

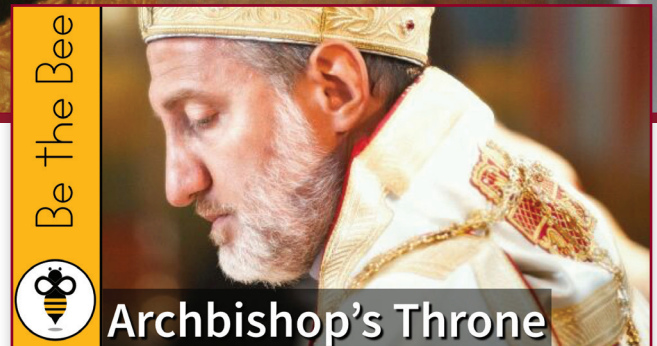
Watch the Enthronement of His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros of America LIVE!

Beginning at 11:00 AM ET on Saturday, June 22 · goarch.org/enthronement



Featurette: Be the Bee #134

Why Do Archbishops Get Enthroned?



When Archbishop Elpidophoros comes to America, the first thing that's going to happen is his enthronement on June 22. Yet that word, "enthronement," can be confusing.

After all, a bishop isn't a king. Why does he need to be enthroned?

The Church is a body. And just like different organs perform different functions in the body, the Church is made up of people with different talents and responsibilities.

Archbishops and bishops have a particular role in

the Church. And, in a given city or town, that role is unique: a particular place is supposed to have one particular bishop.

The Greek word for bishop is "ἐπίσκοπος," (*epískopos*) which literally means "overseer." That's exactly what bishops - or in this case an Archbishop - are supposed to do: oversee what's happening in the Church in a particular place.

An enthronement places a bishop or archbishop in the area he oversees. This happens in a special church called a "cathedral," where you'll find the seat of the bishop. In Greek, the word for the bishop's seat is "καθέδρα,"

(*kathédra*) which is where the word “cathedral” comes from. While people tend to translate καθέδρα as “throne,” the word literally means a “chair” or “seat,” from which we get the ecclesiastical word, “See.”

From the very beginning, the bishop’s role as “overseer” didn’t simply mean overseeing an office. It meant overseeing the liturgical and sacramental life of the Church.

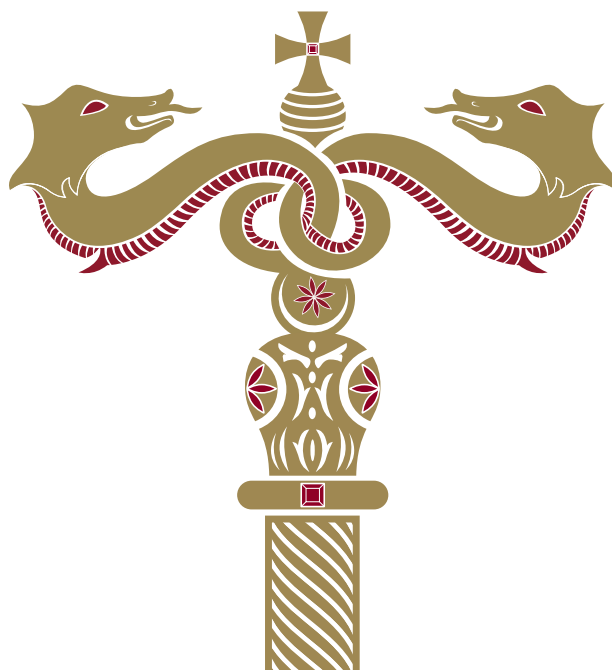
In ancient times, a seat was a place of authority. In fact, in the early Church, the preacher would sit while delivering a sermon, and the people would stand while they listened. The seat was a sign of the preacher’s authority to teach.

And that’s why the bishop of a diocese has his seat in his cathedral. It’s a sign of his authority to oversee the Church in a particular place. And, when a man first becomes the bishop of an area, the first thing he does is take his seat so he can begin to oversee the Church there.

But an enthronement is also a cause for hope. Because seeing a bishop or archbishop take his seat in his cathedral, in the context of prayer, reminds us of who he really is.

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Because the bishop, surrounded by his presbyters and deacons and faithful in worship, is an image of God enthroned in His Kingdom, surrounded by the bodiless powers and saints.

So the seat of the bishop can be a throne. Yet not the throne of a worldly king. Rather, it is the throne of the King of Kings.

And when we gather in Liturgy, around the seat of our bishop or archbishop, we see that truly we stand at the throne of the One God. We stand as One Body: the Body of Christ who is at work in us and around us.

By Steven Christoforou

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WATCH Be the Bee #134: “Why Do Bishops Get Enthroned?”

Saturday, June 15 • youtube.com/y2am



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