

# PRIESTHOOD

## IS THE AUTHORITY TO ACT IN GOD'S NAME

**O**ur Father in Heaven governs the heavens and the earth. By His eternal power the universe is kept in perfect order. To govern His Church on earth, He delegates a portion of His power and authority to worthy male members of the Church. This delegated authority is called priesthood. We see this pattern of delegated responsibility in the New Testament, when Jesus Christ gave His Apostles the authority to act in His name (see Matthew 16:19).

This is God's pattern of government. It is in place upon the earth today. Those who hold the priesthood are authorized to act in God's name in leading His Church and in administering the sacred ordinances necessary for salvation, such as baptism, confirmation, administration of the sacrament, and temple marriage. Every faithful Latter-day Saint man, woman, and child needs priesthood ordinances and is blessed by receiving them.

### Offices of the Priesthood

There are two divisions of the priesthood: Melchizedek and Aaronic. The Melchizedek Priesthood contains greater authority than the Aaronic Priesthood.

Within these two divisions are specific offices, or areas of responsibility. The offices within the Aaronic

Priesthood are deacon, teacher, priest, and bishop. Within the Melchizedek Priesthood, the offices are elder, high priest, patriarch, Seventy, and Apostle. Those who hold these offices are organized into quorums, or groups. Each office has certain duties assigned to it.

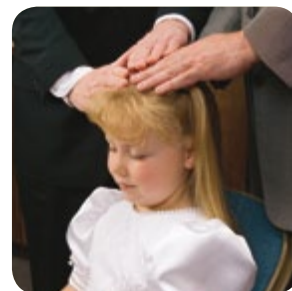
### Keys of the Priesthood

The term *keys* refers to the authority to preside over specific Church units or jurisdictions. In stakes and wards, for example, only the stake president, the bishop, and quorum presidents hold priesthood keys. The keys are given by the laying on of hands by a priesthood holder authorized to confer them.

- Presidents of Melchizedek Priesthood quorums receive the keys of presidency and the administration of spiritual things (see D&C 107:10, 18–19).
- Presidents of Aaronic Priesthood quorums receive the keys of the ministering of angels and performing ordinances such as baptism and the sacrament (see D&C 107:20).
- The President of the Church holds all the priesthood keys for the entire Church (see D&C 81:1–2).

### The offices and some of the duties of the Melchizedek Priesthood:

1. Elders “confirm those who are baptized into the church, by the laying on of hands for the baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost” (D&C 20:41).



### The offices and some of the duties of the Aaronic Priesthood:



2. High priests “administer in spiritual things” and have “a right to officiate in” the offices of elder, priest, teacher, and deacon (D&C 107:12).



3. Patriarchs give patriarchal blessings (see D&C 107:53; 124:91–93).



4. Seventies preach the gospel and are special witnesses of Jesus Christ under the direction of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles (see D&C 107:25, 34).



5. Apostles serve as “special witnesses of the name of Christ in all the world” (D&C 107:23).



1. Deacons pass the sacrament.



2. Teachers “watch over the church always, and be with and strengthen them” (D&C 20:53).



3. Priests “teach, . . . baptize, and administer the sacrament, and visit the house of each member” (D&C 20:46–47).



4. Bishops are presidents of the priests quorum and, as high priests, preside over all members in a ward (see D&C 107:87–88). ■

*“Without the ordinances thereof, and the authority of the priesthood, the power of godliness is not manifest unto men in the flesh” (D&C 84:21).*