

# TRUTH HANDLING AND TEACHING AUTHORITY

**Matthew 16**



**Matthew 18**

## Peter: A Biblical Portrait

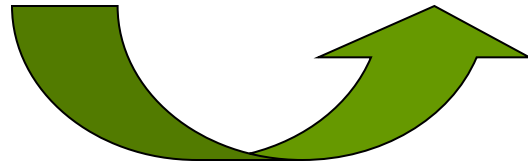
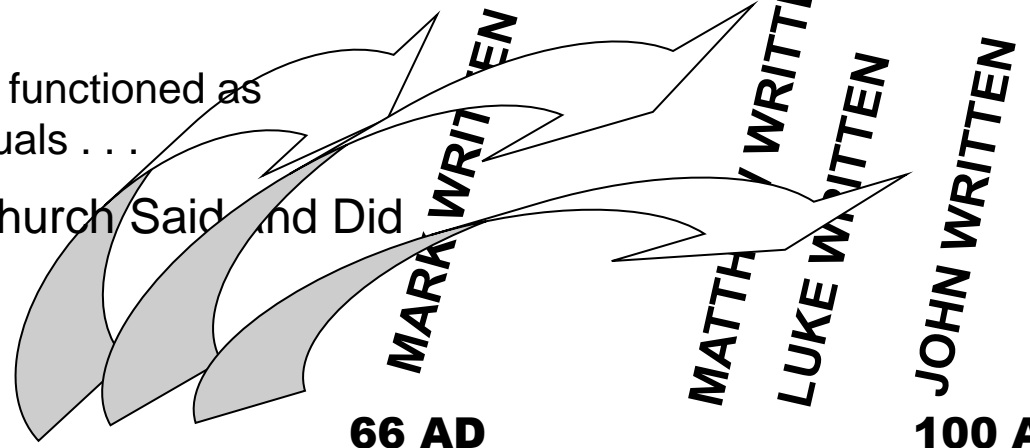
In the 16th chapter of Matthew's Gospel, **Christ singled out the Apostle Peter for the central position** of founding His Church and gives to Peter the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven.

The best spokespersons for an understanding of Matthew would be members of the Apostolic Church, those who heard the words of Christ and writers of the New Testament who recorded the words and deeds of Christ and the early church.



Peter held and functioned as  
first among equals . . .

What the Apostolic Church Said and Did



What Jesus Said and Did

"... you are Peter, and upon this rock  
I will build my church ..."

67 AD, Rome  
Peter Martyred  
Paul Martyred

Peter has 230 Name References  
in the New Testament

## Biblical Portrait of Peter

The Evangelists usually make **Peter the spokesperson** for all the apostles.

### **Mark 8:29**

And he (Jesus) asked them, "But who do you say that I am?" **Peter** said to him in reply, "You are the Messiah."

### **Matthew 18:21**

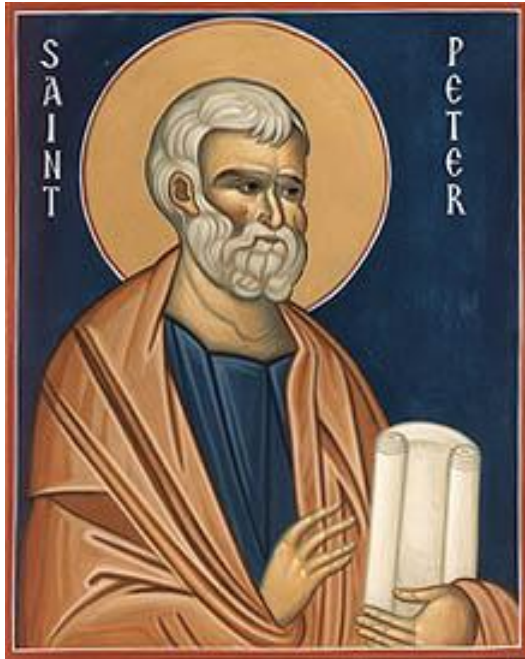
Then **Peter** approaching asked him, "Lord, if my brother sins against me, how often must I forgive him? As many as seven times?"

### **Luke 12:41**

Then **Peter** said, "Lord, is this parable meant for us or for everyone?"

## John 6:67-68

Jesus then said to the Twelve, "Do you also want to leave?" **Simon Peter** answered him, "Master, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life."



In especially dramatic scenes in the Gospels,  
**Peter is often the central figure.**

### **Matthew 14:27-28**

At once (Jesus) spoke to them, "Take courage, it is I; do not be afraid." **Peter** said to him in reply, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water."

### **Luke 5:3-8**

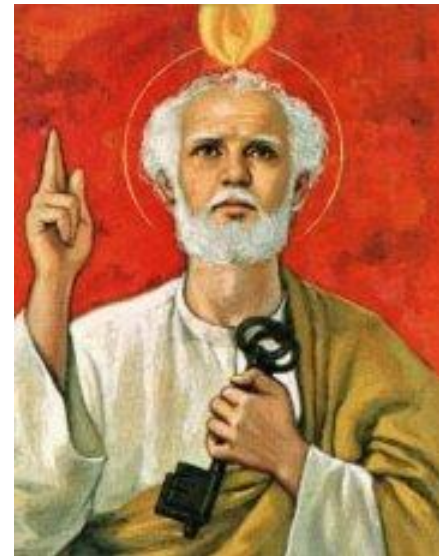
Getting into one of the boats, the one belonging to **Simon**, he (Jesus) asked him to put out a short distance from the shore. ... He said to Simon, "Put out into deep water and lower your nets for a catch." Simon said in reply, "Master, we have worked hard all night and have caught nothing, but at your command I will lower the nets." When they had done this, they caught a great number of fish and their nets were tearing. ... When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at the knees of Jesus and said, "Depart from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man."

## Mark 10:28

**Peter** began to say to him, "We have given up everything and followed you."

## Matthew 17:24-25

...the collectors of the temple tax approached **Peter** and said, "Doesn't your teacher pay the temple tax?" "Yes," he said. When he came into the house, before he had time to speak, Jesus asked him, "What is your opinion, Simon?"





Peter is **always named first** when the apostles are listed in the synoptic gospels and the Acts of the Apostles.

### **Mark 3:16-17**

He (Jesus) appointed the twelve: **Simon, whom he named Peter**; James, son of Zebedee, and John ...

### **Matthew 10:2**

The names of the twelve apostles are these: first, **Simon called Peter**, and his brother Andrew; James, the son of Zebedee, and his brother John;

### **Luke 6:13-14**

When day came, he called his disciples to himself, and from them he chose Twelve, whom he also named apostles: **Simon, whom he named Peter**, and his brother Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, . . .



## Acts 1:13

When they entered the city they went to the upper room where they were staying, **Peter** and John and James and Andrew, Philip ...



The Upper Room in Jerusalem

It is not uncommon that the apostles are simply **referred to as Peter and "his companions" or "the apostles."**

### **Acts 2:37**

... they asked **Peter** and the other apostles, "What are we to do, my brothers?"

### **Luke 9:32**

**Peter** and his companions had been overcome by sleep ...

### **Acts 5:29**

But **Peter** and the apostles said in reply, "We must obey God rather than men."

In light of the special calling on his life, the sacred authors refer to **Peter as being singled out and being shown signs of respect.**

### **John 20:3-8**

So **Peter** and the other disciple went out and came to the tomb. They both ran, but the other disciple ran faster than Peter and arrived at the tomb first, ... but did not go in. When Simon Peter arrived after him, he went into the tomb and saw the burial cloths ... Then the other disciple also went in, the one who had arrived at the tomb first ...

### **John 21:15-17**

Jesus said to **Simon Peter**, "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." He said to him, "Feed my lambs" ... "Tend my sheep." ... "Feed my sheep."

In Paul's letters, **Peter is called the first witness to the Resurrection.**

## **1 Corinthians 15:3-5**

... Christ died ... was buried ... was raised on the third day ... that he appeared to **Kephas**, then to the Twelve.

Paul repeatedly call **Peter "Kephas," the name given him by Christ.**

## **Galatians 1:18**

Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to confer with **Kephas** and remained with him for fifteen days.

## **Galatians 2:9**

James and **Kephas** and John, who were reputed to be pillars, gave me and Barnabas their right hands in partnership ...

## **Galatians 2:11**

And when **Kephas** came to Antioch, I opposed him ...

## **Galatians 2:14**

... I said to **Kephas** in front of all ...

## **1 Corinthians 1:12**

I mean that each of you is saying, "I belong to Paul,"  
... "I belong to **Kephas**," ...

## **1 Corinthians 3:22**

Paul or Apollos or **Kephas**, or the world or life or death,  
or the present or the future: all belong to you ...

## 1 Corinthians 9:5

Do we not have the right to take along a Christian wife, as do the rest of the apostles, and the brothers of the Lord, and **Kephas**?

Luke, in the Acts of the Apostles, clearly **acknowledges Peter's leadership role.**

### Acts 2:14

Then **Peter** stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice, and proclaimed to them, "You who are Jews ..."

### Acts 3:12

When **Peter** saw this, he addressed the people, "You Israelites, why are you amazed at this?"

## **Acts 4:8**

Then **Peter**, filled with the holy Spirit, answered them, "Leaders of the people and elders"

## **Acts 5:3**

But **Peter** said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart ..."

## **Acts 5:29**

But **Peter** and the apostles said in reply, "We must obey God rather than men."

## **Acts 8:20**

But **Peter** said to him, "May your money perish with you ..."



## **Acts 10:34**

Then **Peter** proceeded to speak and said, "In truth, I see that God shows no partiality."

## **Acts 11:4**

**Peter** began and explained it to them step by step, saying...

## **Acts 15:7**

After much debate had taken place, **Peter** got up and said to them ...

## **Acts 3:6**

**Peter** said, "I have neither silver nor gold, but what I do have I give you: in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazorean, (rise and) walk."

## **Acts 9:34**

**Peter** said to him, "Aeneas, Jesus Christ heals you. Get up and make your bed."

## **Acts 9:40**

**Peter** sent them all out and knelt down and prayed. Then he turned to her body and said, "Tabitha, rise up."

## **Acts 5:15**

Thus they even carried the sick out into the streets and laid them on cots and mats so that when **Peter** came by, at least his shadow might fall on one or another of them.

## **Acts 10:9-10**

The next day, ... **Peter** went up to the roof terrace to pray at about noontime. ... he fell into a trance.

## **Acts 10:46-47**

Then **Peter** responded, "Can anyone withhold the water for baptizing these people, who have received the holy Spirit even as we have?"

The Gospels make explicit statements about **Peter's unique role in the church.**

## **Luke 22:31-32**

"**Simon**, Simon, behold Satan has demanded to sift all of you like wheat, but I have prayed that your own faith may not fail; and once you have turned back, you must strengthen your brothers."

## John 21:15-17

When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to **Simon Peter**, "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." He said to him, "Feed my lambs." He then said to him a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." He said to him, "Tend my sheep." He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" Peter was distressed that he had said to him a third time, "Do you love me?" and he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." (Jesus) said to him, "Feed my sheep."

## Matthew 16:15-19

He (Jesus) said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" **Simon Peter** said in reply, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." Jesus said to him in reply, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah. For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my heavenly Father. And so I say to you, you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven. Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

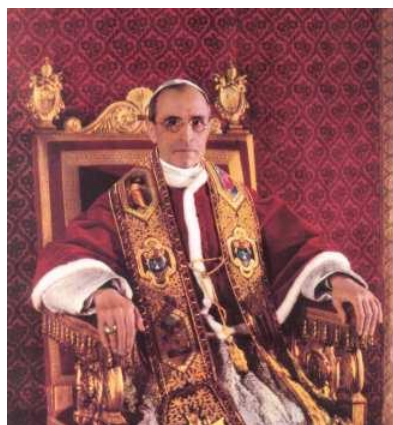
## Matthew Chapter 16, Verse 18: The Primacy of Peter

Perhaps a most pivotal passage of the Bible which divides Catholic Christians from Protestant and Pentecostal Christians is the scripture where **Christ singles out Peter from the rest of the Apostles** for special consideration and authority. That Bible passage is in the Gospel according to Matthew, chapter 16, verse 18.

The Catholic Church teaches that the first principle of hermeneutics, the science of the translation and interpretation of the Bible, is the literal meaning of the text.

## ***Divino Afflante Spiritus*** (Pius XII, September 30, 1943)

"... discern and define that sense of the biblical words which is called literal ... so that the mind of the author may be made clear. ... the exegete must be principally concerned with the literal sense of the Scriptures."



## ***Spiritus Paraclitus*** (Benedict XV, September 15, 1920)

"As Jerome insisted, all biblical interpretation rests upon the literal sense ... "

The definition of the literal sense: **The sense which the human author directly intended and which his words convey.**



The question to be asked in seeking to grasp the literal meaning of Matthew in conveying what Christ had in his mind in these words to Peter is

**what was understood by Peter and the other apostles and what was handed on (*paradosis*) by the Apostolic Church and the constant faith and practice of the Church** regarding the meaning of these words of Christ.

Some basic facts about the author, Matthew, are in order to aid the proper search for the meaning of his gospel.

Matthew is the tax collector called by Christ in 9:9-13;  
Matthew is one of the twelve Apostles, an eye witness;  
Matthew's gospel is directed to a Jewish audience;  
Matthew's gospel is a Gospel of the Church, the only evangelist to use the word "church," and use it twice, 16:18 and 18:17.

The context for interpreting the meaning of the passage is set in the confession of Peter.

### **Matthew 16:13-17**

When Jesus went into the region of Caesarea Philippi he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" They replied, "Some say John the Baptist, others Elijah, still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter said in reply, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." Jesus said to him in reply, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah. For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my heavenly Father."

Christ then gives Simon son of Jonah a new name and a commission.

## Matthew 16:18

And so I say to you, you are "Rock", and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it.



Matthew 16:18-19  
Pietro Vannucci, known as Perugino  
(Pieve 1445/50 – Fontignano 1523)

Since the New Testament was written in **the Greek language**, it is right to begin the consideration of this critical passage in the language in which it was written:

kago de soi lego oti su ei **Petros** kai  
I also And to you say - You are **Peter** and

epi taute te **petra** oikodomeso mou ten ekklesian;  
on this - **rock** I will build of me the church;

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As Greek declined in the Mediterranean world and Latin became the common tongue, the first translations of the Bible were in the Latin language. Hence, it is natural for us to consider also the way in which this critical passage was translated into **Latin by Jerome** (Rome, 383/384).

et ego dico tibi quia tu es **Petrus** et  
and I say to you because you are **Peter** and

super hanc **petram** aedificabo ecclesiam meam  
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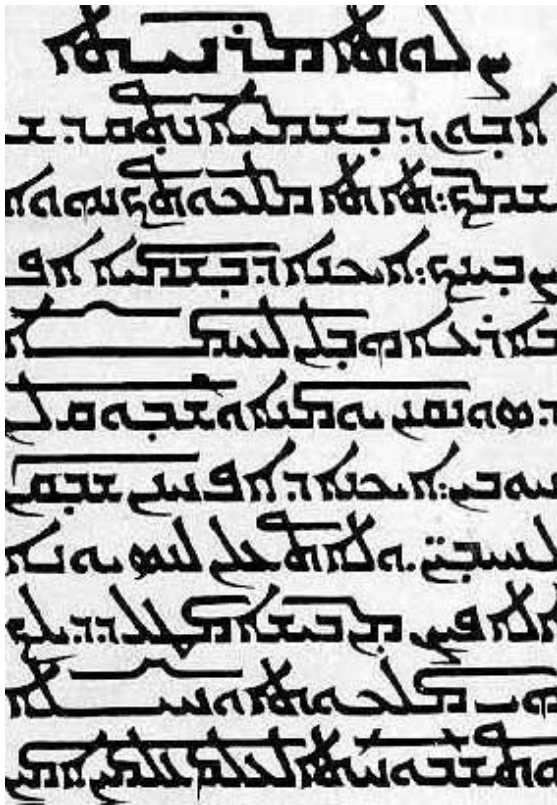
Two observations must be made on the Greek and the Latin translations of Matthew 16:18.

Note in the Greek that the name of Peter is *Petros*, and the word for rock is *petra*. In Latin the name of Peter is *Petrus* and the word for rock is *petra*.

This follows from the demands of the respective languages. Nouns in these languages, unlike English, have gender: some are masculine (e.g., -os or -us ending to words); some are feminine (e.g., -a or -am ending to words). The word for a rock in both languages is, of its nature, feminine; Peter, being a male, could not take a feminine ending to his name. It would be like calling him "Rockette" instead of "Rocky." Quite a difference!

Hence it is only the demands of language that the gender of the words is different.

# The Aramaic Language



The Lord's Prayer in Aramaic

**Aramaic** is a language belonging to the West Semitic subdivision of the Semitic subfamily of the Afro Asiatic family of languages.

After the Jews were defeated by the Babylonians in 586 B.C., they began to speak Aramaic instead of Hebrew.

They retained Hebrew as the sacred language of their religion.

Although Aramaic was displaced officially by Greek after the coming of Alexander the Great, it held its own under Greek domination and subsequent Roman rule.

Aramaic was the language of Jesus.

Following the rise of Islam in the 7th century AD, however, Aramaic began to yield to Arabic, by which eventually it was virtually replaced.

Parts of the books of Ezra and Daniel in the Bible were written in an Aramaic dialect, as were some notable Jewish prayers, such as the kaddish.

In the course of its long history the Aramaic language broke up into a number of dialects.

Grammatically, Aramaic is very close to Hebrew. The Aramaic alphabet was attested in the 9th century B.C.

After c.500 B.C. its use became widespread in the Middle East.

Papias of Hierapolis is quoted by Eusebius of Caesarea as affirming that Evangelist Matthew first "wrote the sayings of Jesus" in Aramaic.



An incense burner

Jesus renamed Simon bar-Jonah for a purpose. The literalness of the play on words--a linguistic pun--is made clear. A pun is a pun because of the literalness of the play on words. This was precisely what Jesus was saying. "You are Rocky and on this rock I will build my church." His intent becomes clear when we examine **the Aramaic in which language Jesus addressed Peter.**

'aph    'ena'    'amar-na'    lak    da'(n)t-(h)uw    ke'pha'  
and    I    say - I    to thee    that-thou-art    **Kephas**

we`'al    hade'    ke'pha'    'ebneyh    le`i(d)tiy  
and upon    this    **rock**    I will build her    namely my church

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**Note that the word for Peter, *ke'pha'*, is the same word for rock. The words are equated: Peter is the rock.**

The core of the meaning appears to rest in the two words for a "rock." If Matthew recorded that Christ used the same word both for (1) the proper name of Peter and (2) the foundation on which Christ says he will build the church, then an interpretation follows that **the foundation of the church is Peter.**

Because the Word of God as recorded in Matthew had to be intelligible in its literalness for all people including the more simple people of the early centuries of the Church, a more involved interpretation demanding extensive hermeneutics and linguistic acumen would be unwarranted. Ultimately, when there are differing interpretations, the principle question then becomes, "by what authority is the truth appealed."

When there is error or misunderstanding, the teaching authority of the Church is appealed.

The Catholic Church has infallibly defined the interpretation of Matthew 16.

## The Council of Ephesus, 431 AD

"No one doubts, in fact, it is obvious to all ages that the holy and most Blessed Peter, **head and Prince of the Apostles, the pillar of faith, and the foundation of the Catholic Church**, received the keys of the kingdom from our Lord Jesus Christ, the savior and redeemer of the human race."



## **First Vatican Council, 1870**, *The First Dogmatic Constitution of the Church of Christ*, Chapter 2

"Therefore if anyone says that the blessed Apostle Peter was not constituted by Christ the Lord as the **Prince of all the Apostles** and the **visible head of the whole Church militant**, or that he received immediately and directly from Jesus Christ our Lord only a primacy of honor and not a true and proper **primacy of jurisdiction**: *anathema sit.*"





Christ continues with **the conferral of the "keys"** which appears to be a clear statement of a position of leadership authority.

### **Matthew 16:19-20**

I will give you (singular) the keys to the kingdom of heaven. **Whatever you bind** on earth shall be bound in heaven; and **whatever you loose** on earth shall be loosed in heaven.



This biblical commission echoes one other conferral of keys in the Bible. Eliakim receives the keys of the royal palace.

### **Isaiah 22:22**

I will place the key of the House of David on his shoulder; when he opens, no one shall shut, when he shuts, no one shall open.

Apart from this passage, there is no background in biblical language for binding and loosening. In Rabbinical Judaism, the words signify rabbinical decisions; **to bind is to give a decision that imposes an obligation, and to loose is to give a decision that removes an obligation.**

### **Matthew 18:15-18**

"If your brother sins (against you), go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have won over your brother. If he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, so that 'every fact may be established on the testimony of two or three witnesses.' If he refuses to listen to them, tell the church (*ekklesia*). If he refuses to listen even to the church, then treat him as you would a Gentile or a tax collector. Amen, I say to you, **whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.**"

In Matthew 18:18, the Apostles share in the power to bind and loose that was given to Peter in 16:19; what was given to Peter alone is now shared by the whole Church in the person of the Apostles.

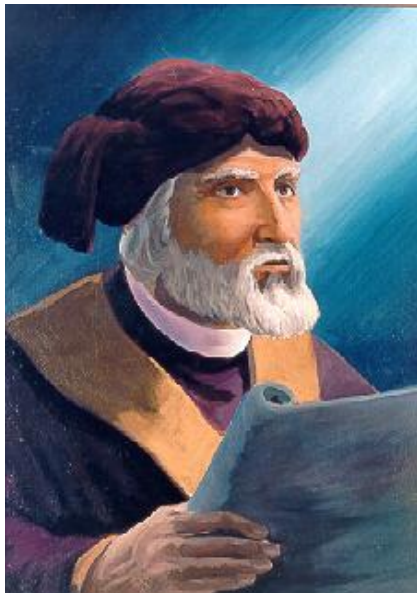
If Peter held a position of primacy, the other Apostles would have to know that and would have reflected that role thrust on Peter by Christ in their relationships to him. In other words, does the Bible reveal a primary place or role for Peter consciously acknowledged by the New Testament writers?

Yes, the biblical portrait of Peter presented earlier in this chapter attests to the preeminent role of Peter among the writers of the New Testament.

Among the Apostolic Fathers, the same recognition can be shown.

### **Tertullian (Rome, 160 - 220 AD), *On Monogamy*, Chapter 8**

"Peter alone do I find ... to have been married. Monogamist I am led to presume him by consideration of ***the church, which, built upon him***, was destined to appoint every grade of her Order from monogamists."



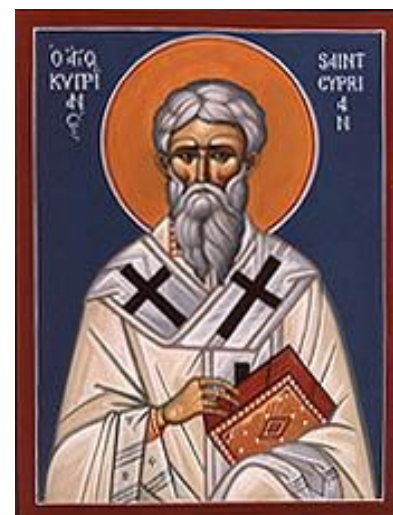
## Clement (Alexandria, 150 - 215 AD), *Who Is the Rich Man That Shall Be Saved?*, Chapter 21

"Therefore, on hearing those words, the blessed Peter, **the chosen, the pre-eminent, the first of the disciples**, for whom alone and Himself the Savior paid tribute, quickly seized and comprehended the saying. And what does he say? 'Lo, we have left all and followed Thee'."



## Cyprian (Carthage, 200 - 258 AD), *On the Unity of the Catholic Church*, Chapter 4

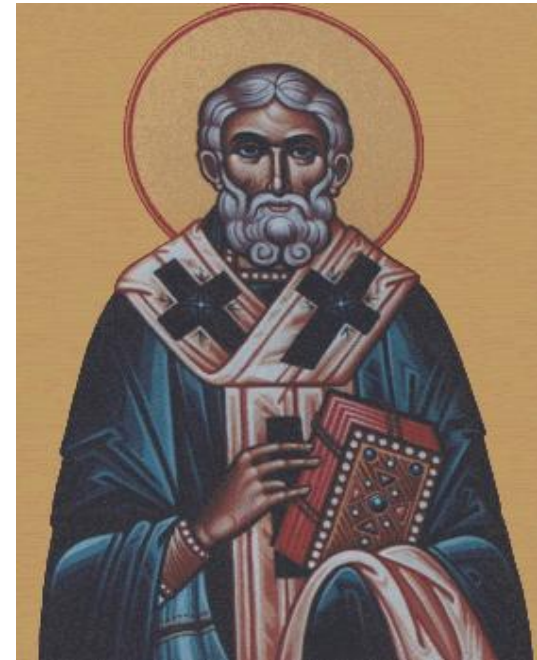
"Upon him (Peter), being one, **He (Christ) built His Church** and although after His resurrection He bestows equal power upon all the Apostles, and says: "As the Father has sent me, I also send you. Receive the Holy Spirit: if you forgive the sins of anyone, they will be forgiven him; if you retain the sins of anyone, they will be retained" (Jn 20:21), that He might display unity, He established by His authority the origin of the same unity as beginning from one."





## Cyril (Jerusalem, 315 - 387 AD), *Catecheses*, No. 2:19

"Peter, **the chiefest and foremost** of the Apostles, denied the Lord thrice before a little maid: but he repented himself, and wept bitterly."



## Augustine (Numidia, now Algeria, 354 - 430 AD), *Letters, No 53*

"For, if the order of succession of Bishops is to be considered, how much more surely, truly and safely do we number them from Peter, to whom, as **representing the whole Church**, the Lord said: "Upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Mt 16:18). For, to Peter succeeded Linus, to Linus Clement, to Clement Anacletus, to Anacletus Evaristus ... "





# The Charism of Truth Handling: Infallibility

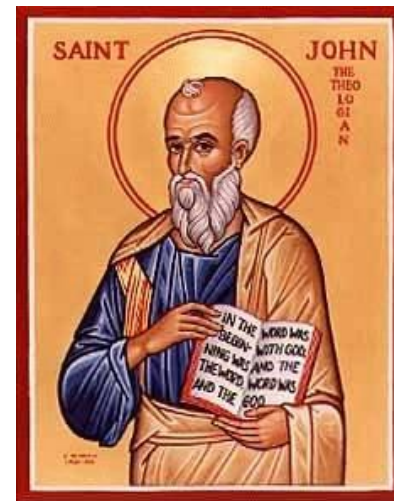
Jesus Christ was sent by the Father and was known as an authentic **Teacher**. Forty times in the New Testament, Christ is called "teacher" (*didaskalos*, also translated as "Master"). Twelve times Christ is called "Rabbi" (master, the address of teachers):

## **Matthew 23:8, 10**

As for you, do not be called 'Rabbi.' You have but one teacher, and you are all brothers. Do not be called 'Master'; you have but one master, the Messiah.

## **Matthew 7:28-29**

When Jesus finished these words, the crowds were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes.



## John 1:17-18

... because while the law was given through Moses, grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. The only Son, God, who is at the Father's side, has revealed him.

## John 13:13-15

You call me 'teacher' and 'master,' and rightly so, for indeed I am. If I, therefore, the master and teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash one another's feet. I have given you a model to follow, so that as I have done for you, you should also do.

The Gospels record Christ **handing over** to the Apostles his own mission, or divine office which he had as man.

### **John 17:18**

As you sent me into the world, so I sent them into the world.

### **John 20:21**

(Jesus) said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you."

### **Matthew 10:40**

Whoever receives you receives me, and whoever receives me receives the one who sent me.

## **Luke 10:16**

Whoever listens to you listens to me. Whoever rejects you rejects me. And whoever rejects me rejects the one who sent me.

## **Matthew 28:18-20**

Then Jesus approached and said to them, "All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age."

Christ is revealed **instituting** a perpetually enduring truth-teaching, truth-handling authority in the Apostles.

### **Matthew 28:20**

... teaching them (all nations) to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.

### **John 14:16-17**

And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate to be with you always, the Spirit of truth, which the world cannot accept, because it neither sees nor knows it. But you know it, because it remains with you, and will be in you.

## John 15:26

When the Advocate comes whom I will send you from the Father, the Spirit of truth that proceeds from the Father, he will testify to me.



## **John 16:12-13**

I have much more to tell you, but you cannot bear it now. But when he comes, the Spirit of truth, he will guide you to all truth.

## **Acts 1:8**

But you will receive power when the holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

Catholic Christians believe that Christ's teaching authority and truth charism continues in His Body the Church in the successors both of Peter and then the apostles, and then to their successors: the successor of Peter in the Bishop of Rome, and the successors of the apostles, the *episcopoi* or bishops from apostolic time to the present.

## MATTHEW 16:18



SIMON BAR JONA / PETER

And so I say to you, you are Peter, and upon this rock **I will build my church**, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it.

I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven. Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

## MATTHEW 18:18

THE ELEVEN

Amen, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

**Founding and Authority in the Church**



## MATTHEW 16:18



SIMON BAR JONA / PETER

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## MATTHEW 18:18

THE ELEVEN

Amen, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

**Founding and Authority in the Church**

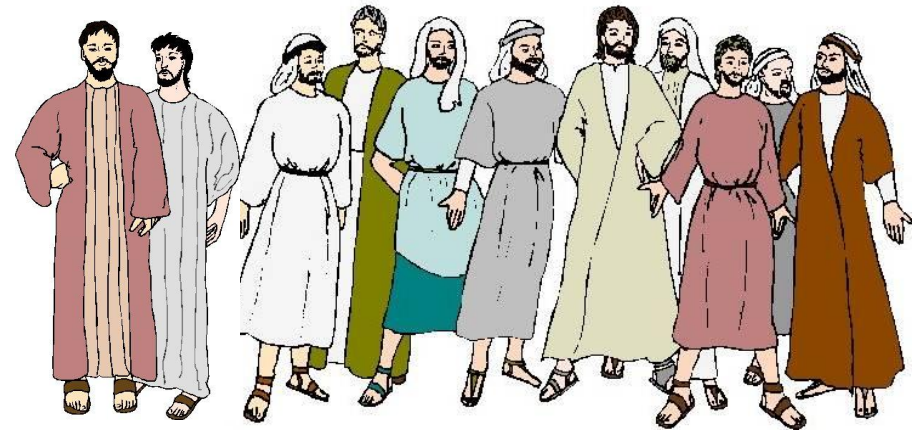
## MATTHEW 16:18



SIMON BAR JONA / PETER

And so I say to you, you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven. **Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.**"

## MATTHEW 18:18



THE ELEVEN

Amen, I say to you, **whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.**

**Founding and Authority in the Church**

**Mt 16**



**PETER**

**BISHOP OF ROME d., 67 AD**



**LINUS, 67-79**



**ANACLETUS, 79-92**



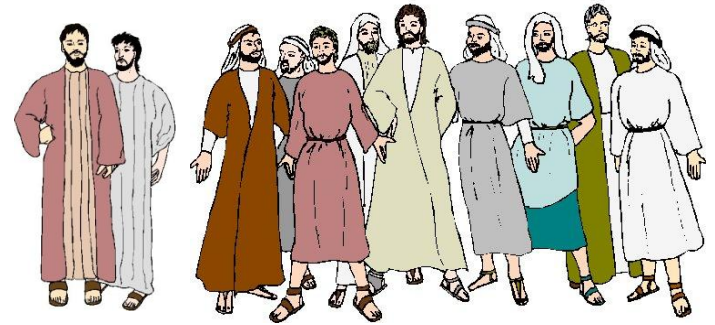
**CLEMENT, 92-101**

**UNBROKEN  
SUCCESSION**

**Francis,  
2013 -**



**Mt 18**



**THE ELEVEN**



**PAUL BARNABAS**

**Acts 13:3-4**

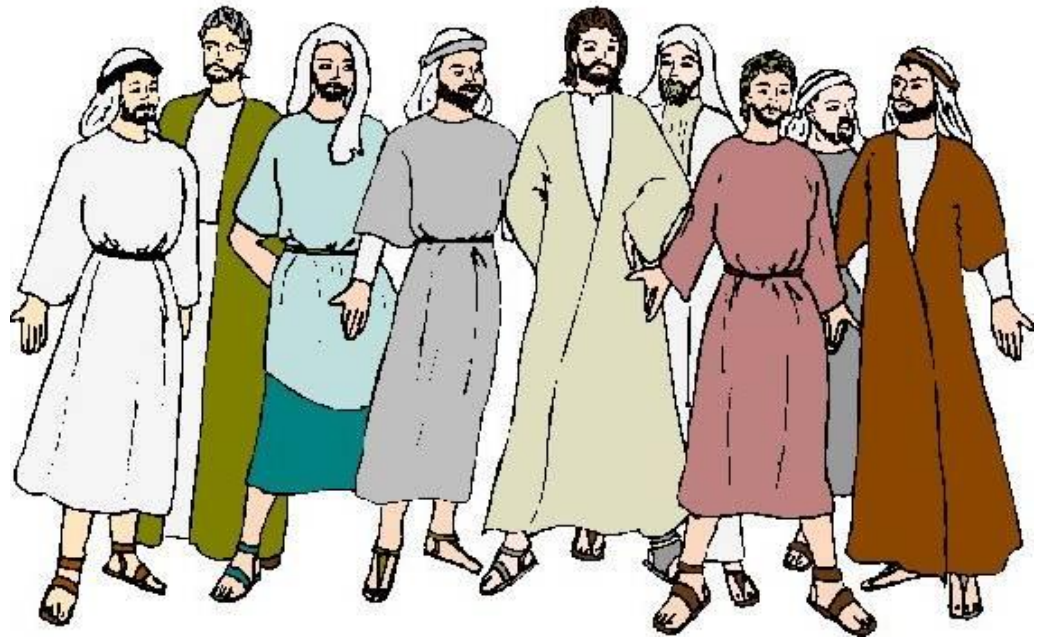
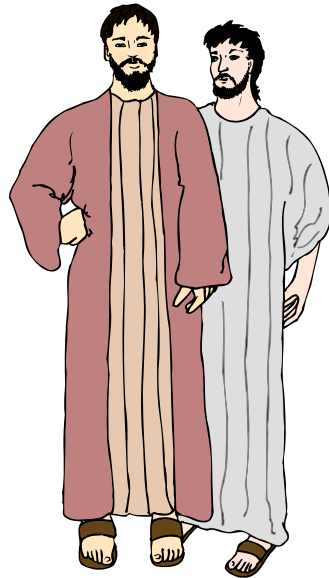
**UNBROKEN  
SUCCESSION**

**BISHOPS OF THE WORLD  
FOR ALL TIME**

**The Exercise of Authority**



As Peter  
is to the  
the eleven  
Apostles . . .

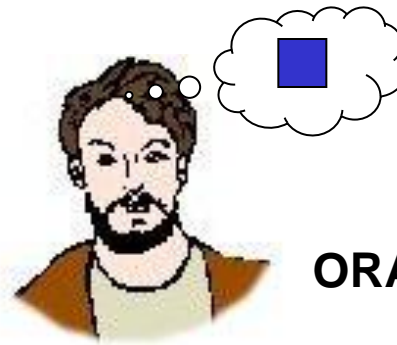
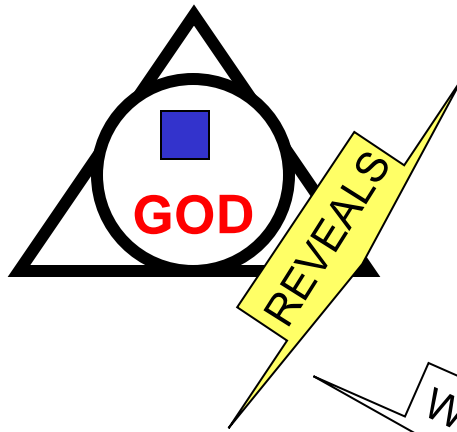


The Bishop of Rome  
is to  
the Bishops  
of the world. . .





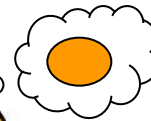
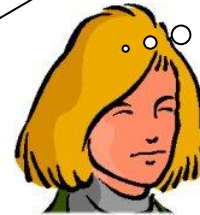
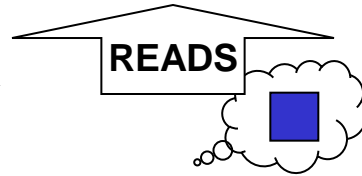
REVELATION



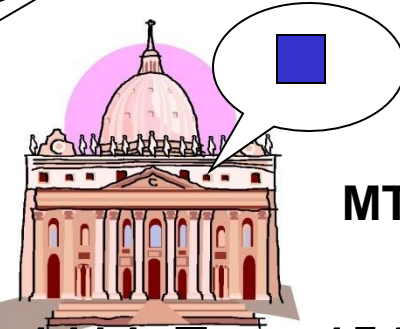
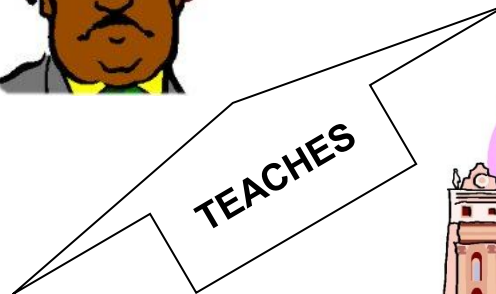
ORAL TRADITION



WRITTEN TRADITION



BELIEVERS



MT 16/18

**MAGISTERIUM**  
Teaching Authority

Florence 1414; Trent 1545-1563

# Bishop of Rome

The Catholic Church from Apostolic times has **literally followed the Bible in the establishment of good order in the Church.**



According to Paul's letters to Timothy and Titus **there are 3 orders to the organization and leadership of the Church** (sometimes known as ecclesiastical order or hierarchy): ***episcopos*** or bishops, ***presbyteros*** or elders, commonly translated priests, and ***diaconos*** or deacons.

The **first in order and the greatest in authority** is the ***episcopos***, the bishop.

## **1 Timothy 3:1-2**

This saying is trustworthy: whoever aspires to the office of bishop (*episcopos*) desires a noble task. Therefore, a bishop (*episcopos*) must be irreproachable, married only once, temperate, self-controlled, decent, hospitable, able to teach ...

## **Titus 1:7,9**

For a bishop (*episcopos*) as God's steward must be blameless, not arrogant, not irritable, not a drunkard, not aggressive, not greedy for sordid gain, holding fast to the true message as taught so that he will be able both to exhort with sound doctrine and to refute opponents.



Luke, in the Acts of the Apostles, distinguishes the shepherding role of the *episcopos*/bishop.

## **Acts 20:28**

Keep watch over yourselves and over the whole flock of which the holy Spirit has appointed you overseers (*episcopous*), in which you tend the church of God that he acquired with his own blood.



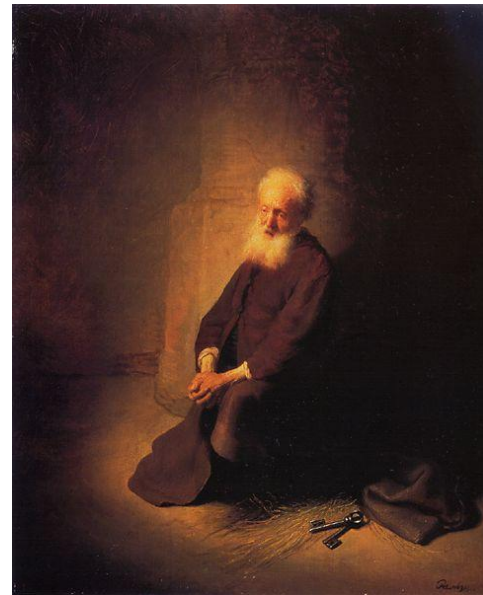
The shepherding role of the apostle Peter as *episcopus* was related by the apostle John.

### **John 21:15-17**

When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." He said to him, "Feed my lambs." He then said to him a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." He said to him, "Tend my sheep." He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" Peter was distressed that he had said to him a third time, "Do you love me?" and he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." (Jesus) said to him, "Feed my sheep."

The Catholic Church believes that the twelve apostles were the first *episcopos*, receiving at the Last Supper their leadership order to serve when Jesus told them "Do this in remembrance of Me."

Peter, as demonstrated in the biblical portrait of him, exercised a leadership role first among the other apostles and early Christians, and then later in Rome before his martyrdom there in 67/68 AD.



Peter's presence in Rome is indicated in his first letter. The name "**Babylon**" is used here as a cryptic name for the **city of Rome**, a characteristic of writings done during times of persecution. During Peter's time (witnessed by his own martyrdom) and most New Testament times (witness the Book of Revelation--classic persecution literature), Rome took on the characteristics of the most outstanding example of a world power hostile to God--ancient Babylon.

## **1 Peter 5:12-13**

I write you this briefly through Silvanus ... The chosen one at **Babylon** sends you greeting, as does Mark, my son.

**Clement of Rome (*I Clement*)** and **Irenaeus (*To the Romans*)** both attest to Peter's presence and death in Rome.

Paul makes mention of Linus, a Christian at Rome.

### **2 Timothy 4:21**

Eubulus, Pudens, **Linus**, Claudia, and all the brothers send greetings.

**Irenaeus (*Adversus Haereses, 3, 3, 3*)** tells us that the same **Linus** was Peter's first successor as bishop of Rome.

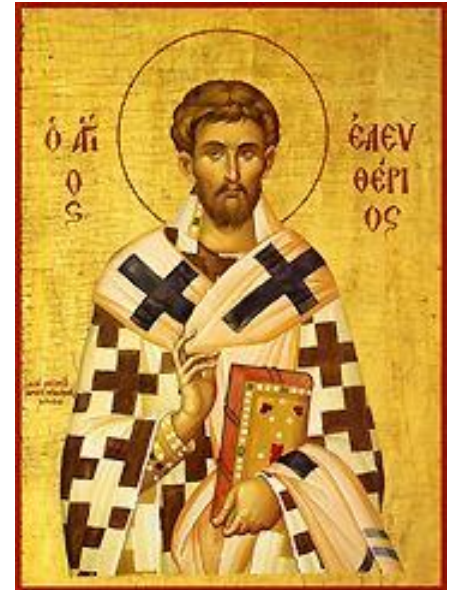


**SAINT LINUS**  
Pope and martyr  
(+67)

Two great historians of the Church, **Eusebius of Caesarea**, a bishop and historian of the Council of Nicea, and **Augustine**, bishop and theologian, preserve for us the list of successors of the bishop of Rome to their own time. They attest to the sense and realization the Church had to the need for historic succession to the Bishop of Rome.

**Eusebius (260-339), *The History of the Church*, Book 3, 324 AD**

"After the martyrdom of Paul and Peter, the first man to be appointed Bishop of Rome was Linus. ... Linus, who is mentioned in the Second Epistle to Timothy as being with Paul in Rome, as stated above was the first after Peter to be appointed Bishop of Rome. Clement again, who became the third Bishop of Rome ... to Miltiades. "



## Augustine (354-430), *Letters*, No. 53, 400 AD

"For, to Peter succeeded Linus, to Linus, Clement, to Clement Anacletus, to Anacletus Evaristus, ... to Siricius Anastasius."





On the following slides is a list **the bishops of Rome** from Peter to Benedict XVI. Historians both secular and ecclesiastical concur with a final list published by the Vatican Library.

The only biblical "claim to fame" of these men is that they are *episcopoi*, bishops. There is no greater "order" according to the Bible. The Catholic Church teaches this. Other titles are only honorary and organizational.

The Catholic Church has also taken Paul at his word.

## **1 Corinthians 4:14-16**

I am writing you this not to shame you, but to admonish you as my beloved children. Even if you should have countless guides to Christ, yet you do not have many fathers, for **I became your father** in Christ Jesus through the gospel. Therefore, I urge you, be imitators of me.



## 1 Thessalonians 2:11-12

As you know, **we treated each one of you as a father treats his children**, exhorting and encouraging you and insisting that you conduct yourselves as worthy of the God who calls you into his kingdom and glory.

The faithful of the Church has always called their ordered leadership "father." In Greek, the language of the early Church, the word for father was *pappas*; in Latin, the language of the later Church, the word for father was *papa*.

By the 300s, bishops were sometimes called "pope" a corruption of the word for father.

By the 700s the title for affection and respect for the Bishop of Rome exclusively was Pope.

It is not uncommon for enemies and non-believers of Catholicism to create an argument against the succession and therefore validity of the Bishops of Rome as true successors to Peter by proffering **the history of the "bad Popes."** That argument arises from a basic misunderstanding of Sacred Scripture.

The first response to be made to the so-called argument from the "bad Popes" is admission that many men who held the position of Bishop of Rome were not holy men. Perhaps Peter was the best model for human failure in such a leadership role. He denied Jesus three times after being told he would do so. Some (e.g., Peter, Judas) who are called stumble and fall. Some (Peter) repent and are saved. Others (Judas) reject that grace. It behooves us to remember that Jesus does not call saints, but sinners.

## Luke 5:31-32

Jesus said to them in reply, "**Those who are healthy do not need a physician**, but the sick do. I have not come to call the righteous to repentance but sinners."

## Matthew 9:12

He heard this and said, "**Those who are well do not need a physician**, but the sick do."

The moral miracle of the "bad Popes" is that they were worldly men, public sinners, and never functioned as spiritual leaders nor touched or changed the deposit of faith of Christianity. We are reminded by the Lord even to the present day that the lifestyle of the messenger does not alter the validity of the message. Recall the American Televangelists' scandals in 1987 and 1988.

# Bishops of Rome: Popes

## First and Second Centuries

- St. Peter (42 - 67)
- St. Linus (67 - 79)
- St. Anacletus (79 - 92)
- St. Clement I (92 - 101)
- St. Evaristus (101 - 105)
- St. Alexander I (105 - 115)
- St. Sixtus I (115 - 125)
- St. Telesphorus (125 - 136)
- St. Hyginus (136 - 140)
- St. Pius I (140 - 155)
- St. Anicetus (155 - 166)
- St. Soter (166 - 175)
- St. Eleutherius (175 - 189)
- St. Victor I (189 - 199)
- St. Zephyrinus (199 - 217)



## Third and Fourth Centuries

- St. Callistus I (217 - 222)
- St. Urban I (222 - 230)
- St. Pontian (230 - 235)
- St. Anterius (235 - 236)
- St. Fabian (236 - 250)
- St. Cornelius (251 - 253)
- St. Lucius I (253 - 254)
- St. Stephen I (254 - 257)
- St. Sixtus II (257 - 258)
- St. Dionysius (259 - 268)
- St. Felix I (269 - 274)
- St. Eutychian (275 - 283)
- St. Gaius/Caius (283 - 296)
- St. Marcellinus (296 - 304)
- St. Marcellus I (308 - 309)
- St. Eusebius (309)
- St. Miltiades (311 - 314)
- St. Sylvester I (314 - 335)
- St. Mark (336)
- St. Julius I (337 - 352)
- Liberius (352 - 366)
- St. Damasus I (366 - 384)
- St. Siricius (384 - 399)
- St. Anastasius I (399 - 401)

## Fifth and Sixth Centuries

- St. Innocent I (401 - 417)
- St. Zosimus (417 - 418)
- St. Boniface I (418 - 422)
- St. Celestine I (422 - 432)
- St. Sixtus III (432 - 440)
- St. Leo I (440 - 461)
- St. Hilary (461 - 468)
- St. Simplicius (468 - 483)
- St. Felix III/II (483 - 492)
- St. Gelasius I (492 - 496)
- Anastasius II (496 - 498)
- St. Symmachus (498 - 514)
- St. Hormisdas (514 - 523)
- St. John I (523 - 526)
- St. Felix IV/III (526 - 530)
- Boniface II (530 - 532)
- John II (533 - 535)
- St. Agapitus I (535 - 536)
- St. Silverius (536 - 537)
- Vigilius (537 - 555)
- Pelagius I (556 - 561)
- John III (561 - 574)
- Benedict I (575 - 579)
- Pelagius II (579 - 590)
- St. Gregory I (590 - 604)



## Seventh and Eighth Centuries

- Sabinian (604 - 606)
- Boniface III (607)
- St. Boniface IV (608 - 615)
- St. Deusdedit I (615 - 618)
- Boniface V (619 - 625)
- Honorius I (625 - 638)
- Severinus (640)
- John IV (640 - 642)
- Theodore I (642 - 649)
- St. Martin I (649 - 655)
- St. Eugene I (654 - 657)
- St. Vitalian (657 - 672)
- Deusdedit II (672 - 676)
- Donus (676 - 678)
- St. Agatho (678 - 681)
- St. Leo II (682 - 683)
- St. Benedict II (684 - 685)
- John V (685 - 686)
- Conon (686 - 687)
- St. Serius I (687 - 701)
- John VI (701 - 705)
- John VII (705 - 707)
- Sisinnius (708)
- Constantine (708 - 715)
- St. Gregory II (715 - 731)
- St. Gregory III (731 - 741)
- St. Zachary (741 - 752)
- Stephen (II) (752)
- Stephen II/III (752 - 757)
- St. Paul I (757 - 767)
- Stephen III/IV (768 - 772)
- Adrian I (772 - 795)
- St. Leo III (795 - 816)



## Ninth and Tenth Centuries

- Stephen IV/V (816 - 817)
- St. Paschal I (817 - 824)
- Eugene II (824 - 827)
- Valentine (827)
- Gregory IV (827 - 844)
- Serius II (844 - 847)
- St. Leo IV (847 - 855)
- Benedict III (855 - 858)
- St. Nicholas I (858 - 867)
- Adrian II (867 - 872)
- John VIII (872 - 882)
- Marinus I (882 - 884)
- St. Adrian III (884 - 885)
- St. Stephen V/VI (885 - 891)
- Formosus (891 - 896)
- Boniface VI (896)
- Stephen VI/VII (896 - 897)
- Romanus (897)
- Theodore II (897)
- John IX (898 - 900)
- Benedict IV (900 - 903)
- Leo V (903)
- Sergius III (904 - 911)
- Anastasius III (911 - 913)
- Lando (913 - 914)
- John X (914 - 928)
- Leo VI (928)
- Stephen VII/VIII (928 - 931)
- John XI (931 - 935)
- Leo VII (936 - 939)
- Stephen VIII/IX (939 - 942)
- Marinus II (942 - 946)
- Agapitus II (946 - 955)
- John XII (955 - 964)
- Leo VIII (963 - 965)
- Benedict V (964 - 966)
- John XIII (965 - 972)





## Ninth and Tenth Centuries (continued)

- Benedict VI (973 - 974)
- Benedict VII (974 - 983)
- John XIV (983 - 984)
- John XV (984 - 996)
- Gregory V (996 - 999)
- Silvester II (999 - 1003)



## Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries

- John XVII (1003)
- John XVIII (1004 - 1009)
- Sergius IV (1009 - 1012)
- Benedict VIII (1012 - 1024)
- John XIX (1024 - 1032)
- Benedict IX (1) (1032 - 1044)
- Silvester III (1045)
- Benedict IX (2) (1045)
- Gregory VI (1045 - 1046)
- Clement II (1046 - 1047)
- Benedict IX (3) (1047 - 1048)
- Damasus II (1048)
- St. Leo IX (1049 - 1054)
- Victor II (1055 - 1057)
- Stephen IX/X (1057 - 1058)
- Nicholas II (1059 - 1061)
- Alexander II (1061 - 1073)
- St. Gregory VII (1073 - 1085)
- Bl. Victor III (1086 - 1087)
- Bl. Urban II (1088 - 1099)
- Paschal II (1099 - 1118)
- Gelasius II (1118 - 1119)
- Callistus II (1119 - 1124)
- Honorius II (1124 - 1130)
- Innocent II (1130 - 1143)
- Celestine II (1143 - 1144)
- Lucius II (1144 - 1145)
- Bl. Eugene III (1145 - 1153)
- Anastasius IV (1153 - 1154)
- Adrian IV (1154 - 1159)
- Alexander III (1159 - 1181)
- Lucius III (1181 - 1185)
- Urban III (1185 - 1187)
- Gregory VIII (1187)
- Clement III (1187 - 1191)
- Celestine III (1191 - 1198)
- Innocent III (1198 - 1216)



## Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries

- Honorius III (1216 - 1227)
- Gregory IX (1227 - 1241)
- Celestine IV (1241)
- Innocent IV (1243 - 1254)
- Alexander IV (1254 - 1261)
- Urban IV (1261 - 1264)
- Clement IV (1265 - 1268)
- Bl. Gregory X (1271 - 1276)
- Bl. Innocent V (1276)
- Adrian V (1276)
- John XXI (1276 - 1277)
- Nicholas III (1277 - 1280)
- Martin IV (1281 - 1285)
- Honorius IV (1285 - 1287)
- Nicholas IV (1288 - 1292)
- St. Celestine V (1292)
- Boniface VIII (1292 - 1303)
- Bl. Benedict XI (1303 - 1304)
- Clement V (1305 - 1314)
- John XXII (1316 - 1334)
- Benedict XII (1334 - 1342)
- Clement VI (1342 - 1352)
- Innocent VI (1352 - 1362)
- Bl. Urban V (1362 - 1370)
- Gregory XI (1370 - 1378)
- Urban VI (1378 - 1389)
- Boniface IX (1389 - 1404)



## Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries

- Innocent VII (1404 - 1406)
- Gregory XII (1406 - 1415)
- Martin V (1417 - 1431)
- Eugene IV (1431 - 1447)
- Nicholas V (1447 - 1455)
- Callistus III (1455 - 1458)
- Pius II (1458 - 1464)
- Paul II (1464 - 1471)
- Sixtus IV (1471 - 1484)
- Innocent VIII (1484 - 1492)
- Alexander VI (1492 - 1503)
- Pius III (1503)
- Julius II (1503 - 1513)
- Leo X (1513 - 1521)
- Adrian VI (1522 - 1523)
- Clement VII (1523 - 1534)
- Paul III (1534 - 1549)
- Julius III (1550 - 1555)
- Marcellus II (1555)
- Paul IV (1555 - 1559)
- Pius IV (1559 - 1565)
- St. Pius V (1566 - 1572)
- Gregory XIII (1572 - 1585)
- Sixtus V (1585 - 1590)
- Urban VII (1590)
- Gregory XIV (1590 - 1591)
- Innocent IX (1591)
- Clement VIII (1592 - 1605)



# Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries

- Leo XI (1605)
- Paul V (1605 - 1621)
- Gregory XV (1621 - 1623)
- Urban VIII (1623 - 1644)
- Innocent X (1644 - 1655)
- Alexander VII (1655 - 1667)
- Clement IX (1667 - 1669)
- Clement X (1670 - 1676)
- Bl. Innocent XI (1676 - 1689)
- Alexander VIII (1689 - 1691)
- Innocent XII (1691 - 1700)
- Clement XI (1700 - 1721)
- Innocent XIII (1721 - 1724)
- Benedict XIII (1724 - 1730)
- Clement XII (1730 - 1740)
- Benedict XIV (1740 - 1758)
- Clement XIII (1758 - 1769)
- Clement XIV (1769 - 1774)
- Pius VI (1775 - 1799)



# Nineteenth, Twentieth and Twenty First Centuries

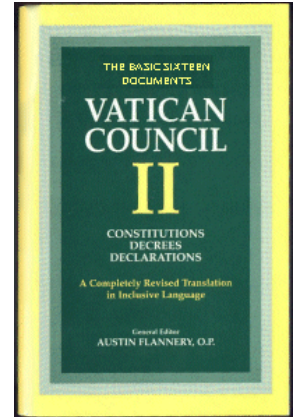
- Pius VII (1800 - 1823)
- Leo XII (1823 - 1829)
- Pius VIII (1829 - 1830)
- Gregory XVI (1831 - 1846)
- Pius IX (1846 - 1878)
- Leo XIII (1878 - 1903)
- St. Pius X (1903 - 1914)
- Benedict XV (1914 - 1922)
- Pius XI (1922 - 1939)
- Pius XII (1939 - 1958)
- Bl. John XXIII (1958 - 1963)
- Paul VI (1963 - 1978)
- John Paul I (1978)
- Bl. John Paul II (1978 - 2005)
- Benedict XVI (2005 – 2013)
- Francis (2013 – )

Taken from The *Pontificia Annuario*, Vatican City, Europe



# The Charism of Infallibility: The Magisterium

## Vatican Council II, *The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*, Chapter 25



Bishops, teaching in communion with the Roman Pontiff  
are to be respected by all  
as witnesses to divine and Catholic truth.

In matters of faith and morals,  
the bishops speak in the name of Christ, and  
the faithful are to accept their teaching and  
adhere to it with a religious assent of souls.

This religious submission  
of will and  
of mind

must be shown in a special way  
to the authentic teaching authority of the Roman Pontiff,  
even when he is not speaking *ex cathedra* ...

his supreme magisterium is acknowledged ...  
the judgments made by him ... adhered to ...  
known chiefly

from the character of the documents,  
from his frequent repetition of the  
same doctrine,  
from his manner of speaking.



... the individual bishops do not enjoy the prerogative of *infallibility*,  
they can ... proclaim Christ's doctrine of *infallibility*...  
when they are dispersed around the world ...  
maintaining the bond of unity  
among themselves and  
with Peter's successor,  
while teaching authentically on a matter of  
faith or  
morals,  
concur in a single viewpoint as the one which must be held ..

This authority is even more clearly verified when,  
Gathered together in an ecumenical council,  
they are teachers and judges of  
faith and  
morals for the universal church.

Their definitions must be adhered to with the submission of faith.

This *infallibility*

with which the divine Redeemer willed his Church  
to be endowed

in defining a doctrine of faith and  
morals

extends as far as the deposit of divine revelation which  
must be religiously guarded and  
faithfully expounded.

This is the *infallibility*

which the Roman Pontiff, the head of the college  
of bishops

enjoys in virtue of his office, when

as the supreme shepherd and

teacher of all the faithful,

who

confirms his brethren in their faith,  
proclaims ... some doctrine of faith or  
morals.

Therefore his definitions,  
of themselves, and  
not from the consent of the Church,  
are justly styled irreformable, for they are  
pronounced with the assistance of the Holy Spirit,  
assistance promised to him  
in blessed Peter ...  
need no approval of others,  
nor do they allow an appeal to any other judgment.

... the Roman Pontiff is not pronouncing judgment  
as a private person ...  
but rather as the supreme teacher of the universal Church,  
as one in whom  
the *charism of infallibility* of the Church herself is  
individually present,  
he is expounding or  
defending a doctrine of Catholic faith.

The *infallibility*

promised to the Church  
resides also in the body of bishops  
when that body exercises supreme teaching  
authority  
with the successor of Peter ...

When either  
the Roman Pontiff, or  
the body of bishops together with him  
defines a judgment  
they pronounce it in accord with Revelation itself ...

Under the guiding light of the Holy Spirit,  
Revelation  
is thus religiously preserved and  
faithfully expounded in the Church.

The Roman Pontiff and  
the bishops,  
strive painstakingly and by appropriate means  
to inquire properly into that Revelation and  
to give apt expression to its contents.

... they  
do not allow that there could be any new public revelation  
pertaining to the divine deposit of truth.

- Questions or comments?
  - Email
    - [Paul Flanagan \(pdflan@catholicapologetics.org\)](mailto:pdflan@catholicapologetics.org)
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