August 25, 2022
St. Louis King of France

Protocol for Exorcism

The Archdiocese of New Orleans has established a protocol to deal with situations of extraordinary malice and assaults of the devil and the other demons, of either a person or a place. The protocol consists of three phases: preparatory, investigative and observatory. The time frame for each of these phases can vary. God allows us to be tested for our own growth in faith. Quick fixes are not in our best interest. Growing in holiness is more important than getting the demons out. Time varies in each healing and deliverance ministry.

**Preparatory Phase:** The pastor, along with his vicar or deacon, engage in the very hard work of assisting the afflicted individual to engage in all of the ordinary spiritual tools to obtain the sufficient grace of God to fight the good fight. These tools are principally: Mass (every Sunday and Holy Day of Obligation), both Sacraments of Healing (Reconciliation and Anointing), Scripture, the rosary, the crucifix, holy water, asceticism (prayer, fasting, almsgiving), the Our Father, the St. Michael Prayer and the Works of Mercy (Corporal and Spiritual). In addition to these tools, if an individual is cohabitating, in an invalid marriage, not living the moral code (the Decalogue and Beatitudes) or engaged in occult practices, then these too must be addressed. As a rule, when all of these things are employed, diabolic malice and assaults are sufficiently deflected. In addition to this, the pastor, his vicar or deacon, may administer the Minor Exorcisms from the RCIA ritual: 71, 94, 102, 153, 168, 175, 180 and 224, adjusting the wording as necessary. This phase is by far the most difficult of the three phases.

**Investigatory Phase:** This phase may begin when all of the steps have been taken in the Preparatory Phase and have proven to be insufficient, then the pastor would contact the Archbishop who in turn would assign one of his appointed exorcists to investigate the situation more thoroughly. The exorcist would look at the following factors: psychological (say paranoia, schizophrenia, bi-polar), physiological (epilepsy, diabetes, hypertension, hormones), anthropological (exercise, sleep, eating habits), cosmological (electronics, wind, temperature, shadows), diabolic (rousing of the senses, rage, malice, obstinance, arrogance, deceptions and lies), angelic (namely the guardianship of the angels) and lastly theological (namely discernment between the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, in contrast to the Adversary, the Evil One, following the Rules for the Discernment of Spirits, The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola). Diagnosis from a physician and a psychiatrist, along with counseling and spiritual direction, are requirements. If the exorcist determines with moral certitude that indeed there is extraordinary diabolic malice and assaults, he will seek authorization from the archbishop to administer the Rite of Exorcism, of a person if an individual, or of a place, if say home or apartment.

**Observatory Phase:** The pastor, his vicar, deacon, and the exorcist keep tabs on the case to ensure that they are staying the course and maintaining all of the tools to remain with God’s sufficient grace. The Rites of Exorcism are not magic and if the individual returns to old patterns and behaviors, diabolic malice and assaults can easily return. That is why Jesus says to stay vigilant. All of the ordinary tools in the Preparatory Phase must be maintained long term.