

Consecration

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Church Consecration

Sources

4th Century

- Consecration of the Church in Tyre
 - Eusebius of Caesarea's Panegyric at Tyre - Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers Vol 1 Page 370
 - Eusebius compares Paulinus, bishop of Tyre, to "a new Beseleel, the architect of the divine tabernacle, or Solomon, king of a new and much better Jerusalem, or also a new Zerubabel, who added a much greater glory than the former to the temple of God" (3)
 - "It was long ago permitted us to raise hymns and songs to God, when we learned from hearing the Divine Scriptures read the marvelous signs of God and the benefits conferred upon men by the Lord's wondrous deeds, being taught to say 'O God! we have heard with our ears, our fathers have told us the work which you did in their days, in days of old."
 - Let all say with a loud voice "I was glad for those who said to me, we shall go into the house of the Lord" and "Lord I have loved the beauty of Your house and the place where Your glory dwells"
 - Christian Rhetoric in Eusebius' Panegyric at Tyre - Christine Smith
 - Smith discusses the lack of precedent for Eusebius to give a homily or panegyric at a Church Consecration. Churches had been consecrated before, but were usually just transforming an existing building, or were built to be a church but very simple. This was more of a cathedral.
 - Note 2: She quotes Minucius Felix where Caecilius criticized the Christians for their secrecy on the grounds that "nullas aras habent, templa nulla" - "these have no altars and no temples", this is not accurate. Eusebius himself, for example, contradicts it in his panegyric when he describes the joy and hope which everyone felt at seeing "temples again rising from their foundations to an immense height, and receiving a splendor far greater than that of the old ones which had been destroyed"
 - <https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/ueboiqneb45r9hvbzvbng/Smith-ChristianRhetoricEusebius-1989.pdf?rlkey=p4urpq43o18zm2nqcgulgpInv&dl=0>
- Consecration of the Church of the Resurrection at Jerusalem

6th Century

- Use of Icons to denote Sacred Space
 - Martyn, 2004
 - Correspondence of Pope Gregory of Rome with Januaris, bishop of Sardinia in AD 599

- "Jews from your city have come here and complained to us that Peter, led over from their superstition to the cult of the Christian faith, on the day after his baptism, that is, on the Sunday of the very Easter festival, gathered certain undisciplined men around him and, in a grievous scandal and without your consent, occupied their synagogue which is in Cagliari; and he installed there an icon of the mother of our Lord and God and a cross to be worshipped, and a white vestment that he had worn when rising up from the font..."
- Dilley, Paul. 2010. "Christian Icon Practice in Apocryphal Literature: Consecration and the Conversion of Synagogues into Churches." *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 23: 285–302. doi:10.1017/S1047759400002403.
 - <https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/g0ifny40v0ceu2xm6zvxf/Christian-Icon-Practice-in-Apocryphal-Literature-Consecration-and-Conversion-of-Synagogues-into-Churches.pdf?rlkey=b18l5ugflmei4solbsc0zr3jp&dl=0>
 - Dr. Dilley discusses in his introduction that the above correspondence between Pope Gregory of Rome and Januaris, Bishop of Sardinia is very similar to a story in the Apocryphal *Story of Joseph* which narrates that Joseph of Arimathea did something similar to a synagogue in Lydda, and Peter the Apostle consecrated that synagogue to be a church, except that the icon of St Mary miraculously emerged.
 - Yasin, 2009

9th Century

- Reconsecration of Barsanuphian Churches
 - From Byzantine to Islamic Egypt - Maged S A Mikhail (Deacon Severus)
 - Page 224: Discussion of conversion between Chalcedonian and non-Chalcedonian communions within Egypt and what that meant for acquisition of church properties. "A prominent example of such an acquisition is documented in the biography of Mark II (d. 819 CE) which cites the reconsecration of a formerly Barsanuphian church."
 - Footnote 123: HP I.4:529 (History of the Patriarchs of the Coptic Church of Alexandria ed./trans. B. Evetts Patrologia Orientales 10.5)
 - History of the Patriarchs 1.4
 - "The Barsanuphians of Egypt, mentioned above, when they saw that their chiefs had returned to orthodoxy, and that no foundation remained for their community, wrote to Abba Mark, praying him to visit them and consecrate their churches. And when he read the letters, he rejoiced exceedingly, and left all his work, and went in haste to Misr, and consecrated their churches and monasteries for them, and established liturgies for them according to the ecclesiastical rule, and gave them the Holy Mysteries of the Body and Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, our God. So there was at Fustat Misr great joy and spiritual gladness."
 - <https://archive.org/details/patrologiaorient10pariuoft/page/415/mode/1up> (page 529 of the document/415 on the PDF))

Ordination

Lord of Spirits: "Who's in Charge Here?"

https://www.ancientfaith.com/podcasts/lordofspirits/whos_in_charge_here

Priesthood

- In order to have an ordination rite, you have to have a Priesthood
- Without a Priesthood, there is no central sanctuary
- We don't see the concept of Ordination Rites or a Sanctuary until the Levitical Priesthood

Pre-Levitical Priesthood

- The role of the priest is to offer sacrifices
- In the early days, priesthood was a ROLE played by the patriarch of the family
 - The family was not dad, mom and kids... it was tribes, clans, families. Abraham and Sarah and their future children, and Lot and his family, and their servants and their families, etc.
 - Abraham is the patriarch of that whole extended family and takes on the role of priest
- We see that Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Job all offered sacrifices
- In the period of Egypt, we see eldership
 - The big extended family grows into tribes, clans, families... a nation. This evolves into eldership.
 - The person who has that patriarchal role in a given family is then part of a group of leaders within a clan and groups of leaders within a tribe - and those are the elders of the people
 - Until the time of the Golden Calf, those were the ones who were still offering sacrifices.

Levitical Priesthood

- After the Golden Calf, the priesthood is taken from the elders and given to the Levites; the high priesthood is separated from the role of the Leader. So Moses continues to be the Leader, but Aaron assumes the High Priesthood. These two roles are re-united with the Lord Jesus Christ.
- With Levites performing sacrifices for everyone, there becomes a need for a Sanctuary... a common altar. The Tabernacle
 - One High Priest + One Central Priesthood = One Altar

Ordination

Adam

- Adam is the first model for priesthood
- Adam is created from the ground and then placed in Eden. He is taken out of the world and placed in the Holy Place (Sanctuary; Paradise, where God dwells) to serve and tend to it.
- His placing in the Garden is his ordination

Aaron

- Aaron's ordination is his placing in the Tabernacle
- The Tabernacle (and later the Temple) are covered in imagery of Paradise (i.e. the Garden of Eden)
 - Embroidered Cherubim
 - Cherubim on the Ark of Covenant
 - Pomegranates
 - Greenery and Foliage
 - Fruit Trees
- The purpose of his consecration and the sacrifices he performs is to enable him to go inside (i.e. to re-enter Paradise)
- The High Priest is set up as the new Adam who will enter the Holy of Holies... but only once a year, and with blood to purify, and with offerings for himself and the people
 - Once a year is very back and forth... go in and out and in and out... not permanent
 - c.f. Hebrews
- The Budding of Aaron's Rod
 - Aaron is already the High Priest, and now there is a rebellion coming from Korah
 - Korah is kind of complaining between two things - we shouldn't have one "we are all priests" or why should Aaron be the priest?
 - God makes a public affirmation that He is the One who has given the priesthood to Aaron
 - God tells Moses to speak to the heads of the tribes and get their twelve rods. Write their name on the staff, line them all up in the tabernacle and I will cause one to sprout; this will prove that I have chosen this man as priest.
 - Aaron's Rod buds and sprouts and produces almonds!
 - That budded rod is placed in the sanctuary to be an ongoing testimony to the fact that Aaron and his line are chosen for the High Priesthood by God
 - ¹⁰ And the Lord said to Moses, "Bring Aaron's rod back before the Testimony, to be kept as a sign against the rebels, that you may put their complaints away from Me, lest they die."
 - Why this symbol?
 - The rod is the symbol of judgment (i.e. restoration of order).
 - The rod was used to send the plagues upon Egypt.
 - The rod was used to split the Red Sea.
 - The rod was used to bring water from the rock.
 - The rod was held up to defeat Amalek.
 - The rod is a dead piece of wood

- This rod budding, combined with the restoration of order, is the Edenic Imagery.
- "Fill the earth and subdue it" - Continue God's work of creation by filling the world with life, and by establishing order
- The priest is the one through whom God is working, to continue His work of establishing order and bringing forth new life.
- All of the other tribes still had their rods (i.e. their authority in terms of order and governance and rendering judgment; establishing justice in their tribes and claims). But their rods did not blossom. They did not have the priestly authority that Aaron had.
- The Gospel of St John continuously refers to the Crucifixion as "When He is glorified" - "When He will be revealed." The dead wood of the Cross, which blossoms forth through Christ's Death and Resurrection with new life, is what marks Him out as the new High Priest; the new Adam. As the Rod of Aaron was kept as a testimony, the Cross is kept as the ongoing testimony of the identity of Jesus as the Messiah.
- Priesthood as a Gift
 - "I give your priesthood to you as a gift for service, but the outsider who comes near shall be put to death." (Numbers 18:7)
 - It is not a reward for anything he has done, but is a gift
- Vestments
 - The vestments for the High Priest are very similar to the vesting used for idols in pagan temples... this idea is inverted here because Aaron is not going to be sacrificed TO, but he will be performing the sacrifices. Aaron is going to serve as the image of God (in the same way that Adam did).
 - Ephod - Linen ephod made of gold, blue, purple and scarlet thread, with an onyx stone on each shoulder, engraved with the names of the sons of Israel.
 - The weight of the stones on his shoulder references the bearing of the iniquity of the Israelites (Numbers 18)
 - The high priest represents the people to God (as a mediator)
 - Breastplate -
 - Urim and Thummim - we don't know how they worked, but some say it's like casting lots
 - Robe of the High Priest - Blue with pomegranates of blue, purple and scarlet, with bells of gold all around the hem
 - "And it shall be upon Aaron when he ministers, and its sound will be heard when he goes into the holy *place* before the Lord and when he comes out, that he may not die." (Numbers 28:35)
 - The bells are on his garment to keep him attentive; to not zone out and lose focus lest he lose focus and die by holiness.
 - Diadem - Crown with plate of pure gold engraved with YHWH and placed on the turban
 - The high priest represents God to the people (as a mediator)
 - Christ is the express image of the Father to the world, being God; and perfectly represents humanity to God because He shared the image of our humanity.
 - The Bishop is the image of Christ, and vested in such a way as to serve as the image of Christ and representing Him to the people, while representing us to

Christ.

Christian Initiation

Matrimony & Crowning Ceremony