

The [Christian](#) law also has necessarily its [priesthood](#) to carry out the Divine service, the principal act of which is the [Eucharistic Sacrifice](#), the figure and renewal of that of Calvary. This [priesthood](#) has two degrees: the first, total and complete, the second an incomplete participation of the first. The first belongs to the [bishop](#). The [bishop](#) is truly a priest (*sacerdos*), and even a [high-priest](#); he has chief control of the Divine worship (*sacrorum antistes*), is the president of [liturgical](#) meetings; he has the fullness of the [priesthood](#), and administers all the [sacraments](#). The second degree belongs to the priest (*presbyter*), who is also a *sacerdos*, but of the second rank ("secundi sacerdotes" [Innocent I](#) ad Eugub.); by his priestly [ordination](#) he receives the power to offer sacrifice (i.e. to celebrate the Eucharist), to forgive [sins](#), to [bless](#), to preach, to sanctify, and in a word to fulfil the non-reserved [liturgical duties](#) or priestly functions. In the exercise of these functions, however, he is subject to the authority of the [bishop](#) to whom he has promised canonical obedience; in certain cases even he requires not only authorization, but real [jurisdiction](#), particularly to forgive

[sins](#)

and to take care of

[souls](#)

. Moreover, certain acts of the sacerdotal power, affecting the

[society](#)

of which the

[bishop](#)

is the head, are reserved to the latter — e.g. confirmation, the final rite of

[Christian](#)

initiation,

[ordination](#)

, by which the ranks of the

[clergy](#)

are recruited, and the solemn

[consecration](#)

of new

[temples](#)

to

[God](#)

. Sacerdotal powers are conferred on priests by priestly

[ordination](#)

, and it is this

[ordination](#)

which puts them in the highest rank of the

[hierarchy](#)

after the

[bishop](#)

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