

Hierodeacon Simeon's Ordination to priest



During the night-time Divine Liturgy of the Sunday of the Samaritan Woman, on the 5th/18th of May 2025, at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the Secretary of the Holy and Sacred Synod and Cantor of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Hieromonk Simeon, was ordained to the Priesthood by His Eminence the Patriarchal Commissioner, Metropolitan Isychios of Capitolias, with the blessing of His Beatitude our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem, Theophilos III.

Concelebrating with the ordaining Hierarchy was the visiting Most Reverend Bishop Epiphanius of Ledra, Hegumen of the Holy Monastery of Machairas of the Church of Cyprus, along with Hieromonks of the Holy Sepulchre Brotherhood, who honoured the ordained, led by Archimandrite Ignatios. The chanting was led by the chief

cantor of the Holy Sepulchre, Deacon Efstathios, together with students of the Patriarchal School of Sion, and a large, devout congregation prayerfully attended the service.

Before the ordination, the ordaining Hierarch addressed the ordinand as follows:

“Dearly beloved Hierodeacon Simeon,

Truly great and honourable is this day for you, by the venerable decision of our tender-hearted Father and Patriarch, His Beatitude Theophilos III, and through the decision of the Holy Synod, as you are now deemed worthy of the highest honour of ordination to the priesthood.

With overflowing love for our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and with wholehearted devotion to the Most Holy Mother of all the Churches, you forsook parents, relatives, and friends, and came to the Holy Places, desiring to serve with all your strength and to dedicate your whole self to the All-Holy Shrines of our Lord. These Shrines, being intimately linked with the earthly presence of the Redeemer, continually pour forth grace and bestow divine gifts as rivers of blessing upon those who approach in faith to venerate.

Within a short period in your role as Hierodeacon and Chief Byzantine cantor, at our venerable Patriarchate of Jerusalem, you have ministered in many ways: as Secretary of the Holy and Sacred Synod, as Overseer of the Holy Monastery of Saint Simeon the God-receiver in Katamon, as a teacher at the Patriarchal School and formerly as its Boarding House Director. You have shown exemplary obedience, praiseworthy zeal in the fulfilment of your duties, reverence for your elders, and love for those younger than yourself.

Therefore, even though a short time has passed, you are today, by the grace of the All-Holy Tomb, deemed worthy to enter the second rank of the Holy Priesthood.

I am well aware of the many and varied emotions that now fill your noble soul. Joy and exultation are accompanied by fear and awe, as you are surely conscious of the great responsibility you are about to undertake.

Do not be disheartened, but take courage in Christ, your Benefactor, whom from this day forward you will serve at the Holy Altar. With a humble mind, look upon Him who stretched out His hands upon the Cross in ineffable love for mankind. He is our comfort and our strength; in Him alone do we place our hope. For this reason, strive with your whole life to follow His example, as the sure model and pattern of salvation.

Though your human weakness may incline you to view this undertaking as burdensome, keep ever before your eyes and take to heart the infallible words of the Lord, who speaks with compassion: “For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light” (Matt. 11:30).

Therefore, come forward with a sober mind and a contrite heart, that you may receive, by my unworthy hands, the grace of the Almighty and All-Holy Spirit, who governs and preserves the Church Militant of Christ.

The prayers of His Beatitude our Father and Patriarch, the members of the Holy and Sacred Synod, and all your brethren of the Holy Sepulchre accompany you always, especially in this honourable and sacred moment of your life.

I pray that the Grace of the All-Holy and Life-giving Tomb of our Saviour Jesus Christ may preserve you all the days of your life.”

In reply to His Eminence, the newly ordained Priest read the following address:

“Your Eminence, Holy Metropolitan of Capitolias,

I offer doxology unto the Thrice-Holy God, Who looked upon my infirmity and guided my steps, since the seventh year of my life, into His courts, to the holy city of our Fathers—Jerusalem—and in His mercy vouchsafed me to minister unto the Mother of all the Churches, the ancient and venerable Patriarchate of Jerusalem.

I consider it the greatest gift and honour from God toward my unworthy person that He deemed me worthy to be enrolled in the venerable phalanx of the Sacred Order of the Studious (Spoudaioi) and to bear—unworthily—the appellation of “Hagiotaphite,” that is, to be counted among the members of our Venerable Holy Sepulchre Brotherhood, which for nearly two millennia has borne upon its shoulders, as another three-barred Cross, its threefold mission: vigilant guardianship of the All-Holy Shrines of our blameless Faith, the ministry and service to the pilgrims coming from the ends of the inhabited world, and the pastoral care of the indigenous flock of the Church of Sion.

This same threefold mission of our Brotherhood I now see embracing me, that I may enter into the inner sanctuary of the mystery of godliness and, by the proposal of our Father and Patriarch of the Holy City of Jerusalem, His Beatitude Theophilos III, and with the approval of the Holy and Sacred Synod surrounding him, I may receive by Your most reverend hands the second degree of the sacred priesthood, becoming a celebrant of the “reasonable and bloodless sacrifice which is offered for the life and salvation of the world.”

“What shall I say, and what shall I declare?” “The mystery doth not admit of scrutiny, but is to be received in faith alone.” With fear and trembling, I stand before the Source of our Resurrection, the Most Holy and Life-giving Tomb. I confess that, though from childhood I have desired the priesthood, at this final moment I tremble and am filled with dread, for, as the mouth of grace, the Apostle Paul, said: “And who is sufficient for these things?” and again: “Our sufficiency is of God.” Moreover, “if I dare to enter into the bridal chamber, my garment doth convict me, for it is not of the wedding, and I shall be bound and cast out by the angels.”

Only endless doxologies can my earthly mouth offer unto the Holy God for all His benefactions toward me, especially for the imminent inclusion into the rank of the Presbyters.

At the moment of my ordination by your hands, Your Eminence, I am also called to depart from the Holy City and journey to Jordan, to learn the language and way of life of the Arabic-speaking Rum Orthodox, who have dwelt there for centuries—“that I might be a minister of Jesus Christ unto the Gentiles, ministering the Gospel of God” (Romans 15:16).

With particular joy and readiness of heart, I accept this ministry entrusted unto me, taking as an example You, Your Eminence, recalling the account You gave of Your

response to the ever-memorable Patriarch, His Beatitude Benedictos, when he asked if You wished to be appointed to Jordan. Your answer was: “I am a soldier of the Church, and I go wherever the Patriarch commands.”

With these thoughts, I feel the need to express my profoundest gratitude to His Beatitude, our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem, Theophilos III, and to the Holy and Sacred Synod which surrounds him, for all their benefactions toward my unworthy person up to this day—most significant among them the trust and honour shown unto me, in assigning me to serve for five years as Secretary of the Holy and Sacred Synod.

From the depths of my heart, I also wish to thank all the Fathers and Brothers and Sisters who supported me and helped me throughout the course of my journey thus far, in the various ministries that were assigned to me, surrounding me with particular love. I likewise offer thanks to all those who have shown me their precious love in these recent days since the announcement of my departure for Jordan. I thank them and will humbly pray for them.

I earnestly entreat all those present and partaking at this moment in the Lord’s Mystery of the Divine Eucharist, to pray on my behalf, that the all-working divine Grace, “which ever healeth that which is infirm and completeth that which is lacking”, may overshadow me, strengthen me in this dread ministry of the priestly service, and make me a partaker of the joy of our sweetest Lord Jesus Christ.

I pray, I supplicate, and I entreat the Holy God that, through the intercessions of the All-Immaculate Ever-Virgin Theotokos Mary, of the holy and righteous Simeon the God-Receiver, and of Saint Photini the Samaritan Woman, Equal-to-the-Apostles, He may overlook my transgressions and grant unto my unworthiness that Living Water “springing up into eternal life” (cf. John 4:14), guiding me toward the Jerusalem which is above, unto the Kingdom of Heaven.

Before the eyes of my soul stands the vision of the Prophet Isaiah, when he saw “the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and the house was full of His glory. And seraphim stood round about Him... and one cried unto another and said: Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of Sabaoth; the whole earth is full of His glory” (cf. Isaiah 6:1-3). “And I heard the voice of the Lord saying: Whom shall I send, and who will go unto this people? And I said: Behold, here am I; send me” (Isaiah 6:8).”

The one who had been ordained was heartily acclaimed with cries of “Axios!” by the pious congregation of monks, nuns, and faithful laity, as well as by his devout mother.

Following the Dismissal of the Divine Liturgy, the newly-ordained Priest, Fr Simeon, offered a reception to those who had honoured him at the office of the Elder Sacristan, His Eminence Archbishop Isidoros of Hierapolis.

According to the decision of the Holy and Sacred Synod, the newly ordained will serve in Jordan, while also continuing his training in the Arabic language.



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