

The Monastic Grades

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When one desiring the monastic life enters a monastery, he normally passes through three steps or stages: **1) Probationer (Novice including Riasaphor), 2) Monk of the Lesser Schema (Cross-bearer or Stavrophore), and 3) Monk of the Great Schema (Russian Skhimnik)**. The Probationer who enters a monastery desires to do so in order to acquit himself worthily in the angelic state, so called because Monks renounce all worldly things, do not marry, do not acquire and hold property, and live as do the Angels in Heaven, glorifying God night and day and striving to do His Will in all things.

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