

How are bishops, priests and deacons different and Relationships they have.

By Archbishop John Johnston Patriarch

Bishops

By ordination to the episcopacy, bishops receive the fullness of the Sacrament of Holy Orders and become successors of the Apostles. Through this Sacrament, a bishop belongs to the college of bishops and serves as the visible head or pastor of the local church entrusted to his care. As a college, the bishops have care and concern for the apostolic mission of all the churches in union with and under the authority of the Patriarch.

Priests

By ordination, “priests are united with the bishops in [priestly] dignity and at the same time depend on them in the exercise of their pastoral functions; they are called to be the bishops’ prudent co-workers”. With the bishop, priests form a presbyter (priestly) community and assume with him the pastoral mission for a particular parish. The bishop appoints priests to the pastoral care of parishes and to other diocesan ministries. The priest promises obedience to the bishop in service to God’s people.

Who is a Priest?

A priest is a ritual expert learned in a special knowledge of the technique of worship and accepted as a religious and spiritual leader.

Throughout the long and varied history of religion, the priesthood has been the official institution that has mediated and maintained a state of equilibrium between the sacred and the profane aspects of human society and that has exercised a stabilizing influence on social structures and on cultic organizations. The term priest has its cultural title in all the cultures ancient and modern, and, on common basis, constitutes a spiritual elder.

The primary role of the priest is that of the ritual expert, the one who has a special and sometimes secret knowledge of the techniques of worship, including prayers, sacrificial acts, songs, and other acts that are believed to maintain and service harmony between the divine or sacred and the profane realms.

Deacons

Deacons receive the Sacrament of Holy Orders from a bishop and are ordained not to the ministerial priesthood but to the ministry of service. Through ordination the deacon is conformed to Christ, who came to serve, not to be served. In the Latin Church, deacons may baptize, proclaim the Gospel, preach the homily, assist the bishop or priest in the celebration of the Eucharist, assist at and bless marriages, and preside at funerals.

They dedicate themselves to charitable endeavors, which was their ministerial role in New Testament times.

Whether they are involved in the liturgical or pastoral life of the Church or in her social and charitable endeavors, deacons are “strengthened by the imposition of hands that has come down from the apostles. They would be more closely bound to the altar and their ministry would be made more fruitful through the sacramental grace of the diaconate”

Deacons (diakonoi) are the assistants of the bishops and are responsible for teaching and administering certain Church tasks, such as the distribution of food (Acts 6:1–6).

In the apostolic age, the terms for these offices were still somewhat fluid. Sometimes a term would be used in a technical sense as the title for an office, sometimes not. This non-technical use of the terms even exists today, as when the term is used in many churches (both Protestant and Catholic) to refer to either ordained ministers (as in “My minister visited him”) or non-ordained individuals. (In a Protestant church one might hear “He is a worship minister,” while in a Catholic Church one might hear “He is an extraordinary minister of Holy Communion.”)

Thus, in the apostolic age Paul sometimes described himself as a diakonos ("servant" or "minister"; 2 Corinthians. 3:6, 6:4, 11:23; Ephesians. 3:7), even though he held an office much higher than that of a deacon, that of apostle.

Similarly, on one occasion Peter described himself as a "fellow elder," [1 Peter. 5:1] even though he, being an apostle, also had a much higher office than that of an ordinary elder.

The term for bishop, episcopos ("overseer"), was also fluid in meaning. Sometimes it designated the overseer of an individual congregation (the priest), sometimes the person who was the overseer of all the congregations in a city or area (the bishop or evangelist), and sometimes simply the highest-ranking clergyman in the local church—who could be an apostle, if one were staying there at the time.

Although the terms "bishop," "priest," and "deacon" were somewhat fluid in the apostolic age, by the beginning of the second century they had achieved the fixed form in which they are used today to designate the three offices whose functions are clearly distinct in the New Testament.

As the following quotations illustrate, the early Church Fathers recognized all three offices and regarded them as essential to the structure of the Church.

Leadership

Anglican clergy are divided into three categories or orders: bishops, priests, and deacons. A threefold ministry (bishops, presbyters (elders), deacons) dates back at least as far as the early 2nd century, possibly earlier.

The highest order of ministry is the office of the bishop. In much of Anglicanism there are Archbishops, but these are not of a higher order of ministry. Archbishop is the usual title conferred on a bishop whose area of jurisdiction is a province (collection of dioceses) rather than a diocese. An Archbishop is a head bishop in a province only. In some provinces, the head bishop is called by another title, e.g., the Presiding Bishop in the U.S. Episcopal Church. The generic term for head bishops is "primate."

An Archbishop can also have a title of Metropolitan Archbishop of an Archdiocese and known as its Patriarch.

Bishops are the chief pastors and heads of their respective dioceses. They are pastors to the other clergy as well as the laity. A bishop must visit the parishes in his or her diocese, exercise discipline (often through delegates) over diocesan clergy, and uphold the doctrines of the faith. A bishop might have subordinate bishops (e.g., suffragans) to

assist in meeting the needs of the diocese. Only a bishop can perform the rites of ordination and confirmation.

Ordinarily a bishop is ordained (consecrated) by an archbishop or other primate, and two other bishops. Anglicanism is one of only a few Protestant traditions that retain the title of bishop, and one of extremely few that claim the apostolic succession of their bishops. Apostolic succession holds that, just as Christ consecrated (set apart) and sent out the apostles, so also the apostles consecrated individuals to pastor the Church in given areas, and those who were consecrated did the same for their successors, and so on in an unbroken chain down through history. Apostolic succession is also called Episcopal succession, from the Greek word that is translated bishop. It is for this reason that many Anglican bodies are self-styled as Episcopal (for instance, America's The Episcopal Church).

Anglicanism places a high value on its participation in apostolic succession. Episcopacy is viewed as a defining feature of Anglicanism and a ground of ecumenical ties with other Christian traditions. The unity of the Church is embodied in the historic episcopate, which is why the realignment-taking place in the Anglican Communion is such a source of pain for bishops across the theological spectrum.

The next order of Anglican clergy is that of priest. Early in Christian history, as the idea of the Eucharist as a sacrifice developed, so did the idea of presbyters as priests. Over time, the clergy came to be seen as representing both the people to God and God to the people. Priests were seen as having supernatural powers imparted to them upon their ordination, powers connected with the sacraments. Thus, the priest had the power to absolve of sins, to bring about the substantive change in the Eucharistic elements from bread and wine to body and blood (transubstantiation), and to repeat the sacrifice of Christ to God in the Mass.

During the Reformation, Protestants rejected the priesthood as a sacred order empowered to stand between God and God's people, favoring instead the idea of a priesthood of all believers. All believers have access to God personally. Anglicanism followed this view. Nevertheless, the Anglican liturgy retained the word "priest," perhaps to indicate the priest's authority to conduct the service of Holy Communion. The term was immediately disfavored in much of England, but returned to the fore with the rise of Anglo-Catholicism. Many Anglicans today seem comfortable with the clerical label of priest, without associating the term with a sacrificial priesthood. Some Anglo-Catholics do view the priesthood in sacerdotal (sacrificial) terms, and some Anglicans of particularly Evangelical inclination are simply uncomfortable with the term priest at all.

In any case, Anglican priests do at least serve as the pastors of their parishes. They preach; celebrate the Eucharist; teach on matters of the faith; provide spiritual guidance; minister to the sick, distressed, and homebound; baptize babies and new confessors of the faith; perform wedding ceremonies; and preside at burial services.

The third order of ministry is the diaconate, or order of deacons. Originally, deacons were charged with the service of and distribution of alms to, the poor (Acts 6:1-6). The duties of the office have not been consistent over time or from place to place, but it has

remained essentially a subordinate and assisting order. In Anglicanism, the office of deacon evolved into simply the first stage of ordained ministry, to be followed by ordination to the priesthood. However, the permanent diaconate has become more common in recent years across various provinces. The powers of a deacon include preaching and all sacramental rites except consecration of the Eucharistic elements.

Priest and Deacons follow under the orders of the Bishop as well of the Archbishop or Patriarch of the Archdiocese. All clergy members are required to follow its Canon Laws.

Five Fold Ministry Apostolic Protocols

Five-fold ministry are fundamental in Apostolic protocols. Apostolic churches consist of a set man, presbytery (consisting of various five-fold ministry gifts), staff, department leaders, and various ministry teams. These interact through relationships and ministry protocols established by the wisdom of the leadership and ratification of the apostle.

You already know that all of the five-fold ascension gifts are graced to perfect (equip) the saints for the work of ministry. When it comes to relating to your apostle understand that he is not equipping people to disconnect from the local church, and neither are you.

I have seen this disconnect many times where people come to a local church, not with a Scriptural mindset of plugging in but with the intention of learning something that would advance their agenda or personal ministry. This is not a Biblical approach. Scripture says, “Those that be planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God” (Psalms 92:13). Planted means deeply rooted, firmly fixed, or held in place. In other words, to be connected with your set man apostle in both spirit and vision regarding the mission of the local church.

THE APOSTLE’S EXPECTATIONS

People come and go in local churches all the time, but the expectation of a set man apostle to his staff and leadership team has a high degree of accountability regarding leadership protocols. A protocol is a code of conduct that defines the scope of ministry outlines expectations and eliminates confusion. In my ministry, for example, we understand the importance of raising spiritual sons and daughters fully equipped to make a difference in their lives. This equipping process is inclusive within the apostolic model of ministry.

Raising proactive sons and daughters (not spectator sheep) is part of the apostolic grace of a spiritual father. Fathering is one of the five primary attributes of an apostle such as building, equipping, sending, governing, and fathering. Fathers want the very best for their sons and daughters. Good fathers help transition the young into adulthood. Apostle Paul mentioned this saying, “For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel” (1 Corinthians 4:15). “Begotten” (Greek *gennaō*) means “caused to arise.”

THE APOSTOLIC DIMENSION (SENT ONES)

Not only are apostles sent but they also send others (Acts 15:25-27). A set man apostle often discerns the leading of the Holy Spirit to send others out from the local church on various ministry assignments. Sending is the Biblical pattern of launching others into the apostolic dimension. You can see this apostolic pattern here.

“Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.” (Acts 13:1-3)

Notice the local apostolic leadership were praying and fasting when the Holy Spirit issued an apostolic assignment to Barnabas and Saul. This emphasizes the need for corporate prayer. The church leaders fasted, prayed, heard, agreed, laid their hands on them and sent them away. This sending “out from” (Greek apo) the local church headquarters launched them into the apostolic dimension. It should be pointed out that this newly formed apostolic team was not sent out from the local church never to be heard from again. They were still spiritually connected in measure to this local apostolic church.

Still speaking on the proper protocol between the local church’s leadership and the set man apostle, every leader needs a place for his family to be raised up in the ways of Christ. They also need to know that their particular five-fold grace is given to them to equip the saints and the building up of the body of Christ in their local church (Ephesians 4:12). In other words, they are first called to assist the set man apostle with his call and vision in ministering to those in their own house and under the set man’s leadership.

ADHERING TO PROTOCOLS

If you have not been given a delegated position of leadership within the local church by your apostle then you are free to do as you please provided it doesn’t harm the local assembly, but if you have been given a delegated position of leadership then there is an expectation to serve your apostle’s vision within the scope of your particular ministry assignment. This appointment carries a list of duties, expectations and encompasses the protocol for your ministry assignment. Make sure you understand what these expectations are. If you’re not sure, then ask.

So if you are a five-fold ascension gift such as prophet, evangelist, or even a psalmist, singer, or another leader who gets invited to minister in other churches, for example, it is proper protocol to check with your apostle. For those in delegated positions of leadership in a local apostolic church that know the protocols of their set man but continue to violate them, they should be released by the set man from their in-house titles, duties, and assignments.

As a leader in your local church, it is your duty to lift up the arms of your apostle within your local church (Exodus 17:11). This means you should stay connected, serve, protect, communicate, make yourself available, attend leadership and prayer meetings, and be at all church services when not traveling.

In our ministry, I ask those that have opportunities to minister in other churches, my staff, or those in delegated positions of leadership, to clear it with me first before scheduling. They know I need them around to help serve in the local church, but they also know I appreciate the opportunities that open up to them. There are, however, special services

that I need them to be at such as major conferences, holidays or other important events that come up.

So then, the proper protocol for those that have delegated positions of leadership and responsibility within a local apostolic church should make it a priority to serve their set man apostle and the needs of those within the local church first and other activities after getting an okay from their apostle. This is proper protocol within the apostolic church model. Scripture declares, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments; As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the LORD commanded the blessing, even life for evermore" (Psalms 133:1-3).

Apostolic ministry training can be found in five words: build, govern, father, send, and equip. The New Testament apostolic model of ministry consists of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers, priests, all working together to equip you to make a difference with your life.

Questions:

1. **Describe the hierarchy of leadership within the Anglican Church.**

Answer:

The Anglican Church is a large religious organization of Christians operating worldwide. The main hierarchy based on which the Anglican Church functions is the Bishop, Priest and the Deacon. The details and definitions of rights and responsibilities of these positions are given below, which will help you understand the organizational structure in a better way.

2. **What is Apostolic Succession?**

Answer:

The original bishops were by legend consecrated by one of the 12 apostles, to be their successors. These successor bishops later consecrated more bishops, so that there would always be bishops. This chain of consecration is called "apostolic succession." There is documentation tracing the chain of consecration back to the early 2nd century, to people who were no doubt the successors of the Twelve, but no scholarly proof exists to document the chain of succession during the very earliest days of the church.

3. **What is the role of the Anglican priest?**

Answer:

A priest is one who has the capacities to provide effective leadership in the communities we are called to serve. In order to exercise this ministry effectively and faithfully, he or she:

1. Demonstrates an understanding of and capacity for shared leadership:
2. Shows willingness to work with the bishop in the leadership of the diocese.
3. Demonstrates the capacity for effective collaborative leadership and an ability to work in teams in a range of settings, including ecumenical.
4. Discerns the gifts of others and equips them to lead and to serve.

5. Demonstrates an awareness of the church's role and opportunities in public life, and a capacity to collaborate in a well-informed way with ecumenical partners, other faith communities and secular agencies.
6. Shows a capacity to be able to maintain healthy interpersonal relationships in order to form community within and outside the church.
7. Demonstrates the capacity to understand and consent to the promises and affirmations in the ordinal.
8. Leads congregations in their calling to make disciples.
9. Is prepared to submit his or her leadership to the discipline of those in authority over them as provided for in canon.

How can Anglican laity take an active role in leadership?

Answer:

This relationship has characteristics of that between a father and son, a master and pupil, and coworkers of pastoral work and evangelization.

The father-son relationship, which a bishop has with his priests, is not paternalistic, like that of an ancient patriarchal society.

The father-son relationship between the Father and his only Son is such that they are one in being, with one heart and one mind, mutually loving one another and inseparable.

This is the perfect model for a bishop's father-son relationship with his priests.

Noted that a bishop, as "the head of the diocesan family" should "primarily take care of the priests' livelihood and material needs."

Priority

This is especially true for elderly and sick priests," Although finances of a diocese or parish church may be tight, caring for priests should still be a priority.

But since the bishop is usually too busy to please everyone, the best thing to do is to select priests, sisters and laypeople who are fervent, fair and knowledgeable in financial affairs to form a committee, under the supervision of the bishop. They should charitably and justly manage and distribute the resources of the diocese.

This would permit each priest to be unconcerned about his or her material needs, and to be totally dedicated to evangelization and pastoral work.

Have a warm, friendly and lovable atmosphere, with a spirit of mutual cooperation and care for one another, and with the priests united with one heart and mind."

"In order to form such a community, the priests need to be in constant contact, communication, and communion with one another.

"The relationship between Jesus and his Father is a perfect model for priests and their bishop to follow."

After the bishop announces the decision, the priests should wholeheartedly accept it, taking it as the will of God expressed through the bishop.

This will certainly bring blessings from God to enable the priest to complete the pastoral and evangelization work the bishop has entrusted to him. It will also help the priest to feel happy and peaceful.

Example:

Reflecting on another characteristic, he noted that the relationship of the bishop and the priests of his diocese could be likened to the master-pupil relationship, which Jesus has with his disciples.

The bishop should be the first to set an example. In his daily life, when dealing with persons and things, he must actively live out the three virtues of faith, hope and charity.

The bishop is the protector and the instructor in the fundamentals of the faith.

He must also protect the Church's hierarchy, and teach the importance of communion and unity.

Finally, reflecting on the third characteristic of this relationship, "when Jesus proclaimed the Gospel on this earth, he selected the apostles as his coworkers and aides."

In pastoral work and evangelization, priests are the bishop's most intimate partners and friends.

Therefore, in the process of planning and making policy for pastoral & evangelization work, the bishop should allow the priests to participate in research and discussion."

If the bishop lives like Jesus, he will not treat the priests as his employees or servants, Rather he will call them his coworkers and friends."

"If the priests, with one mind and one heart, support the bishop in his pastoral ministry and evangelization work, the diocese will reap an abundant harvest."

In conclusion, "If the bishop can maintain a good relationship with his priests, like a father with his sons, or a master with his coworkers, then he will be happy and peaceful, and God will bless his pastoral and evangelical work with abundant fruit."

For every Deacon, Priest and Bishop if called into the Priesthood one must always seek first the wisdom of the Heavenly Father and of the Son Jesus Christ who will lead you in guidance and knowledge of the scriptures to fulfill your duties within the Apostolic faith that has been passed down for centuries. When we preach or counsel we must do it with heart, for God knows our heart and the people will feel the presence of the Lord.