

ECC DISCERNMENT TEAM



BISHOP'S ROLES:

TRADITIONAL ROMAN CATHOLIC & ECUMENICAL CATHOLIC COMMUNION (ECC)

OVERVIEW

Those of us who grew up Roman Catholic often have some preconceived notions about the role of the bishop. Unfortunately, in at least some of those cases, those concepts have not been positive. Your ECC Discernment Team thought it may be helpful to outline the roles of the ECC Bishops in comparison to a traditional Roman Catholic Bishop. We've provided some information below.

TRADITIONAL ROMAN CATHOLIC BISHOP

- Centralized Hierarchical Authority
 - Selected by the Pope/Vatican
 - Serve at the pleasure of that higher authority
 - Can only be removed by that same authority
- Role is Administrative
 - Primary function to maintain the stability of organization via *enforcement of conformity*
 - In enforcing conformity any diverse views or thoughts are squelched.
- Teaching Function: Pass down the dogmas & doctrines from above
- Theology is limited to only expressing ideas that are sanctioned by the hierarchy
- Unable to respond to particular needs of people in their diocese; *unless* it corresponds to the teachings of the hierarchy

ECC – ECCUMENICAL CATHOLIC COMMUNION BISHOP

- Serve within a system of de-centralized authority
 - Selected by *the people they serve*; have term limits
 - Mechanisms are in place to be removed from office by *the people they serve* if they're not serving adequately
- Role is pastoral
 - Functions as a servant leader
 - Facilitates relationships between communities within diocese by functioning as facilitator of unity as opposed to enforcing conformity
- Clearly defined parameters defining the role of the bishops in the ECC constitution which can only be changed by *mutual dialogue and agreement of laity, clergy and bishop (usually at bi-annual SYNOD)*
- Does **not** have any unilateral authority especially within individual communities of the diocese
- Model values relationships: personal & pastoral
 - Operates like an extended family rather than institutional bureaucracy
- Engage in pastoral activities (sacramental ministry, teaching, oversight) in spirit of loving service
- Work at building *consensus* rather than ruling from on high
- *Authority is shared throughout communion*

If you have questions regarding these FAQ flyers, please feel free to reach out to your Discernment Team:
Tammy Drollette, Lynne Hamilton, Wanda Moore, Kathy Mrzywka, Michele & Tom Vedora and Rev Denise

* This document was prepared from Tom Altepeter's Article Entitled "Here I am Among You As One Who Serves."