

Clergy and Monastic Orders in the Orthodox Church



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The Clergy

In the Orthodox Church there are to be found three Major Orders: Bishop, Priest and Deacon, and two Minor Orders: Sub-deacon and Reader (although in ancient times there were other Minor Orders which have now fallen into disuse). The Holy Apostles appointed seven men (Church Tradition calls them Deacons) to perform a special serving ministry (Acts 6: 2 - 6) and in his first Letter to the Corinthians, St Paul speaks of various ministries in the Church (1 Corinthians 12: 28). Likewise, he addresses his Letter to the Philippians, "To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons (Phil 1: 1)." In his first Letter to Timothy, the Holy Apostle Paul also speaks of the qualifications of Bishops and Deacons (1 Timothy 3: 1 - 13), as well as in his Letter to Titus (1: 5 - 9).

Ordination in the Orthodox Church

Ordinations to the Major Orders always occur during the course of the Divine Liturgy, whereas those to the Minor Orders usually take place during the Hours preceding the Liturgy. Only the Bishop has the power to ordain (although in cases of necessity an Archimandrite or Archpriest, as representative of the Bishop, may be granted permission to tonsure a Reader). Because of the collegial nature of the episcopacy, a college of Bishops (at least three) are necessary to consecrate another Bishop. And since any ordination requires the consent of the whole people of God, at a particular point in the Service the assembled congregation proclaims Axios! (He is worthy!), showing their assent.

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The rite of consecration to the episcopacy is very solemn and the Bishop is ordained in the Sanctuary, in the midst of the Congregation before the singing of the Trisagion or Thrice-Holy Hymn (Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us). Thus, the reading of the Holy Gospel is done already with his blessing.

The Priest is ordained after the singing of the Cherubic Hymn before the sanctification of the Holy Gifts. The rite of ordination to the Diaconate is less solemn and takes place before the singing of the Lord's Prayer, when the sanctification of the Holy Gifts has already taken place, since the Deacon only assists at the Divine Services and does not consecrate the Sacraments. At the conclusion of the Liturgy, the Priest goes out to the people to read the Prayer Before the Ambo, and the Deacon to say the final litany, these actions being the first external signs of their ministry.

In all cases of ordination to the Major Orders, there is a laying-on of hands on the head of the one being ordained and the grace of the Holy Spirit is invoked. Like ordination to the Major Orders, ordination to the Minor Orders also involves a laying-on of hands, but there is no invocation of the Holy Spirit in these ordinations.

Orthodox Priests and Deacons are divided into two distinct groups the married (white or parochial) clergy and the monastic (or black) clergy. The monastic clergy are by nature unmarried, but one seeking ordination to the ranks of the white clergy may choose to be celibate (unmarried) or married, but must make the choice prior to ordination since, under Orthodox Canon Law, one may not marry after ordination. A celibate Priest or Deacon may not later marry

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and a married Priest or Deacon whose wife dies may not remarry. Also, one who has been divorced may not be permitted to be ordained. Bishops are drawn exclusively from the ranks of the monastic clergy, although a celibate or widower may be consecrated Bishop after having taken monastic vows. In ancient times married men were permitted to become Bishops (such was the case of St Peter himself), but such has not been the case since at least the 6th Century.

Ecclesiastical Titles

Patriarch

This is the title for the heads of certain autocephalous (self-heading i.e., independent) Churches. At the present time the heads of the Churches of Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem, Moscow, Belgrade (Serbia), Sofia (Bulgaria) and Bucharest (Romania) have this title. The heads of the other Churches are titled Archbishop (i.e., Churches of Greece, Albania, Cyprus) or Metropolitan (Poland, Czech Republic and Slovakia). The head of the autocephalous Church of Georgia is titled the Catholicos.

Metropolitan, Archbishop

Originally a Metropolitan (from the word metropolis) was the Bishop of the capital of a province, while Archbishop was a more general title of honor given to Bishops of special eminence (e.g., Bishops of long tenure) the Church of Russia still generally uses these titles in the original way, but the Greek Churches (except Jerusalem) give the title Metropolitan to every Diocesan Bishop and grant the title Archbishop to those who formerly would have been styled Metropolitans.

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Thus, an Archbishop now ranks above a Metropolitan in the Greek Churches, but in the Slavic Churches the rank of Metropolitan is pre-eminent.

Archimandrite

Originally this title was given to a Monk supervising several monasteries or who was the superior of an especially important monastery. It is now also given as a title of honor for distinguished Priestmonks.

Abbot (Hegumen or Igumen)

Originally a Priestmonk who was the Superior of a monastery was titled Abbot (a practice strictly adhered to by the Greek Church), but in the Russian church, this is more often a title of honor given to Priest-monks. In the Russian Church, an Abbot ranks below an Archimandrite.

Archpriest, Protopresbyter

These are titles of honor given to non-monastic Priests, and are generally equivalent to that of Archimandrite.

Priestmonk

A Priestmonk (Hieromonk) is a Monk who happens to be a Priest.

Deacon-monk, Hierodeacon

A Hierodeacon is a monastic Deacon.

Archdeacon

This is a title of honor given to monastic Deacons usually those attached to a Bishop.

Protodeacon

This is a title of honor given to non-monastic Deacons usually those attached to cathedrals or to Bishops.

Origins of Clergy Vestments

Vestments are the outward manifestation of the consecrated grace of the Priesthood. They are the visible signs of the *Apostolic Succession* and the authority bestowed upon the Apostles and their successors down through the centuries by the *laying-on of hands*.

Our current Orthodox vestments originally developed from Jewish Temple Ritual as described in the Old Testament; and from first and second-century Roman secular dress. The close relationship of the Church and State in the Byzantine Era of the later Eastern Roman Empire had a significant influence on the further development of Orthodox vestments. From the fourth century, it was a requirement of Byzantine (East Roman) law for clergy who were now officials of the state to wear some sign of their office. So, from these beginnings, the various vestments have come to take on symbolic and theological meaning.

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Some vestments were of a later and more accidental development in the Church. This was due to secular influence as well as tailors making vestments easier to mass produce and more practical and convenient for them to make. Also, we need to keep in mind that not all people who made vestments were expert tailors. So, there were variations in styles of vestments because of amateur tailor cutting corners.

Like all the traditions surrounding Orthodox worship, vestments serve as an embodiment of our theology. Liturgical garments are a highly stylized and antique version of the clothes we all wear everyday. In this regard vestments may be viewed as one among the many things set before us by the Church which manifest Christ's sanctification of the material world. When Adam and Eve fell they found it necessary to put on garments in order to hide their nakedness. The Church has taken these lowly garments and transfigured them to such an extent that they are used to glorify and worship God. Vestments, like icons, can and do serve as reminders of the beauty and magnificence of our call as Orthodox Christians: to worship God with our whole being-body, mind and soul.

THE Anatomy of

JEWISH HIGH PRIEST

ISRAEL, 605 BCE – 70 CE

THE EPHOD

The breastplate would sit upon an equally elaborate apron-like garment called an ephod. There is an ongoing debate about what exactly it was but *The Bible* describes it as being made of the same material as the breastplate. It had two shoulder pieces containing golden rings that would affix to the breastplate, with the ephod held together by a girdle fastened at the front.

ROBE OF THE EPHOD

The high priest would wear a robe underneath the ephod - it was sky-blue in colour in reference to heaven. As well as a woven collar, the bottom of the garment had tiny bells made of pure gold and pomegranate-shaped tassels in blue, purple and scarlet. The bells would be heard when the high priest was ministering.

BARE FEET

The entire ensemble symbolises atonement for the sin of bloodshed on the part of the children of Israel, except for the underwear, which was purely for modesty and contained no openings. A high priest's feet would be bare, however, allowing them to touch the ground of God. Claims that a rope would be tied to the high priest's ankle so that his body could be pulled out should he be killed by God in the Holy of Holies are not thought to be true.

THE GOLDEN CROWN

Placed over the high priest's fine linen mite and extending towards both ears, the priestly crown was a pure golden head plate engraved with the words "Holiness to the Lord" held in place by two tied blue straps. By wearing it, the high priest would atone for the sin of arrogance on behalf of the children of Israel and show his intellectual devotion to God.

PRIESTLY BREASTPLATE

A rectangular breast plate containing 12 precious stones across four rows was worn across the heart. The fabric itself was made from gold, fine twisted linen and yarns dyed tekhelet, purple and scarlet. There was a fold within which the Urim and Thummim (literally translated as "lights and perfections") were placed. It's not known exactly what these two objects were but they were a way of receiving revelation from God.

IMPORTANT GEMSTONES

The stones on the breastplate were a ruby, emerald and topaz on the top row; a carbuncle, sapphire and quartz crystal on the second; a jacinth, agate and amethyst on the third; and a chrysolite, onyx and opal on the bottom. Each represented one of the 12 tribes of Israel, with their names engraved on the stones.

FINE LINEN TUNIC

The garment that would touch the high priest's body was known as the priestly tunic and was made of pure linen. The white material would reach the neck and it would be visible under the robe of the ephod as sleeves and a section at the feet. Priests would also wear the tunic but only the high priest's version would be embroidered - except on the Day of Atonement, when it would be plain.





L-R: Jewish Levite, High Priest and Priest.

In the Old Testament (Exodus 28:4-43) we read in detailed description how Aaron and the Priests of God were to be clothed when they were to participate in public worship.

The three major orders of Bishop, Priest, and Deacon roughly correspond to the three orders of the old Jewish priesthood of High Priest, Priest and Levite.

Our Lord, God and Savior, Jesus Christ is the Great High Priest (see icon on front cover) and holds the fullness of priesthood.

The Vestments of the Clergy

The three Major Orders: Bishop, Priest and Deacon, and the two Minor Orders: Sub-deacon and Reader, all have specific functions in the Church and all have distinctive vestments relative to these functions.

Reader (Sticharion)



The universal garment worn by all classes of ordained persons is the Sticharion, a long garment like a tunic, reaching to the ground, with sleeves. Except for a short garment barely covering the shoulders when he is tonsured by the Bishop (Reader's Phelonion symbolizing his dedication to the service of God), the Reader's basic ecclesiastical garment is the Sticharion. This garment (for Readers, Sub-Deacons and Deacons with wide sleeves; Priests and Bishops with narrow sleeves) is called the robe of salvation and the garment of joy, symbolizing a pure and peaceful conscience, a spotless life, and the spiritual joy in the Lord which flows in him who wears it.

Sub-Deacon (Sticharion with crossed Orarion)



In addition to the Sticharion, a Sub-Deacon wears, crossed upon the breast and back, a long, wide band of material, called an Orarion, typifying the wings of angels who serve at the Throne of God, just as do the Sub-Deacons, Deacons, Priests and Bishops. Sometimes the words, "Holy, Holy, Holy" are embroidered upon the Orarion.

Deacon (Sticharion, Orarion & Cuffs)



Deacon with Orarion & Protodeacon with Double-Orarion

Whereas the Sub-Deacon always wears his Orarion crossed, the Deacon, for the most part, wears his on his left shoulder (see picture with red deacon vestments above), only crossing them at the time of the Communion of the clergy and the faithful. The Orarion is the Deacon's principal vestment, without which he cannot serve at any service whatsoever. In ancient times Deacons used to wipe the lips of communicants after they had partaken of the Holy Gifts. For protodeacons and archdeacons, it is wound once around the body (see picture with gold deacon vestments above).

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Cuffs

In addition to the Orarion, the Deacon also wears the Cuffs (as do the Priests and Bishops) for convenience during services and also to remind him that he must not put his trust in his own strength alone, but in the right hand of the Almighty God.

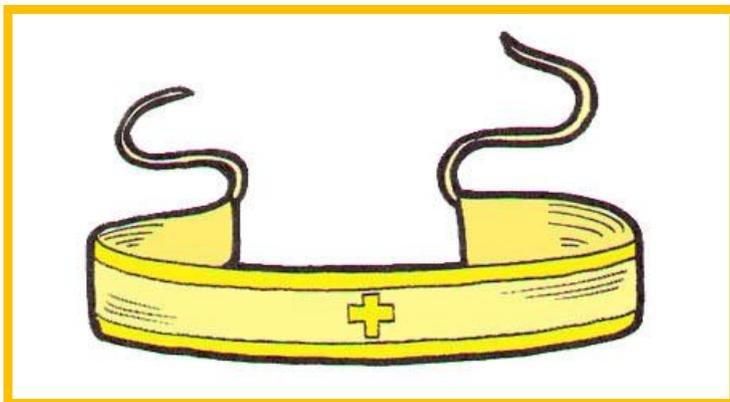
Priest (Sticharion, Epitachelion, Cuffs, Belt, Phelonion)



Indonesian Orthodox Priest Wearing Epitachelion

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In addition to the Sticharion with narrow sleeves, the Epitrachelion (that which is worn around the neck. It is basically an Orarion worn around the neck so that both ends hang down the front, being buttoned or sewn together for convenience), and the Cuffs (which for the Priest also symbolizes the bonds with which Christ's hands were bound), the Priest also wears a Belt around his Sticharion and Epitrachelion, for convenience in serving at the Altar. It symbolizes that the Celebrant must place his hope, not in his own strength, but in the help of God.



Belt

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Nabedrennik (Thigh Shield)



Epigonation/Palitsa

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If so awarded, the Priest may also wear the Nabedrennik and the Epigonation or Palitsa (thigh-shields), which are worn at the hip and are either rectangular (Nabedrennik) or diamond-shaped (Epigonation/Palitsa). The Nabedrennik is worn on the right hip, but if the Epigonation/Palitsa is awarded, it is worn on the right hip, and the Nabedrennik on the left. These symbolize the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.



Back of Phelonion



***Front of Phelonion
with other priestly vestments***

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Over the Sticharion and Epitrachelion, the Priest wears a long garment, sleeveless, with a hole for the head, called a Phelonion. This signifies that the Priests are invested with truth, and are ministers of the truth.



Priests wearing Kamilavka

As tokens of honor, a Priest also may be awarded a pointed hat (the Skufia) or a tall flat-brimmed hat (the Kamilavka), such as Monk's wear, except that they are of purple color. If the Priest is a Monk, he wears the Kamilavka with the veil known as the Klobuk.

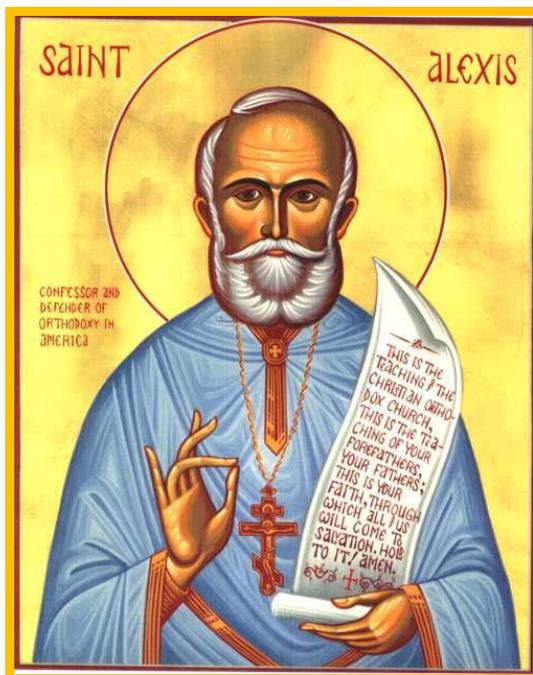
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Skufia



Klobuk/Epanokalimafion



***St Alexis Toth wearing
Phelonion and Pectoral Cross***

In addition, at ordination to the Priesthood, the Priest is given a Pectoral Cross, symbolizing that he must confess the Cross of Christ before all people as a Preacher of the Faith.

Bishop

The Bishop wears all the vestments of the Priest, except the Phelonion and the Nabedrennik. Originally the Phelonion was part of the Bishop's vestments, but in Byzantine Imperial times, this was replaced by a garment, similar to the Deacon's Sticharion, called a Saccos (also spelled Sakkos), symbolizing that the Bishop must rise to holiness of life, wearing this garment of humility. As Christ's robe was without seam, so too, the Bishop (as an Icon of Christ) wears the Saccos, either sewn or buttoned at the sides.



Bishop being vested with Saccos by 2 sub-deacons

Draped over the Saccos, the Bishop wears a wide Orarion, called the Omophorion (shoulder-covering), which, in ancient times, was made of sheepskin. This hangs down in front and back, and symbolizes the wandering sheep which Christ took

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upon His shoulders as the Good Shepherd, which the Bishop also must be.



Bishop's long (l) and small (r) omophorion

At other moments of the Divine services, the Bishop may wear a shorter Omophorion (with both ends hanging down the front), usually called the Small Omophorion.

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Upon his head, the Bishop wears a richly embroidered headgear, called a Mitre, dating from Byzantine times and now symbolizing, as does a crown, the power bestowed upon a minister of the Church.



Bishop wearing mitre

Upon his breast, in addition to the Pectoral Cross, the Bishop also wears a small, circular Icon of the Mother of God, called the Panagia (All-Holy), reminding him that he must always bear in his heart Our Lord's Holy Mother, and thus his own heart must be pure, and his spirit upright.



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Bishops wearing panagia



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As a symbol of his pastoral service, the Bishop bears a Staff (Crozier), as a reminder of the Shepherd's Crook and that he is a shepherd of Christ's flock. The Episcopal Staff has a double crook at the top and above that a Cross. Sometimes this double crook is in the shape of serpent's heads, symbolizing the bronze serpent lifted up by Moses in the Wilderness, which symbolizes Christ lifted up on the Cross, and whose Icon the Bishop is.



Bishop Staff



Abbot / Archimandrite Staff

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The Staff is also given to some Archimandrites and Abbots as a token of their spiritual authority over the monastery which they rule.



Archbishop Mantiya (front)



Metropolitan Mantiya (Back)

In addition, at certain times the Bishop wears a monastic garment, the Mantiya, which covers his whole body except his head. Its flowing lines symbolize the wings of angels, for which reason it is often called the angelic vestment. It has no sleeves (nor do any monastic Mantiyas), symbolizing for all Monks (of whom the Bishop is one) that the fleshly members are dead to the world. Unlike the typical monastic Mantiya, however, which is black, that of the Bishop is some other color, usually red (light blue in the case of Russian Metropolitans) and upon it are sewn the Tables of the Law (square patches at the neck and feet), typifying the Old and New Covenants from which the ministers of God receive their doctrines. In addition, strips of cloth (called fountains) are

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sewn horizontally around the Mantiya, representing the streams of teachings which flow from the Bishop's mouth.



Bishop's Eagle Rug or Eaglet

During Divine services, the Bishop stands on a small round or oval rug, upon which is represented an eagle hovering over a city. The view of the city symbolizes his rule over a city and the eagle (for which reason this rug is called an Orlets or Eaglet) reminds the Bishop that by his teaching and life he

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must rise above his flock and be to them an example of one aspiring to the things of heaven.



(Left) Trikiri and (Right) Dikiri

At various times during the Divine Services, the Bishop blesses the faithful with two candlesticks one with two candles (dikiri) and the other with three (trikiri). The one symbolizes the two natures of Christ, divine and human, while the other symbolizes the three Persons of the Holy Trinity, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

The Monastic Tonsure & Monastic Grades

When one desiring the monastic life enters a monastery, they normally pass through three stages: 1) Probationer (Novice including Rassophore), 2) Monastic of the Lesser Schema (Cross-bearer or Stavrophore), and 3) Monastic of the Great Schema. The Probationer who enters a monastery desires to do so in order to acquit themselves worthily in the angelic state, so called because Monastics renounce all worldly things, do not marry, do not acquire and hold property, and live like the Angels in Heaven, glorifying God night and day and striving to do His Will in all things.

The first act of anyone who desires to perform any strenuous task is that of preparation. If, for example, one is an athlete, they would train and condition themselves physically and mentally, so as to better perform in the chosen event. If one wishes to be a doctor or a lawyer or whatever, they first prepare themselves with the proper education, apprenticeship training under the skilled guidance of one more experienced, and so on. A soldier first spends time in Boot Camp, being trained physically and mentally to be a good soldier. And so, in like manner, those who wish to be a Monastic must prepare themselves for the task at hand, thus entering as a Novice.

For a period of at least three years, the Novice must train themselves under the guidance of one skilled in the monastic life and the direction of souls, by immersing themselves in the life of the Monastery, struggling to perform the obediences given to them and preparing themselves physically (through labors, fasting, vigils, etc.) and spiritually (through their rule of prayer and obedience to an elder), for the monastic life. This three-year period of preparation has existed from the earliest

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times. In the Life of St Pachomius, the founder of the Common Life, we learn that he was commanded by an angel: Do not admit anyone to the performance of higher feats until three years have passed.... Let him enter this domain only when he has accomplished some hard work.

Traditionally, a Novice, after spending a short time in lay clothing, is vested in part of the monastic habit, that is, the Inner Rasson and the Skouphos (or monastic cap). The Inner Rasson is simply a narrow-sleeved robe reaching to the ankles (Podriznik in Russian) and the Skouphos is a cup-shaped cap common to all Orthodox clerics and monastics. These garments are always black in color (as are all the monastic garments), signifying penitence and deadness to the ways of the world.

Rassophore

After one has been a Novice for a while, they could take the next step, which is that of Rassophore Monastic, who it must be noted, is still considered to be a Novice, but in a special sense. They do not make solemn vows, as do the Monastics of the Lesser and Greater Schemas, but are still considered to be, although imperfect, a true Monastic. They cannot marry, they cannot leave the Monastery without censure, and if they were to leave and marry, they would be subject to excommunication. Nonetheless, they are still a Novice.

The Order of the Rasson is usually performed after one of the canonical Hours. Standing before the Abbot, the candidate is tonsured (hair cut in a cross-wise form) in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, signifying that they cast from themselves all idle thoughts and acts, and take

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upon themselves the yoke of the Lord. The Abbot then vests them with the Outer Rasson (a wide-sleeved outer robe) and Kamilavka (a flat-topped hat).

In ancient times the Rasson was worn on days of mourning and it signifies to the Novice that they must grieve for their sins. The Kamilavka (cap protecting from the heat) signifies to the Novice that they must tame the heat of the passions. Henceforth the Novice is called Rassophore (Wearer of the Robe), but as noted, no vows have been made. In our times, the Rassophore Monastic is also allowed the monastic veil with the Kamilavka, as is worn by the Monastics of the Lesser and Greater Schemas.

Those who have attained the dignity of Rassophore are under no obligation to advance further in the monastic grades, and many do not of their own choice, but neither is the Novice obligated to advance to the dignity of Rassophore prior to making solemn vows and attaining to the next step in monasticism, which is that of the Lesser Schema (habit, dignity, or aspect).

Order of the Lesser Schema

Originally in monasticism there were only two grades: Novice and Monastic of the Angelic Habit (or Great Schema). Thus, we can say that for every Monastic the most desired feat of the soul, the feat of attaining perfection, is the taking of the Great Schema. Since ancient times Monastics have spoken of the Great Schema as the culmination of Monkhood, wherein the Monastic loves God with a perfect love in accordance with the Gospel command, with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your mind (Matthew 22: 37). In time the

Lesser Schema became a kind a preparatory step to the Great Schema. The Common Life (that of a Monastic of the Lesser Schema) came to be known as Betrothal, and Seclusion (the life of a Monastic of the Great Schema) within a Monastery as actual matrimony.

The Tonsure

The main feature of the Order of the Lesser Schema is the Tonsure and the making of solemn vows. The Monastic Tonsure (or Profession) can be seen as the mystical marriage of the soul with the Heavenly Bridegroom, but it also can be seen as a second Baptism, inasmuch as the very ceremony parallels the actual Baptism ceremony. The candidate for the Monastic Tonsure comes as a penitent, as though to Baptism. [In the original Greek of the rite, the candidate is referred to as a catechumen, and they fulfill, in a sense, a catechumenate prior to the Monastic Tonsure in their three-year probation.]

The candidate stands in the Narthex of the church as though about to be baptized by immersion, signifying that the Old Man is being put off and the New Man put on. Vows are made, as at Baptism, similar to the Baptismal vows of renunciation, faith and obedience to the end of life, and these are given in response to specific questions, as at Baptism. A new name is given, as at Baptism, and the hair is shorn in the tonsure, just as at Baptism. The new monastic is given a cross, just as a cross is placed around the neck of the newly-baptized, and they are also given a lighted candle to hold, just as is the newly-baptized.

Thus, it is obvious that the resemblance of the Monastic Tonsure to Baptism is not accidental; indeed, in the

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instructions given to the monastic Catechumen in the Order of the Great Schema (with parallels in the Order of the Lesser Schema), the following words are said: A second Baptism you are receiving...and you shall be cleansed from your sins.

We can also see in the Monastic Tonsure the mystical re-enactment of the return of the Prodigal Son to his father's house: At first, they stand at a distance from their father's house (in the Narthex, the entrance to the Nave) as a penitent, having abandoned the world after drinking the cup of its deceitful delights. They are seen from afar (as the Prodigal was by his father), for the Monastics come to greet them and escort them to the gates of the Sanctuary where their father (the Abbot) awaits them.

In the Order of the Lesser Schema, as noted above, the Novice stands in the Narthex, wearing only a sort of shirt (in ancient times a hair shirt, now a white tunic), waiting, as a penitent, to be conducted into his father's house. As they are conducted to the Abbot, the Novice performs three prostrations on the way, and then stops before the Holy Doors where the Abbot is waiting. Before them stands a lectern upon which are laid a Cross and a Book of the Gospels.

The Abbot then asks them what they seek in coming here. The reply is given, "I seek a life of monasticism." The Abbot then questions them further as to whether they aspire to the angelic state, whether they give themselves to God of their own will, whether they intend to abide in the Monastery, whether they intend to keep themselves in virginity, chastity, and piety, whether they will remain obedient to the Superior and to the monastic community even to death, and whether they will endure willingly the restraints and hardships of the

monastic life. When they have answered all these questions with, "Yes, Reverend Father (Master, if the monastic tonsure is performed by a bishop) with the help of God, the Abbot then exhorts them as to the nature of the monastic life and the Novice pledges themselves to keep their vows, which were included in the Order of Monastic Profession by St Basil the Great.

Then, in order to test their willingness, the Abbot hands the scissors, with which the Tonsure is to be made, three times to the Novice, asking them each time to take the scissors and give them to the Abbot. Each time the Novice takes the scissors and hands them back to the Abbot, kissing his hand. Then the Abbot tonsures the Novice's head in the form of a cross, saying, "Our brother (or if it is a female Novice: Our sister) **N.** is tonsured by the cutting of the hairs of his/her head in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit," and in doing so changes the Novice's name for another, in token of complete renunciation of the world and perfect self-consecration to God. Indeed, the first act of obedience of the new Monastic is their acceptance of the new name given to them.

The Monastic Habit

At the completion of the Tonsure itself, the new Monastic is now vested in the Monastic Habit. They are given to wear a square of cloth, called the Paramantiya (something added to the mantiya) upon which are represented the Cross of Christ with the lance, reed and sponge, and the inscription, "I bear on my body the wounds of the Lord." This is fastened about the shoulders and waist by means of strings or cords sewn to the corners, and serves to remind the new Monastic that they

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have taken on themselves the yoke of Christ and must control their passions and desires. At the same time a Cross is hung on their neck (often fastened to the same cords with which the Paraman is bound), signifying that they are to follow Christ.

Then the Monastic is given the Inner Rasson, which is the same as that worn by the Novice. A leather belt, made of the skin of a dead animal signifying deadness to the world is fastened about their waist. This “girding of the loins” also signifies bodily mortification and readiness for the service of Christ and His return (Luke 12: 35 - 37).

Next, the Monastic is given the Mantiya (mantle or cloak), a long, sleeveless robe, also called the robe of incorruption and purity, the absence of sleeves signifying the restraining of worldly pursuits. Upon their head the Monastic is given the Kamilavka with veil (called, in Russian: klobuk), or the helmet of salvation. The veil signifies that the Monastic must veil their face from temptation and guard their eyes and ears against all vanity. The wings of the veil date from the time of St Methodius (846), Patriarch of Constantinople, who was wounded in the face during the reign of the iconoclast Emperor Theophilus. In order to conceal his wounds, the Saint wore wings with his veil and fastened them about his lower face. And so, the wings of the veil have been in use since that time in memory of the sufferings of the Saint. Finally, the Monastic is given sandals for their feet.

After the vesting, the Monastic is given a Prayer Rope with many knots, to count prayers and prostrations. This Prayer Rope is the Monastic's spiritual sword, helping them to conquer absent-mindedness while at prayer and to drive away evil thoughts from their soul. Then they are given a hand

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cross as the shield of Faith, with which to put out the flaming darts of the Evil One. Finally, they are given a lighted candle, signifying that they must strive, by purity of life, by good deeds, and good demeanor to be a Light to the World.

At the conclusion of this, the Great Litany is recited by the Deacon with the addition of special petitions on behalf of the new Monastic. The hymn, "As many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ," is chanted as at the Baptism, and then Epistle and Gospel readings, reminding the new Monastic that they must wage war against the enemies of salvation and how love of God must be greater than love of parents, etc. At the conclusion of the Rite, the Kiss of Peace is exchanged by the new Monastic and the other brothers of the Monastery, or if a female Monastic, by the other sisters of the Monastery.

Order of the Great Schema

As noted earlier, the ultimate goal of a Monastic is the Order of the Great Schema (or Angelic Habit). One who aspired to that dignity usually struggled for many years in the monastic life and often it was not conferred until the end of a Monastic's life. Those who reached that state usually spent the rest of their lives in complete seclusion and silence within the Monastery or a specially-prepared Skete or Hermitage, where lay-people could not enter even to pray.

It should be noted, however, that not all the fathers and ascetics of the Church divided monasticism into Greater and Lesser Schema. For example, St Theodore of Studium (826) disagreed with this practice, since he considered that as there was only one Sacrament of Baptism, likewise there should be

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only one form of monasticism. The practice, however, became widespread, although, in Athonite Greek monasteries, for example, the practice of St Theodore is generally adhered.

The Order of the Great Schema differs from that of the Lesser Schema in the following particulars: 1) the monastic vestments are laid on the Holy Altar the night before, signifying that the candidate receives them from the Lord Himself; 2) the name of the Monastic is again changed; 3) instead of the Paramantiya, the Monastic of the Great Schema receives a garment called the Analavos (Greek: to take up), or the mystical Cross which the Monastic is to take up daily in imitation of Christ. This is worn around the neck and reaches to the ankles at the end. Upon it is depicted the Cross of Christ, together with the spear, reed and sponge, as well as the skull and crossbones. Like the Paramantiya, the Analavos is made from the skin of a dead animal and for the same reason; 4) instead of a Kamilavka with veil (Klobuk), the Monastic of the Great Schema is given a pointed hat and veil called Koukoulion or Cowl (often called a Cowl of Guilelessness), upon which are depicted five crosses one on the forehead, one on the back between the shoulders, one on the back further down, and one each on the ends of the wings of the veil.

Nuns

In conclusion, we must make note that in Orthodoxy monasticism embraces both men and women. The general rules for the organization of monastic life, the Monastic Grades, Tonsure, Habit, etc., are the same for all monastics, and the goals and aspirations of monastic life likewise are the same for both men and women. Customarily, female

monastics are styled Nuns and their monasteries Convents, and as the Monks are addressed as Brother or Father, so too, the Nuns are addressed as Sister or Mother. The Superior of a Convent is entitled Abbess (Igumena in Russian; in Greek Hegumenissa). Nonetheless, although sequestered in separate monasteries, each isolated from the opposite sex, all Orthodox monastics, Monks and Nuns alike, are united in a common quest for the Angelic State.

Orthodox Monastic Attire

The Orthodox Church does not have distinct religious orders. The *Schēma/habit* is the same throughout the world—with minor, local distinctions. The normal monastic color is black, symbolic of repentance and simplicity. But in other climates, the color may vary. The schema of monks and nuns is identical, except that nuns wear an additional scarf, called an apostolnik. The schema is bestowed in degrees, as the monk or nun advances in the spiritual life. There are three degrees: (1) the beginner, known as the Novice (2) the intermediate, known as the Rassophore (or "rasson wearer"), and (3) the fully professed monk or nun known as the Stavrophore (or "cross bearer"). The Great Schema worn by Great Schema Monks or Nuns was originally worn by all fully professed monastics. Later in monastic tradition the Schema was divided into 2: the small and the great Schema.

The schema is formally bestowed upon monks and nuns at the service known as the tonsure. The parts of the Orthodox schema are:

- **Inner Cassock [Worn by all monastics and sometimes novices]** (Slavonic: *Podryásnik*): The

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inner rasson (which is known in English as the inner cassock or the under cassock or just cassock) is the innermost garment. It is a long, collared garment coming to the feet, with narrow, tapered sleeves. The inner cassock is the basic garment, and is worn at all times. The inner cassock is also worn by the married clergy: deacons and priests. For monks and nuns, it symbolizes the vow of poverty and is a reminder for perpetual repentance.



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- **Belt [Worn by all monastics and sometimes novices]:** The belt worn by Orthodox monks and nuns is normally leather, though sometimes it is of cloth.



- **Paramantiya [Worn by Stavrophores and Great Schema monastics]** (Greek: *Paramandýas*; Slavonic: *Paraman*): The Paramantiya is a piece of cloth, approximately 5 inches square which is attached by ribbons to a wooden cross. The cloth is embroidered with a cross and the Instruments of the Passion. The wooden cross is worn over the chest, then the ribbons pass over and under the arms, like a yoke, and hold the square cloth centered on the back. The paramantiya is symbolic of the yoke of Christ who said, "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, because I am meek and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light." (Matthew 11:29-30).



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- **Outer Cassock [Worn by all monastics]** (Slavonic: *ryasa*): Called a *Rasson*. The outer cassock is a large, flowing garment worn over the inner cassock by bishops, priests, deacons, and monastics.



Monastic wearing Kamilavka
and Outer Cassock

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- **Analavos [Worn by Great Schema monastics]**
(Slavonic: *Analav*): The distinctive dress of the Great Schema is the analavos, and it is worn only by Schema-monks and Schema-nuns. Traditionally made of either leather or wool, the analavos covers the shoulders, and then comes down in the front and back, forming a cross.



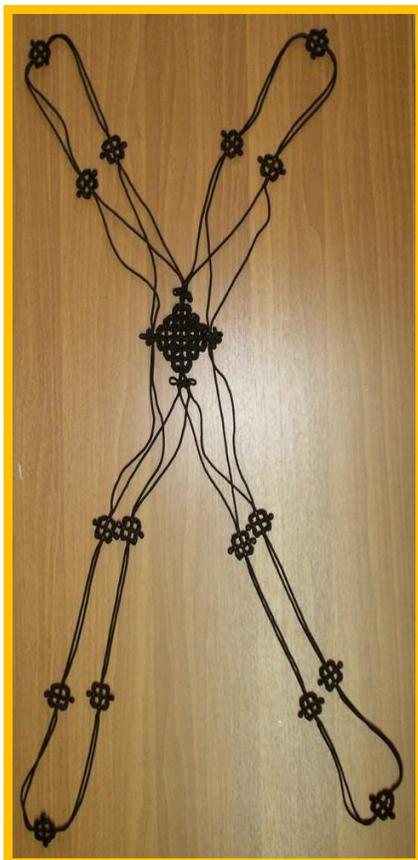
Great Schema/Analavos



Schema-monk:
Analavos, Cowl &
Polystavrion

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- **Polystavrion [Worn by Great Schema Monastics]** (Greek lit. "many crosses"): The polystavrion is a long cord that has been plaited with numerous crosses forming a yoke that is worn over the analavos to hold it in place.



St Athanasios of Meteora Monastery wearing Analavos bound by Polystavrion cord

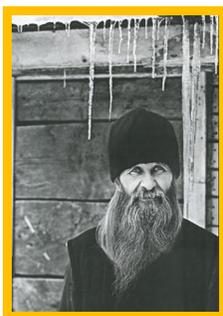
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- **Mantle [Worn by Stavrophores, Abbots, Archimandrites & Bishops]** (Slavonic: *Mantiya*): The Mantle is a long, full cape, joined at the neck which the monastic wears over the other parts of the habit.



Stavrophore Archimandrite Bishop Archbishop Metropolitan Patriarch

- **Skufi [Worn by all monastics and sometimes novices]**: Outside church, monastics wear a soft hat known as a Skufi/Skouphos. Again, for Schema-monks and Schema-nuns it is embroidered with the Instruments of the Passion. A soft-sided cap worn by monastics or awarded to clergy as a mark of honor.



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- **Kamilavka [Worn by Novices, Rassophores, Deacon-monks]:** A stiff hat worn by monastics or awarded to clergy as a mark of honor. It is an item of clerical clothing worn by Orthodox Christian monks (in which case it is black) or awarded to clergy as a mark of honor (in which case it is usually red or purple). It is a stiff hat that may be cylindrical with a flattened conical brim at the top (Greek style), flared and flat at the top (Russian style), or cylindrical and flat at the top (Serbian style).



- **Klobuk [Worn by Stavrophores, Abbots, Archimandrites and Bishops]:** The distinctive head-dress of Orthodox monks and nuns is the klobuk, a stiffened hat, something like a fez, only black and with straight sides, covered with a veil. The veil has lappets which hang down on each side of the head and a stylized hood falling down the back.



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- **Koukoulion [Worn by Great Schema Monastics]:** For monastics of the Great Schema, the klobuk takes a very distinctive shape, known as a koukoulion (cowl), and is embroidered with the Instruments of the Passion. The koukoulion is also worn by the Patriarchs of several local churches, regardless of whether or not he has been tonsured to that degree.



Prayer Rope [All monastics]: Monastics are given a Prayer Rope with many knots, to count prayers and prostrations. This Prayer Rope is the Monastics spiritual sword, helping them to conquer absent-mindedness while at prayer and to drive away evil thoughts from their soul.



Apostolnik: A veil worn by nuns, either alone or with a skufi.



Staff [Abbots/Archimandrites/Bishops]: During the divine services the bishops use a staff as a sign of ultimate pastoral authority. It indicates that they are shepherds of Christ's flock. The top of the staff is made to resemble two serpents' heads, to remind the bishop of the words of Christ to: "Be wise as serpents." A staff without serpents' heads is also granted to archimandrites and abbots as heads of monasteries.



Abbot / Archimandrite Staff



Bishop Staff

Liturgical Colors

Clerical Attire and Liturgical Vestments

Orthodox clergy wear two kinds of robes, non-liturgical and liturgical. The non-liturgical robes are the ordinary daily clothing of the clergy, worn underneath 'liturgical robes.' Liturgical robes, or 'vestments,' are worn during church services.

The non-liturgical robes are called cassocks and outer cassocks. Cassocks are floor-length garments that have long sleeves fitted like shirtsleeves. Outer cassocks are also floor-length garments, but they're more loosely fitting, with very large sleeves.

As for vestments, when the Typikon (Manual on how to properly conduct church services) says anything about them at all, it only specifies 'light' or 'dark' vestments, so local tradition is the only 'standard.' In the Orthodox Church, six liturgical colors are used: white, green, purple, red, blue, and gold. Later, black vestments also came into use in the Moscow and Jerusalem Patriarchates. In some places, scarlet orange or rust color is used.

You could assign meanings to the different colors: **white** for the pure light of God's energy; **green**, the color of life, for the Holy Spirit and the wood of the Cross; **purple** for the suffering of Christ; **deep red** for the blood on the Cross, blood of the martyrs; **blue** for the Mother of God; and **gold** for the richness of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and **bright red** for the fiery flame

of the Angelic Powers. **Black** is traditionally the color of death and mourning in the West, but in the far East **white** is the color of death and mourning. In Russia, **red** is the color of beauty, brightness and joy. None of this is written down in the rules, and different colors obviously have different meanings for different peoples.

Colors

The most important Feasts of the Orthodox Church and the sacred events for which specific colors of vestments have been established, can be united into six basic groups.

The group of feasts and days commemorating Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Prophets, the Apostles and the Holy Hierarchs.
Vestment color: Gold (yellow) of all shades.

The group of feasts and days commemorating the Most Holy Theotokos, the Bodiless Powers (Angels) and Virgins.
Vestment color: Light blue and white.

The group of feasts and days commemorating the Cross of Our Lord. Vestment color: **Purple** or **dark red**.

The group of feasts and days commemorating martyrs. Vestment color: Red. [On Great and Holy Thursday, dark red vestments are worn, even though the church is still covered with black and the Holy (Altar) Table is covered with a white cloth.]

The group of feasts and days commemorating monastic saints, ascetics and fools for Christ. Vestment color: Green.

The Entrance of Our Lord into Jerusalem (Palm Sunday), Holy Trinity Day (Pentecost) and Holy Spirit Day (Monday after Pentecost) are, as a rule, celebrated in green vestments of all shades.

During the Lenten periods, the vestment colors are: **Dark blue, purple, dark green, dark red** and (in the Moscow and Jerusalem Patriarchates) **black**. This last color is used essentially for the weekdays of Great Lent. Funerals, as a rule, are done in **white** vestments.

In many parishes the covering on the altar and other tables, other cloths and hangings, the curtain behind the Holy Doors, and even the glass containers for the vigil candles are changed to the liturgical color of the season.

In parishes of the Greek tradition, it is customary for the vigil glasses and curtain behind the Holy Doors to remain **red** in color at all times. Because of the association of the Gospel story of the curtain in the temple being 'torn in two' at the time of the earthquake when our Lord was crucified, and the story of the eggs carried by Pontius Pilate's wife all turning **red** (and our use of **red** eggs at Pascha) the custom is for the curtain behind the Holy Doors to remain **red**. Remember that this **rich deep reddish purple** color is also the ancient color of royalty, and for that reason, it is used behind the Holy Doors and as a drapery on the Golgotha-Cross and in other places associated with our Lord and His Mother.

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