

Your AARONIC PRIESTHOOD Duties

You have been ordained to the Aaronic Priesthood.

What are you supposed to do now?

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Church Magazines

You may be a brand new deacon, newly ordained last Sunday, or a teacher helping prepare the sacrament each week. Or you may be a well-seasoned priest, wise in the ways of service projects and in guiding the younger teachers and deacons in their new responsibilities. But all priesthood holders have a common call from the Lord: “Let every man learn his duty, and . . . act in the office in which he is appointed, in all diligence” (D&C 107:99).

But where can you go to learn about this duty? The first place to look should be the scriptures. Specifically, you’ll want to study the sections in the Doctrine and Covenants where the duties of the Aaronic Priesthood are outlined: section 20:46–60, 72–79; and section 84:111.

Another great resource is the booklet *Fulfilling My Duty to God: For Aaronic Priesthood Holders*. This booklet divides your priesthood responsibilities into three sections: (1) “Administer Priesthood Ordinances,” (2) “Serve Others,” and (3) “Invite All to Come unto Christ.”

In the “Priesthood Duties” section for each office—deacon, teacher, and priest—you’ll find additional scriptures to study and suggestions for making your own plan to help you better understand your priesthood duties.

Let’s take a brief look at some of the main duties of Aaronic Priesthood holders.

Deacons

A deacon sets a good example for fellow quorum members and other Church members. He lives a righteous life and remains worthy to exercise the priesthood.

He passes the sacrament. This is one of the most sacred duties of a deacon. As a deacon performs this duty, he is a representative of the Lord. He should be worthy to give the emblems of the sacrament to the members of the Church. He should dress and act in a way that will reflect the sacred nature of the sacrament. If possible, he should wear a white shirt.

A deacon serves as a standing minister, “appointed to watch over the church” (D&C 84:111). He is

Being ordained to the Aaronic Priesthood brings specific rights, responsibilities, and duties. To learn what these are, turn first to the scriptures. Another great resource is the booklet *Fulfilling My Duty to God: For Aaronic Priesthood Holders*.



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also to “warn, expound, exhort, and teach, and invite all to come unto Christ” (D&C 20:59). This responsibility includes fellowshipping quorum members and other young men, notifying members of Church meetings, speaking in meetings, sharing the gospel, and bearing testimony.

He assists the bishop in “administering . . . temporal things” (D&C 107:68). This responsibility may include gathering fast offerings, caring for the poor and needy, caring for the meetinghouse and grounds, and serving as a messenger for the bishop in Church meetings.

He participates in quorum instruction by being an active student of the gospel. Other duties include helping members meet their temporal needs, preparing for and giving missionary service, supporting and helping the quorum president, activating young men of quorum age, and learning the gospel.

Teachers

A teacher has all the responsibilities of a deacon. He also has



RISE TO YOUR NOBLE STATURE

"We call upon you wonderful young brethren to diligently strive to be 'born again.' Pray for this mighty change in your life. Study the scriptures. Desire more than all else to know God and to become like His holy Son. Enjoy your youth but 'put away childish things':

"Shun profane and foolish chatter.

"Flee all evil.

"Avoid contention.

"Repent where needed.

"This will help you rise to the noble stature of your manhood. The qualities of courage, trustworthiness, humility, faith, and goodness will be yours. Friends will admire you, parents will praise you, brethren in the priesthood will depend on you, and the young women will adore you and become even better because of you. God will honor you and endow your priesthood service with *power from on high*."

Bishop Keith B. McMullin, Second Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric, "The Power of the Aaronic Priesthood," *Liahona* and *Ensign*, Nov. 2011, 48–49.

the following responsibilities:

He prepares the sacrament. It is the responsibility of the teachers to always have the sacrament ready for sacrament meeting. Preparing the sacrament is a good example of doing service without expecting praise for doing it. Members often do not realize that the teachers prepare the sacrament, but the service is performed nevertheless, and the Lord is pleased because it is true service.

"The teacher's duty is to watch over the church always, and be with and strengthen them" (D&C 20:53). One way he does this is by serving as a home teacher.

He is to "see that there is no iniquity in the church, neither hardness with each other, neither lying, backbiting, nor evil speaking" (D&C 20:54). This responsibility includes being a peacemaker by helping the members get along with each other. He should encourage those around him to always see the good in others.

He is to "see that the church meet together often, and also see that all the members do their duty" (D&C 20:55). Part of this responsibility is inviting others to attend church.

Priests

A priest has all the responsibilities of a deacon and teacher. He also has the following responsibilities:

He officiates at the sacrament table. The honor of administering the sacrament is given to the priests,



who offer the sacramental prayers. A priest should be familiar with the sacramental prayers, dress appropriately, and wash his hands before performing this ordinance. Above all, priests should be worthy to perform this sacred ordinance as the Savior's representatives.

Another duty of priests is to baptize when authorized by the bishop or branch president (see D&C 20:46). Baptism by the proper authority is one of the most important and sacred ordinances in the Church, for it is the ordinance by which we become members of the Church, are forgiven of our sins, and enter the path to the celestial kingdom.

"The priest's duty is to preach,

teach, expound, [and] exhort” (D&C 20:46). This means that a priest is called to teach others the principles of the gospel. And in order to teach the principles of the gospel, of course he must first learn what they are. This responsibility will be a great help as he prepares to serve a full-time mission.

He is to “visit the house of each member, and exhort them to pray vocally and in secret and attend to all family duties” (D&C 20:47). A priest does this as he fulfills his responsibility to be a home teacher and visits his assigned families.

He has the authority to confer the Aaronic Priesthood and ordain other priests, teachers, and deacons but only when authorized by the bishop or branch president (see D&C 20:48). The power to confer the Aaronic Priesthood is sacred.

Young Women and the Priesthood

Even though the authority of the priesthood is bestowed only on worthy male members of the Church, the blessings of the priesthood are available to everyone—and these blessings are the same for men and women, girls and boys, rich and poor. All of God’s children have the privilege of receiving the same saving ordinances of the priesthood.

As chosen daughters of God, all young women who have been baptized have also received the gift of the Holy Ghost. They have the right to seek and be blessed by spiritual

gifts, such as “the gift of tongues, prophecy, revelation, visions, healing, interpretation of tongues, and so forth” (Articles of Faith 1:7). As young women live righteous lives and strive to serve others by receiving and developing these gifts of the Spirit, their example for good will be a strong influence on the young men around them.

How can young women help young men be worthy priesthood holders? One young man answered: “I think two of the biggest things they do are to dress modestly and be kind to everyone. The modest dress helps me keep my thoughts in check, and I can actually look at them while talking!”

Heavenly Father Will Help You

As you deacons, teachers, and priests come to understand and fulfill your priesthood duties, you will experience the joy that comes from administering priesthood ordinances, from serving others, and from inviting all to come unto Christ. In their message to Aaronic Priesthood holders, the First Presidency wrote: “Heavenly Father has great trust and confidence in you and has an important mission for you to fulfill. He will help you as you turn to Him in prayer, listen for the promptings of the Spirit, obey the commandments, and keep the covenants that you have made” (*Fulfilling My Duty to God* [2010], 5). ■



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