

GENERAL MEMORANDUM

HOLY ORDERS CONFERRED “PER SALTUM” AND THE ECCLESIA APOSTOLICA DIVINORUM MYSTERIORUM

1. The Catholic Church in its earliest years occasionally practised the conferral of Holy Orders “per saltum” (literally: by a leap), whereby a person may be ordained to a higher order without firstly receiving a lower order, so that a person may, for example, receive the priesthood without first having received the diaconate, without this fact in itself being grounds for considering the ordination to be invalid.
2. The practice of ordination *per saltum* is not endorsed by the current Roman Catholic Code of Canon Law and there is no known example of its use in the Roman Catholic Church in the modern era, nor in the Old Catholic Church or the Liberal Catholic Church throughout their histories to Our knowledge. Its use has been justified in the Anglican Communion (e.g. by C.B. Moss) for historical reasons that arise from the influence of Protestant theories of ordination within that communion in the sixteenth and seventeenth-centuries.
3. The practice of ordination *per saltum* is specifically proscribed in Titulus VIII, Cap. 5 of the Glastonbury Confession, where it is stated by Mar Georgius, Metropolitan of Glastonbury, to be unlawful, to wit, “We believe that no man may be lawfully promoted to any Order unless and until he hath already received all the other Orders inferior thereto, the interstices, and other requirements of the sacred canons, being duly observed; wherefor we utterly reject the practice of ordination *per saltum*.” While this document is not binding on Our communion, We nevertheless endorse its teaching on this aspect of the sacramental life.
4. A distinction is made between the three Major Orders of Deacon, Priest and Bishop, which are of Divine institution, and the Minor Orders (the Clericature, Ostiariate, Lectoriate, Exorcistate, Acolytate and Subdiaconate), which are of ecclesiastical institution. It is desirable that a candidate should receive the Minor Orders, which offer spiritual preparation as well as discharging valuable ministries within the Church, and it is the normal practice of Our communion that all candidates do so. But no person who has received the Major Orders without having first received the Minor Orders is at any material disadvantage thereby; nor does any default in this respect have the least effect upon the validity of the Major Orders when they are conferred with the correct form, matter and intent.
5. Where the practice of conferral *per saltum* may have occurred in respect of bishops who were among Our predecessors in the Apostolic Succession, whether in the Anglican Communion or elsewhere, we hold

that such successions, while they may be of ecumenical value with respect to the communions concerned, should not be relied upon for the purposes of sacramental validity. The principal lines of Apostolic Succession of the Ecclesia Apostolica Divinorum Mysteriorum that derive from the Roman Catholic Church are not impaired in this manner.

6. The Ecclesia Apostolica Divinorum Mysteriorum, while being mindful of the validity of sacraments *ex opere operatum*, nevertheless holds that a purely mechanistic view of the sacrament of Holy Order that stretches this principle beyond its logical limits would place it in a position where it would be forced to assent to ecclesiastical anarchy, and to the purported conferring of Holy Orders upon persons who are not part of a properly and canonically organized church or communion, but rather have sought Holy Orders for purely personal reasons, and are often ill-prepared spiritually to exercise their purported office. It further holds that in the generally stable circumstances of the Western world during our own era there is no good reason why orders should be conferred *per saltum* unless as a result of some grave irregularity.
7. The Ecclesia Apostolica Divinorum Mysteriorum therefore declines to recognise any and all Holy Orders that have been conferred *per saltum*, and holds that the condition of such persons for all practical purposes shall be as it was before they received orders in this irregular manner. Where the Ecclesia is minded to regularize a sacrament that has been conferred under such circumstances, it shall be the usual practice that the said sacrament shall be repeated *sub conditione*.



++JOANNES
+ANDREAS
+ALEXEI

Council of Three
EADM

30 December 2010 a.d.

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