

2.9.73: 11.0 a.m.

VOCATION AND ORDINATION

12. Entry into this apostolic and God-given ministry, which both serves and signifies the unity of the local churches with one another through time and space, is by ordination. Every individual act of ordination is therefore an expression of the continuing apostolicity and catholicity of the whole church. The Risen Christ calls and ordains, and each act of ordination binds the church and ministry to the revelation accomplished in him. Just as the original apostles did not choose themselves but were chosen and Commissioned by Jesus, so those who are ordained are called by Christ in the church and through the church. Not only is their vocation from Christ but their qualification for exercising<sup>such</sup> a ministry is the gift of the Spirit: "Our sufficiency is from God, who has qualified us to be ministers of a new covenant, not in a written Code but in the Spirit" (2 Cor. 3: 4-6). This is expressed by the essential form of ordination, namely prayer to God to grant the gift of the Holy Spirit and the laying on of hands as the outward sign of the gifts bestowed. Because ministry is in and for the community and because ordination is an act in which the whole church of God is involved, this prayer and laying on of hands take place within the context of the eucharist.