

THE ORDINATION OF DEACONS IN THE EARLY MIDDLE AGES

THE Ordination ceremonies of the Roman rite in the early Middle Ages may be reconstructed from the various *Ordines Romani*,¹ which have come down to us, and from the Roman Sacramentaries.²

The ritual for the Ordination of priests and deacons was simple but it was always performed with great publicity at a solemn station;³ Ordinations were not held every year, but only when necessity arose,⁴ and generally they were celebrated on one of the Saturdays of the Ember weeks:⁵ it seems that up to the fifth century the December Ember Satur-

¹The *Ordines Romani* which describe the Ordination rites are numbers XXXIV to XL of the Corpus edited by Michel Andrieu, the Dean of the Faculty of Theology of the University of Strasbourg. (M. Andrieu, *Les Ordines Romani du haut Moyen Age*, in 5 vols, Louvain, Spicilegium Sacrum Lovaniense). The Ordines which have a reference to this study are: Ordo XXXIV (Andrieu, III, pp. 535-619) of Roman origin; Ordo XXXV (Andrieu, IV, pp. 1-57) of Roman origin; Ordo XXXVI (Andrieu, IV, pp. 113-205) of Gallican origin describing the Roman rites from a Gallican point of view; Ordo XXXVIIA (Andrieu, IV, pp. 209-238) of Gallican origin; Ordo XXXVIIB (Andrieu, IV, pp. 241-54) of German origin; Ordo XXXVIII (Andrieu, IV, pp. 257-69) of German or Gallican origin; Ordo XXXIX (Andrieu, IV, pp. 273-86) of Gallican origin describing the Roman rites for a Gallican church.

²*Sacramentarium Veronense (Leonianum) cura L. C. Mohlberg O. S. B., L. Eisenhofer O. S. B., P. Siffirin O. S. B., editum: textus, glossarium, introductio, indices, tabulae VI, cxv et 453 pp.* (Rerum Ecclesiasticarum documenta cura Pont. Ath. S. Anselmi de Urbe, series maior, fontes I), Herder, Roma, 1958.

The Gelasian Sacramentary edited with introduction, critical notes and appendix by H. A. Wilson, M. A., Oxford, at the Clarendon Press, 1894.

The Gregorian Sacramentary under Charles the Great edited from three manuscripts of the ninth century by H. A. Wilson, London, 1915, Henry Bradshaw Society, vol. XLIX.

³*diaconi veri atque presbyteri nunquam nisi in publici ordinatione* (Ord. XXXVI, 4).

⁴*si necessitas fuerit* (Ordo XXXVIIB)

⁵Ordo XXXV (Andrieu, IV, p. 36) gives the following direction with regard to the date of Ordination: *Mensis primi, quarti, vel septimi seu decimi, sabbatorum die, quaecumque placuerit pontifici infra ipso mense degentem, veniant ad sanctum Petrum ipse electus vel omnis clerus seu populus.* The Ordo recalls the rubric of the Gelasian Sacramentary (ed. Wilson, p. 22): *Mensis primi, quarti, septimi et decimi sabbatorum die in xii lectiones ad sanctum Petrum, ubi missas celebrantur.*

Ordines XXXVIIA and XXXVIIB fix the Ember weeks, while Ordo XXXVIII deals with Ember Saturdays only. These Ordines fix the Ember weeks thus: *In*

day⁶ was preferred though it is very difficult to say what was the reason for this.

Ordinations were held at St Peter's, the stational church for Ember Saturday, and priests and deacons were ordained at the papal altar; but in the twelfth century no Ordinations were held at the papal altar except that of the Pope himself: priests and deacons were ordained in the ora-

*primo mense...in prima hebdomada de mense primo primum jejunium celebratur. Secundum temporis jejunium celebratur in quarto mense in secunda hebdomada... Tertium temporis jejunium septimi mensis...tertia hebdomada ipsius mensis... Quartum temporis jejunium evenit decimi mensis quarta hebdomada...ante natale domini completur: et si vigilia natalis domini in sabbato evenit, in antecedente hebdomada...ieiunium... (celebratur). (Ordo XXXVIII: Andrieu, IV, pp. 249-50). Ember Days are of Roman origin: earlier authorities speak only of a *ieiunium quarti, septimi et decimi mensis*, probably because the *ieiunium primi mensis* was included in that of Lent; in fact, in Rome the traditional Ember week for Spring was the first week of Lent, and that for the Summer Ember days was the week after the feasts of Pentecost.*

This does not agree with the rubrics of the above-mentioned Ordines but perhaps these rubrics were not taken literally. When Ember days were introduced in Gaul the Roman rubrics were taken literally and therefore there arose a divergence between Roman and Gallican observance of Ember days. This divergence was brought to an end by Gregory VII (in 1078) and Urban II (in 1095). Cfr. Andrieu, IV, pp. 213-30; D.A.C.L. XIV, 2014-7).

⁶ From earliest times it was felt that Ordinations should be held only on certain days. In a letter to Dioscorus of Alexandria, Pope Leo the Great, states that Ordinations are to be held *post diem sabbati eius noctis quae in prima sabbati lucescit... ut his qui consecrandi sunt numquam benedictio nisi in die resurrectionis dominicae tribuatur*. Some have understood these words as allowing Ordinations only at the vigil Mass of Easter; others as allowing Ordinations on a Sunday vigil: this is corroborated by another letter of Leo, writing to Anastasius of Thessalonica, in which he objects to the practice of limiting to Sundays the Ordinations of bishops only, while priests and deacons were being ordained on any day — this, he says, is *contra canones et traditiones patrum* (Smith-Cheetham, Dictionary of Christian Antiquities, II, p. 1516, John Murray, London, 1908).

Half a century later Pope Gelasius in a letter to the bishops of Lucania and Sicily, insists that Ordinations of priests and deacons are to be held only *quarti mensis ieiunio, septimi et decimi, sed etiam quadragesimalis initii, ac medianae quadragesimae die sabbati ieiunio circa vespas*. This rule which is found under the title *Synodale quem accipit episcopus*, is found in the *Liber Diurnus Pontificum Romanorum* (Smith Cheetham, II, pp. 983-4) with an addition referring to the Ember Days of March: *ieiunii primi, quarti, etc.* The same rule is found in Ordo XXXIV (Andrieu, III, p. 610): *Ordinationes si feceris, aptis temporibus fac, id est primi, quarti, septimi et decimi mensis*. There is no reference here to the *initium quadragesimae* or the *medianae quadragesimae*.

In Rome the Ember Saturday in December was preferred, and according to the *Liber Pontificalis*, up till the end of the fifth century all Ordinations took place *per mens. decemb.* Pope Simplicius (468-483) was the first to go against this custom of the Roman Church: of him the *Liber Pontificalis* says that he held Ordinations *per mens. decemb. et febr.* From this time up till the end of the

tory of St Andrew.⁷ At first the Ordination Mass was celebrated during the night between Saturday and Sunday; later on the celebration was transferred to the evening, and, in the eighth century, to the afternoon: finally it was held in the morning.⁸

The candidates for Ordination, previously chosen by the Pope, on the Monday preceding their Ordination, had to present themselves before the Pope and the four highest dignitaries of the Roman Church to take

eight century about 12 Popes out of 48 did not hold Ordinations only in December. Righetti (*Storia Liturgica*, vol. IV, p. 262, note 48) notes that the phrase *fecit ordinationes per mens. decemb.* is also said of Popes (v.g. Eusebius and Mark in the fourth cent.) whose very short pontificate did not include the month of December.

Ordo XXXV (Andrieu, IV, p. 36) which belongs to the beginning of the tenth cent. leaves the fixing of the date of Ordinations at the Pope's discretion: any Ember Saturday *qualecumque placuerit pontifici*.

⁷The Gelasian Sacramentary and Ordines XXXIV and XXXVI clearly imply that the Ordinations of priests and deacons were held at the main altar of St Peter's — *ad sanctum Petrum*. The twelfth century custom is mentioned by Benedictus Canonicus who described the rites of Ember Saturday (c. 1140-3), and by Petrus Mallius, a canon of St Peter's who lived about the same time, and who ascribes the custom to Gregory the Great: *descendit pontifex ab altari et vadit ad sanctum Andream; ibi facit consecrationem. Facta consecratione revertitur ad altare quia ad hoc altar nulla consecratio debet fieri nisi de Romano pontifice* (Benedictus Canonicus, *De ordine romano*, n. 11 in Andrieu, IV, p. 127).

The oratory of St Andrew, consecrated by Pope Symmachus, was the second of two rotundas which flanked the Constantinian basilica on the south side: these rotundas were joined to the basilica by an oblong vestibule at the extreme end of the southern part of the transept: it is marked in Alfano's plan of the basilica (D. A. C. L. XIV, 2862).

This tradition is referred to also in the *caerimoniale* composed by A. Patricius Piccolomini at the time of Innocent VIII (1484-92): *Quando Papa aliquos vult ordinare publice in sancto Petro consuevit actus ordinationis et consecrationis facere in cappella sancti Andreae, vel alia, et reliquum missae finire ad altare sancti Petri* (quoted in Andrieu, IV, p. 128). The *cappella sancti Andreae* is not the old rotunda, but the chapel erected by Pius II in 1462 over the ancient chapel of St Gregory, marked 85 in Alfano's plan.

⁸At the time of Pope Leo the Great, when the Sunday service commenced with the night vigil from Saturday evening, Ordinations were held either on Saturday night or on Sunday morning: this is clear from what St Leo states in his letter to Dioscorus of Alexandria, on the 21st July 445: *post diem sabbati, eius noctis quae in prima sabbati lucescit exordia delignantur, in quibus his qui consecrandi sunt ieiunis et a ieiunantibus sacra benedictio conferatur. Quod eiusdem observantiae erit, si mane ipso dominico die, continuato sabbati ieiunio, celebretur...*

The Ordines themselves give different times for the commencement of the Ordination Mass: Ordo XXXV (first half of the tenth century) has *hora diei octava*; Ordo XXXVIIA (first half of the ninth cent.) has *hora tertia, vel qualivoluerit*; Ordo XXXVIII (tenth cent.) has *mense martio...; hora sexta, mense iunio... hora quarta*. Ordo XXXIX (end of the eighth cent.) has *hora vii*. The tendency to change the hour of the Ordination Mass from the afternoon to the morning is evident.

an oath on the relics of the saints that they had never committed the four heinous crimes prohibited by the sacred canons.⁹

On the following Wednesday the people and the clergy of the various regions of the city assembled at St Hadrian's,¹⁰ and from there the Pope with his court, accompanied by the faithful, went in procession to St Mary Major for the celebration of the Mass of the day. During the celeb-

⁹Ordo XXXIX, I (Andrieu, IV, p. 283): *Primitus enim, secunda feria in hebdomada, quando XII lectiones debent fieri, vocat pontifex electos et iurant ante eum super reliquias sanctorum, adstante primicerio et secundicerio et archidiacono et archipresbytero et cui voluerit, de IIII capitula quod canones prohibent.* This oath *de IIII capitula* was also required from candidates for the subdiaconate, according to Ordo XXXIV where they are clearly explained (Andrieu, III, p. 607): *de quattuor capitulis secundum canones id est: arsenoquia, quod est masculo (sodomy); pro ancilla Dei sacrata, quae a Francis nonnata dicitur (violation of a consecrated virgin); pro IIII pedes (bestiality) et pro muliere viro alio coniuncta aut si coniugem habuit ex alio viro quod a Graecis dicitur deuterogamia (adultery).* These four heinous sins could only be remitted through public penance, but they were not the only ones; public penance was an impediment for Holy Orders since earliest times: various Popes mention this rule, among whom we might quote Pope Sixicius (a. 385): *post paenitentiam ac reconciliationem nulli unquam laico liceat honorem clericatus adipisci* (Ep. ad Himerium Tarracon.). One might therefore ask why candidates for Holy Orders were questioned only about four sins and not about all those sins which were remitted only after public penance. Duchesne (*Christian Worship*, S.P.C.K., London 1904, p. 354, note) suggests that the interrogatories preliminary to Ordination go back to a time when Baptism was received at an adult age, and that it had not in view the present condition of the conscience of the candidate, but his conduct before having received Baptism. While proclaiming the remission of sins, however heinous they might be, by virtue of the sacrament of Baptism the Church might have special requirements in the cases of persons who intended to take Orders. There is no text to prove this conjecture, which, if true, would show that these interrogatories belonged to very early times. Andrieu (vol. III, pp. 550-3) notes that the interdictions consequent on public penance remained long after public penance had fallen into disuse; he therefore suggests that these interrogatories were introduced in the sixth century when the old penitential discipline was no longer in use: it was the means to debar from Holy Orders those who had fallen into the most heinous crimes.

¹⁰Pope Honorius (625-38) adapted the hall of the senatorial Curia to be used as a church which he dedicated to St Hadrian, a martyr of Nicomedia. During the fascist regime the church was dismantled so that the remains of the Curia should come to light again.

In the MS of Ordo XXXVI in the Vatican Library (cod. lat. 3833) instead of St Hadrian's we have the *basilica apostolorum tituli Eudoxiae*, i.e. the Basilica of St Peter ad vincula which towards the middle of the fifth century was already known as *titulus apostolorum*. The Ordo of Benedictus Canonicus (twelfth cent.) has the same indication: *fit collecta ad sanctum Petrum ad Vincula in Eudoxia*. Eudoxia is the empress who contributed funds for the erection of the basilica to house St Peter's chains during the pontificate of Pope Sixtus III (432-40).

ration of the Mass the candidates, *induti planitas*,¹¹ would be standing in *presbyterio* facing the people so that they might be well seen and identified by the faithful. After the second collect¹² of the Mass the names of the candidates for Ordination were read to the people who were invited to declare whether they were worthy or not. A lector or *scrinarius*,¹³ for three times, announced:

Cognoscat fraternitas vestra quia ille et ille advocantur in tali vel tali officio. Si quis habet contra hos viros aliquam querellam exeat confidenter propter Deum et dicat. Memor sit tamen omnino communionis suae.¹⁴

If no objection was raised with regard to their worthiness they moved to the left side of the altar after the epistle had been read and the

¹¹Ordo XXXIX, 4 (Andrieu, IV, p. 283). The *planeta* was the vestment common to all clerics; acolytes taking part in the stational Mass were vested with it. On Ordination day, just before the bishop questioned the faithful on the worthiness of the candidates, the archdeacon would unvest them of their *planeta*: *psallitur gradale, deinde exiit ipse subdiaconus planeta a diacono* (Ordo XXXIV, 6; Andrieu, III, p. 605). The candidates for the diaconate would remain standing in front of the bishop vested in white albs and holding the *orarium* in their hands.

¹²In the Roman Liturgy the Mass must once have had three lessons regularly, as it still has on certain of the older liturgical days (Ember Wednesday, Wednesday in the fourth week in Lent, Wednesday and Friday in Holy Week). The longer series of readings on Saturday of Ember Week, on the other hand, is the remains of an ancient vigil service. The ancient tradition had on these days twelve lessons.

The formularies on these days are therefore given the following heading in the liturgical books of the earlier Middle Ages: *Sabbato in duodecim lectionibus*. (Jungmann, *Missarum Sollemnia*, vol. I, p. 396, Benzinger Brothers, 1950).

The second collect of the Mass is that preceding the second lesson, which was read after the bishop (when Ordinations were being held on the following Saturday) had questioned the faithful on the candidates for Ordination (Ordo XXXVI, 6-10; Andrieu, IV, pp. 196-7).

¹³Ordo XXXVI has *lector*, Ordo XXXIX has *scrinarius*. *Lector* here must be taken in a generic sense, for the person charged with the reading of the names of the candidates for Ordination. The actual title of such a person is *scrinarius*. The *scrinarii* had charge of the archives of the Church of Rome, they wrote the Pope's letter, drew up official documents, etc; besides it was their duty also to read publicly all solemn proclamations. (Andrieu, IV, p. 274).

¹⁴The formula is still found in our Pontifical, but with a slight change in the concluding words: *memor sit conditionis suae* instead of *communiois suae*. It is difficult to give a reason for such change. Righetti (*Storia Liturgica*, IV, p. 297) says that some refer it to the excommunication once incurred when making a false declaration, others (more reasonably) to the reverential fear a layman ought to have before saying anything against the honour of a cleric. This shows, continues Righetti, that Rome, so alien to certain old forms of popular elections, had reduced the questioning to a secondary function, as a mere guarantee in the case of guilty or unworthy candidates.

gradual sung, and there they remained till the end of the Mass.

The same thing was done on the following Friday during the stational Mass at the Church of the Holy Apostles, below the Quirinal.

On Ordination day, it was the Pope himself who questioned the faithful with regard to the worthiness of the candidates. The Gelasian Sacramentary¹⁵ has preserved for us the words of the Pope to the faithful. He said: *Auxiliante Domino Deo et Salvatore nostro Jesu Christo*; and immediately added:

Auxiliante Domino Deo et Salvatore nostro Jesu Christo elegimus in ordine diaconii sive presbyterii illum subdiaconum sive diaconum de titulo illum. Si quis autem habet aliquid contra hos viros, pro Deo et propter Deum cum fiducia exeat et dicat. Verumtamen memor sit communionis suae.

Since early times the faithful have been questioned with regard to the worthiness of the candidates for Ordination, and this is still done today.¹⁶

The Ordination rite of priests and deacons immediately preceded the chant after which the Gospel was read. The same thing happens today but in the early centuries it was different: priests and deacons were ordained after the dismissal of the catechumens as soon as the 'Oratio fidelium' had been said.¹⁷

On Ordination day, the Pope, with his clergy and the faithful and the candidates for Ordination, proceeded in procession to St Peter's at a convenient hour, 'laetanium cantando'.¹⁸ The Pope went to the sacristy while the candidates for Ordination proceeded to the 'presbyterium'. As soon as the Pope gave the sign the schola intoned the 'antiphona ad introi-

¹⁵ Ed. Wilson, p. 22. Also Ordo XXXVI, 16 (Andrieu, IV, p. 197): *deinde apostolicus legit ipse advocacionis brevem coram populo.*

¹⁶ The testimony of the faithful is still asked for by the bishop immediately before he begins the Ordination rite, but this only as a part of the rite itself: the actual testimony of the faithful is asked for by means of banns in the candidates' parish and in other churches according to C.J.C. 998.

¹⁷ Rightetti suggests that the reason for the change was that there were no longer any motives for having Ordinations during the sacrificial Mass, as the presence of catechumens and pagans was no longer to be feared. The Council of Laodicea in the fourth century had prohibited the holding of Ordinations *in conspectu audientium*, but in the early Middle Ages the *disciplina arcani* had long ago fallen into disuse. The solemn *oratio fidelium*, since the time of Pope Gelasius (492-6) had been transferred to the beginning of the didactic Mass and underwent a great change at the time of Gregory the Great (Jungmann, *Missarum Sollemnia*, I, part III, n. 9).

¹⁸ The description we have here is that of the beginning of the Mass as celebrated in Rome in the earlier Middle Ages, a full description of which is found in Ordo I (Andrieu, II, pp. 67-108). The description given here is that found in Ordo XXXVI, 13-16 (Andrieu, IV, p. 197) and in Ordo XXXV, 16-21 (Andrieu, IV, pp. 36-7).

tum' and the Pope proceeded to the altar, where, as soon as he arrived, he prostrated himself 'super orarium quod expansum est ab archipara-fonista' until the chant ended. Rising up he kissed the altar and the Gospel book, and then, supported by the deacon, he went to the throne from where he sang the collect of the day. The Kyrie was not sung immediately after the introit but later on, just before the Ordination rite began.¹⁹ The lesson (or lessons) with the responsory was read, then the epistle; after this the Pope left his throne and went to the altar. Meanwhile the candidates for Ordination were standing 'ad rugas altaris',²⁰ those receiving the diaconate vested in white albs and holding the orarium²¹ in their hands. As soon as the Pope arrived at the altar he turned towards the faithful and called himself the candidates for Ordination mentioning them by name and indicating the region of the city from which they came and their title.²² The archdeacon led the first of the candidates called by hand to the altar, and the others followed. It seems that at this moment the Pope questioned the people with regard to the worthiness of the

¹⁹ Ordo XXXIV, 8 says that the *Kyrie Eleison* is to begin after the Pope invites the people to pray for the candidates (*Oremus dilectissimi*). Ordo XXXV, 23 says that after the invitation for prayer *incoat schola litaniam*. The Kyrie of the Mass is what remains of a primitive litany (Jungmann, vol. I, part 3, no 9). At Ordination Mass it was omitted at the beginning and substituted by the litany before the Ordination rite began.

²⁰ The *rugae* are metal 'cancelli' or screens of the more sacred parts of the church with their doors and gratings, often made of silver or even gold. (Smith-Cheetham, II, p. 1822; Andrieu, III, p. 604, note 4).

²¹ It is rather difficult to say what is indicated by the word 'orarium', whether the stole, or merely the ancient *sudarium* as Duchesne suggests (*Christian worship*, p. 390-1). Ordines XXXV and XXXVI do not even agree as to its nature: Ordo XXXVI considers it to be a characteristic vestment of the deacon who is vested with it and with the dalmatic by the archdeacon as soon as he is ordained; while Ordo XXXV (which is of a later date) mentions that subdeacons, at the moment their Ordination to the diaconate begins, stand vested in a white alb and with their orarium in their hand (Ordo XXXV, 23), but then it does not mention the orarium at all when speaking of the vesting of the new deacons by the archdeacon. The stole is of Gallican origin and appears in Rome only in the twelfth century. The term *orarium* in the writings of the earlier Middle Ages has sometimes indicated the stole, at other times the *sudarium* and even sometimes the *pallium*. We might suggest that, considering everything, the *orarium* at Rome was a vestment (worn also by acolytes and subdeacons as well as by superior Orders) and that its place was under the outer garment, whether dalmatic or *planet*: it was merely the ancient *sudarium* (Duchesne, l.c.). The *orarium* mentioned in Ordo XXXVI is the stole, but this Ordo though substantially Roman has been rewritten by a Gallican clerk who introduced a few interpolations (cfr Andrieu, IV, pp. 129-39, 186-7).

²² Ordo XXXIX, 19 (Andrieu, IV, p. 284) gives us the formula for the calling of the candidates for the priesthood: *Talis presbyter, regionis tertiae, titulo tale, ille*. That for candidates for the diaconate must have been similar.

candidates, and then he invited all to pray for them saying:

*Oremus dilectissimi fratres, Deum Patrem Omnipotentem, ut super hunc famulum tuum Ill. quem in sacro ordine diaconatus dignatur adsumere benedictionis suae gratiam clementer infundat eique donum consecrationis indulgeat per quod eum ad praemia aeterna perducat.*²³

Then all prostrated themselves, the Pope 'coram altari cum diaconis', 'ceteris consecrandis humiliter post pontificem super tapetia prostratis orantibusque suppliciter largitorem consecrationum'. The schola intoned the litany, and when the *Agnus Dei* was chanted all rose and the Pope said a prayer and a consecratory canon.

The prayer, which is different in each of the three Sacramentaries,²⁴ must be considered as the conclusion of the collective prayer to which

²³ The prayer is as reported in *Ordo XXXV*, 22. It is slightly different from that of *Ordo XXXIV* which has no mention of the Order being conferred. It runs as follows: *Oremus... famulum suum quem ad sacro ordine dignatur adsumere, benedictionis suae...* This is in agreement with the Gregorian Sacramentary which has *quem in sacrum ordinem dignatur adsumere*.

The Leonian and Gelasian Sacramentaries have a different wording: *Oremus... ut super hos famulos tuos quos ad officium diaconii vocare dignatur benedictionem gratiae suae clementer effundat et consecrationis indulgentiae propitius dona conservet*.

²⁴ The Leonian Sacramentary gives four formulas in succession; (a) a prayer for divine aid: *Domine Deus preces nostras clementer exaudi: ut quae nostro sunt gerenda servitio, tuo prosequaris benignus auxilio; et quos sacris ministeriis exequentis pro nostra intelligentia credimus offerendos, tua potius electione iustifices: per.* (b) the invitation *Oremus dilectissimi...* (c) a prayer which would be the collective prayer to which the faithful have been invited: *Deus conlator sacrarum magnifice dignitatum, quaesumus, ut hos famulos tuos, quos ad officium levitarum vocare digneris, altaris sancti ministerium tribuas sufficienter implere, cunctisque donis gratiae redundantes et fiduciam sibi tuae maiestatis adquirere, et aliis praebere facias perfectae devotionis exemplum: per.* (d) the consecratory prayer *Adesto*. (Eisenhofer-Siffrin-Mohlberg, *Sacramentarium Veronense*, 948-51).

The Gelasian Sacramentary has first the invitation *Oremus dilectissimi*, then under the title *sequitur oratio* the first prayer of the Leonian *Domine Deus preces nostras*, and finally under the title *Consecratio* there is the prayer *Adesto*. (Wilson, p. 26).

The Gregorian Sacramentary as *Orationes ad ordinandum diaconum* has the invitation *Oremus dilectissimi*, followed by the prayer *Exaudi, domine, preces nostras et super hunc famulum tuum spiritum tuae benedictionis emitte, ut, caelestii munere ditatus, et tuae gratiam possit maiestatis adquirere et bene vivendi aliis exemplum praebere. per.* Then the consecratory prayer *Adesto*. (Wilson, p. 7)

In our Pontifical the prayer immediately preceding the consecratory prayer *Adesto* consists of the invitation *Oremus dilectissimi* as found in the Leonian Sacramentary, joined to the first prayer of the Leonian Sacramentary (*Domine Deus*) *preces nostras...* with a slight change towards the end: *offerendos, sua benedictione sanctificet et confirmet*.

the faithful had been invited by the Pope before the litany was intoned.

Immediately afterwards, the following consecratory canon, which is common to the three Sacramentaries and is also found in our Pontifical, was said:

Adesto, quaesumus, omnipotens Deus, honorum datur, ordinum distributor officiorumque dispositor. Qui in te manens innovas omnia, et cuncta disponis per verbum, virtutem sapientiamque tuam Jesum Christum filium tuum dominum nostrum, sempiterna providentia praeparas et singulis quibusque temporibus aptanda dispensas. Cuius corpus ecclesiam tuam, caelestium gratiarum varietate distinctam suorumque connexam discretione membrorum, per legem totius mirabilem compaginis unitam, in augmentum templi tui crescere dilatarique largiris; sacri muneris servitatem trinis gradibus ministrorum nomini tuo militare constituens electis ab initio Levi filiis, qui mysticis operationibus domus tuae fidelibus excubiis permanentes, hereditatem benedictionis aeternae sorte perpetua possiderent. Super hos quoque famulos tuos, quaesumus, domine, placatus intende, quos tuis sacriis servituros in officium diaconii suppliciter dedicamus. Et nos quidem tamquam homines divini sensus et summae rationis ignari, horum vitam quantum possumus aestimamus. Te autem domine, quae nobis sunt ignota non transeunt, te occulta non fallunt. Tu cognitor peccatorum, tu scrutator es animarum, tu veraciter in eis caeleste potes adhibere iudicium, et vel indignis donare quod poscimus. Emitte in eos, domine, quaesumus, Spiritum Sanctum, quo in opus ministerii fideliter exequendi munere ~~sepiiformis~~ tuae gratiae roborentur. Abundet in eis totius forma virtutis, auctoritas modesta, pudor constans, innocentiae puritas et spiritalis observantia disciplinae. In moribus eorum praecepta tua fulgeant, ut suae castitatis exemplo imitationem sanctae plebis adquirant, et bonum conscientiae testimonium praeferentes in Christo firmi et stabiles perseverent, dignisque successibus de inferiori gradu per gratiam tuam capere potiora mereantur.²⁵

The consecratory prayer was certainly accompanied by the imposition of hands, though only one Ordo²⁶ makes a reference to it, without giving

²⁵The consecratory prayer is substantially the same in all the three sacramentaries: there are only minor differences in the text. The prayer is also found in our Pontifical with a slight change towards the middle part of the prayer which on our Pontifical runs as follows: *Tu cognitor es secretorum, tu scrutator es cordium. Tu horum vitam coelesti poteris examinare iudicio quo semper praevalēs, et admissa purgare, et ea, quae sunt agenda, concedere.*

²⁶*Singillatim imponens manus capitibus eorum et benedictet eos* (Ordo XXXVI, 18).

any hint at which moment this took place, whether before the consecratory prayer or during it as in our Pontifical. The Pope alone, 'quia non ad sacerdotium sed ad ministerium consecratur', imposed his hands on each single candidate. This imposition of hands was traditional in the Roman Church and is clearly mentioned both in the *Traditio Apostolica* of Hippolytus,²⁷ and in the *Statuta Ecclesiae antiqua*.²⁸ St Jerome, besides, clearly states that the power of order is given not by the consecratory prayer alone, but also by the imposition of hands.²⁹

This consecratory prayer recalls the wording and style of Leo the Great and may perhaps with great probability be attributed to him. An earlier consecratory prayer has been preserved for us in the *Traditio Apostolica*.³⁰ With this prayer the Ordination rite of the diaconate comes to an end: in the Ordines there is no reference at all to the conferment of the stole and of the Gospel book: these were later additions to the old Roman rite and are of Gallican origin.³¹

²⁷ *Diaconus vero cum ordinatur, eligitur secundum ea quae praedicta sunt, similiter imponens manus episcopus solus. Sicuti et praecipimus in diacono ordinando solus episcopus imponat manus propterea quia non in sacerdotio ordinatur sed in ministerio episcopi, ut faciat ea quae ab ipso iubentur; non est enim particeps consilii in clero, sed curas agens et indicans episcopo quae oportet. (Traditio Apostolica, ed. Botes, Sources Chretiennes, II).*

²⁸ *Diaconus cum ordinatur solus episcopus, qui eum benedicit, manus suas super caput eius ponat, quia non ad sacerdotium, sed ad ministerium consecratur. (Andrieu, III, p. 617).*

²⁹ *Plerique nostrorum χερσποτονίαν id est ordinationem clericorum, quae non solum ad imprecationem vocis, sed ad impositionem impletur manus (ne scilicet, ut in quibusdam risimus, vocis imprecatio clandestina clericos ordinet nescientes) sic intellegunt, ut assumant testimonium Pauli scribentis ad Timotheum (I Tim, 5, 22): Manus cito nemini imposueris (Comm. in Isaiam, l. 16, c. 58, 10; P.L. XXIV, 591).*

³⁰ The prayer runs as follows: *Deus qui creasti omnia et Verbo praeordinasti, Pater Domini Nostri Jesu Christi, quem misisti ministrare tuam voluntatem et manifestare tuum desiderium, da Spiritum Sanctum gratiae et sollicitudinis et industriae in hunc servum tuum quem elegisti ministrare ecclesiae tuae et offerre...* The prayer seems incomplete; in fact both the eight Book of the Apostolic Constitutions and its Epitome give the concluding part of the prayer: on the altar what is there offered by the bishops, whom you have appointed to glorify Thee, so that, serving you in this Order, without dishonour and in purity, he may be found worthy through your grace of a higher degree, praising you through your Son Jesus Christ Our Lord, through Whom you have with Him Glory, Power, Virtue and Honour with the Holy Ghost now and forever. Amen. This prayer was composed at a time when there were no fixed formulas, and each bishop could compose his own prayer-formulas if so inspired as long as these formulas were correct and orthodox (cfr Righetti, IV, p. 295-6).

³¹ This happened when a Romano-German Pontifical compiled at Mainz about 950 – the basic model of today's Pontificale Romanum – found its way to Lucca and Rome (cfr Andrieu, I, part III, chp. 5).

After the consecratory prayer the archdeacon vested the newly ordained deacons with the dalmatic and the orarium;³² then the new deacons, after giving the kiss of peace to the Pope and the clergy, went to stay at the right hand side of the Pope. The proper Gospel of the day was sung by the new deacons and then the Mass was continued 'more solito'.

This vesting by the archdeacon was only for those deacons serving the Church in Rome, the 'diaconi cardinales'; the other deacons, the 'forenses' or 'parrocchiani',³³ left as soon as the consecratory prayer had been said. At the Communion only the diaconi cardinales received it; for how could those receive communion at the altar, at which they had not got the permission to minister? asks the compiler of Ordo XXXV.³⁴

When the Ordination Mass came to an end, each newly ordained deacon returned to his church preceded by 'stratores dominicos duos', who all along would say: 'Tali diacono sanctus Petrus elegit'. And all the clergy who followed the new deacon to his home acclaimed him and he invited his friends to dinner with him.³⁵

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³²Ordo XXXVI, 19 says that the archdeacon takes the oraria from the altar on which they have lain from the day before. We have already suggested that this is a Gallican interpolation, and therefore there is no contradiction with Ordo XXXV which says that the candidates for the diaconate hold the orarium in their hands. The orarium of Ordo XXXV is not the orarium of Ordo XXXVI. In Rome the vestment proper for the deacon was the dalmatic; it was the prerogative of the Roman deacons. In fact only the *diaconi cardinales* i.e. the seven regional deacons received it solemnly on their Ordination day; the other deacons, the *diaconi forenses* were not vested with it.

³³The distinction between the *diaconi cardinales* and the *diaconi forenses* is only mentioned in Ordo XXXVIII, 5-6 (Andrieu, IV, p. 250). The diaconi cardinales were seven, one for each of the seven ecclesiastical regions in which Rome was divided. The *diaconi parrocchiani* or *forenses* were the deacons to the various churches of the city.

³⁴*Forenses vero presbyteri vel diaconi nec ad sedem accedunt ad communionem percipiendum, nec super altare communicant. Et quomodo potest fieri ut super illud communicent, ubi licentiam non habent ministrare nec corpus domini consecrare?* (Ordo XXXV, 36).

³⁵*Similiter et diaconi habent stratores dominicos duos, qui antecedunt eos clamando et dicendo: Tali diacono sanctus Petrus elegit. Et respondit cunctus clerus, qui eum sequitur similiter usque in domum suam. Et ipse aepulat cum amicis suis.* (Ordo XXXIX, 31).