

# To be a Servants/Priests of Jesus Christ

serv·ant

'sərvənt/

noun: servant; plural noun: servants

a person who performs duties for others, especially a person employed in a house on domestic duties or as a personal attendant.

a devoted and helpful follower or supporter.

"a tireless servant of God"

synonyms: helper, supporter, follower

"a servant of the people"

We as servants must recognize the need to humble ourselves before Father and the congregation.

We do the task of being a servant not seeking gain or honor. The payment of a servant is the joy one gets by helping a member or a congregation.

Servant must recognize the need to help.

Pity: I acknowledge your pain

Sympathy: I care your suffering

Empathy: I feel your suffering

Compassion: I want relieve your suffering.

Compassion is the nature of the servant. One must have Love for the souls within the congregation and for all the souls not just the ones we get along with or who agree with the ways we want things done. We serve Father for the edification of our brothers and sisters.

## Being a Servant - Most Relevant Verses

Mark 10:45

Verse Concepts

"For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

Philippians 2:5-8

Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men.

1 Corinthians 10:24

Let no one seek his own good, but that of his neighbor.

Luke 22:24-30

And there arose also a dispute among them as to which one of them was regarded to be greatest.

And He said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who have authority over them are called 'Benefactors.' "But it is not this way with you, but the one who is the greatest among you must become like the youngest, and the leader like the servant.

1 Corinthians 7:21-31

Were you called while a slave? Do not worry about it; but if you are able also to become free, rather do that. For he who was called in the Lord while a slave is the Lord's freedman; likewise he, who was called while free, is Christ's slave. You were bought with a price; do not become slaves of men.

1 Corinthians 4:1

Let a man regard us in this manner, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.

John 13:12-15

So when He had washed their feet, and taken His garments and reclined at the table again, He said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you?" "You call Me Teacher and Lord; and you are right, for so I am. "If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet.

John 13:1

Now before the Feast of the Passover, Jesus knowing that His hour had come that He would depart out of this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.

## **Our Catechism states the following for the Ministry/ Servant of God**

### **7.9 Tasks of the ministries**

Apostle Paul writes: "There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all" (1 Corinthians 12: 4-7). Thus each minister is a servant of God with the task of proclaiming and advocating the unadulterated gospel of Christ. He provides care to the members of the congregation entrusted to him, and promotes their faith and knowledge. In caring for their souls, he sympathizes with their personal concerns, prays with them, and helps them carry the burdens of daily life. The minister is an example for the congregation. To him the words apply: "Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself" (Philippians 2: 3).

Proverbs 3:5-6

Trust in the LORD with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him; And He will make your paths straight.

## **These are the two most common offices/servants in a congregation: Priest and Deacons**

### **Priest**

The Priest proclaims the word of God and cares for the souls within the congregation. This includes being close to the members, visiting them regularly, reinforcing their faith, and promoting their knowledge. The Priest stands by them, comforts them, and prays with them. He makes regular visits to the sick and celebrates Holy Communion with them. He also pursues those whose ties with the congregation are waning. In many congregations Priests also take on the function of rector.

### 7.9.2 The diaconal ministry

The diaconal ministry is discharged by Deacons and Sub-deacons. The word "Deacon" has its source in the Greek and signifies "servant". Deacons help in various ways in the congregation. It is also their task to support the Priests in their pastoral care work.

Today no one is ordained into the Sub-deacon ministry anymore. This ministry corresponds to the Deacon ministry in nature

Both of these examples show one who assists God's children by showing compassion when they are sick, weak and mislead. Servants guide His children when led astray.

The example in Galatians 6 teaches to humble guide God's Children to restoration and admonishes that we do not serve sin as well.

### **Galatians 6 (NIV)**

Doing Good to All

6 Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted. 2 Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. 3 If anyone thinks they are something when they are not, they deceive themselves. 4 Each one should test their own actions. Then they can take pride in themselves alone, without comparing themselves to someone else, 5 for each one should carry their own load. 6 Nevertheless, the one who receives instruction in the word should share all good things with their instructor.

Servants must be careful not to judge those we they serve. They must heal and uplift. Teach and not rule over those they serve. Christ taught on the Sermon on the Mount.

Matthew 7

[Judging Others] "Do not judge or you too will be judged". For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. "Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? ...

Servants do not criticize His people for they are His. It is only for God to judge or critic his people. For He is the Father their God to show what is good and what is evil. Father is the one who guides His children. Servants help along in His work, they are not there to judge or punish and make themselves bigger than Father. The example of Moses is given in Numbers 20

## Numbers 20 6-13

6 Moses and Aaron went from the assembly to the entrance to the tent of meeting and fell facedown, and the glory of the Lord appeared to them. 7 The Lord said to Moses, 8 "Take the staff, and you and your brother Aaron gather the assembly together. Speak to that rock before their eyes and it will pour out its water. You will bring water out of the rock for the community so they and their livestock can drink." 9 So Moses took the staff from the Lord's presence, just as he commanded him. 10 He and Aaron gathered the assembly together in front of the rock and Moses said to them, "Listen, you rebels, must we bring you water out of this rock?" 11 Then Moses raised his arm and struck the rock twice with his staff. Water gushed out, and the community and their livestock drank. 12 But the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, "Because you did not trust in me enough to honor me as holy in the sight of the Israelites, you will not bring this community into the land I give them." 13 These were the waters of Meribah, where the Israelites quarreled with the Lord and where he was proved holy among them.

Being a servant/priest is what the Bride must become, and it is imperative that we, as children of God (and Guardians) learn 'how' to serve, and practice already today. Jesus taught us that serving others was the basic premise of His journey on Earth. From this perspective, we can better realize that this is one of the greatest callings in life. When we allow ourselves to see beyond this life by focusing on our immortality, recognizing that our current mortal existence is a mere 'blink' of an eye when compared to eternity, we can better see that what we do to serve and help souls is truly the most important activity that we engage in.

Personally, becoming a priest and learning to be a servant has been a highlight of my life. By this I mean that the experiences that Father has guided me through have been awe inspiring and humbling. The enormity of sharing faith and crying with souls, who cannot physically attend services anymore as we share Holy Communion in their homes, is an experience that is not easily duplicated. They seem to really grasp the importance of the Word, forgiveness of their sins, and the necessity of Holy Communion.

Looking back at my journey in my priestly ministry, I realize that I needed to be humbled (sometimes significantly) in order to administer Father's full blessing to others. Today, I more fully understand who Father wants me to be, and become - one who loves, serves, teaches, supports and ultimately helps lead souls to Father.

Because I had much to learn about humility, I became a priest later than many in our faith. I was in my mid thirties and had been a sub-deacon/deacon for more than 10 years. When I was asked to serve as a priest, I was humbled and overwhelmed at the prospect. I could not believe that I would ever be worthy enough to serve a soul Holy Communion, and when I did, I was moved beyond words, and I still am. I have been privileged to experience many other spiritual blessings in my priestly ministry as well.

As a priest in the New Apostolic Church, we have opportunities to be Father's blessing bearers in significant events in the lives of our fellow brothers and sisters, and each of these events is unique in their blessing. These events include: Holy Baptism; wedding blessings; anniversary blessings; funeral services; to name a few.

I have never shied away from any of these events when asked to officiate because it did not take me long to realize that being in oneness with Father, Son and Holy Spirit, makes the task not only possible, but actually easier than one would expect. This leads me to the responsibility that is a major portion of the ministry: Serving God's Word.

I could probably go on for quite a while sharing the many experiences of faith gained in serving at Father's altar, but I will simply share the most impactful to me personally. There is nothing more humbling and exciting to me as standing behind the altar and seeing spiritual awakenings in the congregation when the Holy Spirit reveals something to a soul, and they 'get it' and have an 'Ah Ha' moment. This is truly a great experience.

All in all, the best part of being a priest and servant to me is that it has helped me to be "on" more and more - almost requiring me to be the example that Father wants me to be.

So many things come to mind with so many different aspects when thinking about being a servant. The greatest leader is an even better example.

As not only the rector, but also the only minister in my congregation, the struggle is real. There is so much to do in the congregation and I am only one person, with only two hands and two feet, but panic and worry is something that Satan thrives off of. Rather than worrying about how to get to earning a dollar, work on one penny at a time when you need to - You need 100 to make a dollar and only realize how important that penny is when you have 99 cents One task at a time; one soul at a time.

The title doesn't make the minister, the heart does. I have a number of brothers and sisters that have the heart of a servant, without the title of the minister. They can still serve others and help make a difference in the Lord's work. Some of the cornerstones in the Willowdale congregation weren't "ministers," but help start, build up and maintain the congregation. There are some congregations who don't have a Priest at all - Who does it then?

Although we all know that the Our Father, Big Brother and HS are all around, many others don't or are blinded to it. As a result, many come into Father's house thinking that this is the only place where they will hear from them. We are then called on to be Father's voice. Before conducting a service I pray that HS would be active, my thoughts would be gone and that I would be the mouth piece in the service, not the musician. That the service would be composed the way that HE wanted it to be. I feel this point is a large struggle as when man tries to compose this piece, HS is pushed out.

As a Servant and Priest we are also looked at by many to be the example. Many will also take a magnifying glass to analyze what we say and do. In order to help protect ourselves and be who Father wants us to be, there are two things that can be done.

Allow Father through HS to rule our lives. Never stop making more room for Him. The moment we stop, is the moment we start to close that door. Preach what you live and live what you preach.

God's work is a perfect work; His workers are not. This often is something that we forget - We look at the man and all his faults and mistakes rather than the minister, resulting in us missing out on the blessing Father wanted to give us through that Priest. On the other side, this is something that Priests sometimes use as an excuse - "I'm not perfect." Or their ego can threaten to come in making them think that they're better than the other.

My Grandfather (Apostle Horn) had a saying that he's lived by: "My neighbor is as good as me; maybe even a bit better." No one is perfect, but that doesn't mean we should stop working on our perfection. It is our choice on whether we choose to use this as an excuse to give up or a reason to try harder.

Life is busy and is only getting busier, but Father knows what we can handle. A bishop once said to me that holding a service is only 5% of what a Priest does - 95% is caring for the souls/soul care. One of the most amazing experiences that I've had has been feeling the power/energy go through my hands as I speak the absolution and consecrate the elements. Then having the privilege to serve Holy Communion to Father's children on our Big Brother's behalf is something that can't be described.

We also have the opportunity to do this outside of Father's House for the sick, elderly, etc. I had a beautiful experience recently. A 92 year old sister from our congregation with advanced dementia was taken to the hospital with an illness that was critical and wasn't expected to last the night. I had the opportunity to pray with her and celebrate Holy Communion with her at least once more (with a proxy as she wasn't conscious). Before leaving the doctor came by and said that at her age she likely wouldn't make it, but if God wanted her to, then she could survive. She made it through that night and lasted a few more weeks. I felt the need to go visit her in the hospital after service on a Wednesday night. I had asked my mom to come along as I needed a proxy (our sister wasn't able to eat solid foods at the time) and also felt that she should be there. When we got to the hospital it was dark in the room as it was already late. As we walked in, we noticed that her bed-mate was in the washroom. We kept walking and got to her bed. She was already asleep and my mom decided to put her hand on our sister's forehead. All of a sudden she woke up, looked around at us and became extremely frightened. She had no idea who we were. As this was happening, the nurses came in to help the other lady from the washroom. As a result, they turned on the lights. When this happened, our Sister (Sr. Anklam) looked first at my mom and remained frightened, but then looked at me and became peaceful. Why? She saw my black suit on and knew that I was a Priest from the church.

When it came time to celebrate Holy Communion (shortly after), something beautiful happened. Sr. Anklam still had no clue who we were even though we had known her for over 25 years, but when I said let's celebrate Holy Communion, she right away folded her hands and closed her eyes. She didn't remember all the words to the Lord's Prayer, but tried. However, every Amen that she said was with such confidence and faith. When it came time to serve Communion she put her hands out. It broke my heart that I couldn't give her a wafer, but knew that Father had a special blessing for her faith. Sr. Anklam passed away on Thursday evening. She was a very special, faithful soul.

At the beginning I mentioned about "the struggle." Yes it is real, but it is so worth it. Hard work is rewarding work, but the Lord's Work is the most rewarding. What is our reward/payment? Sure we all know the reward that we all have waiting for us when Christ returns, but there is so much that we receive today. Our reward is the unending love, support, prayers and appreciation that we get from our brothers and sisters. What is that an extension of? Not just our brother and sister saying thank you and showing their thankfulness, but Jesus saying thank you:

"When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. 32 All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. 33 And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. 34 Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: 35 for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; 36 I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.' 37 'Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? 38 When did we see you a stranger and take you in, or naked and clothe You? 39 Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' 40 And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.

In closing, there's a saying: "I've learned that people may forget what you said, people may forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel. Our Big Brother made it simple: "Love one another as I have loved you. By this, all will know that you are My disciples." How do we do it? It's quite simple. Just like a runner completes a race one step at a time, we do the same; One choice for Father at a time. My grandfather has another saying that I will never forget – "Together we will make it."

As for me serving as a Priest and a Rector was one of the most eye opening experiences for me. To be the "go-between" for Father and His children there is no greater task. And to know that the members trusted me with their hearts.

Serving Holy Communion is what I miss the most. Not standing behind the altar saying one word. This is one of the most intimate moments we can share with Jesus.

I had an occasion when I served a sister in young people. When I looked into her eyes while I served her communion I could see and feel her pain. After the service I approached her and offered my ear. She asked how I knew so I told her I saw her heart when I served her. We sat down and then she broke down crying and told me what she was struggling with. I prayed with her and then a few weeks later I saw her and Father helped her through this difficult time.

Weekly visits were the highlight of serving as a Priest. NO not the cake and coffee but sharing faith, helping where I could and supporting their needs.

I would humble myself before Father and intercede on the behalf of my congregation, and sometimes helping a new soul find their faith in Father.

**To be a servant in Christ means that you must surrender your life into His service. Your life is no longer yours, it is His.**

**This shows as Servants of God we humble ourselves before God and his children. Servants must never be greater than the duty one performs.**