



Good day Worthy Knights,

In this part 32, the Pastoral Staff

(Wikipedia)

A **crozier** (also known as a **pastoral staff** or bishop's staff) is a stylized staff that is a symbol of the governing office of a bishop and is carried by high-ranking prelates. The Eastern Orthodox and Eastern Rite Catholic crozier is found in two common forms. One is tau-shaped, with curved arms, surmounted by a small cross. The other has a top comprising a pair of sculptured serpents or dragons curled back to face each other, with a small cross between them.

The symbolism in the latter case is of the bronze serpent, Nehushtan, made by Moses as related in Numbers 21:8-9. It is also reminiscent of the caduceus of Hermes or the rod of the ancient Greek god Asclepius, whose worship was centered around the Aegean, including Asia Minor, indicating the role of the bishop as healer of spiritual diseases.

### Symbolism

The traditional explanation for the form of Western croziers, beyond the obvious reference to the bishop as a shepherd to his flock, is this: the pointed ferrule at the base symbolizes the obligation of the prelate to goad the spiritually lazy; the crook at the top, his obligation to draw back those who stray from the faith; and the staff itself, his obligation to stand as a firm support for the faithful.

It is considered to be both a rod and a staff (Psalm 23:4): a rod for punishing the recalcitrant, and a staff for leading the faithful.

The crozier is conferred upon a bishop during his ordination to the episcopacy. It is also presented to an abbot at his blessing, an ancient custom symbolizing his shepherding of the monastic community.

### Western Christianity

A bishop usually holds his crozier with his left hand, leaving his right hand free to bestow blessings. The *Caeremoniale Episcoporum* states that the bishop holds the crozier with the open side of the crook forward, or towards the people. It also states that a bishop usually holds the crozier during a procession and when listening to the reading of the Gospel.

