

The Diaconate, Deacons, and Altar Servers

Holy Orders or Ordination is one of the seven sacraments of the Church, and one of the three major or main orders is that of the Diaconate (Deacons). The other two major orders are the Priesthood (Priests) and the Episcopate (Bishops).

In the beginning, the Apostles were the sole ministers in the Church. They were the teachers, sanctifiers, and rulers of the Church. As membership in the Church increased, the Apostles created other officers to assist them and the first order established was that of the Diaconate.

As heirs to the power of the Apostles, the Bishops only can administer the sacrament of Ordination. Tzernatrootuin (Ordination) translates into "laying on the hands" because the one act that is common to all of the orders is the "imposition of the hands" by the Bishop during the ceremony.

There are five minor orders. The first four minor orders are given at the same ordination ceremony and the rank is called Tbir (Clerk). The Tbir is entitled to sing in the choir, serve as an acolyte, and read the lections during the Divine Liturgy.

An Ouraragir (Stole-bearer) holds the first four minor orders with the right to wear the Ourar (Stole) which is given through the ceremony of Devchootuin (Bestowing of). The ouraragir has all the privileges of a Tbir, may also serve at the altar, and may do the censuring in the church.

A Guis-a-sargavark (Sub-deacon) holds the highest rank of the minor orders having reached the fifth minor order. The fifth rank is given through Ordination and allows the Guis-a-sargavark all the privileges of the first four minor orders. In addition, he may handle and read the Gospel, may carry the empty Sikh (Chalice), and may do the censuring in the Church.

A Sargavark (Deacon) holds the sixth order which is the first of the major orders of Ordination. The Sargavark has the responsibility to assist the Priest during the celebration of the Divine Liturgy and during hourly services or special rites of the Church. By his rank, the Sargavark has the privileges of the five minor orders, and in addition, he may carry the unconsecrated nushkar and wine (Gifts) in the Sikh.

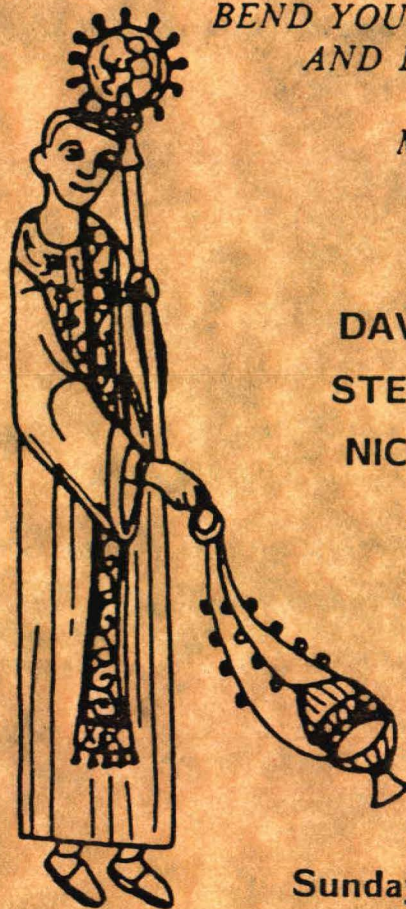
In order to administer to the spiritual necessities of the faithful in a Diocese, the Primate or Ordinary of the Diocese (Arachnourt) may grant special privileges, such as preaching, administration of the sacraments, and rites of the Church, to a Sargavark at the time of his Ordination. These special privileges, granted by a Primate to Sargavarks within his jurisdiction, normally apply to serving a particular church at and for a particular time.

The Ourar (Stole or Orarion) is the distinctive vestment of an ordained Sargavark; however, permission to wear an Ourar is sometimes given by a Bishop to persons holding the first four minor orders. The Ourar is a band or riband about nine feet long and four inches wide which is worn on the left shoulder, hanging loosely in front and back. A cross is sewn at the shoulder, front bottom, and back bottom of the Ourar.

A CALL TO SERVICE

*BEND YOUR NECKS TO MY YOKE,
AND LEARN FROM ME.*

Matthew 11:29



**DAVID HOPLAMAZIAN
STEPHAN HOVNANIAN
NICKLAS TERKANIAN
ARA YETERIAN**

**Sunday, February 7, 1993
Holy Trinity Armenian Church
Cheltenham, Pennsylvania**

PRIEST

Holy Father, our holy mother the Church asks that these clerks; David, Stephan, Nicklas and Ara, that we present to you, be granted the stole of service. So that they may accept this yoke of service to our Lord Jesus Christ at His Holy Altar, and that they prepare themselves with diligence, faith and love for service at His holy Altar.

PRAYER - BISHOP

By the grace of God the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit I call clerks; David, Stephan, Nicklas and Ara, to the rank of Stole Bearer. Therefore we beseech our compassionate God, so that He will brightly illuminate them through the holiness of His graces by the hand of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom is befitting glory dominion and honor, now and always and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

PRIEST

And again in peace let us beseech the Lord, receive, save and have mercy. Bless Lord.

BISHOP

Blessing and glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.

PRIEST

We beseech God Almighty on behalf of His servants; David, Stephan, Nicklas and Ara, that once again calling them to the rank of Stole Bearer they be worthy of this holy blessing and to receive grace in the manner of Saint Stephen the first deacon and martyr from God Almighty: receive and have mercy. Bless, Lord.

BISHOP

Lord God Almighty, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, before You these clerks have bended their necks both physically and spiritually, place Your invisible hand upon them and bless them by making them worthy of the call to serve Your Holy Church. To accept the graces like unto those of Your beloved ones which You so abundantly spread over Your faithful each according to his rank in order to worship You, true God. To whom is granted the ability to be worthy to expel the earthly and accept Your most abundant graces through the peace of Your Gospel with glory to the all-holy Trinity, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and unto the ages of ages. Amen.