

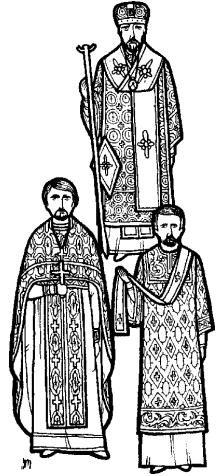
**THE ORDINATION OF  
HIS GRACE  
BISHOP SPYRIDON  
OF AMASTRIS**



**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2020  
GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE HOLY CROSS  
BELMONT, CALIFORNIA**

# THE SACRED MYSTERY OF ORDINATION TO THE EPISCOPACY

In the early Church, all Mysteria (Sacraments) were celebrated in the context of the Divine Liturgy. Today this is uncommon except for the Sacrament of Ordination that continues to follow the original practice. The Greek word for ordination is χειροτονία (the laying on of hands) and we find the first reference to this practice in the New Testament (Acts 14:23), when the Apostles Paul and Barnabas ordained (by the laying on of hands) individuals for the churches in Lystra, Iconium and Antioch.



There are three “Holy Orders,” deacon, presbyter (priest), and bishop. Ordination to each occurs at a different point in the Liturgy. A deacon is ordained by a bishop late in the Liturgy, following the consecration of the Holy Gifts, because his primary role is to serve the priest and the bishop in their ecclesiastical ministry and to assist with the distribution of Holy Communion. A presbyter is ordained by a bishop prior to the consecration of the Holy Gifts, because it is his distinguishing grace to invoke the Holy Spirit who makes Christ present in the Eucharist. A priest heads a local parish as an extension of the bishop.

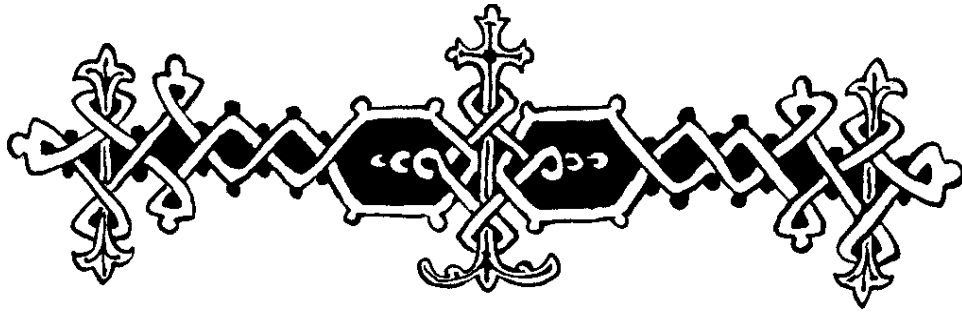
The ordination of a bishop, who according to the canons of the Church must be ordained by at least three bishops, takes place before the Scriptural readings, because it is his special role to preach and teach the Gospel. He is ordained at this point in order to ordain others (e.g., deacons and presbyters).

**During both the Matins Service and the Divine Liturgy celebrated in conjunction with the Ordination Rites, many of the usual hymns are replaced by those of the great Feast of Pentecost. It was at Pentecost (Acts 2) that the Holy Spirit descended on the disciples, transforming and empowering them. These hymns are chanted today to recall that the ordination of the bishop is a charismatic event in the life of the Church, insofar, as “powers from on High” are bestowed on the ordained to lead the Church.**

**Both the New Testament and the Church Fathers acknowledge the twelve Disciples of Christ as the first leaders of the Church. They in turn ordained others and the present-day bishops of the Orthodox Church can trace their succession directly back to the Apostles. The Greek word for bishop is *ἐπίσκοπος* and refers to his duties of being an “overseer” of the faithful and the clergy in a given area.**

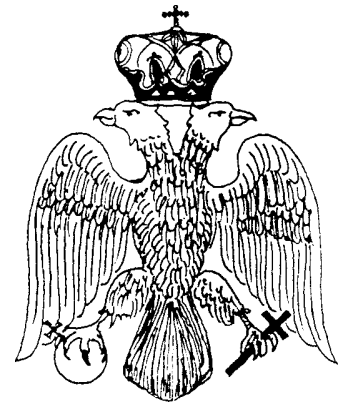
**The episcopal ordination begins at the conclusion of the Orthros Service, when the Bishop-elect, partially vested in priestly vestments and carrying the Holy Gospel, is escorted by two deacons through the Royal Doors. The Archbishop and his concelebrant Hierarchs are seated on the solea, facing the Sanctuary. The Bishop-elect opens the Holy Gospel and reads a document containing his Confession of Faith, which he has previously signed.**





# THE ORDER FOR THE ORDINATION OF A BISHOP

*As the last “Agios o Theos” (Holy God...) of the Doxology is chanted, the Archdeacon and 2<sup>nd</sup> Deacon, holding Dikerotrikera (episcopal candelabra), bow before the Archbishop and enter the Altar. They lead the Bishop-Elect to stand on the Eagle Tapestry in front of the Royal Gates. He holds the Holy Gospel and is without headdress.*



*Then, the Archdeacon exclaims:*

**DEACON:** Let us be attentive!

*The Bishop-Elect, facing the congregation, reads The Nicene Creed and makes his Confession of Faith from the Royal Gates.*

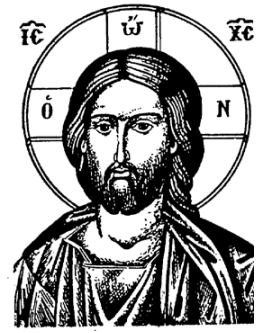
**BISHOP-ELECT:** I, Spyridon by the mercy of God, Bishop-Elect of the once illustrious Holy Diocese of Amastris, duly declare by the signing of my own hand that:

**I believe in one God, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.**

**And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all ages; Light of Light, true God of true God, begotten not created, of one essence with the Father through Whom all things were made.**

**Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became man.**

**He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered and was buried. And He rose on the third day, according to the Scriptures.**



**He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father; And He will come again with glory to judge the living and the dead. His kingdom shall have no end.**

**And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Creator of life, Who proceeds from the Father, Who together with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, Who spoke through the prophets.**

**In one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. I confess one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the age to come. Amen.**

**In this, my confession of faith, I will accept and cherish the Seven Holy Ecumenical Councils, which convened to protect and uphold the true dogmas of the Church.**

**I promise to cherish and safeguard the canons and holy decrees defined by the Holy Fathers and as formulated at different times and places by them.**

**I do accept all the Canons they have accepted; and I do reject all the Canons they have rejected. I also promise to preserve the peace of the Church; and not plot anything whatsoever which is contrary to that peace all the days of my life.**

**I will follow all things in fullness and obey His All-Holiness, the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, and my Archbishop, His Eminence Elpidophoros of America, President of the Holy Eparchial Synod.**

**Furthermore, in the fear of God, I promise with a God-loving mind, to maintain myself to the best of my ability, unsullied by any evil intentions.**

**I do also hereby promise that I will uphold as inviolate and irrefutable whatever rights and privileges belong to the Apostolic, Patriarchal and Ecumenical Throne, until my last breath.**

**I, Spyridon, by the mercy of God, Bishop-Elect of the Holy Diocese of Amastris, humbly submit this, my confession of faith, signed by my own hand.**

*Then, one of the Priests receives the Holy Gospel from the Bishop-Elect and places it on the Holy Altar Table. The two Deacons lead the Bishop-Elect from the Royal Gates to the Archbishop exclaiming:*

**1<sup>st</sup> DEACON: Command!**

**2<sup>nd</sup> DEACON: Let all Command!**

**1<sup>st</sup> DEACON: Command him, holy Master, now presented before you!**

*The Archbishop blesses the Bishop-Elect with the sign of the Cross as he says:*

**ARCHBISHOP ELPIDOPHOROS: The grace of the Holy Spirit, through my humble person, proffers Your Grace, the Archimandrite and Bishop-Elect, to be Bishop of the once illustrious Holy Diocese of Amastris.**

*The Choir then begins to chant “Many years, O Master” while the Bishop-Elect venerates the hand of the Archbishop and the hands of all the concelebrating Hierarchs, according to seniority. In turn, the Hierarchs kiss the forehead and shoulders of the Bishop-Elect.*

**CHOIR: Many years, O Master.**

*The Deacons escort the Bishop-Elect to the Royal Gates to two senior Priests. They bow to the Archbishop and lead the Bishop-Elect before him.*

**1<sup>st</sup> PRIEST: Command!**

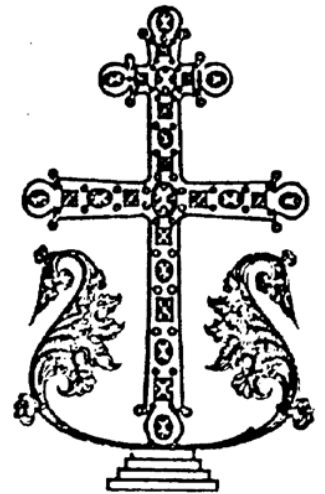
**2<sup>nd</sup> PRIEST: Let all Command!**

**1<sup>st</sup> PRIEST: Command him, holy Master, now presented before you!**

*The Archbishop blesses the Bishop-Elect with the sign of the Cross.*

**ARCHBISHOP ELPIDOPHOROS: May the grace of the All-Holy and Life-creating Holy Spirit be with you, now and forever, and unto the ages of ages.**

*The Choir then begins to chant “Many years, O Master” while the Bishop-Elect venerates the hand of the Archbishop and the hands of all the concelebrating Hierarchs, according to seniority. In turn, the Hierarchs kiss the forehead and shoulders of the Bishop-Elect.*

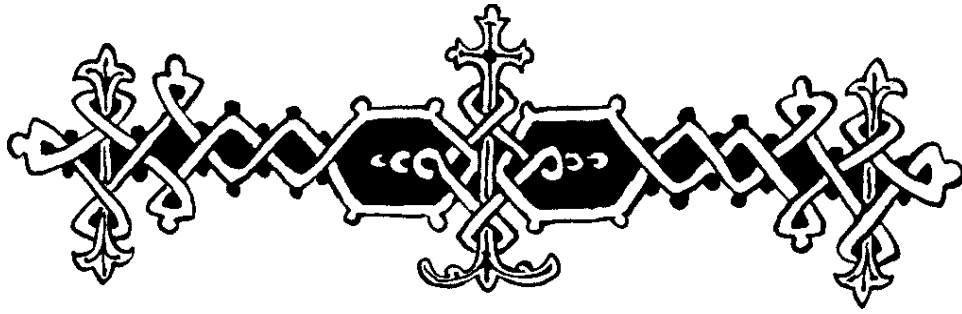


**CHOIR: Many years, O Master.**

*Then the Bishop-Elect enters the Altar and fully vests as a Priest.*

*The Dismissal Hymns of Pentecost follow.*

*After the Dismissal Hymns are chanted, the Divine Liturgy commences.*



## THE ORDINATION

*After the completion of the Trisagion and the Acclamations, the two senior Priests exit the Sanctuary with the Bishop-Elect onto the Soleas, to present him before the consecrating Archbishop who stands at the Royal Gate.*

**1<sup>st</sup> PRIEST: Command!**

**2<sup>nd</sup> PRIEST: Let all Command!**

**1<sup>st</sup> PRIEST: Command him, holy Master, now presented before you!**

**ARCHBISHOP ELPIDOPHOROS: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. (Thrice)**

*The Bishop-Elect is then brought into the Sanctuary by the two senior concelebrating Hierarchs, Archbishop Nikitas and Metropolitan Gerasimos.*

*The Archbishop is then seated before the Altar.*

*The two Hierarchs, Archbishop Nikitas and Metropolitan Gerasimos, lead the Bishop-Elect in circling the Altar Table three times. Each time, he reverently venerates the four corners of the Altar Table as well as the Archbishop's hand and his Epigonateon. During the circling of the Altar Table the following hymns are chanted by the Clergy:*

Holy Martyrs, who have fought the good fight and received your crowns, intercede with the Lord to be merciful with us.

Glory to You, Christ our God, the Apostles' boast, the Martyrs' joy, who proclaimed the Consubstantial Trinity.

Rejoice Isaiah! The Virgin is with child, and has borne a Son, Emmanuel, Who is both God and man. Dayspring is His name; in magnifying Him we call the Virgin blessed.



*Upon the third completion the Bishop-Elect stands to the right of Archbishop Elpidophoros. He bends his right knee and places his brow upon his crossed hands resting on the Holy Table.*

In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

❖ ❖ ❖ **THE CONGREGATION KNEELS** ❖ ❖ ❖

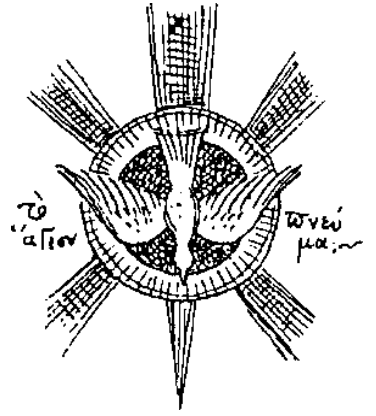
**DEACON:** Let us be attentive!

*The Archbishop places his Omophorion upon the head of the Bishop-Elect and then the Holy Gospel, opened and facing downwards. The ordaining Hierarchs place their right hands upon the Holy Gospel as the Archbishop offers the prayers of Ordination.*

**ARCHBISHOP ELPIDOPHOROS:** By approval and directive of His All Holiness our Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, and elected by the Most Reverend Metropolitan members of the Holy and Sacred Synod, the Divine Grace, that ever heals frailty and replenishes that which is lacking, ordains the most devout Presbyter Spyridon, Bishop of the once illustrious Holy Diocese of Amastris. Let us, therefore, pray for him that the grace of the Holy Spirit may come upon him.

*The Archbishop then reads the Ordination Prayers for a Bishop. Simultaneously, the senior Hierarch, Archbishop Nikitas, chants the Litany of Peace. The choir is chanting the Kyrie Eleison of Ordination.*

**ARCHBISHOP ELPIDOPHOROS:** Master and Lord our God, who through Your all-praiseworthy Apostle Paul have established for us diverse orders and offices – first, Apostles, then Prophets, and thirdly, Teachers – to serve and officiate the divine celebration of Your pure and undefiled mysteries upon Your Holy Altar: grant, O Lord of all, that this man, who has been chosen and



deemed worthy to be placed under the yoke of the Gospel and to enter the episcopal office by the laying on of hands by me, a sinner, and by my co-celebrant and fellow bishops here present, may be strengthened by the inspiration, power, and grace of Your Holy Spirit, as You did strengthen Your Holy Apostles and Prophets, as You anointed Kings, as You consecrated Archpriests. Make his episcopacy to be blameless; adorn him with all dignity; make him holy that he may be worthy to ask for those things which are for the salvation of the people, and that you may hear his prayer. For holy is Your Name and glorious is Your Kingdom of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

## **THE LITANY OF PEACE**

**ARCHBISHOP NIKITAS:** In peace let us pray to the Lord.

For heavenly peace and for the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord.

For peace in the whole world, the stability of God's Holy Churches and for the oneness of all, let us pray to the Lord.

For Archbishop Elpidophoros, for his Priesthood, for aid, peace, health, salvation, and for the work of his hands, let us pray to the Lord.

For the servant of God Spyridon, who is now being ordained Bishop, and for his salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

**That our loving God, grant that his High Priesthood be kept pure and undefiled,  
let us pray to the Lord.**

**For this city and for every city and land, and for the faithful who live in them,  
let us pray to the Lord.**

**For all those in need of aid and assistance from God, let us pray to the Lord.**

**That we may be spared all affliction, wrath, danger and want, let us pray to the  
Lord.**

**Help us, save us, have mercy on us and keep us, O God, by Your grace.**

**Remembering our most holy, pure, blessed and glorious Lady, the Theotokos  
and ever-virgin Mary, with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and one  
another, and our whole life to Christ our God.**

**CHOIR: To You, O Lord.**

***The ordaining Archbishop completes the invocation of the Holy Spirit:***

**ARCHBISHOP ELPIDOPHOROS: O Lord, our God, in  
accordance with Your divine plan for us. You have  
appointed for our sake teachers of the same nature as  
ourselves, because it is not possible for the nature of man to  
endure the Essence of the Divinity, to stand by Your throne  
and offer You sacrifices and oblations on behalf of all Your  
people. Do You, O Christ our Lord, make this man, who has  
been proclaimed a steward of the episcopal grace, an  
imitator of You, the true Shepherd, Who did lay down Your  
life for Your sheep; make him a guide for the blind, a light  
for those in darkness, an instructor to the unwise, a teacher of children, a  
lamp to the world, so that when he has accomplished the work of perfecting  
the souls of those entrusted to him in this present life, he may stand without  
reproach before Your throne and receive the great reward which You have  
prepared for those who have courageously contended for the preaching of  
Your Gospel.**



# THE VESTING

*Upon the conclusion of the Ordination Prayers, the consecrating Archbishop Elpidophoros lifts the Holy Gospel and his Omophorion from the head of the newly ordained Bishop, who rises from kneeling. The Archbishop, facing the congregation presents to them the newly ordained Bishop. As he vests him with his hierarchical vestments, the Sakkos, the Great Omophorion, the Epigonateon, and the Pendant, he declares each time: Axios! (He is worthy). The congregation responds, Axios!. The Choir chants the Axios!, thrice.*

*The Archbishop and all concelebrating Hierarchs embrace and give kiss of peace to the newly ordained Bishop. He in turn venerates their right hand.*

*The Choir chants: “Many years, O Master” while the Archbishop blesses the faithful.*

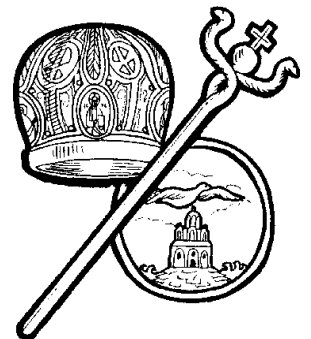
*The newly ordained Bishop wears the Great Omophorion and stands in the place of honor to the right of Archbishop Elpidophoros for the remainder of the Liturgy.*



# THE CONFERRING OF THE MITRE AND STAFF

*The Archbishop, prior to the dismissal, presents the newly ordained Bishop to the congregation and now completes the episcopal vesting. First, he blesses the Mitre, conferring it upon the head of the newly ordained Bishop, exclaiming: Axios! Then, he presents him the Pastoral Staff, the emblem of episcopal authority.*

**ARCHBISHOP ELPIDOPHOROS:** Receive this Staff to shepherd the Flock of Christ entrusted to you. To the mindful, may it be their brace and support. To the wayward and heedless let it be their rod of reprimand, their staff of instruction.



*The newly ordained Bishop Spyridon of Amastris is then led to the Episcopal Throne by two deacons, to offer the Dismissal Prayer of Pentecost.*

**BISHOP SPYRIDON:** May the blessing and the mercy of the Lord come upon you by His divine grace and love for mankind, always, now and forever and unto the ages of ages.

CHOIR: Amen.

**BISHOP SPYRIDON:** Glory to You, our God. Glory to You.

**DEACON:** Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and always, and unto the ages of ages. Amen. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Holy Master, bless us!

**BISHOP SPYRIDON:** May He who sent down the all-holy Spirit from heaven in the form of fiery tongues on His holy Disciples and Apostles, and Who rose from the dead, Christ our true God, through the intercessions of His all-pure and all-immaculate holy Mother, the power of the precious and lifegiving Cross, the protection of the honorable, bodiless powers of heaven, the supplications of the honorable, glorious prophet and forerunner John the Baptist, of the holy, glorious, and praiseworthy apostles, of the holy, glorious, and triumphant martyrs, our venerable and Godbearing Fathers; the holy and righteous ancestors of the Lord, Joachim and Anna, of Saint Philip the Apostle, and of Saint Gregory Palamas whose memory we keep today, and of all the Saints, have mercy on us and save us, for He is good and loves mankind.

*While the newly ordained offers the Dismissal, the Choir chants:*

**CHOIR:** O Lord, protect our Master and Hierarch for many years; O Master, may you have many years; may you have many years!

**BISHOP SPYRIDON:** Through the prayers of our holy fathers, Lord Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us and save us.

**CLERGY:** Through the prayers of our holy Master, Lord Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us and save us.

**CHOIR:** Amen.

*According to custom and tradition, the newly ordained Bishop distributes the Antidoron.*

**ἌΧΙΟΣ! ἌΞΙΟΣ! WORTHY!**

# **THE ONCE ILLUSTRIOUS DIOCESE OF AMASTRIS**

**The city of Amastris was founded early in the Third Century B.C. It is named after a Persian princess who was given in marriage by Alexander the Great to Craterus, a Macedonian Greek. This was part of Alexander the Great's plan to unite the Empire he created. Interestingly, Amastris was the first woman to issue coins in her own name.**

**Geographically, Amastris is in northern Turkey on the Black Sea in the area of Pontus. Today the Turkish name for the city is Amasra. Though small, the city is graphic and beautiful, making it very inviting to tourists. In its early history, it was a major and wealthy seaport. The port of the city made it a trade center in the ancient world, even to the beginning of the Middle Ages.**

**Throughout the centuries, as a prize, it suffered the attacks of Arabs, Rus, and the occupation of the Genovese who had come with the Fourth Crusade. In 1460, Mohammed II occupied the city. Its decline continued during the Ottoman years until the last of the Christian population disappeared.**

**From the earliest of Christian times it was actively involved in the life of the Church by its participation in the Councils which formulated our doctrines. The minutes of several Ecumenical Synods bear the signatures of the representatives of Amastris. In one early local Synod, they convened to discuss the celebration of Easter.**

**During the Byzantine period, it was one of the major centers of the northern empire. Its Byzantine monuments include two small single aisle churches,**

perhaps of the 9<sup>th</sup> Century, and the remains of a monastery that have been dated to the early 8<sup>th</sup> Century.

Though now dimmed with the passing of the ages, it has an interesting religious history. It was indeed illustrious.

*His Grace Bishop Spyridon expresses his most profound appreciation to His All Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew for granting him the historic and beautiful Diocese of Amastris. He anxiously looks forward, in the very near future, to visiting his once illustrious See and paying and praying his respects to the Christian men and women of this faithful flock.*



**The beautiful port city of Amastris (now Amasra, Turkey)**