



# The ministries

# 20

## Objective

The confirmands know the different ministries and their functions.  
They want to consolidate the connection with their bearers of blessing.

## Contents

Ministers are chosen by God and ordained into their ministries by Apostles.  
The various ministries and their functions.  
My bearer of blessing.  
The Fifth Article of Faith

## 1 Lead-in

### Ask

**In the New Apostolic Church why does one brother have the ministry of District Elder, another the ministry of Deacon, while a third has no ministry?**

### Hint

It is important for all confirmands to be able to express what they know or surmise about this. The confirmation teacher listens attentively to the confirmands' answers. He also accepts incorrect answers without commenting. Only later does he go into them. (Make notes if necessary.)

## 2 How are ministers selected?

### Explain

#### *Called by God*

No minister has recommended himself. It is God who has chosen him and provided the necessary signs and indications to this end. Through the ordination the minister is blessed and sanctified for his service. He receives authority out of the Apostle ministry. Available talents are awakened and dedicated to the exercise of his ministry

### Tell

#### *Moses' selection*

God spoke to Moses from a burning bush. He commissioned Moses to lead the people of Israel out of Egypt. Moses gave various reasons which he considered a hindrance to fulfilling his commission. God however, had chosen him and no one else. He told Moses, "I will certainly be with you" (Exodus 3: 12).

### Tell

#### *David's selection*

God once sent the prophet Samuel to Bethlehem where he was to anoint one of Jesse's sons king. Jesse introduced seven of his sons to Samuel, but not one of them was the chosen one. Samuel then asked Jesse if these were all of his children. Jesse had one more son. He was the youngest and tended the sheep. Samuel requested that he be brought to him. God then said to the prophet, "Arise, anoint him; for this is the one!" This is how David was called to be king.

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God had told Samuel what is decisive for such a selection: “Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart” (1 Samuel 16: 7; cf. 1 Samuel 16).

### Explain

*Being God’s child is the greatest*

Being God’s child rather than having a ministry is the greatest in our life. A ministry is given to serve God’s children. God’s work needs ministers. Those who are selected for this ought to say as Samuel once did, “Here I am” (1 Samuel 3: 6). However, we are not New Apostolic to become ministers, but to participate in the marriage of the Lamb. On the day of the Lord it will be our faithfulness to Him rather than a ministry which will be considered.

## 3 The various ministries

### A student reads aloud

Apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthians: “There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all” (1 Corinthians 12: 4–6).

### Summarise

God does everything through instruments which He selects for Himself.

### Explain

Apostle Paul speaks of the cooperation of the entire congregation (cf. 1 Corinthians 12: 12–27). This can also be applied to the ministries of a congregation, a district, and even to the entire work of God.

### *The human body*

The human body comprises various parts. Each has a specific function and all parts of the body are important. None would dispute the role of another part. It would be absurd if the ear would say, “I am not a part of the body because I am not the eye.” Or perhaps a foot would say, “I want to be a hand.” Together they constitute a whole—the body—under the direction of the brain. When one part is no longer connected to the brain it can no longer look after its task. It becomes useless and perhaps even a danger to the body.

### *The ministerial body*

No minister can be a useful instrument in the hand of God without an intimate connection to his Apostle. The Apostles, in turn, foster an intimate relationship with the Chief Apostle and thereby with their Sender Jesus Christ, the head of the church. Even today the words which the Son of God spoke to His Apostles continue to apply: “Without Me you can do nothing” (John 15: 5).

**Confirmands do workbook exercise B and a student reads aloud**

I believe that those designated by God for a ministry are ordained only by Apostles, and that authority, blessing, and sanctification for their ministration come forth out of the Apostle ministry.

## The ministries

### Ask

### What ministries do you know?

### Hint

The ministries which exist in the respective district churches are to be listed.

### Write answers on the board

- Chief Apostle
- District Apostle
- Apostle
- Bishop
- District Elder
- District Evangelist
- Elder
- Shepherd
- Evangelist
- Priest
- Deacon

### Hint

If a minister from the congregation is present he ought to briefly describe his responsibilities.

### Elaborate through further questions

Every minister has a specific ministerial commission and has also received the necessary authority from the Apostle to this end. The confirmands are to be made aware of the ministerial commission associated with each of the ministries.

- Who dispenses Holy Baptism with water?
- Who dispenses the gift of the Holy Spirit?
- Who brings Holy Communion to the sick?
- Who ordains the Apostles into their ministry?
- Who makes pastoral care visits?
- Who serves Holy Communion?

Several answers are possible to some of these questions.

### Workbook exercise A

The confirmands now complete the list of ministries in exercise A in their workbook by adding the names of their bearers of blessing. Afterwards the responsibilities of the various ministries are discussed with the help of this list. The confirmation teacher emphasises the following:

### Explain

*The Apostle ministry*

*The priestly ministries*

*The diaconal ministries*

*The district leaders, and the rectors*

- Certain functions are reserved exclusively for the Apostles (see lesson 18).
- The Apostles ordain the priestly ministries and Deacons who assist them in their great responsibilities.
- Each district and congregation has a rector. However, this is not a ministry, but a special commission. The rector of a congregation generally has the ministry of Priest, Evangelist, or Shepherd.

In Holy Scripture we read that the Apostles of the early church were likewise unable to manage everything on their own.

## 4 My bearer of blessing

The confirmation teacher asks the confirmands to provide the names of their bearers of blessing. Each of them should know that we all have bearers of blessing to whom we can turn.

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### Ask

### When do you turn to your bearers of blessing?

### Listen to answers and supplement

I can

- ask my bearers of blessing to pray for me,
- go to them for advice,
- share my joys with them,
- confide my concerns and problems to them,
- obtain new insights through them,
- thank them, and
- ask them how I can help along in the congregation.

### Hint

If some of these answers do not come readily the confirmation teacher can provide the following examples to help the confirmands to complete the list. He stops when he comes to the three dots (...) in the example. Perhaps one of the confirmands will then be able to continue.

- A friend at school asks me a question concerning my faith. I don't know how to respond. (...) I ask my bearer of blessing and gain new insight.
- It is a miracle that I am not involved in a traffic accident. Immediately I have to think of how this morning I prayed in particular for the protection of the angels. I thank my heavenly Father and (...) tell my bearers of blessing. They share in my happiness.
- I have been trying to overcome something for a long time. Yet despite my sincere efforts I am not succeeding. (...) Here too I ask my bearers of blessing for advice and to intercede for me.
- I always see the same elderly brother working on the church grounds. (...) I go to my bearer of blessing and offer to help with this work.

### Hint

The confirmation teacher's role is very significant here. He is to encourage each of the young children of God to be very close to his or her bearers of blessing.

### Explain

The confirmands ought to know that their bearers of blessing will stand by them in all matters and concerns.

### The main points

### I also want to ...

**... be wholeheartedly connected with my bearers of blessing!**

### Homework

The confirmands learn the Fifth Article of Faith by heart. In the Bible they read John 3: 1–7 and prepare to retell what they have read. They do exercise A of lesson 21 in their workbook.