

EPISCOPAL ACADEMY



INTENSIVE STUDY GUIDE & ASSIGNMENTS

History of the Episcopacy

Early church history

Introduction to Church History

All too often, we have approach the episcopacy like it was something that we invented in the present century and ignore how it developed in the past. Some scholars and teachers have approached this office as though it just suddenly pop on the scene without any connection to the apostles or as though it was their invention and not something authorized by the Holy Spirit.

The History of the Episcopacy is the study of the hierarchical form of church governance in which the chief local authority are bishops. It is the study of structure used by many of the major Christian churches and denominations, such as Catholic, Eastern, eastern Orthodox, Anglican and Lutheran churches or denominations, as well as other churches founded and independent from these lineages.

What is a Bishop?

Etymology

Definition of the word Bishop: A bishop is an ecclesiastical dignitary, an ordained or consecrated member of the Christian clergy who is generally invested with a position of authority and oversight over a diocese, jurisdiction, or area of responsibility.

The etymological roots of the office includes its Greek form, which is “Episcopos” followed by its Latin form, which is Episcopus.”

The next development of the term is its Italian form, which is closest to the Latin and is rendered as “Vescovov.” From the Italian we move on to its German form, which is “Bishcoff.”

The two final linguistic forms of the title is Anglo-Saxon, which is rendered as “Biscop” and the Modren English, which borrows from the German first syllable, “Bish” and combines it with the Anglo-Saxon second syllable, “op” to create the no familiar “Bishop.”

In all of its forms, the term and title, literally means “epi” which means “over” and the term “skope” which means to see and is combined to mean “overseer.”

A bishop is an ecclesiastical dignitary, an ordained and consecrated member of the chistian clergy who is generally entrusted with a position of authority and oversight over a diocese, jurisdiction, or area of responsibility.

The English term derives from the New Testament Greek word, episkopos meaning, “oversee” or guardian. Greek concordances, indicate that the Greek word is a compound of ejpi, meaning “over, above” and skopov, meaning “an observer, a watchman.

Strong's defines episkopos as superintendent. A Christian officer in generally in charge of a church or jurisdiction.

Overseer

An overseer is a person charged with the duty of seeing that things to be done by others are done right.

Early Church History

Early Church History reveals that the development of the church was organized primarily as metropolitan enterprises that were known as "Patriarchates" and there were five. The term "Patriarchate," combines the notion of rule with that of father and suggests that the earliest form of Christianity operated under the supervision of a church father. The five patriarchates of the church included: Jerusalem, Antioch, Alexander, Constantinople and Rome.

While there are some that argue that the office of pastor and bishop were interchangeable in the early church, such an assertion does not seem to be supported by linguistic origins of the terms.

The title Pastor is a derivative of the term "Presbuteros" and has a literal meaning of "shepherd" while the term Bishop is a derivative of the term "Episcopu."

HISTORICAL FOUNDATION

The first Christians were essentially Jewish or Jewish proselytes. What is a proselyte? The biblical term "proselyte" is an Anglicization of the Greek term (proselytos), which means "stranger", a "newcomer to Israel", a "sojourner in the land". "Proselyte" also has the more general meaning in English of a new convert to any particular religion or doctrine.

The church split from the Jewish synagogue was gradual. Jewish Christians continued to worship in the synagogues for centuries.

After Paul's conversion, we see the integration of Gentiles into the church. The word "Gentile" derives from Latin gentilis, which itself derives from the Latin gens, meaning clan or tribe. Along with forms of the cognate Greek word genos. The original meaning of "clan" or "family" was extended in post-Augustan Latin to acquire the wider meaning of belonging to a distinct nation or ethnicity. Later still, the word came to refer to other nations, 'not a Jew or Roman citizen

The first church council was held around the year 50 (The Council of Jerusalem Acts 15:19-29). A Council, in the Christian Church, is a meeting of bishops and other leaders to consider and rule on questions of doctrine, administration, discipline, and other matters. An ecumenical or general council is a meeting of bishops of the whole church; local councils representing such areas as provinces or patriarchates are often called synods. The Council of Jerusalem or Apostolic Council was held in Jerusalem around AD 50. It is unique among the ancient pre-ecumenical councils in that it is considered by Catholics and Orthodox to be a prototype and forerunner of the later ecumenical councils and a key part of Christian ethics. The council decided that Gentile converts to Christianity were not obligated to keep most of the Law of Moses, including the rules concerning circumcision of males. The Council did,

however, retain the prohibitions on eating blood, meat containing blood, and meat of animals not properly slain, and on fornication and idolatry, sometimes referred to as the Apostolic Decree or Jerusalem Quadrilateral.

In the late 1st. century, Judaism was a legal religion with protection of Roman law. Jews had special rights, including the privilege of abstaining from civic pagan rites. The Romans initially identified Christians with the Jewish religion.

Emperor Nerva decreed that Christians were different than Jews and did not have to pay the annual tax upon the Jews. Because of this Nerva's determination, Christians are persecuted for disobedience to the emperor as they continued to refuse to worship the state Pantheon.

Church in Jerusalem was much like the Jewish synagogues. The Church had a council or college of ordained presbyters (elders). **What is a college? A college is an organized group of professional people with particular aims, duties, and privileges.**

Acts 11:30 and Acts 15:22, we see a collegiate system of government in Jerusalem chaired by James the Just, according to tradition the first bishop of the city. Acts 14:23. Paul ordains presbyters in churches in Anatolia. **What is ordain ordination? Ordination is the process by which individuals are consecrated, that is, set apart as clergy to perform various religious rites and ceremonies. The process and ceremonies of ordination vary by religion and denomination. One who is in preparation for, or who is undergoing the process of ordination is sometimes called an ordained. The liturgy used at an ordination is sometimes referred to as an ordination.**

Paul ordains and the one who is ordained or consecrated becomes a presbyter. **What is a presbyter? In the New Testament, a presbyter is a leader in a local Christian congregation. The word derives from the Greek presbyteros, which means elder or senior. The Greek word episkopos literally means overseer; it refers exclusively to the office of bishop. Many understand presbyteros to refer to the bishop functioning as overseer. In modern Catholic and Orthodox usage, presbyter is distinct from bishop and synonymous with priest or Elder. In predominant Protestant usage, presbyter does not refer to a member of a distinctive priesthood called priests, but rather to an elder.**

The term Presbyter (Elder) and Bishop (Overseer, superintendent) denote in the New Testament one and the same office, with this difference only, that the first is borrowed from the Synagogue, the second from the Greek communities, and that the one signifies the dignity, the other the duty.

Bishop was regarded first as the head of a congregation surrounded by a council of presbyters.

Lightfoot expressed: "The episcopate was formed, not out of the apostolic order by localization, but out of the presbyteral, by elevation, and the title, which was common to all, came at length to be appropriated to the "chief among them".

Conclusion

Therefore, we can conclude that the churches in the New Testament community served under anointed leadership, but that the distinction of an episcopacy in the special sense that we see today probably came

much later. According to most scholars, in fact, this special distinction did not come until after the death of the last Apostle and maybe not in a larger sense until the early part of the second century.

From Apostles to Bishops

While the insights into the present office that we can glean from the New Testament record are somewhat limited, we can indeed learn much from the writings of the men called “Church Fathers”. Through their voices, the Church maintains that the New Testament apostles left “approved men” as their successors to the end of preserving the traditional and apostolic faith. To wit, their official position is articulated thusly:

THE TESTAMONY OF ST. IRENAEUS (Church Father):

“The apostolic tradition is manifested and preserved throughout the world by those whom the apostles made bishops and by their successors down to our own time. The sacred synod teaches that the bishops have by divine institution taken the place of the apostles as pastors of the church in such wise that whoever rejects them rejects Christ and him who sent Christ.”

From Gifting to Office

To understand how we move from Apostles to Bishops, we must understand the theological shift that occurs between the Apostolic Gift and the Office of the Bishop.

Initially the emerging church was religiously and administratively led by the fivefold ministry gifts revealed to us in Ephesians 4:1-11. The founders of the emerging church were the 12 men sent and empowered by Jesus to establish His “Ecclesia”, (the Church). They were endowed with the gift of the Apostle given to them by Jesus.

EPHESIANS 4:1-15

4 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, 2 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; 3 Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. 4 There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; 5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all 7 But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. 8 Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. 9 (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? 10 He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) 11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: 13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: 14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; 15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:

WHAT IS AN APOSTLE?

Question: "What is an apostle?"

Answer: The word apostle means "one who is sent out." In the New Testament, there are two primary usages of the word apostle. The first is in specifically referring to the twelve apostles of Jesus Christ. The second is in generically referring to other individuals who are sent out to be messengers/ambassadors of Jesus Christ.

The twelve apostles held a unique position. In referring to the New Jerusalem, Revelation 21:14 states, "The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb." The twelve apostles are also referred to in Matthew 10:2; Mark 3:14; 4:10; 6:7; 9:35; 14:10, 17, 23; Luke 6:13; 9:1; 22:14; John 6:71; Acts 6:2; and 1 Corinthians 15:5. It was these twelve apostles who were the first messengers of the gospel after the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It was these twelve apostles who were the foundation of the church—with Jesus being the cornerstone (Ephesians 2:20).

This specific type of apostle is not present in the church today. The qualifications of this type of apostle were: (1) to have been an witness of the resurrected Christ (1 Corinthians 9:1), (2) to have been explicitly chosen by the Holy Spirit (Acts 9:15), (3) to have the ability to create and establish new churches, and perform signs and wonders (Acts 2:43; 2 Corinthians 12:12). The role of the twelve apostles, laying the foundation of the church, would also argue for their uniqueness. Two thousand years later, we are not still working on the foundation.

THE OTHER APOSTLES

Beyond the unique twelve apostles of Jesus Christ, there were also apostles in a generic sense. Barnabas is referred to as an "apostle" in Acts 13:2 and 14:4. Andronicus and Junias are possibly identified as apostles in Romans 16:7. The same Greek word usually translated "apostle" is used to refer to Titus in 2 Corinthians 8:23 and Epaphroditus in Philippians 2:25. So, there definitely seems to be room for the term apostle being used to refer to someone besides the twelve apostles of Jesus Christ. Anyone who was "sent" could be called an apostle.

What exactly would be the role of an apostle outside that of the twelve apostles? That is not entirely clear. From the definition of the word, the closest thing today to an apostle, in the general sense, is a missionary. A missionary is a follower of Christ who is sent out with the specific mission of proclaiming the gospel. A missionary is an ambassador of Christ to people who have not heard the good news. However, to prevent confusion, it is likely best to not use the term apostle to refer to any position or office in the church today. Because the word Apostle refers to gifting and not to an office. The vast majority of occurrences of the word apostle or apostles in the New Testament refer to the twelve apostles of Jesus Christ and their gifting.

APOSTLE & BISHOPS

CHARACTERISTIC OF APOSTOLIC GIFTING

Apostles have always been foundation layers and spiritual parents.

They are parenting-type figures who have the ability to attract and birth other leaders.

They are master builders who have a strong passion to see the church built on right foundations.

They are servants of the church who are sent out by the church to evangelize and to plant churches.

They have an itinerant ministry as they often exercise general leadership over a group of churches.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE BISHOP OFFICE

A bishop is a consecrated member of the Christian clergy

An ecclesiastical dignitary.

He/She is generally invested with a position of authority.

He/She has oversight over a diocese (churches), jurisdiction (churches), or area of responsibility (administrative).

They are spiritual supervisors and overseers.

They are a member of the highest order of the ministry.

INHERENT FACTS ABOUT APOSTOLIC AUTHORITY

- Apostles govern but they must govern out of a judicial office.
- Bishop is the office that the Apostolic gifting serves in.
- The gift of the apostle is the Devine ability.
- The office of the Bishop is the designated judicial and authoritative position or order in which the apostolic gifting serves.
- To be an apostle one is graced by Jesus with the gift.
- To operate in the gifting as it relates to the church, one must be affirmed by men.
- Affirmation only come through agreement.
- Every five-fold ministry gifts must be affirmed by men.

IMPORTANT NOTE

“JUST BECAUSE MEN DO NOT AFFIRME YOUR GIFT, DOSENT MEAN YOU DO NOT POSSES THE GIFT.

“THE WORK ALWAYS COMES BEFORE THE AFFIRMATION OR ELEVATION”.

THE EMERGENT CHURCH

The Apostolic Era did not end with all of the doctrinal issues settled, for the nascent church. Happily, the Apostles trusted the continuance of the Gospel message to men they had personally mentored. Well-endowed with both a secular and apostolic education these men produced copious volumes of written work, over the course of the first five to seven centuries of church history.

Some of the works of these “Apostolic Fathers” and “Early Church Fathers” were of a theological nature, and – very importantly – others were of an apologetic nature. From late in second century onward we begin to see the emergence of a hierarchical division of labor in the church, with bishops being separated as overseers of an entire metropolitan area; and assisted by presbyters and deacons.

The exponential growth of the church necessitated that the church take on some semblance of structure; and so we begin to see the first glimpses of a church that will eventually resemble the church we see today.

The earliest of the men who helped put this structure in place are known as the Apostolic Fathers, owing to the belief that these men were mentored personally by the Apostles, and – in a few instances even believed to have been mentioned in the New Testament.

The consensus concerning these earliest “fathers” is that they were among the “approved men” chosen to succeed the Apostles in their ministry, should they fall asleep. In introducing his book, Learning Theology with the Church Fathers, Christopher Hall observes that: The early church fathers were great theologians--though they did not think of themselves as such. They were working pastors, involved in the daily life and leadership of their congregations.

Yet they were wrestling with many of the great and formative questions of the Christian faith, such as the Trinity, the incarnation, the providence of God and the nature of the church. These beliefs were defined in the crucible of spiritual leadership, pastoral care and theological conflict, all set against the background of the great cultural movements and events of their day. For the church fathers, theology was a spiritual exercise woven into the texture of life.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR BISHOPS AND APPOINTED OFFICERS OF THE EPISCOPACY



CODE OF CONDUCT FOR BISHOPS AND APPOINTED OFFICERS OF THE EPISCOPACY

The Code of Conduct is designed to be a guideline for those in Episcopal authority and appointment for Episcopal work for the Reformation. Since those who serve are under the authority of the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the guidelines of the Reformation there are some necessary expectations and requirements in general capacity that are expected. Those who are affected by the Code of Conduct are the Bishops who are consecrated, Overseers, Armorbearers, Pastors, Elders and Deacons who are ordained and appointed by the Reformation.

Those who are consecrated, have great responsibility because of the scrutiny on and into their lives. Those who are consecrated are eligible for review, hearings and are allowed due process as listed under the areas of discipline in areas of responsibility. The procedure as outlined due to the position held is to be followed and adhered to as necessary for discipline before extreme action is taken.

Those who are consecrated are able to appeal to the Apostolic Team for hearing under disciplinary situations, but the final decision will be left to the discretion of the Presiding Bishop who appoints persons in stated positions or the Episcopal officer in authority on an Episcopal level who has made appointments. Those who are appointed can be removed by immediate Episcopal authority as needed after assessing and determining a situation and/or the effectiveness or lack of professional, ethical and/or moral concern of appointee.

The Code of Conduct is concerned with the following:

1. That an individual walk in the level of integrity that is expected by the standards set by the Presiding Bishop and is expected by the Reformation.
2. A moral standard is set and followed by all concerned who are consecrated, installed and/or appointed.
3. That the person in position realize the significance of their position and the need to present themselves as honorable ambassadors to a higher level of servitude and representation.
4. Whether consecrated, installed or appointed that a time of teaching and training is required and expected before assuming the position of service.
5. That superiors respect and work with those who are in a capacity of servitude.
6. That discipline is not an embarrassment to the person in question and people are removed with a maintenance of dignity.

7. That no official openly degrade, humiliate, and/or demean person(s) in an attempt to exalt themselves or assert their authority.
8. That a Christ-like attitude and persona is used when working with issues that necessitate executive decision, insight and expertise.
9. That respect of communication is disseminated to all members of the Reformation regardless of position and subjectivity to keep leadership informed and involved on all levels with absence of malice, negligence or prejudice.
10. That leadership not jeopardize the growth of the Reformation because of personal degradation, aggrandizement, accusation and/or an attempt to exercise individual influence (this could result in removal from office if it is detrimental to the growth of the Reformation so that people or churches are leaving the Reformation).
11. That removal of an individual from position is done with the greatest of discretion and dignity so as not to embarrass the individual removed and/or the Reformation.
That those who remove leaders keep record of meetings, documented evidence and/or procedures that relate to consecrated leaders.
12. That presentations of consecrated, installed and appointed individuals is respected by those receiving the presentation and that respect is given to the response of those presentations to encourage the opportunity to be heard.
13. That adequate technological tools and machinery is a part of the office equipment of consecrated, installed and appointed leadership so that information can be received and dispatched as needed and required by the Office of the Presiding Bishop.
14. That an adequate address and telephone number is registered in the offices of the Presiding Prelate, so that communication of materials and information can be properly, adequately and efficiently disseminated to the appropriate leadership (neglect and dereliction in this area can be grounds for immediate removal from office).
15. That accusation of abusive leadership is documented, recorded and/or discussed before removal of an appointed individual from office.
16. That leadership not allow itself to delve in idle gossip, rumors and discussion that could allude to negative Reformation relationships.
17. That proper review and recommendation is followed before recommendation, appointment and/or approval is made of any of the aforementioned individuals.

GENERAL CONDUCT THAT IS UNBECOMING OF A MEMBER OF THE EPISCOPACY

Though this is a general category, it is an open door of opportunity to work with and aid our spiritual leadership to be handled on a level of respect that is professional and relevant to the actions of the member of the Episcopacy and the offense committed. It allows Episcopal leadership to handle the unbeknownst activities that could arise in the future. The Episcopacy is continually confronted with challenges and temptations that are seemingly under control. They often forget that the snares and darts that are set for others are also set for the leaders of the church.

These listed items and their points of discipline are not to be used as a tool of abuse, but a rule of guide and measurement for those who are in a position who can bring possible embarrassment to the Reformation family and who have no regard for themselves or the welfare and future of the Reformation. The Reformation cannot continue to sanction those who will disregard and/or disrespect those areas that are important to the Body of Christ and are sacred and special in the scriptures. Mercy is always to be considered, but restraint is expected as the Episcopacy is governed and led by the Holy Spirit. Eventually the actions and sins of all of us catch up with us at a time when we least expect it.

The repercussions is the knowing that God will have the final say and that the exercising of mercy should always be a part of the vocabulary of the saints for we are certain that God has been merciful to all of us. However, God has set a standard and we must do what we can to live according to His expectations and standards.

The world believes the church will continue to say one thing and do another. The policy and process must begin somewhere and there is no better place to begin in the Protestant Church than in the Joint College of Bishops. The message will be sent to society that somewhere in the Body of Christ that a stand against the immoral, illegal, unholy and unrighteous acts of man have their limitations of acceptance. We hope that as a Reformation Family that none of these actions will ever have to be taken but we are determined to set a standard for the Lord and the Kingdom regardless of position, influence, relationship ties, etc. They will not be determined by idle gossip or rumors but persons will be able to confront their accusers.

DISCIPLINE OF A BISHOP

When situations arise that question the compliance of a Bishop with the expected standards, the procedure is as follows:

1. If it is brought to the immediate attention of the Presiding Bishop – the Apostolic Team will be immediately summoned. If the person is a member of the Apostolic Team – the investigation will be maintained on the level of the Apostolic Team. The investigation by the Apostolic Team will make a thorough review and, if necessary, the Presiding Bishop is summoned for spiritual discretion, direction and investigation to maintain the integrity of the Apostolic Team, the reputation of the Bishop and the necessary immediate execution of chastisement with dignity and covering for the protection of the Bishop, his/her family, the local church and the Body of Christ.

2. If the concern should arise from the Bishop's Council and is presented to the Presiding Bishop or the Apostolic Team and is a member of the Bishop's Council, the investigation will ensue from a Committee appointed by the Bishop's Council and the recommendation will result from said committee's results of investigation with the final result and decision coming from the Presiding Bishop. The Committee of appointment will be chaired by one of the Apostolic Team members.
3. Should the concern arise from a member of the College of Bishop's the above procedure in number two (2) will be followed. The Presiding Bishop reserves the right to summon the Apostolic Team to immediate investigation of the concern and the Apostolic Team may convene an aggregation to investigate and formulate information, as deemed necessary, to bring immediate resolve on behalf of the Presiding Bishop. The Presiding Bishop will determine on which level as it pertains to the level of activity of the Bishop that deliberations, investigations, recommendations, and necessary removal and/or covering will occur. The Presiding Bishop and the Apostolic Team will ultimately bring resolve to the matter for final disposition. The Executive Secretary shall communicate the decision of the Council to the Bishop in question.
4. If the Bishop in question is a member of the Apostolic Team, the Bishop shall not participate in any and all activities, meetings, matters of concern or decisions pertaining to and of the Apostolic Team, until resolution is made and a final decision is rendered on the Bishop of concern and it is communicated in writing from the Executive Secretary. Should the Bishop be a member of the Bishop's Council, the Bishop will not participate in any and all activities, meetings, matters of concern or decisions pertaining to and of the Bishop's Council until resolution is made and a final decision is rendered on the Bishop of concern and it is communicated in writing from the Executive Secretary.
5. Finally, when a Bishop's activities character is in question it could determine a need that has not been addressed to aid the Bishop in receiving necessary aid and counseling.
6. The investigation, in such matters, would serve as a catalyst to quietly remove the Bishop for their individual protection, the protection and integrity of the Body of Christ, the Family of the Bishop and the local Church Family. The Bishop would be placed in protective seclusion and a plan worked out to protect resources, eliminate legal investigation and due process and preserve the integrity of the Family of the Bishop. This will allow the matter to be resolved in a spiritual manner and open the door to aid before extreme resolve. RESTORATION IS ALWAYS A CONSIDERATION AT THE DISCRETION OF THE PRESIDING BISHOP.

LETTER OF RESCISSION POLICY

A letter of rescission is sent by the Executive Secretary under the direction of the Presiding Bishop as it relates to individuals who are not performing as to the capacity expected of them by the Presiding Bishop and the rules and regulations as outlined in the Policy and Procedure manual.

Those who are under the immediate scrutiny of the Presiding Bishop are the members of the Apostolic Team and the Bishop's Council. They are also allowed the privilege of rescission as investigated and

concluded by the necessary persons who gather and properly interpret information as overseen by the Presiding Bishop. The Policy and Procedure manual directives are expected to be a guideline of expectation that will allow those who have been selected to become Bishops, Elders, staff and aids of assistance to the Reformation to produce and become sound in their productivity and morality become evident, it is necessary for the open allegations of impropriety to be investigated and/or for the legal process to take place to deem a final outcome to determine if a letter of rescission is to be implemented.

In the case where an Investigation or legal proceeding are in immediate procedure progress, the Presiding Bishop has the right to suspend the Bishop, Pastor or Elder and/or person of concern until a matter is finally determined. If the Presiding Bishop should determine that a resignation is necessary, it finalizes the process of the appointee or consecrated individual. The individual must then proceed through a process of proving one's self to be placed in the ranks of accepted authoritarians and be reappointed again. A letter of rescission from the Executive Secretary should follow with the final determination made by the Presiding Bishop or his designate. The Presiding Bishop reserves the right to accept or reject any and all resignations sent to him relative to matters of concern.

In the case when an individual has submitted his resignation to the Presiding Bishop verbally or by letter then it will be communicated by the Presiding Bishop to the Executive Secretary and after conclusion to the matter is confirmed then a letter is sent to the Presiding Bishop and the individual of concern to verify that a resignation has been submitted and then a letter of rescission is sent to the person of concern informing them of their resignation acceptance.

Any communications to the Presiding Bishop, relative to resignation of position, must be submitted by letter. If verbal communication is given to the Presiding Bishop a letter is also expected from the individual who has communicated that information to the Presiding Bishop. This is for the protection of the Presiding Bishop and the Reformation. In the case where an individual has not been suspended or resigned but has been asked to step down, then they hold their position but become an individual "without portfolio".

THE RECESSON OF CREDENTIALS AND REMOVAL FROM THE BISHOPRIC

The office of a Bishop is considered one of the most significant in servitude as it pertains to the spiritual diplomacy of mankind and man's ability to become subject to the powers that govern heaven and earth. Before a man can become Bishop he must learn and understand subjectivity. For one to be in this most delicate position and to become unruly and or unbearable in one's position is not only an atrocity but an embarrassment to the position that is designated with Godly duties divine permission.

The Presiding Bishop has the Apostolic Authority to appoint men and women to the sacred office of Bishop. He also has the right to determine, present and justify an individual from being removed or removed from the consecrated position of Bishop with the abstraction of consecrated act having been noted as eliminated from the life of a Bishop. For this mandate to happen it usually means that something very extreme has occurred. The Presiding Bishop has the alternative given by his apostolic position to administer mercy and justice when it is needed, necessary, and adjudicated. It is then that the personal advisement of the Presiding Bishop should expect to be administered.

The Presiding Bishop also has the right and power to suspend, watch and probate a Bishop for a justified period of time (30, 60, 90...days) in order that he might review the individual, see how the individual reacts to discipline and whether the act of mercy should be administered and exercised as he sees fit. Should an individual react negatively or become belligerent to the discipline that has been administered or adjudicated the Presiding Bishop has the right to rescind the credentials of a Bishop and remove them from not only their position but from the consecrated ranks of Bishopric.

When an individual has had his credentials rescinded, it is an embarrassment to the local congregation and the personage of the Bishop; yet sacredness, dignity, and integrity of the reformation must remain intact as well as the office of Bishop.

The rescission of credentials and the abstraction of the Bishop from the ranks of the Bishopric are as follows:

1. The Presiding Bishop will review all charges related to the Bishop in question.
2. The Presiding Bishop may suspend a Bishop for the charges that have been made pending the results of an investigation.
3. The Presiding Bishop also has the right to ask for a resignation which will bring finality to the Bishops situation and bring the rescission and abstraction process to an immediate attention or open the door for the process for the rescinded Bishop to go through the process of preparing for the Bishopric again and scrutiny by the Presiding Bishop and thorough investigation of the Bishop of Consecrations.
4. The Presiding Bishop has the right to suspend for cause and to institute the investigation.
5. When the question of sexual harassment, sexual misconduct and sexual abuse are brought as charges on the Bishop it is necessary that suspension occur immediately. Suspension may be invoked according to the length of legal and apostolic investigation.
6. An investigation team appointed by the Presiding Bishop will investigate the charges that are presented to the Presiding Bishop and/or the Bishop's Council
7. The Executive Secretary will immediately send a letter of suspension relative to the delegated authority of the Presiding Bishop.
8. The Presiding Bishop will inform the Apostolic Team and/or the Bishop's Council of the suspension and what his desires may be or the investigative situation of the matters.

9. Should the actions of the Bishop or allegations be true the Presiding Bishop will determine what state he desires for the Bishop to maintain so that a further investigation or review will be made.
10. If the individual becomes insubordinate, disrespectful or has committed a felonious act that brings to mind the authority and integrity of the Reformation, the Presiding Bishop will make the ultimate decision based on his personal views and evaluation and the results of review and investigation.
11. If there rescission and abstraction is fundamentally necessary a letter of the decision to rescind and abstract the Bishop will be sent to the Bishop by the Executive Secretary.
12. A letter to the local newspaper will be sent to announce the rescission an abstraction of the Bishop in question and his/her removal from said office as well as the position by the Executive Secretary.
13. A letter of request will be sent by the Executive Secretary to ask for the return of the consecration papers with a copy of said letter going to the lay leader in the church and the local church family.
14. If the consecration papers are not sent back to the Executive Secretary then a public letter of renouncement is sent to the local media stating the rescission and abstraction and the lack of cooperation that has been displayed and the adverse reaction to spiritual authority.
15. The church will be reminded of those items that denote the Bishopric and that, those items should not be worn publicly and that the individual has been removed from said office of the Bishopric by letter.
16. The Bishop has the right to an attorney during the investigative process.
17. The Bishops attorney also has the right to involve himself in the instigative process and to challenge any and all evidence presented.
18. The Bishop in question has a right to question witnesses individually through his legal representative, review evidence that is presented, a right to question and to have access to any and all allegations that are presented.
19. After the investigating process is complete and it is found that there are no justified reasons to rescind and abstract the Bishop, the Presiding Bishop will direct the Executive Secretary to send a letter lifting the suspension and reinstating the position of the Bishop.
The Presiding Bishop has the right, authority and power to rescind any and all of the above that will restore a man or woman to the position in question as it becomes visible that a change of heart has taken place as it states it should be done in Galatians 6:1.

Levitical Vestments & Code of Dress



Levitical Vestments & Code of Dress

A ministerial dress code is herein prepared so that we might effectively exemplify the beauty and dignity of holiness, showing ourselves an example to all believers in all things. This Code will prescribe and suggest Civil, Ceremonial (Choir Dress), Liturgical, and Academic Attire for Bishops, Clergy and Diaconate of the church. The effectiveness of this Code is contingent upon the commitment of every clerical member of the College to adhere to its standards at every level. By doing so we establish order, and a sincere acknowledgment of, and regard for spiritual authority.

The Presiding Bishop

- The principle color of the Presiding Bishop's Office is Scarlet
- The Presiding Bishop has the option of wearing any of the Churches liturgical colors (Roman Purple, English Purple or Black)
- The use of the aforementioned color (Scarlet) is to be reserved for the Apostolic Office.

Cassock

The cassock is a close fitting garment, reaching the feet, and may be worn by all clergy as a symbol of the servant. The bishop wears this garment in deference to our Lord Jesus who instructed, "they who would be chief among you, shall be servant of all."

This particular Cassock is called the "House Cassock" and is worn by bishops and priest within their daily offices or at occasional public or street functions. It is not a Worship Garment or a Celebration Vestment. On occasion, this garment may be worn at Conclaves or during "Magesterium" Session of the Church.

Cincture

- The Cincture is worn about the waist with the Cassock.
- It is the girdle and symbol of that with which our Lord "girded Himself...with a towel to wash His disciple's feet."
- This portion of the vestment is to be the same color as that of the Cassock only with exception by the Presiding Bishop.

Rochet

The Rochet is a ceremonial white linen or cotton garment, similar to the Surplice. The Rochet reaches the floor. The Rochet sleeves is made like a coat or a buffed-bell gathered at the wrist.

This garment is the symbol of the priesthood, which was given to Aaron and his sons, as well as those of us who draw nigh to the Alter of God to represent Christ to His people. It is the symbol of worship and only bishops or those who have Apostolic Dispensation to do so wear the Rochet.

Chimere

- The Chimere is the sleeveless outer-robe of the bishop.
- The symbol of this garment is that of the bishop's Prophetic Office in the Church as Chief Preacher and Defender of the Faith within his/her See.
- The specific color of this garment is Scarlet for the Presiding Bishop and Diocesan Bishop ONLY.

There may be occasions when the Presiding Bishop might elect to wear Roman Purple with his brother-bishops or Black at a funeral or on a most solemn occasion. This garment is reserved for bishops who have been duly appointed and / or consecrated to that Office by the laying on of hands by bishops who have Apostolic Succession and the Canonical Authority to do so.

Stole or Tippet

The Stole or the Tippet is the symbol of the yoked one. All clergy of the Church are authorized to wear this symbol, while the Presiding Bishop wears the Seal of the Church and of his/her, Apostolic Office affixed there unto. The Tippet is the symbol of Jurisdiction. It alone denotes the bishop's territory or diocese when the Seals of his / her Office are affixed.

Zucchetto

The Zucchetto is the bishop's Prayer Cap and must not be worn by any other than the bishop. The bishop ONLY wears a Zucchetto in Cassock, Choir Dress or Ceremonial Vestments. The Zucchetto is removed during Prayers of invocation, the Consecration of the Host, Blessings, the Public Reading or hearing of the Gospels of Jesus Christ and at the "All Hail" of Handel's Messiah. The Bishop does not remove it, however during the Prayer of Consecration at the ordination of elders and deacons or the consecration of Bishops.

Pectoral Cross & Chain

The Cross and chain should be of precious gold or silver and may be worn by bishops ONLY. The cross is the obvious message of the Church for the salvation of the world in Christ. The Cross may have a precious stone encrusted in keeping with the bishop's desire. The chain from which it is suspended should be at least 40" in length.

Bishop's Ring

The Ring is the symbol of Royal Sonship and episcopal collegiality. This Ring is usually signet or jeweled Amethyst. It is worn on the right hand, ring finger. When it is worn, no other ring is proper except the Wedding Band for those bishops who are married. The same rule holds true when wearing the civic attire. We are never to wear ornamentation when in uniform. Loud buttons or carnations are completely out of order, regardless to the occasion, when in our vestments or civic attire.

Celebration Vestments

- Celebration Vestments are usually worn when a specific service of worship requires the Celebration of the Lord's Broken Body and Shed Blood.
- When it is determined that Holy Communion will be served, and that there will be a Solemn Processional of the diaconate, clergy and episcopacy.
- The Presiding Bishop will adorn in CASSOCK, ROCHET OR ALB, STOLE, WITH MITER AND CROSIER.
- THE CROSS COULD BE WORN WITH GOLD CHAIN OR A CORD OF RED AND GOLD
- A GREEN AND GOLD CORD OR GOLD CHAIN FOR ALL OTHER BISHOPS.

Civic Attire for Bishop's

The plain black suit or dress with white clerical collar is the basic street dress for all clergy in the Church. Black plain toe, heel in shoes. At no time will earrings, necklaces or excessive finger-rings be worn with this or any other Clerical Uniform. The pectoral Cross and Chain is worn around the neck with the cross in the left breast pocket (over the heart) with the chain exposed.

- Scarlet Red clerical shirt with Roman collar (Presiding Bishop & Diocesans)
- Cardinal Red clerical shirt (Ordinary Bishops or Apostolic Team)
- Purple clerical shirt (Suffragan or Auxiliary Bishop)
- English blue Purple clerical shirt (General Overseers, State Overseers or National Overseer)

General Overseer (National & State Overseer)

These Overseers are appointed, by the Presiding Bishops in the dioceses. The basic cassock is English/Blue Purple with matching Cincture.

Funeral & Home Going & Educational Services

Black is worn during Lent and Salome occasions. It can also be worn during regular preaching assignments.

Civic Wear Bishops Shoes

Black shoes (plain toe - heel- in) and black stockings are the required accessories. At no time (in uniform) will earrings, neckless, or excessive finger-rings be worn with this or any other Clerical Uniform.

Black Clerical Shirt

All clergy of the Church should wear the Black Breast Front with your uniform. However, in those cases where order dictates, bishops should wear their Roman Purple Breast Fronts while Overseers may wear their English/Blue Purple Breast Fronts

Apostolic Team

Cardinal Red or Fusia with Roman Collar

The Crosier

- Thy Rod and thy staff, they comfort me. Ps.23:4
- The Crosier is the shepherd's staff. It is an ecclesiastical ornament that is conferred upon bishop at their consecration in which is used by these prelates in performing certain solemn functions.
- The bishop carries the Crosier in his left hand with the hook pointing forward.

- The bishop holds the Crosier during the processional and when listening to the gospel, giving a homily, excepting vows, solemn promises, or a profession of faith, and when blessing people unless he must lay hands on them

Clergy Ropes

- White (Ordained Elders)
- Gold (Installed Pastors)
- English Blue (Overseers, National or State)
- Red (Adjutant or Armor-Bearer for Presiding Prelate)
- Black (Adjutant or Armor-Bearer)

Choir Dress for Pastors & Elders

The Choir Dress for all ordained clergy is a Black Cassock without any trimming of color other than matching Black, and Surplices shall become the outer garment for Choir Dress.

Vestment Prayer Prayers to be said while vesting

When he washes his hands, he says:

Prayer: Give strength to our hands O Lord, to wash away all uncleanness; that We may be enabled to serve You, in purity of mind and body.

James 4:8 Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.

As he sets the Zucchetto on his/her head he says: Set on our head O Lord, the helmet of Salvation, that I may overcome the assaults of the Devil. Ephesians 6:17- And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

When he vests himself in the Cassock:

{The Garment of Servanthood} "We wear the cassock as a sign of the Martyrs to which we have been called. The color has changed to denote the level of servant-prelature to which you now submit." The blood red in our robes represents the blood of martyrs who was killed for sport in the courts of Roman Emperors by the Lions who ravished the bodies of the Ecclesia who did not compromise the faith. To keep the Emperors from receiving their ultimate gratification, of blood soaked robes, they wore blood red and black to keep their garment from changing colors from their own blood.

Prayer: Make us pure, O Lord, and cleanse our heart, that, being made white in the Blood of the Lamb, We may attain everlasting joy.

Revelation 7:14- And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

When he girds himself with the Cincture:

{The Garment of Humility} "Receive the cincture as a symbol of Christ's example and admonishment of humility---forever reminded of our Lord Jesus, who washed His disciples feet."

Prayer: Gird us about, O Lord, with the girdle of purity and quench in our loins the passion of lust; that there may abide in us the virtue of continence and chastity.

Ephesians 6:14- Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;

When he puts on the Rochet

The Rochet: {The garment of Priesthood} "Receive the Rochet, liken to the linen ephod of the high-priest, as a sign of your priesthood—as the chief intercessor and worship leader."

Prayer: Thank you for this priestly anointing that bears the sins of those who are lost and cast them upon our only savior Jesus Christ.

Isaiah 61:10 I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness,

When he dawns the Chimere

The Chimere: {The Garment of Prophet} "As bishop and prophet, you are called to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus and to be a defender of the Faith."

Prayer: Restore to us, O Lord, the stole of immortality, which We lost in the transgression of our first parents, and although We are unworthy to draw near to Your Holy Mysteries, grant that We may attain everlasting joy.

Psalm 91:16- With long life, will I satisfy him, and show him my salvation.

When he put on the Stole (Tippet)

THE STOLE: "Receive this TIPPET, as a mantel of Consecrated ministerial authority in the Church of Jesus Christ." This Tippet signify the Coalition of Ecclesiastical brethren and sisters who have called you to this work and the Apostolic sign of succession of this brotherhood.

Prayer: O LORD, who has said: My yoke is easy, and My burden is light, grant that We may so bear it, as to attain Your grace. Amen.

Matthew 11:29- Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

(Dawned First by the Presiding Prelate)

THE CROSS: "Receive this cross as a sign of our Lord's triumph and the banner of our salvation. Be one with the Apostles in proclaiming Christ's resurrection and His sovereignty as Lord and Savior.

THE RING: "Receive this ring as symbol of the collegial authority given to you. Guard the faith, unity and discipline of Christ's Holy Apostolic Faith. The ring is then place on the Presiding Prelate by his/her Bishop of Clerics and "Kissed" by each Bishop. (Recognizing the Seat of Apostolic Succession of this reformation.

The Cross and Ring of each Bishop is placed upon their neck and finger by the Presiding Prelate and "Kissed" by him, honoring the collegial seat of each of His Bishops. Each Bishop then following the Bishop of Clerics "Kisses" Bishop Ring of the Apostolic Team of this Reformation.

Closing Prayer by the Presiding Prelate:

"God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Father of mercies and God of all comfort, dwelling on high by having regard for the lowly, knowing all things before they come to pass: we give You thanks that from the beginning You have gathered and prepared a people to be heirs of the covenant of Abraham, and have raised up prophets, Kings, and priest, never leaving Your temple unattended. We praise You also that from the creation You have graciously accepted the ministry of those whom You have chosen.

"Therefore Father, make this Apostolic Team Bishop in your Church. Pour out upon them Your princely Spirit, Whom You bestowed upon Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, with whom He endowed the Apostles,

and by Whom Your Church is built up in every place, to the glory and unceasing praise of your Name.
Amen!

Vestment Protocols

- Episcopal vestments are sacred and are to be worn only by those who have been consecrated through Apostolic succession or casual succession.
- Vestments are to be worn only in celebratory service of your reformation.
- It is the responsibility of the bishop to get permission from the Presiding Prelate prior to committing one's self to that specific task.
- When wearing vestments at another reformation, your Tippet is not to be worn with your reformation insignia and should not be seen.

Stockings

All Bishop's may wear the Roman Purple stockings with their vestments only. AT NO TIME WILL PURPLE STOCKINGS BE WORN WITH THE CIVIC ATTIER. BLACK OR OFF BLACK STOCKINGS ONLY, WILL BE WORN WITH CIVIC ATTIRE!!

Venerating of the Office

In the case of bishops, we would remind that people venerate our Office by kissing our Episcopal Ring or our right Hand.

Apostolic Fathers



What they taught about the Episcopacy.

In the early church, there was a rather rigid protocol and criteria for the acquisition of the office. First, a person had to be at least thirty years of age was required to have been in the ministry for a period of not less than six months. Because a great part of the role of the Bishop was to be a defender of the faith, bishops were required to hold a "Doctor of the Church" degree known as *doctus ecclesiasticus*.

In discussing New Testament times, there are three Early Church fathers who contributed greatly to the establishment of the episcopacy for New Testament times. These figures include Ignatius of Antioch, Irenaeus and Cyprian.

Ignatius of Antioch

Ignatius of Antioch ad c. 35 or 50 – 98 to 117, also known as Ignatius Theophorus lit. ("the God-bearing"), was an Apostolic Father and student of John the Apostle and was the third bishop of Antioch.

In route to Rome, where he met his martyrdom by being fed to wild beasts, he wrote a series of letters which have been preserved as an example of very early Christian theology. Important topics addressed in these letters include ecclesiology, the sacraments, and the role of bishops.

Ignatius converted to Christianity at a young age. Later in his life he was chosen to serve as a Bishop of Antioch, succeeding Saint Peter and St. Evodius (who died around AD 67). The 4th-century Church historian Eusebius records that Ignatius succeeded Evodius. Making his apostolic succession even more immediate, Theodoret of Cyrrhus reported that St. Peter himself appointed Ignatius to the episcopal see of Antioch. Ignatius called himself Theophorus (God Bearer). A tradition arose that he was one of the children whom Jesus took in his arms and blessed.

Ignatius is one of the five Apostolic Fathers (the earliest authoritative group of the Church Fathers). He based his authority on being a bishop of the Church, living his life in the imitation of Christ. Some believe that Ignatius, along with his friend Polycarp, were disciples of John the Apostle.

Along the route, he wrote six letters to the churches in the region and one to a fellow bishop. He was sentenced to die at the Colosseum. In his Chronicle, Eusebius gives the date of Ignatius's death as AA 2124 (2124 years after Adam), which would amount to the 11th year of Trajan's reign; i.e., AD 108.

Around the end of the 1st century, the church's organization becomes clearer in historical documents. In the works of the Apostolic Fathers, and Ignatius of Antioch in particular, the role of the episkopos, or bishop, became more important or, rather, already was very important and being clearly defined.

It was Ignatius that argued that the episcopacy was the center of unity for the church.

Ignatius view of the Bishopric

- Plainly therefore we ought to regard the bishop as the Lord Himself" — Epistle of Ignatius to the Ephesians 6:1.
- "your godly bishop" — Epistle of Ignatius to the Magnesians 2:1.
- "the bishop presiding after the likeness of God and the presbyters after the likeness of the council of the Apostles, with the deacons also who are most dear to me, having been entrusted with the diaconate of Jesus Christ" — Epistle of Ignatius to the Magnesians 6:1.
- "Therefore as the Lord did nothing without the Father, [being united with Him], either by Himself or by the Apostles, so neither do ye anything without the bishop and the presbyters." — Epistle of Ignatius to the Magnesians 7:1.
- "Be obedient to the bishop and to one another, as Jesus Christ was to the Father [according to the flesh], and as the Apostles were to Christ and to the Father, that there may be union both of flesh and of spirit." — Epistle of Ignatius to the Magnesians 13:2.
- "In like manner let all men respect the deacons as Jesus Christ, even as they should respect the bishop as being a type of the Father and the presbyters as the council of God and as the college of Apostles. Apart from these there is not even the name of a church." — Epistle of Ignatius to the Trallesians 3:1.
- "Follow your bishop, as Jesus Christ followed the Father, and the presbytery as the Apostles; and to the deacons pay respect, as to God's commandment" — Epistle of Ignatius to the Smyrnans 8:1.
- "He that honoureth the bishop is honored of God; he that doeth aught without the knowledge of the bishop rendereth service to the devil" — Epistle of Ignatius to the Smyrnans 9:1.

It is clear that a single bishop was expected to lead the church in each Centre of Christian mission, supported by a council of presbyters (a distinct and subordinate position) with a pool of deacons. As the Church continued to expand, new churches in important cities gained their own bishop. Churches in the regions outside an important city were served by Chorbishop, an official rank of bishops. However, soon, presbyters and deacons were sent from bishop of a city church. Gradually priests replaced the chorbishops. Thus, in time, the bishop changed from being the leader of a single church confined to an urban area to being the leader of the churches of a given geographical area.

Irenaeus

Irenaeus (/aɪrəˈniːəs/; Greek: Εἰρηναῖος) (early 2nd century – c. AD 202), also referred to as Saint Irenaeus, was Bishop of Lugdunum in Gaul, then a part of the Roman Empire (now Lyon, France). He was an early Church Father and apologist, and his writings were formative in the early development of Christian theology. He was a hearer of Polycarp, who in turn was traditionally a disciple of John the Evangelist. Irenaeus was born during the first half of the 2nd century (the exact date is disputed: between the years 115 and 125 according to some, or 130 and 142 according to others), and he is thought to have been a Greek from Polycarp's hometown of Smyrna in Asia Minor, now İzmir, Turkey. Unlike many of his contemporaries, he was brought up in a Christian family rather than converting as an adult.

During the persecution of Marcus Aurelius, the Roman Emperor from 161–180, Irenaeus was a priest of the Church of Lyon. The clergy of that city, many of whom were suffering imprisonment for the faith, sent him in 177 to Rome with a letter to Pope Eleuterus concerning the heresy Montanism, and that occasion bore emphatic testimony to his merits. While Irenaeus was in Rome, a massacre took place in Lyon. Returning to Gaul, Irenaeus succeeded the martyr Saint Pothinus and became the second Bishop of Lyon.

Little is known about the career of Irenaeus after he became bishop. The last action reported of him (by Eusebius, 150 years later) is that in 190 or 191, he exerted influence on Pope Victor I not to excommunicate the Christian communities of Asia Minor which persevered in the practice of the Quartodeciman celebration (Latin for "fourteenths", because of holding their celebration on the fourteenth day of Nisan.) of Easter.

It was Irenaeus that would argue that the episcopacy was the depository of truth for the church. It should be remembered that at this time the Bible had not yet been established as the ultimate authority of the church.

Irenaeus on the Holy Writ

Irenaeus pointed to Scripture as a proof of orthodox Christianity against heresies, classifying as Scripture not only the Old Testament but most of the books now known as the New Testament, while excluding many works, a large number by Gnostics, that flourished in the 2nd century and claimed scriptural authority. Often times, Irenaeus, as a student of Polycarp, who was a direct disciple of the Apostle John, believed that he was interpreting scriptures in the same hermeneutic as the Apostles. This connection to Christ was important to Irenaeus because both he and the Gnostics based their arguments on Scripture. Irenaeus argued that since he could trace his authority to Christ and the Gnostics could not, his interpretation of Scripture was correct. He also used "the Rule of Faith", a "proto-creed" with similarities to the Apostles' Creed, as a hermeneutical key to argue that his interpretation of Scripture was correct.

Before Irenaeus, Christians differed as to which gospel they preferred. The Christians of Asia Minor preferred the Gospel of John. The Gospel of Matthew was the most popular overall. Irenaeus asserted that four Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, were canonical scripture. Thus Irenaeus provides the

earliest witness to the assertion of the four canonical Gospels, possibly in reaction to Marcion's edited version of the Gospel of Luke, which Marcion asserted was the one and only true gospel.

Based on the arguments Irenaeus made in support of only four authentic gospels, some interpreters deduce that the fourfold Gospel must have still been a novelty in Irenaeus' time. Against Heresies, 3.11.7 acknowledges that many heterodox Christians use only one gospel while 3.11.9 acknowledges that some use more than four. The success of Tatian's Diatessaron in about the same time period is "... a powerful indication that the fourfold Gospel contemporaneously sponsored by Irenaeus was not broadly, let alone universally, recognized."

Irenaeus is also our earliest attestation that the Gospel of John was written by John the Apostle, and that the Gospel of Luke was written by Luke, the companion of Paul.

Irenaeus on Apostolic Authority

Irenaeus is also known as one of the first theologians to use the principle of apostolic succession to refute his opponents.

In his writing against the Gnostics, who claimed to possess a secret oral tradition from Jesus himself, Irenaeus maintained that the bishops in different cities are known as far back as the Apostles and that the bishops provided the only safe guide to the interpretation of Scripture. In a passage that became a locus classicus of Catholic-Protestant polemics, he cited the Roman church as an example of the unbroken chain of authority which text Western polemics would use to assert the primacy of Rome over Eastern churches by virtue of its preeminent authority.

With the lists of bishops to which Irenaeus referred, the doctrine of the apostolic succession, firmly established in the Church at this time, of the bishops could be linked. This succession was important to establish a chain of custody for orthodoxy. He felt it important, however, to also speak of a succession of elders (presbyters).

Cyprian

Cyprian (Latin: Thascius Caecilius Cyprianus) (c. 200 – September 14, 258)[1] was bishop of Carthage and an important Early Christian writer, many of whose Latin works are extant. He was born around the beginning of the 3rd century in North Africa, perhaps at Carthage, where he received a classical education. After converting to Christianity, he became a bishop soon after in 249. A controversial figure during his lifetime, his strong pastoral skills, firm conduct during the Novatianist heresy and outbreak of the plague, and eventual martyrdom at Carthage vindicated his reputation and proved his sanctity in the eyes of the Church. His skillful Latin rhetoric led to his being considered the pre-eminent Latin writer of Western Christianity until Jerome and Augustine.

- It would be Cyprian that would pose that the episcopacy was the vicegerent of Christ, and as earthly representation of Christ.

- St. Cyprian was not a speculative theologian; Cyprian's writings were always connected to his pastoral ministry. His first major work was a monologue spoken to a friend called Ad Donatum, detailing his conversion, the corruption of Roman government and gladiator shows, and "the only refuge of the Christian," prayer. Another early writing was the Testimonia ad Quirinum.[3] During his retreat from Carthage, he wrote his most famous treatise, De Ecclesiae Catholicae Unitate (On the Unity of the Catholic Church). Upon returning to his seat, he issued De Lapsis (The Lapsed).
- Approximately sixty epistles survive, which are partly collected with the answers of those to whom they were written; doubtless this is only a fraction of his actual extent of writing. Cyprian wrote a number of treatises, some of which have also the character of pastoral letters. His most important work is his "De unitate ecclesiae." In it, he states "if a man deserts the Chair of Peter upon whom the Church was built, does he think that he is in the Church?" (iv.); "He can no longer have God for his Father who has not the Church for his mother; . . . he who gathereth elsewhere than in the Church scatters the Church of Christ" (vi.); "nor is there any other home to believers but the one Church" (ix.).

Overseers CORP.



Overseer Corp.

The Historical Overseer.

The bishops of the early church (and still today) govern the affairs of the church, and to establish systems, offices, and positions that ensure the effective and efficient administration of the church.

We find strong evidence that the office of the Overseer, as we know it today, has a historical origin of sorts in the Roman Rite of the Catholic Church, and is a hybrid of the Papal Honors that were bestowed upon the clergy.

The honorary prelature was considered the lower-ranking, non-episcopal house, which is to say that the authority of this house was not autonomous and the clerics did not carry succession as did the "regular" episcopates

The foundational facet in the history of the Overseer starts with the position commonly known as Monsignor. For a short time in the 14th century, the Papal Court operated out of Avignon, France. During that time in France, those clerics/ priests who worked in the Papal executive/ administrative offices (known as the Curia) were addressed as "Monseigneur (Monsignor) meaning "my lord".

As a result of being awarded with such honor, these clerics were allowed to adorn some of the Episcopal Vesture and be addressed in the official style of "Right Reverend Monsignor" or "Very Reverend Monsignor" dependent upon their ranking/ designation in the lower house of the prelature.

Within the Monsignori there are sixteen different positions that existed in the Pontificalis Domus (The Prelates Household)

The nomination announcement of the Prelato d'Onore di Sua Santita (The Prelate of Honor of His Holiness) is usually executed simultaneously with the group of other Prelate honors being conferred at that time within a diocese

The Overseer ultimately works for the presiding Prelate in a national or international level, which is totally determined by the Cathedra or indirectly by the jurisdiction under the authority of a Jurisdictional Bishop.

Though they have episcopal ranking, their authority is not inherent nor autonomous but derived from the Presiding Prelate or diocese or Jurisdictional Bishop.

The Overseer in some cases does not have episcopal dignity, but has complete autonomy because they are the establishmentarian.

The Presiding Bishop of a Fellowship or Reformation may use this title also; the difference is they are consecrated with full episcopal dignity, inclusive of Apostolic Succession.

Signatures

The Overseer have not prescribed episcopal dignity. He is allowed to wear the prescribed vestments. He is prescribed the right to be addressed as Overseer, Monsignor, General Overseer, "The Very Reverend" They may use the sign of the cross at the end of their signature

Please note the Bishops signatures always have the cross at the beginning of there signatures.

Protestant Reformation

In the facets of the Protestant Reformation, we find various offices of oversight:

- Church of God In Christ- District Superintendent
- African Methodist Episcopal Church- Presiding Elders and District Elders
- Pentecostals Assembly of the World- Suffragan Bishops
- Baptist Church- Moderator

THE BIBLICAL OVERSEER

History gives us the shell of the office and the bible gives us the Substance of the appointment.

One of the earliest accounts of oversight is found in Genesis 1:28-31, 2:8,9, 15-17 and the 3rd Chapter.

From the onset of the relationship, God gave Adam authority (dominion), but not without parameters.

Authority did not inherently or naturally exist with Adam. It belong to God.

God delegated authority to Adam.

Adams authority is bound to the fact that he was made in the image and likeness of God. Adams rule is not completely autonomous.

In delegated authority, an individual must understand three realities:

1. The Overseers authority is not independent of the Bishop.
2. The authority of the Overseer does not equate to ownership.

3. The Overseer must accurately represent the source in order to extend the influence of the source.

In the case with Adam, his promotion from clay to the crown of creation was nestled in the declaration of God. Adam is who he is and has what he has all because god delegated his authority! Herein lies the same basic principle that the Overseers must remember. Your elevation to this office is solely due to your Bishop.

God will never circumvent authority to elevate you.

The succession of our savior

Jesus elevation is only declared from heaven after His submission to John.

- It is important to know that even after Jesus's elevation, people were still avid followers of John and not Jesus.
- They took issue with Jesus' baptismal authority.
- It was John's affirmation to his followers that served as validation for the authority of Christ.
- No matter how great your preaching, your administrative skills, or how many people you have, there are those who will never relinquish their loyalty and allegiance to you without the leader's validation of you.

Part of Overseers validation comes through your submission but is accompanied by your open recognition of whom the leader is and the appointment that is given to you.

As overseer you must never cease to confirm your allegiance and loyalty to your Leader in the eyes and ears of those who are in your charge. For therein lies your influence and your possible elevation.

Overseer's leadership never equates to ownership.

- Adam is a leader under authority.
- Overseers in their reformations or fellowships, are leaders under authority and those who have dominion but not ownership.
- As a Bishop, the weight of liability lies on them and not the Overseer.

The final consideration

True representation of authority is not devoid of possessing authority.

ALL AUTHORITY NEEDS TO BE ASSESSED TO ENSURE ACCURATE REPRESENTATION.

Overseer must keep in the forefront of their minds, that the authority given to them is not for them to be them, but for them to be the physical representation of their leader in their area of authority.

An Overseer must make the decision that his leader would make with the welfare of the church in mind and not the to full fill a self-aggrandizing need based on position, politics, and power.

Although the Bishop has given you authority to represent him in an area of authority given you, supervision is still necessary.

The Bishops supervision comes from These Proverb:

- Proverbs 1:5, Proverbs 12:15, Proverbs 15:22, Proverbs 19:20.

THEREFORE, MICROMANAGING IS A SECONDARY CONSEQUENCE OF THE OVERSEER EXPERIENCE.

Credentials & Character

As a member of the prelature albeit the lower house, the Overseer has to be just as sound as those that are of episcopal dignity. Sound in their theology points and thought processes and sound in the content of their character.

Metropolitan Archbishop J. Delano Ellis:

The very first step beyond commitment to Christ, Devine calling, and theological preparation for a candidate must be in them a very high moral content of character with a strong emphasis on family.

The Overseer is an Office of Administration. Business matters is part of the purview of the overseer. Although we are not looking for Elders who have a MBA but we are looking for someone who have some business acumen.

OFFICE

Minister in Training

License Minister

Ordained Elder

Overseer

Bishop

STAGE

Novice

Advanced Beginner

Competent

Proficient

Expert

The Overseer should either possess or be in pursuit of sound, accredited, Sacred and secular learning. From business and accounting to systematic theology, homiletics, and hermeneutics, these among others are the essence of what is needed to be equipped to equip.

Beyond academia, accolades, awards and even the anointing, it is the character of a person that will speak louder and will be the main element in the effectiveness of their influence.

The character of a leader is seen in Exodus 18. In Jethros conversation with Moses he tells him to select some men to Assist him, as the work that he was doing was to much for him, and by doing it alone it will be detrimental to him and to the people.

Episcopal Assignments



EPISCOPAL VOCABULARY

Define each of the following

Week 1

Episcopal

Apostolic

Archdiocese

Bishop

Presbytery

Catholic

catholic

Alms

Armorbearer

Auxiliary Bishop

Overseer

The Great Awakening

Apostolic Succession

Casual Succession

Defender of the Faith

Succession Document

Week 2

Bishops Coadjutor

Bishops Suffragan

Canons

Catechism

Cathedral

In Cathedral

Church

Written Coalition

Apostolic Fathers

Church Fathers

Council of Jerusalem (Acts 15:19-29)

College of Bishops

Consecration

Convocation

Communion

Diocesan Bishop

Week 3

Diocese

Ecumenical

Executive Council

Eucharist

Ecclesia

Ecclesiastical

Heretics

Incarnation

Magisterium

Mission

Ordain

Ordination

Protocols

Denomination

Rituals

Pentecostalism

Week 4

Proselytes

Protestants

Polity

Region

See

Synod

The Trinity

Valid but Illicit

Visitation

Titles & Jobs

These are “job Titles” for both clergy and laity, both individuals and groups. The Episcopal tradition has kept many of these for centuries, and they are still used today.

Acolyte

Adjutant

Apostolic See

Arch Bishop

Bishop-Elect

Bishop-Designee

Episkopos

Week 5

Canon

Celebrant

Cheirotonia

Liturgy

Chancellor

Chaplain

Clergy

Cleric

Communicants

Concelebrant

Crucifer

Curate

D. Min

D.D.

Deacon

Deaconate or Diakonia

Week 6

Dean

Elder

Epistoler

His Grace

General Overseer

Gospeller

Jurisdiction

Laity

Lector

Metropolitan

Minister

Moderator

Officiant

Ordinary Bishop

Your Excellency

Your Eminence

Week 7

Pope

Preacher

Presiding Bishop

Priest

Primate

Superintendent

The Reverend

The Right Reverend

Most Reverend

Reformation

Reverend Doctor

Vicar

Clothing & Vestments

The term vestments is from the Latin *vestis* or garment. Today's vestments have their origins in the ordinary clothes of the later Greco-Roman world. Between the sixth and ninth century, secular fashion began to reflect the occupation of person, it was possible to tell what one did by what he or she wore. The Church reflected this change by not changing the style of their garments.

Alb

Cassock

Chasuble

Chimere

Week 8

Cincture

Colors

Clerical Collar

Civic Attire

Choir Dress

Celebration Vestments

Cope

Crozier

Mitre

Pectoral Cross

Processional

Bishops Ring

Rochet

Stole

Surplice

Tippet

The Investiture

Zucchetto

Ecumenical Councils

Council of Nicaea 1 (325)

Council of Constantinople (381)

Council of Chalcedon (451)

Council of Ephesus (431)

Episcopal Academy Essays

Effectively writing different types of essays has become critical to academic success. Essay writing is a common Episcopal assignment, a part of everyday life of the Bishops office. Often for Bishops, choosing the correct type of essay to write in response to a writing prompt is key to getting the question right. Clearly, Bishops cannot afford to be confused about types of essays. There are for type of essays but Bishops usually use only two: Expository Essays and Persuasive Essays. Coupled together are called the “writings.”

1. Expository Essays: Just the Facts

The expository essay is an informative piece of writing that presents a balanced analysis of a topic. In an expository essay, the writer explains or defines a topic, using facts, statistics, and examples. Expository writing encompasses a wide range of essay variations, such as the comparison and contrast essay, the cause and effect essay, and the “how to” or process essay. Because expository essays are based on facts and not personal feelings, writers do not reveal their emotions or write in the first person.

2. Persuasive Essays: Convince Me

While like an expository essay in its presentation of facts, the goal of the persuasive essay is to convince the reader to accept the writer’s point of view or recommendation. The writer must build a case using facts and logic, as well as examples, expert opinion, and sound reasoning. The writer should present all sides of the argument, but must be able to communicate clearly and without equivocation why a certain position is correct.

For each essay Choose from either Expository essay or Persuasive essay, for each response to the writing prompts. All essays must be typed and double space. Your Name date and title of the writing must be on the essay with your proper signature on the bottom right-hand of the last page or your writing will not be accepted.

Episcopal Essays:

Week 1

- 1. Write a 300 word essay on the etymology of the word Bishop.**
- 2. In a 2 Page essay Explain the Historical foundation of Christianity and the Church.**
- 3. In a 2 page essay Explain how we went from Apostles to Bishops**
- 4. In a 3 Page essay Who are the Early Apostolic Fathers and what did they teach about the Bishopric?**

Week 2

- 5. In a 2 Page essay What is Apostolic Succession and What is Casual Succession.**
- 6. In a 1 Page essay What is the Roman Catholic Viewpoints regarding Apostolic Succession?**
- 7. In a 1 Page essay What is the Protestant Churches Viewpoint regarding Apostolic Succession?**
- 8. In a 2 Page essay What is the History of Apostolic Succession in America?**

Week 3

- 9. In a 1 Page essay What is your personal conclusion concerning Apostolic Succession?**
- 10. In a 2 Page essay What is Episcopal Authority- The Magisterium?**
- 11. In a 1 Page essay What does it mean that Bishops primary duty is to act as a "defender of the faith"**
- 12. In 300 words What is the Council of Nicaea and what doctrine of the church came out of it?**

Week 4

- 13. In 300 words What is the Council of Constantinople and what doctrine of the church came out of it?**
- 14. In 300 words What is the Council of Chalcedon and what doctrine of the church came out of it?**
- 15. In a 1 Page essay What is the History of the African Methodist Episcopal Church (AME)?**

16. In a 1 Page essay What is the History of the Church of God in Christ (COGIC)?

Week 5

17. In a 1 Page essay What is the History of the Assemblies of God?

18. In a 1 page essay Explain the significant of the Revival at Azusa Street and why was the media so against it?

19. In 100 words Who was Bishop Charles Harrison Mason?

20. In 100 words What is the difference between a Reformation and a denomination?

Week 6

21. In a 2 Page essay What is a Ordinary Bishop, Jurisdictional Bishop, Suffragan Bishop, Auxiliary Bishop?

22. In 2 Paragraphs What is a Metropolitan Bishop?

23. In a 1 Page essay What is an ecclesiastical province, Dioceses, Archdiocese?

24. In a 1 Page essay Give an exegesis of Exodus 28:1-43?

Week 7

25. In a 1 Page essay What is Civic Attire, Choir Dress, Celebration Dress?

26. In a 3 Page essay What is a Cassock and its significance, the Cincture and its significance, the Rochet and its significance, the Chimere and its significance, the Pectoral Cross and its significance, the Ring and its significance, the Zuchetto and its significance, the Tippet and its significance, the Mitre and its significance, The Crosier and its significance.

27. In a 1 Page essay What are the proper colors for a Presiding Bishop, Ordinary Bishops (Apostolic Council), Auxiliary and Suffragan Bishops and Overseers.

28. In a 2 Page essay Explain what is a Cheirotonia?

Week 8

29. In 2 Paragraphs What is the Difference between Designee and Elect?

30. In a 2 Page essay What are the Bishop's primary responsibilities?

31. In a 1 Page essay How is a Bishop chosen?

32. In a 2 Page essay what is a Adjutant and a Armorbearer?

33. In a 1 Page essay What is a Cathedral, what is the proper greeting for a Bishop, and what is the proper Signature for a Bishop and Overseer.

34. In a 1 Page essay What is the Historical Dignity of the Office of the Bishop.