HOLY ORDERS

LIBBY: They said it will be at least an hour wait.

KAI: Not if I can help it.

LIBBY: You can't pretend to be a priest.

KAI: Watch me. Come on. How hard could it be?

KAI: Bad idea. They started confessing.

LIBBY: Whoa. To what?

CATHOLIC CENTRAL OPENING TITLES

KAI: Welcome to Catholic Central. I'm Kai.

LIBBY: I'm Libby.

KAI: Today, we'll be talking about Holy Orders.

LIBBY: As in Sacrament of, not my Etsy site with custom-made holy-water fonts.

KAI: Holy Orders is the sacrament through which the mission entrusted by Christ to His Apostles continues to be exercised in the Church until the end of time.

LIBBY: Put another way, it's what makes priests, bishops and deacons into, well, priests, bishops and deacons.

KAI: Where does this sacrament come from? Why do all the rules for it matter? Shouldn't we be able to skip the middleman and go straight to God?

LIBBY: Catholics admit that doing things this way can make things, shall we say, inconvenient.

BRIDE LIBBY: The whole wedding is held up because the priest is late.

KAI: It also maintains this sacrament as truly special and unique.

LIBBY: To understand it, though, we need to look at how anyone can become a priest …

KAI: Uh …

LIBBY: … through baptism. All Christians are baptized as priest, prophet and king.

KAI: This gives each Christian a special mission to make sacrifices and serve others, helping everyone they meet to better know and love God.

LIBBY: This forms the foundation for the ordained priesthood ...

KAI: Which takes that mission and combines it with examples from the Old Testament and Jesus himself.

LIBBY: The Israelites had a priestly class, starting with Moses and his brother Aaron. Aaron was designated high priest of what was later known as the Levitical priesthood, after the tribe of Levi.

KAI: The priest in those days maintained the sacred space of the temple and offered sacrifice on High Holy days.

LIBBY: When Jesus came along, He started forgiving sinners, healing the sick and exorcising demons.

KAI: Catholics believe that He also established the Eucharist at the Last Supper.

LIBBY: And accepted baptism from John the Baptist, even though, let's be honest, He didn't really need to.

KAI: By getting baptized Himself, Catholics believe that Jesus showed us that we do need someone and something else to go to God.

LIBBY: That collective someone are priests, and that some thing are the Sacraments, which are reflections of what Jesus did in His ministry. Jesus confirms this handing on these ministries to His apostles.

KAI: After Jesus' Ascension, the Holy Spirit descended on the Apostles, and they spread throughout the known world to preach and serve.

LIBBY: That's a big job for just 12 guys, so they worked with the local churches to identify more leaders.

KAI: They trained and anointed people for formal roles in the Church.

LIBBY: Within the first two centuries, these came to be bishops; in Greek, *episkopos*.

KAI: These were leaders of regional and local churches. They enlivened and guided the activity of a place, but also united that local place with the Universal Church ...

LIBBY: The Church around the world that came to be based in Rome.

KAI: Priests, called *presbyters,* where people who dedicated their whole life to assist the local bishop, officiated sacraments and religious services and coordinate the service of all the people, especially the poor and needy.

LIBBY: These also came to be known as priests because of the sacrificial nature of presiding at the Eucharist, and for their connection to Jesus, the High Priest.

KAI: That's why Catholics, even today, say that priests are *in persona Christi*. Catholics believe that when the priest pronounces the words of a sacrament, he is acting in the person of Christ.

LIBBY: Bishops act in the person of Christ during their weekly multiplication of loaves and fishes.

KAI: We wish. Actually, bishops act as Christ in their role as leaders of the Church.

DEACON KAI: Hi. Yeah. Are you ever going to mention deacons? Because it's always, "Priests this, bishops that." Deacons get no respect.

LIBBY: Sorry, Deacon. Deacons were chosen in the Book of Acts to help with the distribution of food, so that the Apostles could focus on prayer and preaching.

KAI: Nowadays, the Sacrament of Holy Orders happens through a process called ordination. Catholics believed that, like Baptism and Confirmation, ordination changes a person in the very core of who they are.

LIBBY: Ordination is a permanent change, creating what is sometimes called an indelible or unerasable mark on the soul.

KAI: Ordination happens through the laying on of hands, which is a throwback to the Apostles.

LIBBY: In the Catholic Church, there are three things you can be ordained: deacon …

DEACON KAI: Thank you.

KAI: Priest and bishop.

LIBBY: The difference between them are what they do.

KAI: Deacons preach, witness marriages and perform baptisms.

LIBBY: They can't consecrate the Eucharist, hear confessions, confirm the faithful or anoint the sick.

KAI: Some men are permanent deacons: men who heard the call to dedicate themselves in a unique way to God while still living in the world, often having an outside job and a family.

LIBBY: Men also pass through the diaconate on the way to the priesthood.

KAI: Priests do all the Sacraments but can't ordain other priests or deacons. That's for bishops to handle. Handle, laying on of hands. Get it?

V/O: Oh.

LIBBY: Catholics take ordination seriously. To get to the point of getting ordained a priest, men go through six to nine years of discernment, prayer, extensive applications …

KAI: Background checks, conversations with directors of vocation, psychological testing …

LIBBY: Studies in philosophy and theology and seminary, and supervised ministry.

KAI: Once ordained, daily life as a priest varies depending on several things. One is whether a priest is ordained into the diocesan priesthood or religious order.

LIBBY: Diocesan priests commit themselves to a specific geographical area. Most of them focus on serving those in the parish his bishop assigns to him.

KAI: On the other hand, priests in religious orders serve all over the map. They're ordained for a particular mission, spirituality and common life.

LIBBY: You might find priests doing everything from teaching to serving the poor or working in the media.

KAI: No matter if it's diocesan or religious priesthood, though, you have to start with aptitude for service, a strong life of prayer, intellectual ability, social and psychological maturity, physical ability and, most importantly, a call from God.

LIBBY: A call which is also confirmed by the community, including a candidate’s superiors and bishop.

KAI: Right. It's like marriage. You can't just show up at Ryan Gosling's house in a wedding gown and expect a ceremony to happen.

LIBBY: Not that I ever tried that.

KAI: No, certainly not. Just like a wedding doesn't automatically make you the perfect spouse, ordination doesn't make someone perfect.

LIBBY: It does allow deacons, priests, and bishops to give their lives in service to the Church and accompany the faithful in the greatest joys and sorrows of life.

KAI: Since all Christians are proclaimed priest, prophet, and king at baptism, the sacrament of Holy Orders gives us all an example of how to be Christ to one another, speak the truth and lead others to faith.

LIBBY: From all of us here at Catholic Central, thanks for watching. I'm Libby.

KAI: I'm Kai. Be sure to check out our website, CatholicCentral.com for more on Holy Orders.

LIBBY: Be sure to check out our other episodes on the Sacraments and hit subscribe on YouTube.

KAI: Be sure to check out Libby's Etsy site with holy-water fonts.

LIBBY: Thank you.

KAI: You're welcome.

LIBBY: They're great.

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