Steps to the Priesthood

1. The Taking of the Cassock: A young man, after prayer, reflection and counsel, decides to turn his back on all things mundane. He dons a black cassock which is a symbol of death to world.

2. The Tonsure: The Church officially adopts the seminarian as its own child. The ceremony has its roots in the ancient Roman ceremony of adoption of children. Hair is cut from the front, back, left and right of the head in the form of a cross.

3. Porter: The Ostiarate is the first of the four minor orders and it bestows upon the seminarian the duty of guarding the House of God and everything within. He touches the keys of the sacristy and church and then opens and closes the door of the church in a symbolic exercise of his new function.

4. Lector: . The Lectorate is the second minor order and is received immediately after the first. Kneeling in front of the Bishop the ordinand places his fingers on top of the book proffered by the Bishop (a missal, breviary or evangelarium) with his thumb touching the pages. The lector has the privilege of reading the lessons at matins and the prophecies of Ember Saturdays and Holy Saturday.

5. Exorcist: The Exorcistate is third minor order; it gives the seminarian the power to cast out demons; it is a real power and is usually only exercised during the administration of the sacrament of Baptism. Only a priest with explicit permission from his Bishop can perform a solemn exorcism of a possessed soul. During the ceremony, the seminarian touches the ritual presented to him by the Bishop.

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6. Acolyte: The Acolytate is the fourth and highest of the minor orders. In the ordination ceremony the Bishop presents the candidate with a candlestick and unlit candle which he touches with his thumb and index finger respectively while the bishop says, "Receive the candlestick and candle and know that it is your duty to light the lights of the church in the name of the Lord". The candidate is then presented with an empty cruet to touch while the Bishop says, "Receive the cruet, to minister wine and water for the Eucharist of the Blood of Christ, in the name of the Lord."

In recent times, because few parishes have any ordained acolytes to serve at the altar, laymen are allowed to take their place.

7. Subdeacon: The Subdiaconate is the first of the major orders. It is the decisive step in the life of a cleric in which he assumes the obligation of observing perfect chastity in the unmarried state and of reciting the Divine Office. The official duties of the subdeacon are to read the epistle, to hand the chalice and paten to the deacon during the Mass, to prepare the water for the chalice, and to wash the altar cloths and corporals. During the ceremony the newly ordained subdeacon touches a chalice and paten, a pair of cruets containing water and wine and a basin and towel. He is then invested with the insignia of his office: the amice (symbolising moderation in speech), the maniple (fruit of good works), tunicle (joy) and then touches the epistalarium.

8. Deacon: The Deaconate is the second of the major orders but is the first order which is a part of sacrament of Holy Orders. It leaves an indelible mark upon the soul of the ordinand and obliges him to fulfil his duties of reading the Gospel, preaching, assisting the priest at the Holy Sacrifice, distributing Holy Communion and even administering the sacrament of baptism on particular occasions. After the epistle of the ordination Mass, the bishop is requested by the archdeacon on behalf of the Church to ordain the candidates. The bishop then ceremonially inquires as to the worthiness of the candidates and then consults the people, asking if there be any reason why any of the candidates might not be ordained. If there are none, the order is conferred by the Imposition of Hands followed by the words "Send forth, we beseech Thee O Lord, the Holy Ghost that they might be strengthened by Him, through the gift of Thy sevenfold grace, unto the faithful discharge of Thy service." Each new deacon is then invested with the insignia of his office: a stole (symbolising the sweet yolk of God's law) and a dalmatic (symbolising joy and justice). He then touches the evangelium and receives the power to read the gospel.