

LICENSURE

Purpose for Licensure:

The purpose for licensing is to recognize what God has already done.

Definition of a License, Ordained or Commissioned Minister:

Ministers are individuals who are duly ordained, commissioned, or licensed by a religious body constituting a church or church denomination. They are given the authority to conduct religious worship, perform sacerdotal functions, and administer ordinances or sacraments according to the prescribed tenets and practices of the church or denomination. If a church or denomination ordains some ministers and licenses or commissions others, anyone licensed or commissioned must be able to perform substantially all religious functions of an ordained minister to be treated as a minister for social security purposes.

There are Three (3) functions that the IRS looks for in defining a minister with respect to social security taxes. Although without doing the following three things a person may still be recognized as a minister by other government agencies, the IRS does not recognize anyone as a minister unless he/she performs the following three functions. Therefore, if one wants to be recognized by all government agencies (which include the IRS) he/she must regularly fulfill the functions as stated below.

1. Conduct religious worship
2. Perform sacerdotal functions
3. Administer ordinances or sacraments according to the prescribed tenets and practices of that church or denomination.

Under this definition all pastors and associates pastors are ministers. Most youth pastors and worship leaders (deacons) will also qualify.

Different types of Licenses:

There are three (3) traditional forms of licensing issued by churches. The church use them to represent before the congregation and community the authority bestowed upon a person to act or function in its name. Even though the church distinguished between them many government agencies will not, with the exception of the Christian Worker License They are listed below:

1. Christian Worker (Lay Minister)
2. Licensed Minister(Deacons, Youth Ministers)
3. Ordained Ministers (Priest)

Each one of these licenses usually represents a different level of preparation and authority. Examples will be listed below:

1. Christian Workers (Lay Ministers) license may be issued to a member of the church who has a proven record of commitment, who reflects such in his/her life and has volunteered to help with work of the ministry. The work may be that of making hospital visits, praying for the sick and invalids, or working in the church. The license may be beneficial in giving the person some credibility with hospital staff and police departments, etc. This type of license does not give the worker the privilege to perform sacerdotal functions. He/she also would not qualify for any special tax rules.
2. Licensed Ministers (Deacons. Youth Ministers) license may be given to a person that has become a part of the pastoral staff. Many churches license the staff ministers of their churches to give them the authority to marry, conduct funerals and to the lead worship services and much more. He/she may qualify for special tax rules, depending on the type of authority the church grants the individual by licensing him/her. This level of licensure should require some course or study of an x number of years of ministry experience.
3. The Ordained Ministers (Priests) license is usually granted to a person who is either the pastor or associate pastor of a church. The reason behind this type of license is to signify that he/she is in charge of the congregation (usually a senior pastor or an associate pastor). This level of licensure should require some course of study and X number of years of ministry experience.

Remember the License that the church issues are only as credible as your church or ministry is credible to the public. It is always important for the church body to reflect the character of Jesus everywhere they may go.

Mission Statement

To equip ministers for a lifetime of effective ministry so they may respond to the Great Commission of Christ to *"go and make disciples of all nations,"* and advance God's kingdom by the preservation and propagation of Christian holiness as set forth in the scriptures. By the licensure we as a church are committed to send out men and women of God to hold and build the Historic Faith and Order that is set forth in the Holy Scriptures, The Seven Ecumenical Councils and The Apostolic Disciplinary Canon Laws of the Holy Byzantine Catholic Orthodox Church.

Vision

The vision of the Holy Byzantine Catholic Orthodox Church is to offer a faithful and abiding witness to the risen life of Christ, as that is made known to us in Holy Scripture the Seven Ecumenical Councils and the Apostolic Disciplinary Canon Laws.

1. **PRAYER and WORSHIP:** Prayer and worship are the heart and soul of our life in the Holy Byzantine Catholic Orthodox Church, the most direct way in which we honor the first commandment. The centrality of our common life is the Eucharist. We encourage the development of a strong prayer life and the active participation of our ministers in worship - in styles, forms and language that are both traditional and new.
2. **GOVERNANCE:** The governance of our church is structured through canonical provisions for lay and clergy participation in all governing bodies, staffs, committees, and ministries. We encourage open and active participation in all our governing bodies and ministry groups.

3. **COMMUNICATION:** Good communication is essential to the vitality of our communion with God and with one another. Striving as ministers to be open, honest, and direct with each other, we encourage new opportunities for gathering, as well as improved avenues of communication, recognizing that this will require greater initiative and responsiveness among all of church.
4. **PASTORAL CARE:** License Ministers are committed to providing pastoral guidance and care for all our people. They do this intentionally and directly through prayer and active care in situations of illness, injury, conflict, addiction, and other needs.
5. **EDUCATIONAL AND SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT:** We seek to offer programs for educational and spiritual development for our Ministers in order to support our congregations and by doing so they may also grow "in the knowledge and love of God".
6. **STEWARDSHIP:** Our licensed ministers live in a rich and beautiful environment with an abundance of human and financial resources. We seek that they are faithful stewards of the earth, and of these resources, and to share them equitably and generously by assisting in the economical maintenance of the church as well as the needs of the children of God.
7. **FACILITIES:** The ministry of our Licensed Ministers happens in many church facilities and other physical structures throughout the world. By our own continuing care of these places we continue to work towards providing safe, accessible, attractive, and visible facilities in which to enjoy fellowship and enrich our life together.
8. **EVANGELISM:** As Licensed Ministers we are called to proclaim the good news of the Gospel. Trusting in God's love in Christ for all people, we seek to grow in faith and in numbers by inviting others into our community.
9. **JUSTICE:** Matters of justice are integral to the very fabric of God's intention in creating the world and its entire people. Justice is not an optional extra in our faith, nor can God's peace exist without it. Our church has a long tradition of prophetic advocacy for justice; that is, of being a voice for the poor, the outcast, the oppressed and for all others who suffer marginalization. We as Licensed Ministers commit ourselves to such advocacy in a culture of growing consumerism, inequitable distribution of wealth, abuse of the environment, and consolidation of power.
10. **HOSPITALITY:** As License Ministers of the Holy Byzantine Catholic Orthodox Church we are committed in an open community of faith, regardless of race, ethnicity, age, gender, disability or cultural background, we seek to welcome everyone and to offer opportunities for leadership in our communities.
11. **SERVICE:** As Licensed Ministers, local churches, and ministry groups, we seek many ways to fulfill the serving of Christ in all people with creativity, perseverance and a spirit of adventure.
12. **ECUMENISM:** Our traditions have long enabled us to promote ecumenical work among various Christian faith communities. As we grow in our understanding of these other traditions, we are also able to embrace the larger work of interfaith dialogue and sharing. As Licensed Ministers we embrace in love the challenges and the opportunities of ecumenical and interfaith work, trusting that our own faith will be deepened in the process.

Requirements for Licensure

- 1) Pre-Application Requirements:
 - a) Must have been a Byzantine Catholic Orthodox.
 - b) Must be of outstanding reputation within the parish they are serving.
 - c) Must have the Pastors approval before applying.
 - d) Must have a good credit report, as it will be checked.
 - e) Must be willing to tithe to the main church:
 - i. \$600.00 per year or \$50.00 per month
- 2) Course Requirements:
 - a) (Please see seminary curriculum)

Christian Worker (Lay Ministers)

This recognition is issued to those called by God as helpers, or to those that are just beginning their ministry. They are not authorized to perform any sacerdotal services, but primarily assist other in the Body of Christ. The individuals in this category may include, but are not limited to: teachers, readers, cantors, instructors, hospital and jail visitation ministry, ministerial assistance, and lay persons who are called of God as helpers.

The Lay Minister must:

1. Meet the general requirements for licensing (Please see seminary curriculum course requirements).
2. Be established in a local church body.
3. Be recommended by the pastor or associate pastor.
4. Be recommended by his/her peers in the ministry.
5. Meet all other criteria as determined by the Licensing Committee.

Licensed Minister (Deacons, Youth Ministers)

This ministerial recognition includes those who are somewhat seasoned in the ministry, but need further experience to be fully established. Such persons are authorized to perform all certain prescribed sacerdotal services. They are not in charge of a congregation and have limited authority to run certain affairs of the church.

The Deacon or Youth Minister must:

1. Meet the general requirements for licensing (Please see seminary curriculum course requirements).
2. Be for license by the pastor, another pastor of an established congregation, or the senior pastor of an established ministry.
3. Demonstrate a level of biblical and theological proficiency.
4. Meet all other criteria as determined by the Licensing Committee.

Ordained Minister (Priests)

This ministerial recognition is given to those persons who have an “established” or “proven” ministry. Ordained Ministers (Priests) are authorized to perform all functions of the sacerdotal services, and must be capable of doing so. He must either be ready, as determined by the bishop, to take care of a congregation or already in charge of one.

The Priest must:

1. Meet the general requirements for licensing (Please see seminary curriculum course requirements).
2. Have an established ministry.
3. Demonstrate biblical and theological proficiency.
4. Be capable of performing all sacerdotal services.
5. Meet all other criteria as determined by the Licensing Committee.

THE HOLY BYZANTINE CATHOLIC ORTHODOX CHURCH

5143 Argus Dr. Los Angeles, California 90041
1 (323) 255-6911

APPLICATION FOR LICENSING PROGRAM

Please complete all information requested. (Please print)

Full Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip:** _____

Email Address: _____ *Please print very carefully*

Telephone Number (____) _____ **Date of Birth:** ____/____/____

Marital Status: ____ **Married** ____ **Single** ____ **Divorced** ____ **Widowed** ____ **Annulment**

Which Type of license are you applying for:

- ___ **Ordained Minister** (Priest) \$50.00 Application Fee, \$50.00 per month, or \$600.00 per year
___ **Licensed Minister** (Deacon, Youth Minister) \$50.00 Application Fee, \$40.00 per month, or \$480.00 per year
___ **Lay Minister** \$50.00 Application Fee, \$30.00 per month, or \$360.00 per year

Are you in harmony with the doctrines of this Church? YES [___] NO [___]

Are you willing to obedient to the Bishops of this Church? YES [___] NO [___]

Are you willing to tithe to this Church? YES [___] NO [___]

Are you willing to take all courses required by this licensure? YES [___] NO [___]

If granted a license to be an Ordained Minister of this church are you willing to forsake all other things in order to perform you sacerdotal duties. YES [___] NO [___]

By applying, I agree to bind myself to all the requirements and regulations of the Holy Byzantine Catholic Orthodox Church. I also agree that in no way I am guaranteed a license unless the Board and Ministerial Licensing Committee determine that I qualify to receive one.

Signature _____

Date _____