12/07/2021

Address at the Ordination to the Priesthood of Protodeacon Rostislav Zadorozhnyy



Beloved Protodeacon Rostislav,

Today, your service to the Lord advances, together with the community of the Slavic Orthodox Vicariate in America. You, Protodeacon, advance to the rank of Presbyter, in imitation of the Presbyters who surround the Throne of God in the Vision of the Book of the Apocalypse.[*] You have served for six years as a deacon, ministering at the Holy Table of the Lord. And although the service of the Diaconate is a complete ministry in and of itself – and is worthy even for a lifetime, if that is the Lord's will – you now enter into more responsibilities for the People of God. Now, you will serve the Divine Mysteries in accordance with the capacity of a Presbyter of the Church. Now, you are called to represent the Hierarch in front of the Holy Table and celebrate the Holy Liturgy. You are called to the awesome labor of invoking the Holy Spirit upon the Gifts of the People, so that they may become the Body and Blood of the Lord. You are called to baptize and increase the family of God.

All of these ministries are reflected in your name, Rostislav, which, as we all know, means "Increase of Glory." But this increase does not belong to us who serve the

Holy Altar. The glory always belongs to the Lord of Glory, Who willingly ascended the Cross for our sakes. We, forever and ever, ascribe all glory, praise and worship to Him. For as we surround the Holy Table, we imitate – by grace – the Celestial Liturgy, as described in the Book of Revelation by Saint John:

Then I looked, and I heard the sound of multitudes of Angels round about the throne, together with the Living Beings and the Presbyters, and the number of Angels must have been thousands upon thousands, even ten thousand times ten thousand. They cried out with a loud voice:

“Worthy is the Lamb, Who was sacrificed, to receive power and abundance, wisdom and strength, honor and glory, and blessing!” [†]

As a Presbyter of the Church, then, dear Father Rostislav, you will join this heavenly throng and add your voice to theirs, as you minister the Holy Liturgy.

Especially for your service to this Vicariate, you will be adorned with special offices of the Church. With your priestly vestments, you will be blessed to wear the kamilavka and a golden pectoral cross. But this is not all.

For you are one of many servants of the Lord in our Slavic Orthodox Vicariate in America. Your brothers in Christ share in this moment of exaltation. Protodeacon Peter Utkin will also be granted the right to serve with the purple kamilavka. And Deacon George A. Hero will be elevated to the rank of Protodeacon. Thus, the entire community partakes of the blessings of this day.

Protodeacon Rostislav – and I address you as “Protodeacon” for the last time – the moment has come for you to fulfill the promise of your ministry and rise to the rank of Presbyter.

Hold fast in your mind and heart the image of the Twenty-Four Heavenly Presbyters arrayed in brilliant robes and crowns, who take their place before the Celestial Throne surrounded by the emerald rainbow.[‡]

You are called to their purity of heart and clarity of vision. Be bold in your ministry, and always trust in the purity and clarity of our Holy Orthodox Faith.

Thus, you will be well-pleasing to the Lord in this lifetime, and be graced to be in His Divine Presence as well in the life to come.

Amen.

[*] Cf. Revelation 4.

[†] Revelation 5:11-12.

[‡] Cf. Revelation 4:2-4.

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