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Auxiliary Bishops — Their Diocesan Role

The Second Vatican Council in its decree on the Bishops' Pastoral Office in the Church explained the role of auxiliary bishops. The Council noted:

"In the government of dioceses, the welfare of the Lord's flock must be the prime concern of a bishop." The Council added "that this welfare may be duly secured, auxiliary bishops must frequently be appointed because the diocesan bishop cannot personally fulfill all his episcopal duties as the good of souls demands."

Factors calling for the naming of auxiliary bishops, the Council stated, included "the vast extent of the diocese, the special nature of the apostolate," and other reasons of a different nature.

Auxiliary bishops are enjoined by the Council teaching to manifest obedience and reverence toward the diocesan bishop. "He in turn, should have a fraternal love for auxiliary bishops and hold them in esteem."

The Council adds, "they shall be dependent upon his authority only, and he may wish to consult them in examining questions of major importance, especially of a pastoral nature."

External Marks of A Bishop

The *crozier* or pastoral staff used by a Bishop is a symbol of his authority as a shepherd or pastor of souls. In origin it is traced back to the shepherd's crook and it was first used about the fifth century.

It consists of two parts, the crook and the staff, separated by a knob. Its height is commonly about five to six feet. By Church law the crozier belongs to Cardinals, Bishops and Abbots, and since it is a sign of jurisdiction it is used only within the area of his jurisdiction.

It is held in the left hand just below the knob with the crook turned forward. If a visiting Bishop is required to use it at a function he carries it with the crook turned away from himself.

The *mitre* worn by a Bishop is a kind of folding cap made by joining two flat, stiff, peak-shaped pieces. Two strips of cloth called fanons hang from the back of it. Its use dates back to the eighth century and it originated in Rome. The mitre is characteristically worn by the Holy Father, Cardinals, Bishops, and Abbots, and sometimes by clergymen of lesser rank.

The *ring* worn by a Bishop is a sign of his spiritual marriage to the Church and indicates that he is ready, if

necessary, to lay down his life for it as Christ did.

A Bishop has the right to wear a ring from the time of his consecration. The color and choice of a precious stone is left to each Bishop.

The *pectoral cross* of a Bishop is a small cross suspended by a chain or cord from the neck and hanging over the breast (the Latin word "pectus" means breast). It symbolizes order and dignity, and Bishops are expected to wear it at all times.

Bishops have two such crosses: One, the ordinary cross made of gold and usually suspended by a gold chain, for daily life; and the other, hallowed so that it contain relics of the saints and suspended by a cord of green and gold silk, for ceremonial occasions.

A Bishop's *coat-of-arms* is designed according to the principles of the ancient art and science of heraldry. It is used by him at the top of Church documents, on his stationery, over the entrance of his residence and above the door of his cathedral.

The *Bull of Consecration* is the sol-

emn document issued by the Holy Father in Rome which gives the mandate to consecrate a specific priest as a Bishop. It derives its name from the leaden seal or "bull" which is attached to it. The ceremony cannot be held until this document is received.

Alb. A white, full-length undergarment.

Amice. A white, rectangular protective cloth tied about the neck.

Biretta. A three-pointed ecclesiastical cap.

Buskins. Knee-length silk stockings.

Chausable. A colorful mantle cut away at the sides.

Cincture. A cord tied about the waist.

Cope. A long, hooded cape.

Dalmatic. A waist-length unadorned garment of unlined silk.

Maniple. A small, band-like cloth which hangs from the left arm.

Sandals. Low, braid-trimmed slippers.

Stole. Band of cloth which circles the shoulders and is crossed at the waist.

Tunic. A waist-length-plain garment of unlined silk.

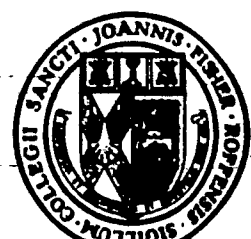
Zucchetto. A small round skull-cap worn by Bishops. The Pope's zucchetto is white, cardinals are red and bishops' violet.

CONGRATULATIONS

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and
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