

TREASURES of OUR FAITH

by: Deacon Ryan Adams

Greetings brothers and sisters. As we go through this 'Year of Faith', each week we will take a journey together to deepen and rediscover our faith as Catholic Christians. We will take time to look at the rich traditions of our Church, we'll look at what certain things signify and their symbolism, take time to answer some frequently asked questions and look at why we do certain things as Catholics. This week we'll look at Holy Orders.

The Sacrament of Holy Orders is the continuation of Christ's priesthood, which He bestowed upon His Apostles; The Catechism of the Catholic Church refers to the Sacrament of Holy Orders as "the sacrament of apostolic ministry."

"Ordination" comes from the Latin word *ordinatio*, which means to incorporate someone into an order. In the Sacrament of Holy Orders, a man is incorporated into the priesthood of Christ, at one of three levels: the episcopate (Bishop), the priesthood (Priest), or the diaconate (Deacon). Holy Orders, is given by degrees, by successive steps. The sacrament of Holy Orders unfolds itself through three stages as it confers successively the powers of Deacon, Priest, and Bishop. At each stage, as in every sacrament, there is an increase in sanctifying grace. At each stage there is the imprinting of a character upon the soul. In that imprinted character are rooted the right and the power that belong to the order which is being received. There is only one Sacrament of Holy Orders, but there are the three levels. Next week we'll take a look at the three different levels.