

History of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Denver

The Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Denver was established as the Diocese of Denver in 1979 and extends over a vast area of the western mountain and central plains states. Forty-nine parishes and two chapels under the spiritual guidance of His Eminence Metropolitan Isaiah of Denver are scattered throughout 1.3 million square miles encompassing the states of Colorado, Idaho, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, and Wyoming, as well as the western parts of Louisiana and Missouri.

The states which now comprise the Metropolis of Denver were originally under the spiritual jurisdiction of the Greek Orthodox Diocese of San Francisco. When the Archdiocese of North and South America was subdivided into diocesan districts in 1968, these states formed the Eighth Diocesan District, which existed from 1968 to 1977 and was administered by the following Assistant Bishops and Archdiocesan Vicar:

Bishop Iakovos of Catania..... 1968-70
Reverend William Gaines..... 1971
Bishop John of Thermon 1972-1979

Under the administration of Bishop John, the regional headquarters of the Eighth Diocesan District were relocated in 1974 from Houston, Texas to Denver, Colorado.

The Diocese of Denver was established by Decree of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in 1979, and the first bishop bearing the title Bishop of Denver was enthroned in 1984. The Hierarchs and Vicars who administered the region from 1979 were:

Bishop Anthony of Amissos..... 1979
Very Reverend Kallistos Samaras 1980
Reverend George Neofotistos..... 1981
Bishop Kallistos of Zelon..... 1982
Bishop Philip of Daphnousia..... 1983
Bishop Anthimos of Denver 1984-1987 (*the first Bishop of Denver*)
Bishop Kallistos of Zelon..... 1988-1991
Reverend Nicholas Triantafilou 1991-1992

On June 24, 1992 His Grace Bishop Isaiah became the second Bishop of Denver, relinquishing his former responsibilities as Chancellor of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America. He was enthroned during ceremonies on September 10, 1992 at the Cathedral of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Denver. In November 1997 Bishop Isaiah was elevated by the Ecumenical Patriarchate to be the titular Metropolitan of Proikonisos, while continuing in his capacity as hierarch of the Diocese.

In 2003 the Ecumenical Patriarchate elevated the Diocese to the status of a Metropolis, and Metropolitan Isaiah became the first Metropolitan of Denver. He is presently in his nineteenth year as the presiding Hierarch of the Denver Metropolis.

The total population of the states that lie within the Diocese of Denver is over 33 million people, out of which approximately 30,000, or slightly over one-tenth of one percent, are members of the Greek Orthodox parishes.