



THE BISHOP'S DUTIES AND ROLE AS A PART OF FIRE INTERNATIONAL FELLOWSHIP OF CHURCHES AND MINISTERS, INC.

The duty of the Bishop in the Church and FIRE International Fellowship of Churches and Ministers, Inc. is a hierarchical one in the sense that the Bishop bears a greater responsibility to the church than other members. Bishops are in charge of administrative functions, spiritual and sacerdotal functions, as well as, making sure the church continues along a safe path. For FIRE International FOCM, Bishops play several roles.

In Pentecostal churches, everyone can be touched or filled with the Holy Spirit, but Bishops receive special influence from the Holy Spirit. Consecrated Bishops in FIRE International FOCM that desire and have been chosen for this office, must have a demonstrated history of faithfulness, trust, integrity, and charismatic leadership. The FIRE International FOCM Bishop must be teachable and humble.

Leadership Role and Duties

Performance

One of the main functions of Bishops in FIRE International FOCM is to perform leadership and oversight duties for the betterment of the organization and the people of God for the Glory of God and our Lord Jesus Christ.

These duties many times will be administrative, including acting as a go-between for the church and the state government or other officials.

With the help of an Overseer, Bishops will be responsible for helping specific districts of congregations or regions to develop their God-given potential. In helping these overseers, churches, pastors, and regions to grow, to sustain growth, and to sustain holiness, the Bishop is expected to be organized and to develop good time management skills. In understanding each overseer, church, pastor, and region, the Bishop must be patient and willing to learn, in the love of Jesus Christ, those whom he has been given jurisdiction over, never taking advantage of this responsibility for personal gain or to fulfill one's self-esteem.

As leaders, Bishops must maintain high ethical and moral values in all their dealings, personally and professionally, and always be willing to learn, according to the Holy Scriptures and the FIRE International Code of Conduct and Ethics.

Bishops must actively reach out to the Presiding Prelate for direction and understanding of their duties where there are ambiguities. Bishops, in all humility, must be willing to be a help and be an asset to the Church, FIRE International FOCM, and the Presiding Prelate, for the Glory of God, never giving indication of division or being the progenitor of division in the Body.

Bishops **must** take a leadership role to find answers, solutions, and bring them to the table for approval by the Board of Bishops.

Bishops **must** take an active role to reach out to the FIRE International Office staff for information, to stay on top of FIRE International's schedule of events and meetings, and to accurately and correctly pass down appropriate information and guidance to the overseer and churches under their purview. The Bishop cannot sit back and wait for information to be passed on to him, but must take an active role in obtaining information in humility and love.

Bishops must take on the role of servant and not boss.

Bishops are expected to check-in on, to mentor, to pray for, and fast for those overseers, churches, pastors, and districts under his jurisdiction.

Bishops of the FIRE International FOCM must actively foster cooperation at every level within the organization and must personally take on the role of peacemaker within the Body of Christ, FIRE International FOCM, and with the office of the Presiding Prelate.

Protecting the Church

The church sometimes faces internal problems or comes under attack from outsiders. The Bishop is responsible for protecting the integrity and existence of the church in these cases. In their own lives and in their teachings, Bishops have to show they are "faithful to Christ, to family, to the church." Also, the Bishop has to be careful to impart a true message about the church's doctrines and belief system from the Holy Scriptures and not from their opinions.

The Body of Christ must never come under attack from the Office of the Bishop or their immediate family by word or deed.

The Bishop and his immediate family members must maintain a high standard of confidentiality at every level.

Mediator of Grace

The Bishop is a kind of sacrament. Sacraments serve as mediators of God's grace, so that all members of the congregation can enjoy its benefits through these rituals and people. The Bishop is one of many representatives to help mankind understand Christ's grace with Christ being the only way to attain that grace. The Spirit-filled, gathered church is a sacramental presence in the world, which implies that anybody can receive God's grace directly by being or becoming a part of the church's community of saved believers.

As a mediator of God's Grace, a Bishop must never take upon himself to correct other Bishops, Overseers, or Pastors in front of other leaders or the congregation, unless voted upon by the Council of Bishops and having been duly appointed to do so. The Bishop must remain gentle and apt to teach being wise in our official duties. If there is a private admonishment, it must be done in prayer and fasting, love, grace, and patience, not self-willed, hasty, or in anger.

1. Bishops are consecrated by the Presiding Bishop, College of Bishops and set apart for a ministry of servant leadership, general oversight and supervision. As followers of Jesus Christ, Bishops, in all humility, are authorized to guard the faith, order, liturgy, doctrine, and discipline of the Church. The role and calling forth of the Bishop is to exercise oversight and support of the Church in its mission of

making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. The basis of such discipleship of leadership (*episkopé*) lies in discipline and a disciplined life, as indicated in the Holy Scriptures. The Bishop leads, therefore, through the following disciplines:

- a) A vital and renewing spirit. The duty of the Bishop, in all humility, is to faithfully practice, model, and lead the spiritual disciplines of our faith and to call and inspire the clergy and laity within the Church to practice the Christian disciplines in their individual lives, through the tradition of personal holiness. The Bishop is to lead in public worship, in the celebration of the sacraments, and in the commendation of our faith.
- b) An enquiring mind and a commitment to the teaching office. The role of the Bishop is to continue to learn and to teach how to make disciples and lead faithful and fruitful congregations using scripture, spiritual disciplines, and the history and doctrines of the Church.
- c) A vision for the Church. The duty of Bishop is to lead the whole Church in claiming its mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. The Bishop leads by discerning, inspiring, strategizing, equipping, implementing, and evaluating the fulfillment of the mission of the church. Working in partnership with the Council of Bishops, the cabinet and laity and clergy leadership of the annual conference, and the professing members of the church, the Bishop urges the whole church to move toward the vision of sharing Christ with the world in fulfillment of our mission, faithful discipleship, and a "more excellent way" of being Christ's people in the world.
- d) A prophetic commitment for the transformation of the Church and the world. The duty of the Bishop is to be a prophetic voice for justice in a suffering and conflicted world through the tradition of social holiness. The Bishop encourages and models the mission of witness and service in the world through proclamation of the gospel and alleviation of human suffering.
- e) A passion for the unity of the church. The duty of the Bishop is to be the shepherd of the whole flock in their district and, thereby, provide leadership toward the goal of understanding, reconciliation, and unity within FIRE International FOCM and the church universal.

Growth of the Organization

Each Bishop is expected to help develop, grow, and bring in churches as a part of FIRE International FOCM, Inc. Bishops are expected to conduct themselves in a way that leads to growth of the organization.

The job of the Bishop, for organizational growth, is to help the Churches to reach their full potential in love, humility, and patience. We are not to lead the Church of our Lord by constraint, but by example.

If a Bishop, Overseer, church, or Pastor is not where the Bishop is in their faith, they must help him or her to grow by example and love not by demeaning or berating them into submission.

At organizational meetings, Bishops must always put out helpful information to the Church in love, in a helpful way that the body may grow to the full stature of what Christ has ordained for His Body.

The Bishop is expected to be well prepared and to defend sound doctrine to his assembly and to FIRE International FOCM diocese which he has jurisdiction over.

Bishops must not teach their personal likes and dislikes to FIRE International Churches, at FIRE International meetings, conventions, or convocations, but for the growth of the organization, must use wisdom and the Word of God.

Bishops, along with their churches and districts, are expected to be present and accountable for Organizational functions, meetings, conventions, and convocations.

For some reason, if the Bishop cannot be there, he will make sure his leaders and church is present.

Scripture

1 Timothy 1:3-7 This *is* a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

1 Peter 5:2-4 Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight *thereof*, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over *God's* heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

Titus 1:5-9 For this reason I left you in Crete, that you would set in order what remains and appoint elders in every city as I directed you, namely, if any man is above reproach, the husband of one wife, having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion. For the overseer must be above reproach as God's steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain, but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled, holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict.

Acts 20:28-32 "Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. "I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them. "Therefore be on the alert, remembering that night and day for a period of three years I did not cease to admonish each one with tears. "And now I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified.

1 Thessalonians 5:12-13 But we request of you, brethren, that you appreciate those who diligently labor among you, and have charge over you in the Lord and give you instruction, and that you esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Live in peace with one another.

James 1:19-20 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

Proverbs 11:30 The fruit of the righteous *is* a tree of life; and he that winneth souls *is* wise.

Ephesians 4:29 Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

1 Corinthians 14:40 Let all things be done decently and in order.

1 Corinthians 10:9-12 Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.

Print Name: _____ Signature: _____

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

COUNTY OF _____

The foregoing instrument was acknowledged before me this _____ (date) by

_____ (name of person acknowledged).

Notary Public

Print Name: _____

My commission expires:
