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## **Greek Church calls on young men to serve the Church, parents not to block them**



The Greek Church is calling on all young men “who feel inclined towards the cassock” to heed the call and serve Christ and His Church. And to the parents of such young men, the Church implores that they not hinder them from entering the ministry.

The Third Sunday of Great Lent, the Sunday of the Cross, is also recognized as the Sunday of Priestly Vocations in the Greek Church. The Holy Synod composed an encyclical on the occasion, explaining that the day is about the desire and eagerness “to wear the glory of the Mystery of the priesthood... To don the venerable cassock, to wrap themselves in the blood-stained mantle of the priesthood.”

The Lord stands before every soul, knocking with His Cross in order to “find a worthy child of His to clothe in the holy priesthood,” the Synod writes, and for his parents to facilitate this desire.

“The cleric is endowed with spiritual authority, thanks to the creative presence of the Paraclete, becoming His venerable vestment and transforming into a sanctified, grace-filled, ordained person,” the bishops write.

“This is especially experienced by the one being ordained. He sees everything around him changing, taking on a strange and indescribable appearance. Literally experiencing a transformation as the priesthood abides within him, making him a “chosen vessel” (Acts 9:15).”

A priest thus becomes worthy to be a “living icon of Christ” before the altar, according to St. Maximus the Confessor, the Synod teaches.

The statement concludes with a call to both parents and young men:

Blessed parents, we beg in the name of the Crucified Christ, do not block the path for your offspring who wish to blossom serving the Holy Table!

And to you, our young men, who feel inclined towards the cassock, please accept Christ’s invitation extended through our voice, and serve Him, His Church, and His people!