

# THE MYSTERY OF PRIESTHOOD

## 1. Priesthood: Man's natural gift

- a) Adam was created as a priest
  - \* in "the image and likeness" of the Holy One
  - \* Adam was called to bring the "spiritual sacrifice" by:
    - + offering his mind to God
    - + offering his heart to God
    - + offering his will to God
- b) After the original sin man lost his natural priesthood so:
  - \* he reinvented priesthood
  - \* instead of "spiritual sacrifices", he offered bloody sacrifices for:
    - + an attempt to cleanse sin
    - + an attempt to be forgiven
    - + an attempt to reconcile

## 2. The Priesthood in the old Testament

- a) The priesthood of Melchizedek
  - \* described in Genesis 14, 18
    - + no known origin
    - + not anointed
    - + offering "spiritual sacrifice" of bread and wine
- b) The priesthood of Aaron
  - \* described in Leviticus 8
    - + known origin
    - + anointed with "blood" and "oil"
    - + called to offer "bloody sacrifices"
- c) The royal priesthood of the people of Israel
  - \* described in Exodus 19, 5-6
    - + all people were called
- d) Prophecies about the need to fulfil the Old Testament Priesthood
  - \* see Jeremiah 33, 18-21
  - \* see Isaiah 66, 20-22
  - \* see Hebrews 7, 11-19

## 3. Jesus Christ: The Only True Priest

- a) the Name Jesus Christ:
  - \* Jesus: "the one who saves"
  - \* Christ: Christos: "the Anointed One"
- b) the priesthood consequences of His Incarnation
  - \* One Person, fully God and fully man:
    - + in His Person:
    - + the Divine Nature anointed
    - + the Human Nature
- c) the Holy Scripture calls Him:
  - \* the Apostle & High Priest
    - + see Hebrews 3, 1
    - + see Hebrews 5, 6
  - \* the Prophet & Teacher
    - + see Luke 7, 16

- \* the Shepherd & Bishop & Deacon
- + see John 10, 11
- + see 1 Peter 2, 25
- + see Romans 15, 8

#### 4. The High Priest Chose the 12 and the 70

- a) Jesus chose the twelve
  - \* from among many
  - \* after He prayed
  - \* see Luke 6, 12-13
  - \* see John 15, 16
- b) Jesus trained the twelve
  - \* gradually (see Matthew 4, 19)
  - \* sent them to practice (see Matthew 10, 7)
  - \* "servant and His master..."(see Matthew 10, 24)
  - \* "...whoever receives you receives Me..."(Matthew 10, 40)
- c) Jesus instituted the Mystery of priesthood
  - \* giving the power of priesthood to the Disciples as we can see in John 20, 21-23
    - + the power to "forgive and retain" is central
    - + from His paschal state
      - their priesthood will make His invisible priesthood visible
  - \* the connection between their priesthood and the Eucharist
    - + "receive the Holy Spirit" makes possible
    - + "receive, eat...receive, drink..."

#### 5. Pentecost fulfills the Mystery of Priesthood in the Church

- a) Apostles were "members" of the Mystical Body, the Church
  - \* making the High Priest, the Head of the Church:
    - + heard
    - + seen
  - \* as they were sent, they went out and:
    - + taught
    - + performed the miracles of the mysteries of the Church
    - + provided the proper leadership of the Church
    - + see John 20, 21 & Matthew 28, 19
  - \* as they were asked they kept the faith
    - + see 1 Timothy 6, 20 & 2 Timothy 1, 14
- b) The Liturgical form of Laying on of hands
  - \* anticipated in the old Testament
    - + see Numbers 27, 18 & Deuteronomy 34, 9
  - \* it is mentioned clearly in the New Testament
    - + see 1 Timothy 4, 14 & 2 Timothy 1, 6
  - \* it was done with the approval of the people
    - + "He is worthy"
- c) The three orders of Priesthood
  - \* episkopoi, presbyteroi & deacons

- + the distinction between the three was not as clear at first
  - + the distinction was very clear by the time Ignatius of Antioch wrote his letters
  - \* the New Testament shows different orders
    - + see Acts 20, 28 & Acts 20, 17 & Philippians 1, 1
  - \* the meaning of the term pesbyteros
    - + different than geron
    - + a clear attempt to distinguish from the Septuagint term for Old Testament priesthood
    - + see Acts 11, 30
    - Acts 15, 23
    - Acts 21, 18
- d) The other "laying of hands" and the issue of the ordination of women