

Fons Honorum vrs. Fons Spiritu Santus

by Metropolitan Archbishop David Leon Cooper

My position is that bishops do not establish a fons honorum nor carry it. Bishops of the Apostolic Succession do not need it. My view is that fons honorum is a concept conjured up by worldly men for the earthly dominions and does not apply to bishops of the Apostolic Succession. My thesis is that any bishop of the Apostolic Succession is a **fons spiritu sanctus because from his hands flows the Holy Spirit in ordination to Holy Orders and the other 6 sacraments.**

Additionally, bishops are the successors of the Apostles of Christ (1) and may invoke the blessing of Almighty God upon anyone.

Bishops rule a diocese. They govern the church and provide the sacraments through the Holy Spirit. Those that oppose their authority are warned not to do that but to follow them "Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers (bishops). Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood." (Acts 20:28). (Overseers and bishops are from the same word in Greek: episkopeos.

Bishops may choose to recognize any royal titles that we choose. We do not issue them ourselves. Can a bishop bless a man to be a knight? Let us look at early Christian history.

The first militarized Christian Religious were the apostles! They carried swords authorized by Christ into the Garden of Gethsemane (Matthew 26: 36-56). Christ did not resist being arrested since he chose to die for our sins. Since the Apostles carried swords to the Garden (Lk 22:36-37), the **first** Christian knights were the apostles! It is true that in Matthew 26:52 Jesus advises his disciple to get rid of swords because those who "live by the sword shall die by it." **However, in Jesus advises his disciples to buy swords** (Lk 22:36-37). The cut ear off the Temple guard is clear proof that Christ allowed them to be brought there.

"Living by the sword" is not the same as defending with the sword. Peter's act was one of needless violence since Christ **wanted** to be arrested so his resistance was stopped by Christ (John 18:10-11) (2).

Bishops, as successors to the apostles, may appoint bishops' guards and militant Religious (knights) ourselves just as Christ told his disciples to buy swords. We do not need some worldly man-made notion of "fons honorum" to militarize our Religious.

St. Paul referred to himself as a "soldier of Christ." *"Endure suffering along with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. Soldiers don't get tied up in the affairs of civilian life, for then they cannot please the officer who enlisted them."* (II Timothy 2:3-4) (Timothy was the bishop of Ephesus.) (3)

Thus we find support for the fact that worldly or earthly soldiering is not the same as that from Christ. Thus a Christian knight (soldier) **under the church** is in a **different classification** from the worldly royal one. Christ's royal priesthood is separate and distinct from the so-called "blood" royalty which is really a fleshy (sperm) one. "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places"(Eph 6:12-13)

Christ told Pilate: "My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence." (4)

The notion of "fons honorum" does not apply to apostolic churchmen (more accurately bishops) at all. Bishops receive men and women into religious orders. Members of religious orders **must** be under the jurisdiction of a bishop. They are all subject to canon (church) law either as laity or as a cleric. Religious in holy orders must have faculties (license) from a bishop.

Christ's kingdom did not rise from this world as do physical kingdoms (Dan. 7:3-17). Christ's laws are not worldly; it is a kingdom whose laws are written the hearts of men and of divine origin (Heb. 8:10). The Holy Spirit led the apostles and has and does lead their successors the bishops in councils.

Christ's kingdom is not a visible physical kingdom (Matt. 4:8). It is a different category from worldly kingdoms and **so are its' soldiers!**

"The Friars of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem" were not an authorized religious order until the Bishop of Rome said that they were (Pope Paschal II in 1113). (5) The first leader was a **Rector** (6) and the members were **friars. Keep in mind that all of that was about one thousand years after the apostles first were authorized by Christ to get swords.**

Bishops can recognize anyone as a warrior (militant). Thus a knight (warrior) in a religious order is not to be classified as one would categorize a person in a worldly royal organization. They are in an entirely different category.

Bishops by definition are of the lineage of the royal priesthood of Christ and carry that Apostolic Succession. (7) Every bishop is as valid as another; all titles beyond "bishop" are honorary or organizational since the offices or degrees of major orders are deacon, priest and bishop (8). This ranking of honor of bishops was understood as early as the 4th Century. The pope was considered to be honored first among "**equals**" (9) These beliefs still hold true today for the Eastern and Oriental Orthodox. (10)

Some nobility "commissions" have made up some ideas about which bishops or clergy can make knights. These same people would tell you that some abbot can make a knight but not all bishops can and other such conjured up rubbish. It is a silly argument to hold that any abbot in the world has more spiritual authority than **any** bishop. An abbot is not a bishop but a priest. A priest can not rule or govern anything without license (faculties) from a bishop. (11)

Some nobility "authorities" show their ignorance of church matters when they try to say that only certain bishops can create knights. A bishop definitely can ordain a person into major holy orders and bless and receive vows to bring others into minor religious orders (12). If that bishop chooses to **appoint them as guards or otherwise arm them or militarize them it is his prerogative as ruler of the diocese.**

Religious orders are subject to the rule of a bishop of the Apostolic Succession as evidenced by the 4th Canon of the Council of Chalcedon, which decreed that "the monks in every city or place shall be subject to the Bishop." (13)

Certain "nobility authorities" have tried to conjure up rules from thin air or build upon the opinion of some other theologic invalid fellow regarding religious military orders created and overseen by a bishop of the Apostolic Succession.

Knighthood under a bishop as a religious order is valid because it is of the Apostolic Succession. *Soldiers of Christ were **first with the apostolic church not earthly royalty.***

Additionally, the church can recognize or bless anyone that it pleases. Since **any bishop with a valid Apostolic Succession is considered to be a real bishop no matter what church he is in, a blessing from that bishop is a real one. (The Roman Catholic Church holds that even a "break off" and excommunicated bishop still has full power of holy orders!)(14)**

Some think that it is because a certain city-state or community is governed by a bishop that this is why he can make knights. No Christian earthly rule existed in the early church. Some would assert some special status to the pope over chivalry or what can be termed a "papal states" and "Vatican city-state" argument. This rings hollow in light of the fact that a **lie called the Donation of Constantine started such notions. Charlemagne's grants of cities were based upon his belief in a forgery. (15) (16) (17) (18)**

About 800 years before that polygamist named Charlemagne, Saint Paul told a bishop named Timothy to “wage the good warfare” (1 Tim. 1:18) and to “endure hardship as a **good soldier of Jesus Christ**” (2 Tim. 2:3). Again, Christian soldiers (knights) came **first. That apostolic authority as soldiers of Christ has always been with the church governed by the bishops of the Apostolic Succession.**

Paul also told Christians to put on the “whole armor of God” (Eph. 6:10–20).

The words translated as “whole armor” (Gr. panopli[÷]a, panoplia) denote the “whole armor” of the heavily armed legions.

Since we are not fighting a fleshly battle, our weaponry must not be carnal. This is one of many ways the spiritual was declared to be superior and preferable to the worldly. *That does not mean that Christian soldiers may never pick up physical weapons. Recall Christ's violent cleansing of the Temple. (John 2:13-16)*

I have provided the following translations of Luke 19:27 to emphasize what will happen to those who refuse to acknowledge the rule of the kingdom of Christ. (Combine this with Acts 20:28 and you have application to those who would resist the rule of the bishops.) Christ was speaking to his disciples in a parable. Those who would not submit to the rule of the royal priesthood of Christ should consider this:

"But as for these enemies of mine who didn't want me to be their king-bring them here and slaughter them in my presence!" (New American Standard Bible, 1995) The same verse is translated differently but the meaning is clear:

"But bring those enemies of mine who didn't want me to reign over them here, and kill them before me." (Young's Literal Translation)

Now, consider that the rule is Christ's kingdom and is preserved in the Apostolic Succession in the Holy Church by the Holy Spirit. If you defy or ignore the rule of the bishops, you may incur the wrath of Almighty God upon your soul! This includes the rule of religious orders. Again, see Acts 20:28.

Jesus equipped his followers with swords and note that Peter cut a Temple guard's ear off. Two swords were brought there. Jesus could have said to go totally unarmed but he did not. Jesus wanted to die for our sins so Jesus instructed Peter to put his sword away.

The point is that Christ's soldiers (knights) were commissioned by Christ and they were the **apostles. Their successors are the bishops. The authority to commission soldiers of Christ therefore lies foremost, firstly and mainly with the bishops of the Apostolic Succession as "fons spiritu sanctus" --not secular royalty and definately not to be judged by some nobility "commission".**

References

(1) Pope Clement I, (*Letter to the Corinthians* 42:4–5, 44:1–3 [A.D. 80]).

(2) Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant, cutting off his right ear. (The servant's name was Malchus.) ¹¹ Jesus commanded Peter, "Put your sword away! Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?" **John 18:10-11**

(3) www.jesus-passion.com/Saint_Timothy_Bishop.htm

(4) John 18:36

(5) http://blessed-gerard.org/bgt_1_3.htm

See also: <http://www.beyond.fr/history/hospitalers.html>

(6) <http://ciliaracorte.com/grandmasters/gerard.html>

(7) Pope Clement I, (*Letter to the Corinthians* 42:4–5, 44:1–3 [A.D. 80]).

(8) http://www.deacons.net/Articles/Holy_Orders_Bishops_Priests_Deacons.htm

See also: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Holy_Orders_\(Catholic_Church\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Holy_Orders_(Catholic_Church))

- (9) <http://answers.yahoo.com/question/index?qid=20080107170115AAxDTIu>
- (10) <http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/new.php?n=10986>
- (11) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Holy_Orders
- (12) Ibid
- (13) http://anglicanhistory.org/religious/ohc/relation_religious.html
- (14) http://india.smashits.com/wikipedia/Catholic_priest
- (15) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Donation_of_Constantine
- (16) <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/05118a.htm>
- (17) <http://www.answers.com/topic/donation-of-constantine>
- (18) <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/donatconst.html>

Appendix

Acts 20:28: "Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you bishops, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood." Again, the Holy Spirit is with the bishops of the Apostolic Succession. Bishop and overseer are from the same Greek word.

Additional translations of Luke 19:27 are provided below. Consider why Christ chose these words. He could have used another parable but he did not.

"But these enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, bring them here and slay them in my presence." (GOD'S WORD Translation, 1995)

Again:

"Bring my enemies, who didn't want me to be their king. Kill them in front of me." (King James Bible)

And again:

"But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me." (American King James Version)

And yet another translation:

"But those my enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring here, and slay them before me." (American Standard Version)

And again another:

"But these mine enemies, that would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me". (Bible in Basic English)

And another translation rendered thus:

"And as for those who were against me, who would not have me for their ruler, let them come here, and be put to death before me." (Douay-Rheims Bible)

Several more versions follow for absolute clarity:

"But as for those my enemies, who would not have me reign over them, bring them hither, and kill them before me." (Darby Bible Translation)

"Moreover those mine enemies, who would not have me to reign over them, bring them here and slay them before me." (English Revised Version)

"Howbeit these mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me." (Webster's Bible Translation)

"But those my enemies, who would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me." (Weymouth New Testament)

"But as for those enemies of mine who were unwilling that I should become their king, bring them here, and cut them to pieces in my presence." (World English Bible)

John 2:13-16

". . . Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the Temple courts he found men selling cattle, sheep and doves and others sitting at tables exchanging money. So he made a whip out of cords and drove all from the Temple, both sheep and cattle; he scattered the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. To those who sold doves he said: 'Get out of here.'