



# Vested in Grace: Marriage and Priesthood in the Christian East

*Joseph J. Allen*

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"Literature bearing witness to the state of life of the clergy during the first two centuries of Christianity is very scarce and, in spite of what can appear at first glance, leaves the field open to conjecture regarding marriage and priesthood. At all events we can find no trace of a consistent teaching singling out clergy with respect to their marital status."

With these words, Abp Peter L'Huillier, who writes the first historical chapter in this study, well captures the earliest roots of a condition that has prevailed until our own age, in both the Eastern and Western Churches. The fact that questions regarding marriage and priesthood remain "open to conjecture," and continue to lack a "consistent teaching," is at once a problem for the Church and the creative cause for the present study.

Here the hard questions about marriage and priesthood are asked and each contributor in his own field of specialization seeks to answer them honestly. This is not a study which can be reduced to pietistic formulations. Rather it takes the reader to the roots of the many issues which the Church must face, both now and in the future, in the area of marriage and priesthood.

The contributors are: Joseph J. Allen, Peter L'Huillier, Patrick Viscuso, Michael Najim, and Nicholas Nagorny.



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