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Minor Orders
Office of the Doorkeeper – Part I

Overview of Minor Orders

The Apostolic Guardian Church of Grace and Blessing is organized around an initiatic degree structure which encourages (but does not require) members to participate in the Minor Orders as an aid to their spiritual growth.

Minor Orders are not of Apostolic origin and are not universally recognized. What does this mean? It means the Minor Orders have developed and evolved over time and due to various traditions and are not directly traceable to the teachings of the Master Jesus or his Apostles. Some Churches use them, some don't. Some Churches use one version, some another.

The Minor Orders have many names. In the Apostolic Guardian Church of Grace and Blessing, the Minor Orders are offered in four degrees (often called Offices) which may be thought of as levels of spiritual apprenticeship. For convenience, these 4 degrees (or Offices) are called by their ancient and symbolic names of:

1. Office of Doorkeeper
2. Office of Reader
3. Office of Exorcist, and
4. Office of Acolyte.

Although the focus of work of the Minor Orders is primarily for personal spiritual growth, those who have received *all four* of the Minor Orders are also considered to be clergy of the Apostolic Guardian Church (not of any other Church) and may assist (if they are invited and if they so desire) in the

celebration of Mass (at the discretion of the officiating Priest or Bishop), but they have no obligation to pursue an active ministry, nor are they authorized to do so.

Each Candidate for Minor Orders progresses through a series of mentored studies and practices. Those who satisfactorily complete the requirements for all four Minor Orders may, if they so desire, apply to receive training in the Major Orders of Deacon, Priest, and Bishop. However, *completion of Minor Orders does not automatically guarantee acceptance into the Major Orders.*

The Symbolic Role of Doorkeeper

Historically, it was the duty of the Doorkeeper to ring the church bells and open the doors of the church at appointed times. Today these duties are seen as mostly symbolic. The primary focus of the Doorkeeper in the Apostolic Guardian Church is to:

1. Meditate and reflect on his/her relationship with God (*see Reflections on God section below*).
2. Meditate and reflect on his/her relationship with Christ (*materials to follow*).
3. Meditate and reflect on his/her relationship with the Holy Mother (*materials to follow*).
4. Open the doors of the Heart in service to others.
5. Meditate and contemplate on the 'door' as a symbol at least 5-6 times.
6. Invite others to worship by the force of his/her good example. Just as the Doorkeeper of days past rang the bell to summon those to worship, so does the Doorkeeper of today invite by example.
7. Complete work related to The Law of Acceptance and The Law of Forgiveness.

Part I Assignments

1. **Write a detailed one-to-two page summary of your thoughts, feelings, and experiences regarding the Reflections on God section below.**
2. **Write a detailed one-page summary of your meditation, contemplation, and reflections on the 'door' as a symbol. Include dates and times of meditation.**

Study for each section of the Office of the Doorkeeper is expected to take about 7-10 days. Timely, thorough, and satisfactory completion of all assignments is necessary for further advancement. After assignments for each section are

submitted, reviewed, and approved, the next set of materials will be sent. Those who satisfactorily complete all sections may be invited to proceed with the Office of the Doorkeeper—Rite of Dedication.

Reflections on God

This is the first “reflection” paper in the Order of the Doorkeeper. The ideas presented here are not necessarily “truth.” They are not being offered as rigid dogma or specific articles of faith. Instead, these reflections are offered as conversational hypotheses between spiritual friends—friends who think for themselves, have their own experiences, and who share a common thirst for Love and Wisdom.

Everything that exists has a location within the infinite bounds of space—every galaxy, every star, every solar system, every planet, and every living thing. Space is the only container big enough to contain all that exists and all of space is contained within the One God in Who all live, move, and their our being.

There is no space or place where God is not. There is no place that contains more of God than any other place. All places are Holy. God is omnipresent and is everywhere all the time.

God is in everything and everything is in God. Everything is alive! Everything is sacred! Everything is enrolled in the school of evolution. God dwells in the heart of each star, each planet, each person, each animal, and each tree or flower as their sense of I AM-ness. God dwells in all from the tiniest atom to the greatest sun.

All things are part of and expressions of the only One that is. All are part of God and no one or no thing can be apart from God. Separation from God is impossible. It is only the illusion of separation that makes it possible for God to be thought of as a separate object. Since God is all-pervading Spirit, no individual can be closer to God than any other, but there can be differences in the awareness and recognition of this nearness.

There is only One God, the Eternal Only Being. God is God of all gods, Light of all lights, Life of all lives, Love of all loves. God is much too big to fit into the container of one religion or even the combination of all religions. No religion is the “one true” religion.

God is complete, needs nothing, wants nothing, lacks nothing, doesn't get mad or seek revenge, punishes no one, and loves all unconditionally.

That which "sees" and is "seen" and the act of "seeing" itself are One. Knower, known, and knowing are Trinitarian aspects of the One.

God communicates with everyone all the time through their thoughts, feelings, images, dreams, experiences, other people, animals, books, movies, etc. But is there listening?

God is the "Still Small Voice" within. Do what helps to remember whether it be saying a Rosary, kissing a stone, bowing five times a day to the east, chanting a vowel, or beating a drum. Do whatever it takes to remember.

God is the Ultimate Friend, who loves all and would never violate free will or condemn to eternal damnation.

The Kingdom of Heaven lies all around. In God all live, move, and have their being. All are "Sons and Daughters of the Most High."

God is in everything and then some! Yet, after all is said, any description of God is pure heresy.

Blessings!

+Timothy