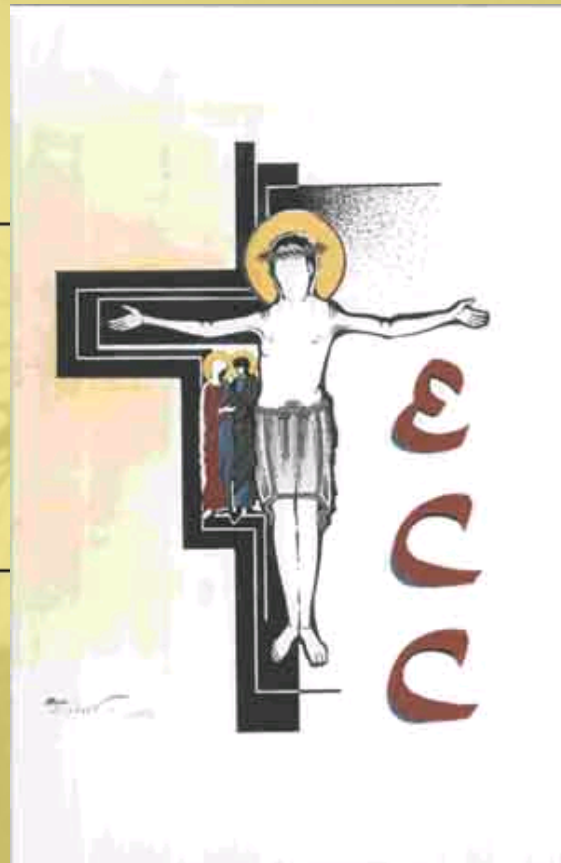


*ECC 101**
Saturday
January 18, 2014
9am - 12noon





Welcome AZ ECC Communities!


- Guardian Angels Catholic Community, Tempe AZ
Rev Sue Ringler, Pastor
- St Michael the Archangel Ecumenical Catholic Church
Tucson AZ
Rev Delores Kropf, Pastor
- St Teresa of Ávila Catholic Community, Phoenix AZ
Rev Kate Lehman, Pastor
- Serving Guardian Angels and St Teresa of Ávila ~
Fr Ed Walsh and Rev Elaine Groppenbacher



Overview

- Welcome Prayer ~ Introductions
- ECC Beginnings and Vision
- ECC Roots ~ Important points in Catholic history ~ often unknown or forgotten
- ECC Structure ~ What is polity? For real, just another word for hierarchy or what?
- Q/A
- Sending Prayer

The Beginnings & Vision of the Ecumenical Catholic Communion [ECC]



*As a body is one though it has many parts,
and all the parts of the body, though many,
are one body, so also Christ.*

(1 Corinthians 12:12)



The ECC formally begins in 2002...

With three Catholic communities which came together to discover a way to live in harmony and mutual support.




- By 2003, clergy and laity of eight communities had gathered for the ratification of its constitution with 14 signers.
- The ECC continues to grow – with a presence in the USA, South America, Europe, India, and the Philippines.



Constitution
of the
Ecumenical Catholic
Communion

The Most Reverend Peter E. Hickman, Presiding Bishop
1111 West Town and Country Road – Suite 14
Orange, CA 92868

Ratified 19 September 2003



**The Co-founders of the
Ecumenical Catholic Communion
19 September 2003**

Armando Leyva
Bob Blattner
Delores Kropf
Denise Donato
Francisco A. Morales-Perez
James Lehman
Kathy McCarthy
Mark Jaufman
Mary Ramerman
Ned Reidy
Peter E. Hickman
Scott Jenkins
Steve Rosczewski
Zilvanas Jakstas



DEAR: DELORES &
"ST. MICHAEL" COMM.

*"I embrace you with all my heart
and congratulate you
on the birth of Christ!
This is beautiful time,
full of hope and sincerity.
I believe that Christ's birth
creates a miracle for everyone.
Once again I Love you
and bless you in God's name."*

*DA
ZILVINAS & FAMILY
(FROM MINNESOTA)*

DECEMBER-20, 2006





Though diverse, the ECC communities are UNIFIED in One Catholic Identity

- The ECC and its communities welcomes dialogue with other Christian communities and with people of all faiths.
- The communities are open and inclusive.
- Yet, the communities hold fast to that Catholic identity which is cherished and celebrated by the leaders of the Communion – both lay and ordained.





Inspired by the renewal of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965)...

- The communities of the ECC joined together in the **ancient Catholic tradition of *Communion*** – the deepest identity of the Church.
- This is a return to the type of unity that existed in the first 1000 years of the Church.





Through the process growth, we want to follow the path of the Church Catholic

- Expressed in the Creeds and instructed by the Councils
- Amplified, corrected and nuanced by the documents and spirit of the Second Vatican Council
- Embodied in the constitution of this Communion, informing and informed by the values of the people of the ECC under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.



(Mary enfolding all of humanity,
Lohjan Kirkko, Finland, 16th century)



Sources of Communion

The Eucharistic Nature of the Church

helps us to realize that we are most true to our identity when we are at liturgy, with the many ministries and roles

- lay ministries, clergy and bishop
- all focused in the instruction of Jesus ~
“Do this in memory of me”





One with Christ

Our belief that we are the reflection of God
leads us to understand our dignity.
Individually we share in the divinity of Christ
– becoming what he is.



We pray with hope, looking forward to the day when “God shall be all in all” (1 Cor 15:28)
We hope for this fullness at liturgy, when we pray:
“We wait in joyful hope for the coming of your kingdom.”

One with the Trinity




As individuals we share the dynamic life of the Trinity.



Rublev, 15th Century

And we also share this Trinitarian life as interdependent persons, sharing the life of God that unites us and the light of God that leads us.


As a community, we are formed by the life of the Trinity and share in the communion of the Trinity – the very life of God.



Communion is our share in the divine

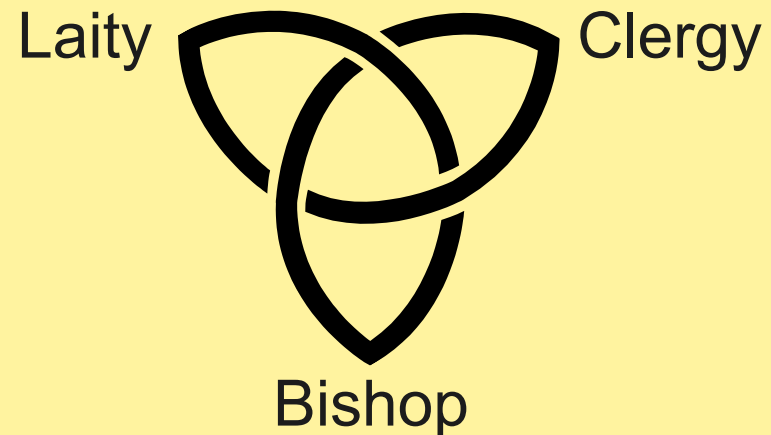


- I become Christ –
“Through him, and with
him, and in him...”
- I am one with Christ in
the life of the Trinity.
- Mary is the icon of the
“divinized” Christian –
fully one with Christ.




Our polity is informed by communion

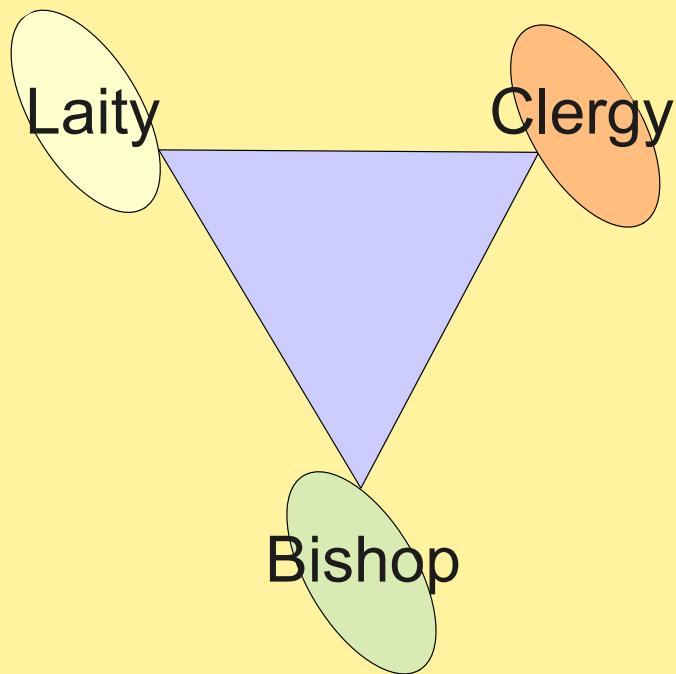
- Like the Trinity – distinct persons in one God – our polity reflects distinct roles in one unity.
- Three **distinct** voices form our communion and its interaction.




- Each has its own role, charism (gift) and presence in the life of the Communion. Our polity is not a majority of two or three votes, but a consensus of distinct voices. Each has its own ministry – distinct from the others.



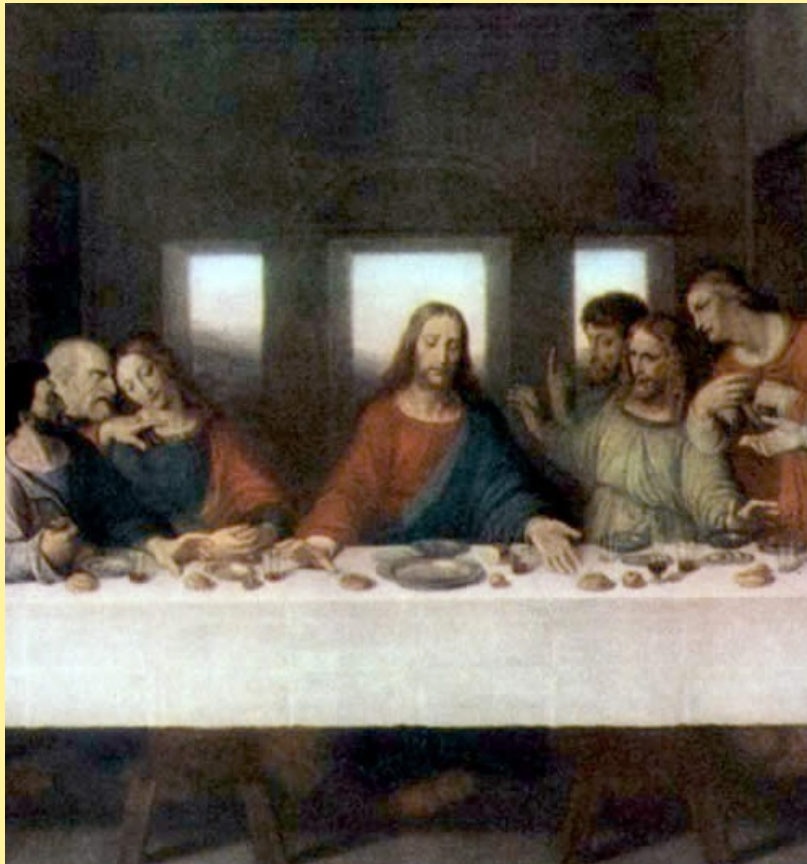
Our polity is informed by our spirituality



- The share in the divine life (in each of us and in all of us) creates a trust and hope in the ancient communal life of the Church.
- Each voice is of value, with a distinct presence in worship, ministry and polity.
- This too is communion.



Our Communion is a new way of leadership in Christ



Da Vinci, 15th century

- Jesus called the disciples to him and said, 'You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. It will not be so among you; but whoever wishes to be great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be your slave... (Matthew 20:25-27)



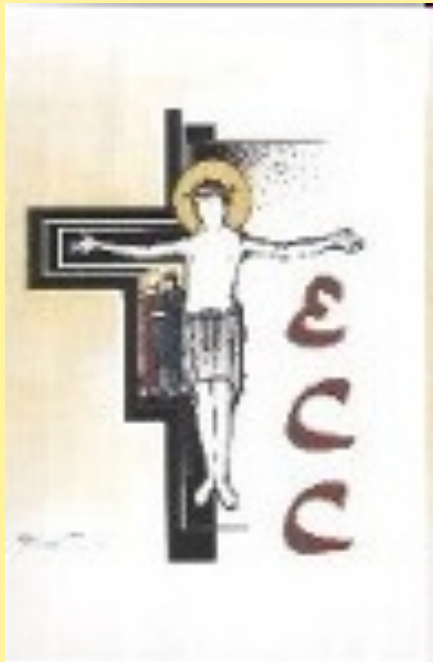
The Ecumenical Catholic Communion

- A Catholic identity that is firm in its sacramental and theological tradition, yet embraces the diversity of gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation and style of spirituality for every community and each member.
- A Catholic identity that embraces both the apostolic tradition of its bishops and clergy
- **...yet requires the voice of all its people in its governance and ministries.**





The Vision of the Ecumenical Catholic Communion



We are People of God baptized in Christ and professing our faith in a living Catholic tradition. We are men and women, lay and ordained, joining together as a “communion of communities”...

-From the ECC Mission Statement

The Roots of the ECC

*“Make every effort to preserve the
unity which has the Spirit as its
origin and peace as its binding
force.”*

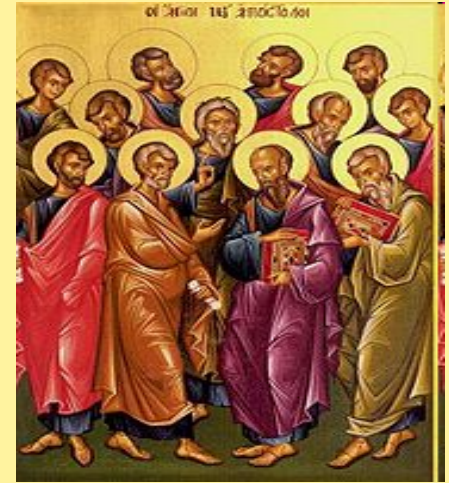
Ephesians 4:3



Our Polity ~ The Historic Foundations

The Acts of the Apostles provides a striking guidepost for the governance of the Church.

The community chose Judas' replacement - Peter addressed 120 disciples describing the need for another apostle and "they nominated two."



The Christian community was asked to present 7 men to act as assistants to the apostles. Chosen by the community, they were ordained deacons.

Two elements are always involved: the choice of the community and the affirmation of apostolic leadership.

Leadership takes the form of wisdom teacher, while authority resembles the spiritual power of the prophets



The Witness of the Early Church

Fr. Richard McBrien,
re: Church governance in 250 A.D.



In fact, the whole Church community took part in the election of bishops and the choice of ministers. Even though the early Church already possessed a firm canonical structure, it also wanted to be ready for any movement prompted by the Holy Spirit. And so the intervention of the laity was welcomed as a matter of principle. But the Church also regarded the bishop as possessed of the gifts of the Spirit in a preeminent way. It was because of the apparent presence of these gifts that one was chosen a bishop in the first place.



First 1000 Years of Church

The Church functioned in a more democratic way than it would in the centuries to come.



In the early 5th century of the Church, Pope Celestine (pictured) promoted the formula for selecting bishops that would be repeated again and again:

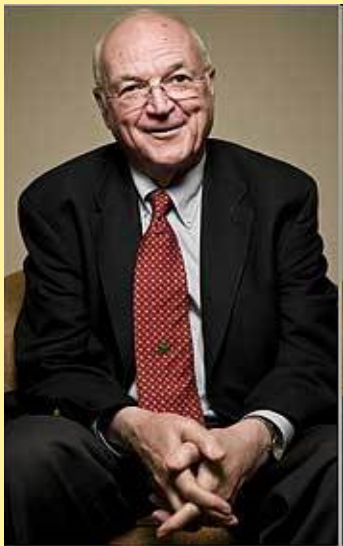
“The one who would be head of all should be selected by all.”

This formula would be reaffirmed at the Council of Orleans in 549, the Council of Paris in 557, and as late as 1140, in the collection of canon law known as the *Decretals of Gratian*.



The First 1000 Years ~ Towards the End

Fr. Richard McBride writes about this period:



*And so a legalism was introduced, and it radically changed the original spiritual notion that obedience to God's representative is obedience to God. The presence of grace in the representative was no longer crucial. Episcopal authority was no longer **moral** authority but **jurisdiction**, and it was bestowed even before the sacrament was conferred. The bestowal of grace was secondary. And so the idea developed that a priest "governs" his parish, bishops "govern" their dioceses and "judge" in all matters, and the pope rules as "sovereign" – indeed, is the "Sovereign Pontiff."*

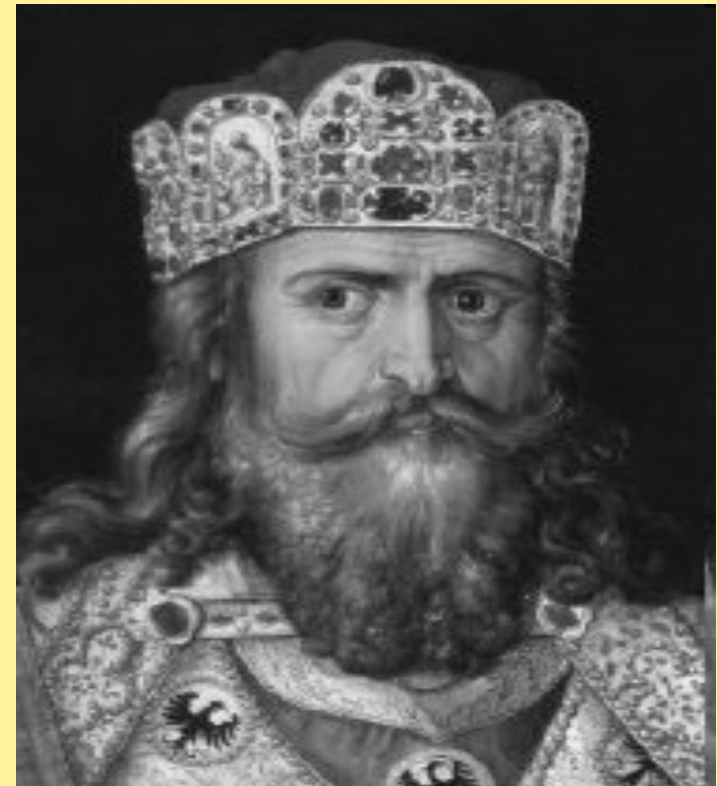
Catholicism, p. 747



The Ascent of Rome

In the 800 Charlemagne was crowned “Emperor” of the “Holy Roman Empire” by Pope Leo III.

In exchange for this honor, the emperor agreed to suppress the rituals that had been observed in France – known as the Gallican Rite of the Church.





The Ascent of Rome

Many other rites were also suppressed: e.g. Mozarabic rite of Spain, Celtic rites and monastic governance in British Isles.



Clerical celibacy enforced throughout Europe and finally reached Germany in 11th century under Pope Gregory VII.

Roman Patriarch (Pope) demanded absolute authority over 4 other ancient patriarchs: Patriarchates of Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem.



The Archbishop of Utrecht



St. Willibrord (pictured) was a 7th century missionary who preached to the people of the “low country” of Europe – the modern day Netherlands.

He/his successors = the Archbishops of Utrecht (Dutch city).

Senior priests of Utrecht had the right to elect the successor from the beginning until pope rescinded it in 18th century.

The controversy led to a separation from the Vatican authority.



The Present Archbishop of Utrecht

The episcopal line of the Archbishop of Utrecht continues until today.

The present Archbishop of Utrecht is the Most Reverend Joris Vercammen, also known as the Metropolitan of Utrecht.



In the 19th century, the Old Catholic movement in Europe found a great patron in the Archbishop of Utrecht.



Pope Pius IX and Vatican I

Pope Pius IX (pictured) began his administration of the Roman Catholic Church with some liberal reforms.

Pius IX lost territories called Papal States in 1848 in rise of Italian nationalism.

Pius IX reacted by condemning liberal democratic reform in the governments of Europe, as well as condemning public education, the separation of church and state, free speech, bible study groups, and ideas called “Modernism” and “Liberalism.”





Vatican I



In 1868, the Pope called for an ecumenical council, which met from 1869-1870.

This culminated in the declaration of Papal Infallibility, as well as complete jurisdiction over all bishops and all people throughout the world.

Many bishops left Rome rather than face a vote over infallibility.



The Old Catholics

Many bishops and others at Vatican I were horrified by declaration of total Papal power, including some American bishops.

Encouraged by a liberal press (which promoted such beliefs as the freedom of conscience, basic human rights of speech, religion, etc.), hundreds of laity and clergy in Europe repudiated Papal infallibility as contrary to the ancient teaching of the Church.

Catholic bishops of various European nations eventually formed the Union of Utrecht, which is now in communion with the Anglicans and other national Catholic churches that are not part of Roman Catholicism.



The Old Catholics



1871 ~ the first Old Catholic Congress convened in Munich, Germany – The congress supported the teaching of an *Older Catholicism* (thus called **Old Catholics**).

The leaders of the Congress were excommunicated for rejecting Papal Infallibility.

Old Catholic movement promoted participation of laity in governance of the Church; the affirmation of basic rights for all Catholics, the removal of rule of celibacy for clergy, adherence to the ancient Catholic faith, the reform of the training of the clergy, and the move toward the re-unification of the Christian denominations.

Much of the work of the Old Catholic Congress was based on the efforts of the great Catholic theologian Johann Joseph Ignaz von Döllinger (pictured).



The Roman Catholic American Experience

1782 ~ Fr. John Carroll (pictured) wrote a constitution for clergy of the new nation: the product of 3 meetings held by the clergy over a 2 year period.



The Constitution outlined rights of the clergy to determine their ministries and their leaders – reflecting democratic process of the American government.

Benjamin Franklin suggested John Carroll when the Pope sought a new bishop for the USA.

John Carroll declined the position unless he should be elected by his fellow priests. He was almost unanimously elected and continued to create a system of governance that included the voices of those under the bishop's leadership.



The Roman Catholic American Experience

In this system, the liturgy was in English and both clergy and laity were a part of the governing councils of parishes.

Additionally, the bishop had a limited right to dismiss a pastor as the laity chose their pastors who were then appointed by the bishop. Disputes were settled by an arbitration board made up of clergy and laity.

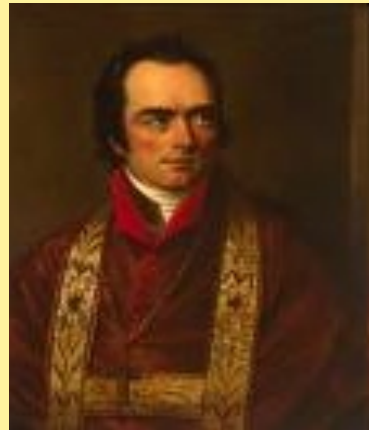
The Catholic Church in America was also open to ecumenical dialogue with Protestants under the leadership of Bishop Carroll.





The Roman Catholic American Experience

Bishop John England (pictured) of Charleston, South Carolina, continued heritage of democratic process in the Church 34 years after its beginnings under Bishop John Carroll.



Bishop England wrote a constitution for the Roman Catholic Church of South Carolina that was based upon the belief in “Conciliarism” affirmed by the Ecumenical Council of Constance in 1415. This council affirmed the authority of an ecumenical council over that of the Pope.



A Constitution for the USA Roman Catholic Church



This constitution (pictured above) affirmed that bishops were not deputies of the Pope any more than governors of the states were deputies of the American president. It added that “We are not required by our Faith to believe that the Pope is infallible.”

Each parish had a vestry (lay council) that administered the finances, including clergy salaries and salaries of hired lay personnel. The vestry was involved in all personnel decisions.

Disputes or problems with the clergy were discussed by the vestry and reported to the bishop, who would be asked to settle the matter. On the diocesan level, a board controlled diocesan funds – composed of two clergy appointed by the bishop, a vicar and three clergy chosen by the clergy, and six lay members chosen by the laity.



A Constitution for the USA Roman Catholic Church

This constitution continued Bishop Carroll's legacy by 1) affirming participation of clergy and laity in Church governance 2) governing following a written constitution; and 3) holding a diocesan convention every two years.

*The diocesan convention consisted of a house of clergy and a house of laity, and **every act that was passed by the convention required the harmonious agreement of the two houses and the bishop.** Any disputes would be appealed to Rome.*



The Roman Catholic American Experience



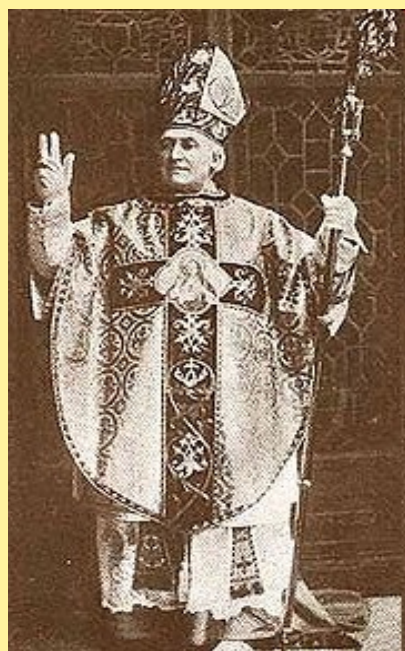
At Vatican I the American bishops initially opposed the doctrine of Papal infallibility, knowing it would inflame Protestant fears of foreign interference in the nation, as well as suppress free speech in the Roman Catholic Church.

Three bishops were so ecumenical that (against the desires of Rome) they attended the first Parliament of World Religions in Chicago in 1893 (pictured above) ~ Cardinal James Gibbons of Baltimore (from the North), Bishop John Keane of Richmond, Virginia, the first rector of Catholic University (from the South), and Bishop John Ireland of St. Paul, Minnesota (from the Midwest).



The Old Catholics in England and America

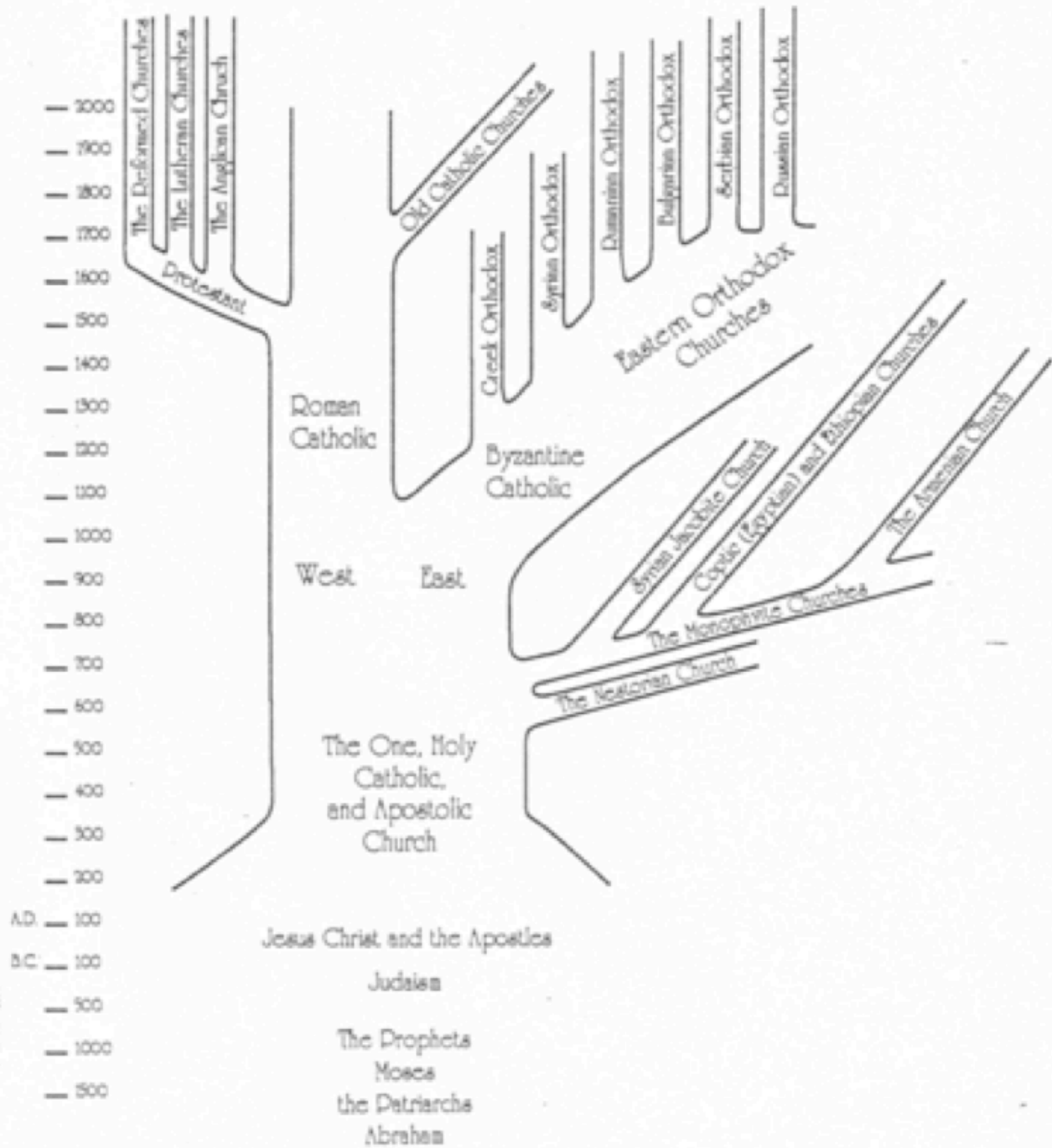
1908 ~ Dr. Arnold Harris Mathew (pictured), who had left the Roman Church, was consecrated by Archbishop of Utrecht, assisted by all the continental Old Catholic Bishops.



Placed in charge of the English mission, he was elected as Old Catholic Archbishop and Metropolitan of Great Britain in 1911.

He ordained bishops who made their way to America and developed the Church in the ancient Catholic tradition and according to Old Catholic ecclesiology.

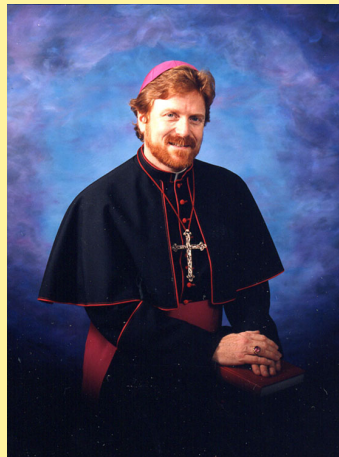
Over the past 100 years, Independent Catholic movements arose in many countries outside Europe – such as Brazil and the Philippines – with millions of parishioners.





The ECC

The first Presiding Bishop of the ECC, the Most Reverend Peter Hickman, received his ordination through three bishops who trace their lines through 1) Archbishop Mathew, 2) the Independent Catholic Church of Brazil and 3) the Anglican/Episcopal Church.



The ECC affirms the *Declaration of Utrecht (September 24, 1889)*, which serves as the founding document of the Union of Utrecht.

In addition, the ECC has established “Distinctives” & the ECC Constitution by which it governs.

The Structure of the ECC

*~ from the local parish to a
communion of communities ~*



**God has so constructed the body
... so that there may be no division, but that
the parts may have the same concern for one another.**

**If one part suffers, all suffer;
if one part is honored, all share its joy.**

(1 Corinthians 12:24-26)



The Local Parish Community

The standard faith community for the Church.

Continues the mission of the Church through each generation that begins with the life of faith in the parish community.

Gives rise to the clergy that serve the Church

Promotes and supports vocations, specialized ministries, and other efforts that fulfill the multi-faceted call of the Gospel to faith and service.



Theology of the Parish Community

The life of the Christian takes on real experience in the parish – faith is made “flesh and blood” through worship, education and the life of service. Every Christian is an image or “icon” of Christ to the world and to other Christians.

So too, the bishop, priest and deacon are icons of Christ to the Church – each in a different way – just as spouses are icons of Christ to each other and parents are icons of Christ to their children. The reality is that the Church is filled with living symbols of Christ.

Baptism is the great sacrament that transforms each Christian into this iconic presence. Ordained people are changed by the sacrament of holy orders into a new role for the Church – to stand as an image of Christ for the assembly of faith. This sacramental role is meant to gather and lead. It is especially recognized in the great sacrament of the Eucharist, in which the laity and the ordained exercise their roles and ministries.



The Community

“The parish offers an obvious example of the apostolate on the community level inasmuch as it brings together the many human differences within its boundaries and merges them into the universality of the Church.

(1) The laity should accustom themselves to working in the parish in union with their priests,

(2) bringing to the Church community their own and the world's problems as well as questions concerning human salvation, all of which they should examine and resolve by deliberating in common.

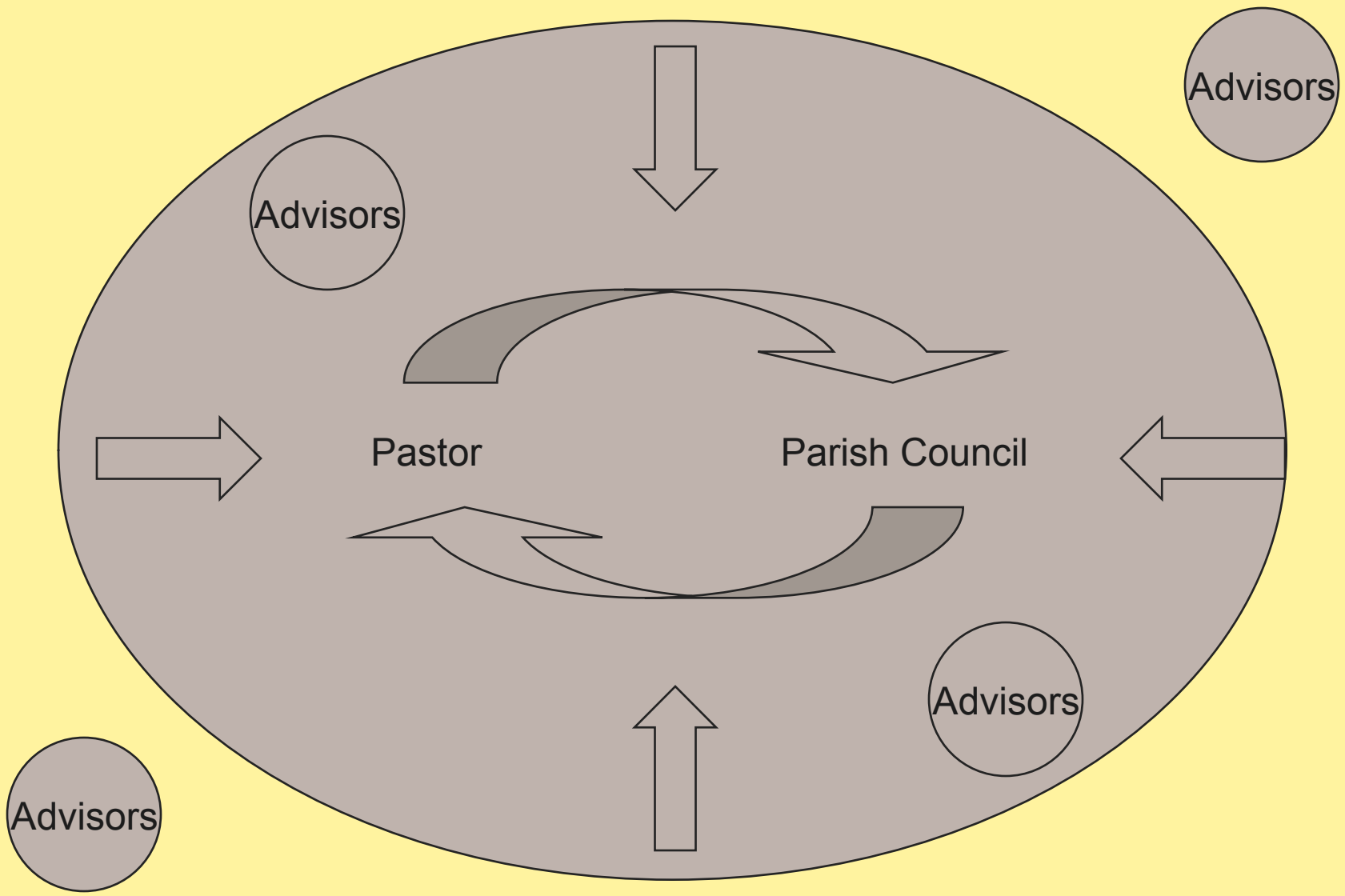
As far as possible the laity ought to provide helpful collaboration for every apostolic and missionary undertaking sponsored by their local parish.”



Vatican II, *Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity*



The Parish Community Gives Input





Separate Roles of Leadership

- The Pastor and Leadership Council have different roles.
- The parish leadership is meant to find consensus. This is not simply a majority decision, but a consensus between the voice of the pastor and the voice of the parish council.
- Both the pastor and the members of the council listen for the feedback of the whole community.
- This will lead to a discernment of the Spirit for the parish community. The call of leadership is to discernment prior to decision. This will require prayer and good communication, as well as good information about each issue.
- Advisors from inside and outside the parish will aid the parish, its council and its pastor in the process of decision and action.



The Pastor

The pastor is a priest of the ECC who serves as the senior spiritual leader of the parish.

While the parish is the “employer of record” for the pastor, the relationship is not just one of employment.

The pastor brings a vision to the parish which is affirmed by the parish when engaged through a contract.



The Pastor

The pastor speaks with a unique point of view.

The parish council speaks from another point of view.

Through education, prayer and strong communication both viewpoints are brought to consensus to lead the parish.

The pastor is the senior liturgical celebrant, educator and spiritual advisor for the parish and its members.



The Parish Leadership Council

Selected members of the parish comprise the parish leadership council, not just to voice the majority opinion of the community, but because council members are respected for their wise and skillful ability to lead the parish.

In other words, the judgment of the council members is trusted by the parishioners.

The council creates a partnership with the pastor to lead the faith community in wisdom and action.

Some council members are also talented in specific areas as advisors to the parish – such as finances, education, social outreach, music, etc.



The ECC Larger Church

The parish gives its community voice to the diocesan and national synods when they meet.



- The parish sends delegates to these synods to vote on canons and select episcopal leadership.
- The relationship between the diocesan and national Church can be compared with the relationship of sovereign states to the federal government.

- A parish is a self-governing but interdependent community of the diocese.
- The parish complies with the diocesan and national constitutions.
- The parish receives clarification and guidance from the bishop.





The People of God “The Church” Ground the Polity of the ECC

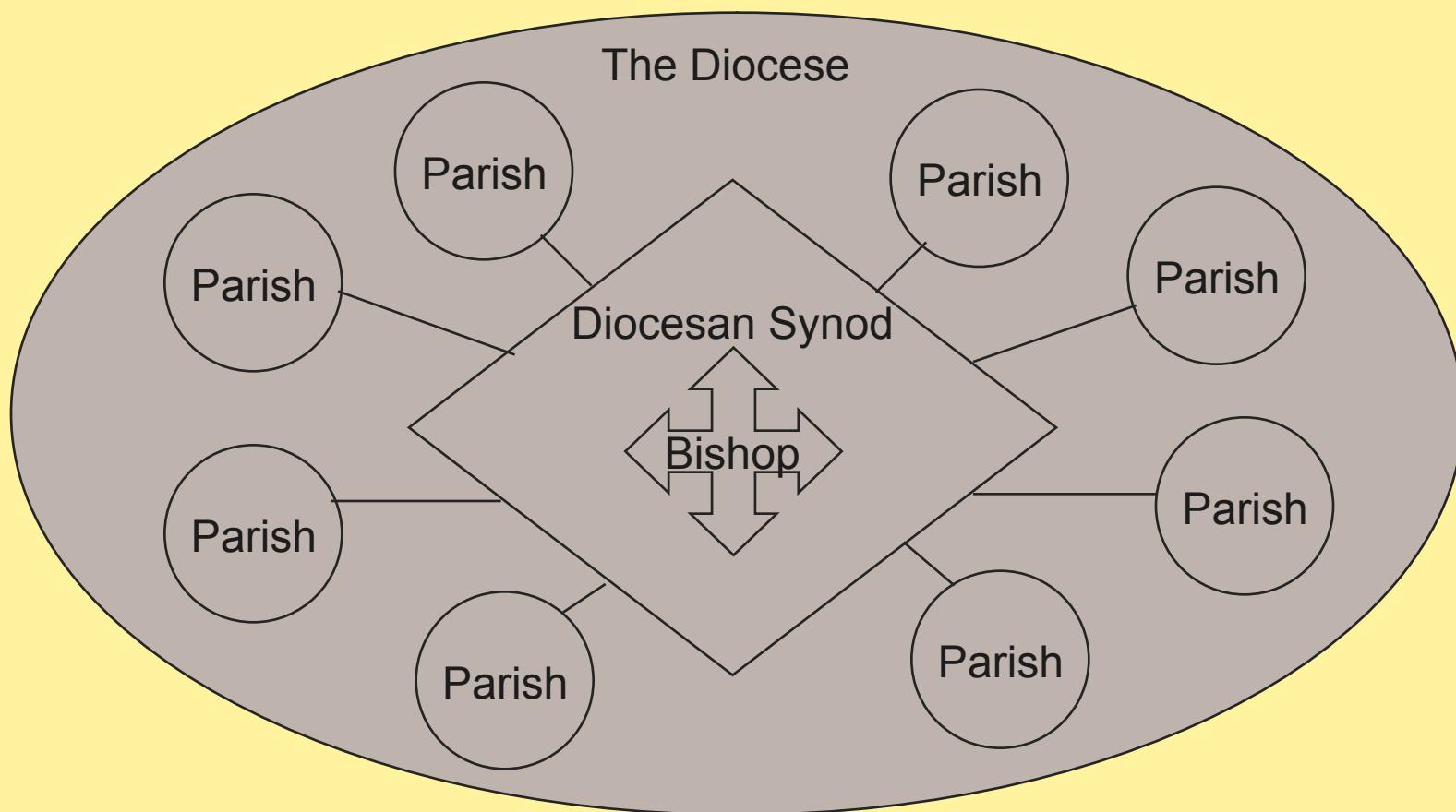
In the Church there is a diversity of ministry but a oneness of mission. Christ conferred on the Apostles and their successors the duty of teaching, sanctifying, and ruling in His name and power. But the laity likewise share in the priestly, prophetic, and royal office of Christ and therefore have their own share in the mission of the whole people of God in the Church and in the world.

- From chapter 1, Vatican II Document,
Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity





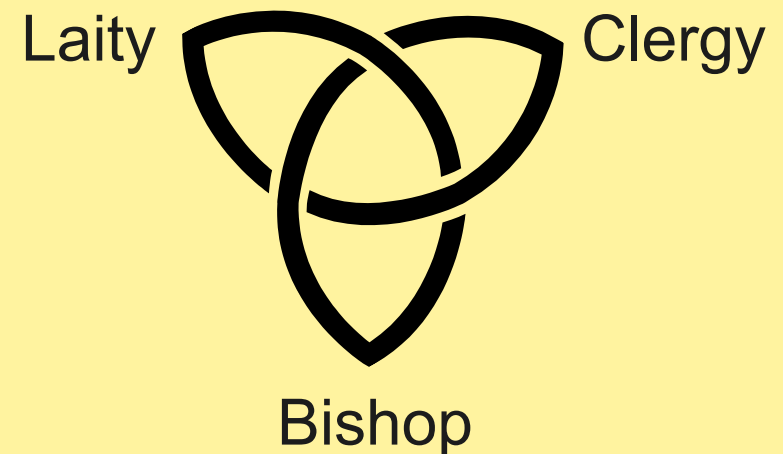
The parish is a self-governing interdependent member of the diocese, guided by the bishop





A Diocese has all the Elements of Church

- ❖ Three distinct roles form the Church, and are contained in the diocese: the bishop, the laity and the clergy.
- ❖ Thus, there is a sense of the completeness of the Church, the People of God, in the local diocese.
- ❖ The fullness of the Church is seen in each diocese, held in communion with other dioceses through love, faithfulness to the Gospel, and the common Catholic identity and heritage continuing from the Apostles of Jesus Christ.

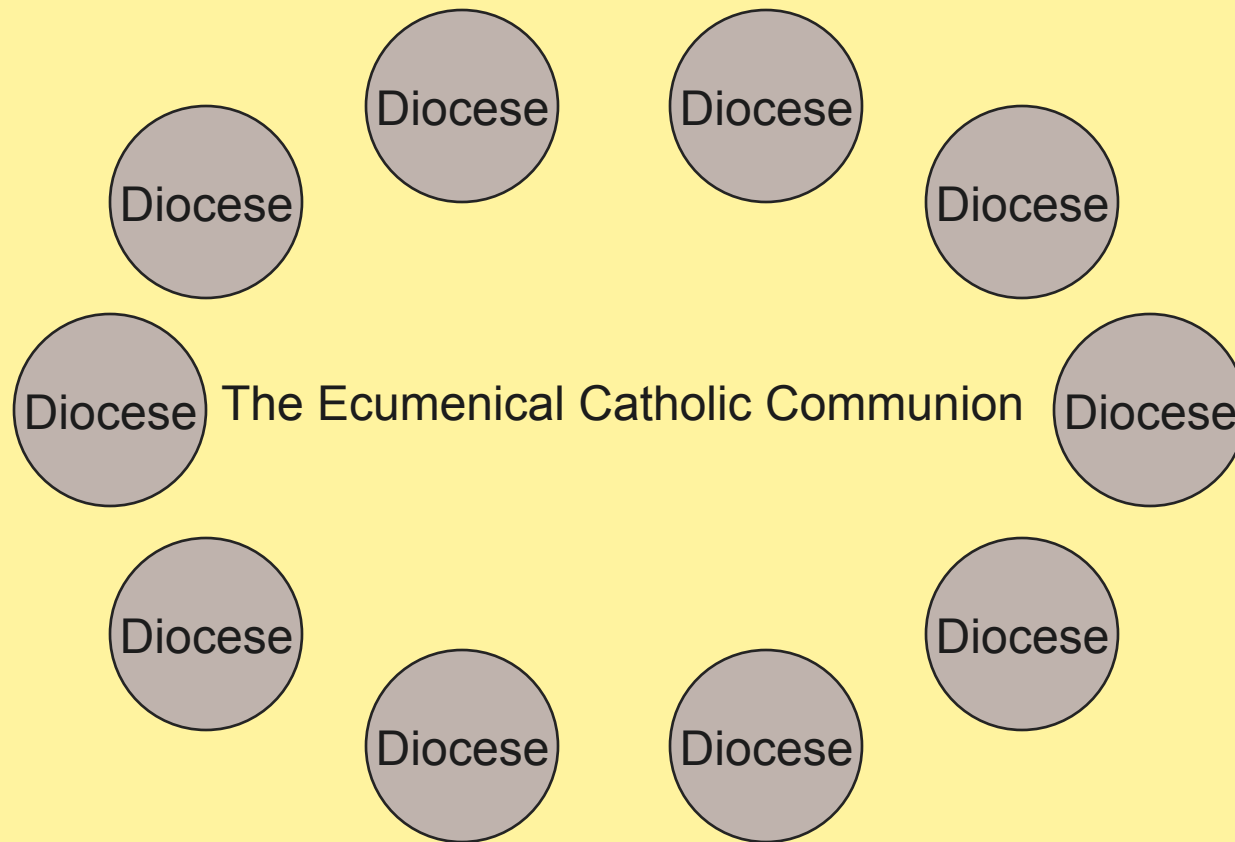


*The Structure and Polity
of the Diocese*



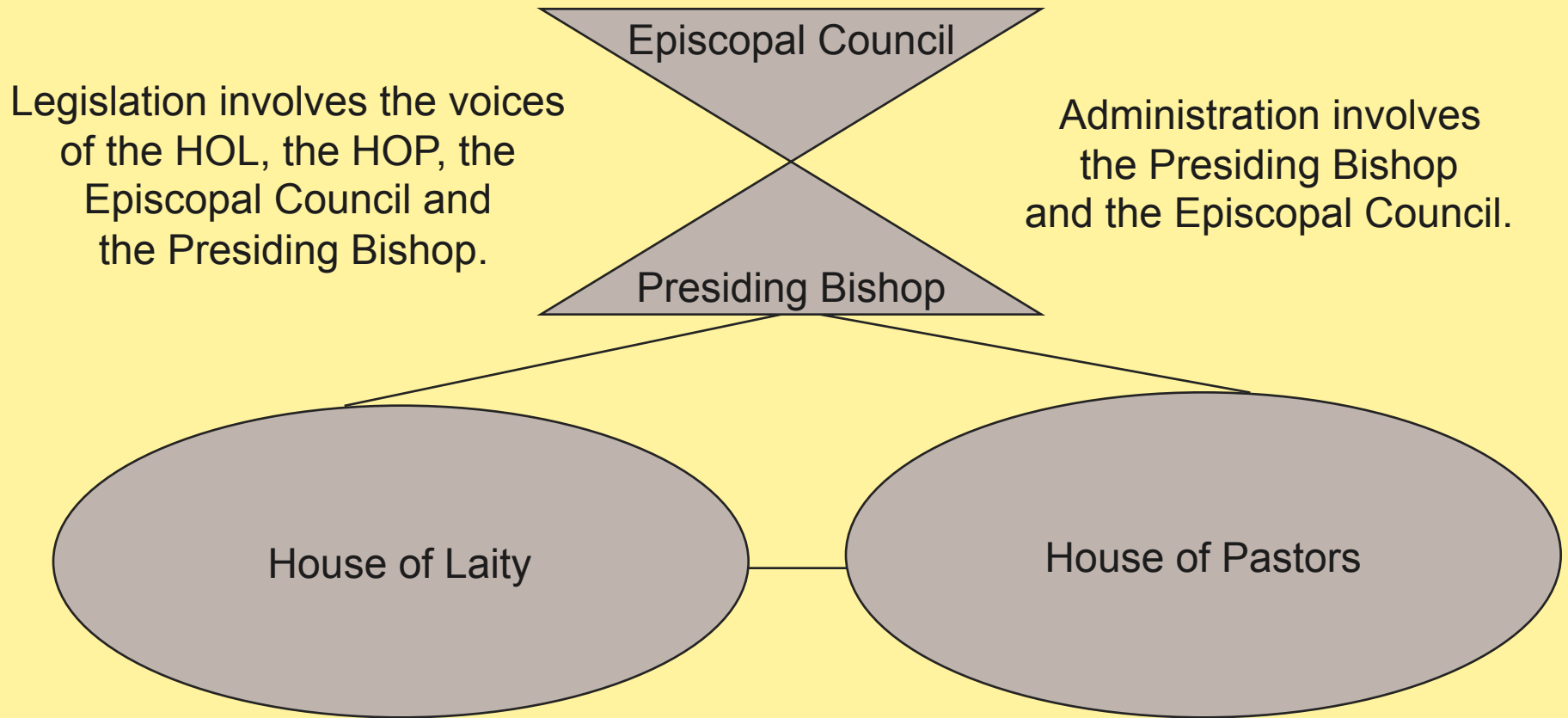
The Ecumenical Catholic Communion

is a confederation of autonomous dioceses,
each of which comprises the Church in its fullness.






Governing of the Communion occurs through a synodal structure



Disputed legislation and issues of misconduct are resolved through the Episcopal Council and its Commissions



The Voice and Role of the Laity



I think I am right in saying that the tradition of the Apostles, committed to the whole Church in its various constituents and functions ... manifests itself variously at various times: sometimes by the mouth of the episcopacy, sometimes by the doctors [of theology], sometimes by the people, sometimes by liturgies, rites, ceremonies, and customs, by events, disputes, movements, and all those other phenomena which are comprised under the name of history.

– Cardinal John Henry Newman
19th century England



The House of Laity...



Sensus fidelium is a “sense of the faithful” in the belief of the Church. *Consensus fidelium* is the common understanding that Catholics have concerning an element of faith.

...has a unique gift of acting as a mirror: a revealing response to change within the Communion. The “*sensus fidelium* or *consensus fidelium*” **resides heavily among the laity**, resonating within the people’s intuition of Catholic life, faith and practice. What is Catholic? One important answer comes from observing the everyday life of faith of our Catholic people – faith in Christ, the Church of Christ, and in the sacraments, devotions and service of the Church.



House of Laity Functions

- ❖ Members are least 18 years of age and cannot be ordained clergy. *(Canon 2.1)*
- ❖ Finance issues originate in HOL, are affirmed by HOP and signed by the Presiding Bishop. *(Canon 2.4)*
- ❖ The HOL participates in the election of the Presiding Bishop. *(Canon 4)*
- ❖ The HOL affirms liturgical changes for the Communion. *(Canon 7)*





The Witness of the Catholic People



...the body of the faithful is one of the witnesses to the fact of the tradition of revealed doctrine, and because their consensus through Christendom is the voice of the Infallible Church.

– Cardinal John Henry Newman,
19th century England.



The House of Pastors

- ❖ Pastors are members of the HOP for as long as they are serving in the office of pastor at an ECC parish. *(Canon 3.1)*



- ❖ HOP representatives are ordained ECC members in good standing with the ECC.
- ❖ *If there are no other clergy of the Communion within the parish, an alternative representative, selected from the lay leadership may temporarily serve as the additional ministerial representative of that parish.*
(Canon 3.2)



The Call to Ordination

An image of oneness as men and women, in an image of love, that in the unity of the genders we find a clear expression in the creation and a central point of ecclesial life in the office of the priesthood. When we so often and so strongly emphasize our concern about the Catholicity of the church, and its relationship to all people, then we find the sacerdotal services by both genders as a perfect expression.

- From *A Pastoral Letter on the Ordination of Women in the Church*, Bishop Joachim Vobbe, The Old Catholic Church of Germany, 1996





Pastoral Service

The House of Pastors has a perspective of pastoral service. Its members are, first of all, the pastors of parishes of the Communion – the ordained priests who lead each parish.

Additionally, there are associate pastors who act as pastoral representatives – priests or deacons who assist in the sacramental and pastoral life of the community.

Pastoral staff members may also represent the community while there is no priest or deacon to fulfill this position in the HOP from a faith community.





House of Pastors Functions

- ❖ The HOP participates in the election of the Presiding Bishop (*Canon 4*)
- ❖ Liturgical changes are affirmed by the HOP (*Canon 7*)
- ❖ Intercommunion agreements are affirmed by the HOP (*Canon 8*)
- ❖ The HOP may also initiate legislation regarding clergy (*Canon 9*)





Specific Faith Communities, Other than Parishes:\

- ❖ Have the right to two seats in the HOP: one is to be held by the leader of the faith community and the other seat shall be held by an official member of the faith community, as selected by the guidelines of that faith community.
- ❖ The term of office is two (2) years and the number of terms shall be determined by each faith community. These representatives are not required to be ordained clergy, but are to be in a pastoral role – such as the head of a religious order or religious school. (Canon 3.3)





Diverse Faith Communities

The Communion is blessed with religious orders, chaplaincies, and other specialized ministries that serve through special missions.

Education, service to the poor, social justice, service in prisons and health care settings, and military chaplaincy are only some of the diverse communities with a special Gospel call to serve “the least of the brothers and sisters.”





Kinds of Legislation

- ❖ Canons and bylaws regulating liturgical changes of the Communion originate and are passed in either the HOP or the Episcopal Council, and affirmed by the two houses and the Episcopal Council. Such changes are signed by the Presiding Bishop to become official canons.
(Canon 7)

- ❖ Proposed changes to guidelines for the following areas may be initiated in the HOP or in the Episcopal Council:
 - Receiving new faith communities into the Communion
 - The ordination of bishops, priests or deacons of the Communion
 - Receiving ordained clergy from other ecclesial bodies into the Communion. . .
 - The discipline and the termination of the faculties of clergy of the Communion. *(Canon 9)*



The Presiding Bishop



The Presiding Bishop calls the various Churches (autonomous dioceses) into the unity of the Ecumenical Catholic Communion. The Presiding Bishop is the first teacher and senior bishop of the Communion, yet does not hold jurisdiction over the other diocesan bishops. Suffragan bishops fall under the jurisdiction of the Presiding Bishop as they represent the Presiding Bishop.

The authority of the Presiding Bishop comes her/his apostolic witness to the Gospel and faithfulness to the Catholic tradition she/he images to the entire Communion.

The Presiding Bishop officially convenes of the Synod, and appoints a facilitator for the Synod gatherings in consultation with the Leadership Council. (*Canon 1*)



The Charism of the Presiding Bishop



The leadership of the Presiding Bishop brings unity and diversity to the Communion.

- Unity comes from his/her Gospel vision and witness to the Catholic tradition
- Diversity comes from the cultivation of many dioceses and faith communities, each with its own distinct character and regional concerns.

As the Presiding Bishop convenes the Synod, this marvelous charism is seen in the call to all parts of the Communion to come from many places and join together into one heart and mind – celebrating our identity as the Body of Christ.



From St. Ignatius of Antioch (1st Century) Letter to the Ephesians, Chapter 4



You should appropriately run together in accordance with the will of your bishop...For your well respected presbytery, worthy of God, is fitted as exactly to the bishop as the strings are to the harp. Therefore in your peaceful and harmonious love, Jesus Christ is sung. One by one, become a choir, that being harmonious in love, and taking up the song of God in unison, you may with one voice sing to the Father through Jesus Christ, so that God may both hear you, and perceive by your actions that you are indeed the members of His Son. It is profitable, therefore, that you should live in a blameless unity, that thus you may always enjoy communion with God.



Presiding Bishop Functions

The Presiding Bishop establishes an administration that includes a Chancellor, and other officers needed to fulfill the duties of the Office of Presiding Bishop. The Presiding Bishop may also establish standing committees or ad hoc committees to further the mission of the Communion. (*Canon 4.1*)



- The Presiding Bishop has the responsibility to sign/veto all legislation, liturgical changes &/or intercommunion agreements.
- 2/3 majority vote of both the HOL and the HOP overrides a PB veto.
- When the veto is exercised, the Episcopal Council must the matter.
- Disputed Legislation may be appealed to the Episcopal Council as a court of review.

(*Canon 4.2*)



Presiding Bishop Functions

- ❖ The Presiding Bishop receives new faith communities into the Communion – see Guidelines for Formation of New Faith Communities – (confirmed by the Episcopal Council). (*Canon 4.3*)
- ❖ The Presiding Bishop also accepts a faith community's request for withdrawal from the Communion. (*Canon 4.4*)
- ❖ The Presiding Bishop may issue a pastoral letter with the confirmation of the Episcopal Council. (*Canon 4.5*)
- ❖ Intercommunion agreements with other ecclesial bodies are negotiated and signed by the Presiding Bishop and become effective through a vote of confirmation by both the HOP and the Episcopal Council. (*Canon 8*)

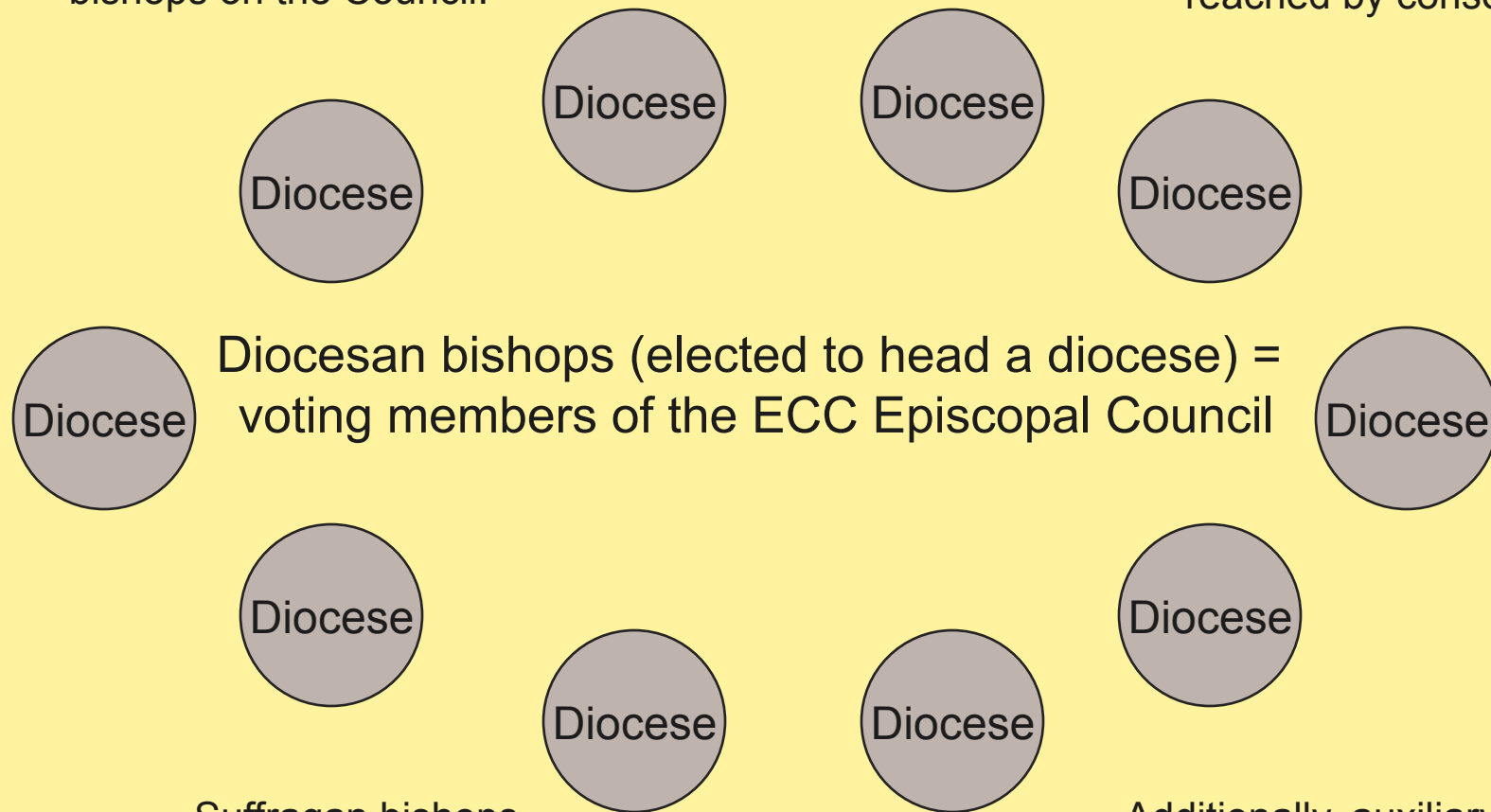




How the Episcopal Council Functions

Only specific decisions require formal voting, such as the confirmation of new bishops on the Council.

Most decisions of the Episcopal Council are reached by consensus.



Suffragan bishops (represent the presiding bishop to a region or population) = non-voting members of this council.

Additionally, auxiliary bishops of each diocese are non-voting members.



The Episcopal Council: Diverse Leadership in Unity

Each diocesan bishop, assistant bishops of dioceses, and the suffragan bishops (who act as representatives for the Presiding Bishop) are all members of the Episcopal Council. Their diversity includes the various geographical regions they represent, as well as the special episcopal ministries to which each is called.





Episcopal Ordination and Election to Office



The bishop of a diocese is elected by the people (laity and clergy) of that diocese.

- ❖ The bishop of the diocese is similar to a governor of a state, in that she/he is the head of an autonomous Church, full and complete. Yet, these Churches are bound together in the Ecumenical Catholic Communion, in accordance with the constitution.
- ❖ A bishop retains the sacrament of ordination, even when she/he no longer serves in the office of the bishop of the diocese.
- ❖ The bishops also serve as the judiciary branch of the ECC, in that they are a court for disputed synodal legislation or cases of misconduct – (similar to a situation of governors of the states serving as the justices of the Supreme Court).



The Episcopal Council

- ❖ The Episcopal Council is comprised of all bishops in good standing with the Communion. (*Canon 5*)
- ❖ The Episcopal Council initiates liturgical changes and intercommunion agreements, which are be affirmed by the House of Pastors.
- ❖ It may also issue joint pastoral letters and policy statements, in consultation with the House of Pastors. (*Canon 5.1*)



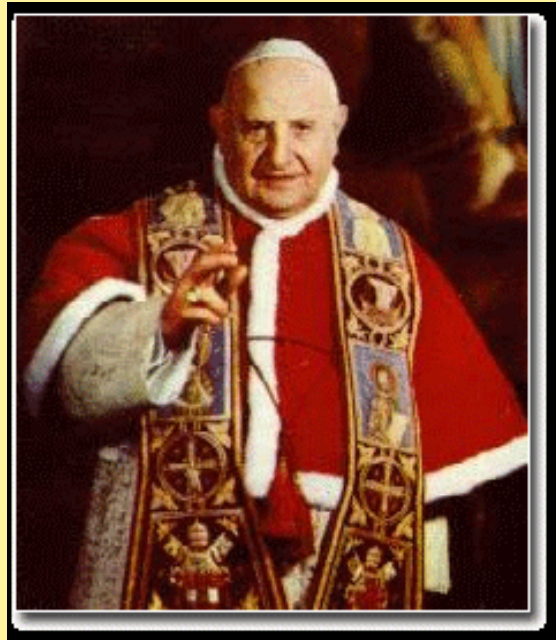


Episcopal Council Functions

- ❖ The Episcopal Council is a Court of Appeal for the decisions of the 2 houses. *(Canon 5.2)*
- ❖ The Episcopal Council is a Court of Review for cases of misconduct and/or incompetence and may appoint an investigating committee if necessary. *(Canon 5.3)*
- ❖ The Episcopal Council may also establish standing committees or ad hoc committees to further the mission of the Church.
- ❖ This Council may establish and/or modify guidelines for ordination and guidelines for the formation of new parish communities.
- ❖ In addition this Council reviews and confirms all applications for vocations and the formation of new faith communities. *(Canon 5.4)*



Our Communion ~ a prophetic vision of hope



*Consult not your fears but your hopes and your dreams.
Think not about your frustrations, but about your unfulfilled
potential. Concern yourself not with what you tried and failed
in, but with what it is still possible for you to do.*

- Pope John XXIII



Presentation Sources*

The slides for this presentation were drawn from the following five PowerPoint presentations created by Fr. James Farris PhD for the Ecumenical Catholic Communion:

Unity and Peace ~ The Foundations and Vision of the Constitution of the ECC

The Vision of the ECC

The Journey of the ECC

The Beloved Community ~ Catholic Parish Polity

Regional Growth in the ECC