The Second litany may be used, with the addition of .the following petitions after that for our bishops and all other ministers:*

INTERCESSION

For your servants who through the ages have served humanity in your name, and for the servant of God now consecrated Bishop in your Church, and for all ministers, that they may show forth Christ in their life and service; that they and all your people may come to fullness of life in Christ; that they may be instruments of your love and peace.

Let us pray to the Lord:

Lord, have mercy.

For the servant of God now consecrated Bishop in your Church, and for all ministers, that they may discern your work and purpose; that they may stand up for what is just and true; that they may not fear to lead where others falter. Let us pray to the Lord:

Lord, have mercy.

For the servant of God now consecrated Bishop in your Church, and for all ministers, that they may receive the spirit of wisdom, understanding and faith and all the gifts of your Spirit; that will strengthen and uphold them even in times of weakness; and despair.

Let us pray to the Lord:

Lord, have mercy.

For the servant of God now consecrated Bishop in your Church, and for all ministers, that their life be directed by your Word and Spirit; that their homes be blessed with your presence and that they may be kept faithful to the end. Let us pray to the Lord:

Lord, have mercy.

After the intercessory litany is said, the Moderator says:

Almighty God, you have promised to hear the prayers of those who ask in your Son's name; grant that these things, for which we have asked in faith, be granted to us according to your will; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

AMEN