

Metropolitan

History of a Metropolitan Bishop?

Metropolitan bishops (*metropolitans*) serve as superior (in rank) bishops which historically and traditionally materialized to provide direction, supervision, judgment. In spiritual matters, metropolitans serve as mediators of accuracy in theological and ecclesial disputes. Historically, the presence of metropolitans arose when bishops from the country and the city came together and the diocesans from the city viewed the diocesans from the country as less educated and less prestigious. In an effort to distinguish themselves, metropolitans – bishops from major provinces of the ancient world – were given this title to affix greater authority and prestige to their office.

Metropolitans soon came to be known as archbishops; a bishop over other bishops with provincial power. With this definition in place, many started to ascribe the title *archbishop* as being synonymous with the title metropolitan bishop. In the early days of the Roman Empire when expanding the Empire for a pope was paramount, archbishops were sent to conquered lands with expanded powers from the papal office to fulfill the desires of the pope. As a result, archbishops or metropolitans were soon acknowledged for their abilities to bring cohesion to the Roman Empire and the Roman Catholic Church. In the Western Church, metropolitans exercised authority over the sees of suffragan bishops and have authority over the dioceses in their provinces.

Present-day Metropolitan Bishops

In this day of the Church, the prelature has increased exponentially with many prelates covering the lives and ministries of those entrusted to their care. However, these same prelates which cover others have no covering themselves.

As such, just as ministries are drawn to certain ministers for covering, bishops in the Lord's Church are also led to be covered themselves. Coverings can be physical, emotional, financial, and definitely, spiritual. When a metropolitan is in the life of those prelates aligned with him in ministry, those same prelates (some of whom may be primates themselves) are able to link themselves closer into the present-day work of the Holy Ghost in the Kingdom of God.

This linking into the Kingdom, actually, takes on many different facets. Metropolitans link other likeminded ministers and ministries at work in the Kingdom with each other. Brothers and sisters, which would not normally or in everyday situations be connected in ministry, start to even align themselves with each other. This facet of ministry, which is fostered through relationship with the metropolitan, is possible because the spirit of the patriarch has been released among the spiritual children of the metropolitan's ministry.

Another facet of ministry which is fostered through the metropolitan is the spirit of completion. Completion in that some ministers/ministries lack the encouragement and know-how to achieve the result which the Lord has shown them in their time of prayer and meditation. Much of what is not achieved in ministry by some prelates is due to their own training not being complete. Through relationship, those ministers/ministries which have this lackness are now linked to those with the encouragement and know-how to achieve the necessary results.