

# Saint Peter



- St. Peter is also known as Cephas, Simon Peter, the first Pope.
- Peter was born in Bethsaida which is located near Lake Tiberias.
- Peter and his brother, Andrew worked as fishermen on Lake Genesareth.
- Jesus called Peter and Andrew to be his Apostles.

- Caesarea Philippi was the place where Jesus called Simon by his new name, Peter, which literally means "rock."
- It was here that Jesus asked His Apostles, "Who do you say that I am?" (Matt. 16:18).



**Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."**



**Jesus said in response, "...you are Peter and upon this rock I will build My Church."**

# Jesus entrusted a specific authority to Peter (Matthew 16:19, CCC 553).

Peter alone was promised by Christ: “I will give you the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven.”

“Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”

- The “key” is a symbol of authority.



- Christ gave Peter the “power of the keys” which designates authority to govern the house of God, which is the Church.
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# The Power of the Keys

- The power to “bind and loose” connotes the authority to absolve sins, to pronounce doctrinal judgments, and to make disciplinary decisions in the Church. (CCC 553, 1444)
- We know that only God has the power to forgive sins, but Jesus entrusted to his Apostles the administration of that grace.
- In the Sacrament of Reconciliation, the Church, through the bishops and priests, forgive sin in the name of Jesus Christ.

Peter was with Jesus during significant events in His public life such as at the Transfiguration, the raising of Jairus' daughter, the Last Supper and Christ's Agony in the Garden of Gethsemani.



Throughout the New Testament, there is evidence that Peter's role of leadership was recognized by the Apostles and disciples.

# Forgiveness of Peter

- After Jesus' arrest, Peter denied knowing Jesus three times.
- In repentance for these denials, Peter gave a threefold affirmation of love. Jesus forgave him and told him to feed and care for His sheep.

*(See John 18:15-27 and 21:15-17.)*



# Peter's Preeminence

There is ample evidence in the New Testament that Peter was first in authority among the Apostles.

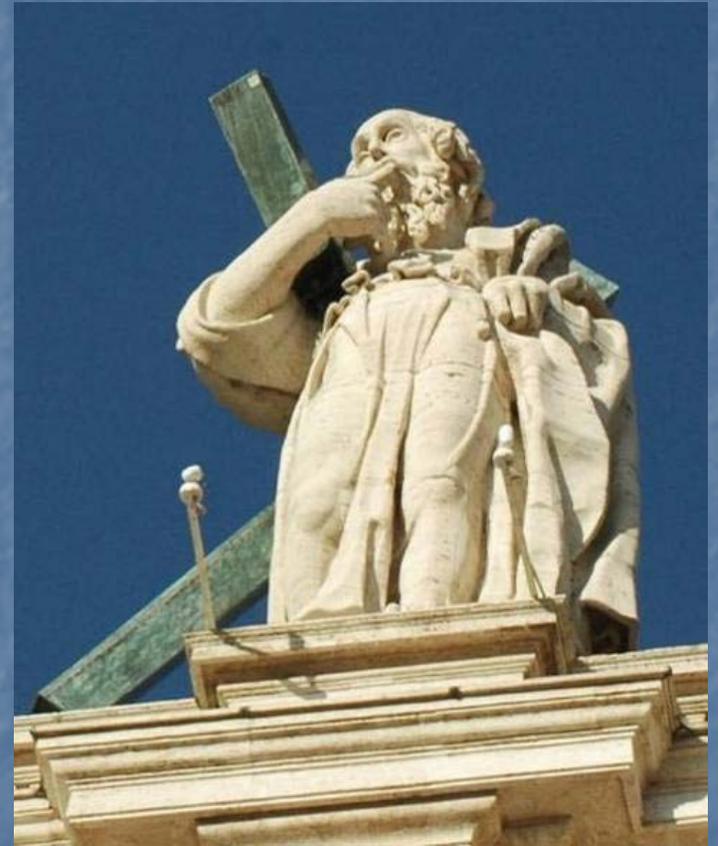
Whenever they were named, Peter headed the list. (See Matt. 10:1-4; Mark 3:16-19; Luke 6:14-16; Acts 1:13.)

On Pentecost, it was Peter who first preached to the crowds (Acts 2:14-40) and who worked the first healing in the Church age (Acts 3:6-7).



# Peter's Preeminence

- It was Peter's faith that would strengthen his brethren (Luke 9:32).
- Peter was given Christ's flock to shepherd (John 21:17).
- An angel was sent to announce the Resurrection to Peter (Mark 16:7).
- It was Peter that headed the meeting that replaced Judas with Matthias (Acts 1:13-26).



# Peter's Preeminence

Peter inflicted the first punishment (Acts 5:1-11).

Peter excommunicated the first heretic (Acts 8:18-23).

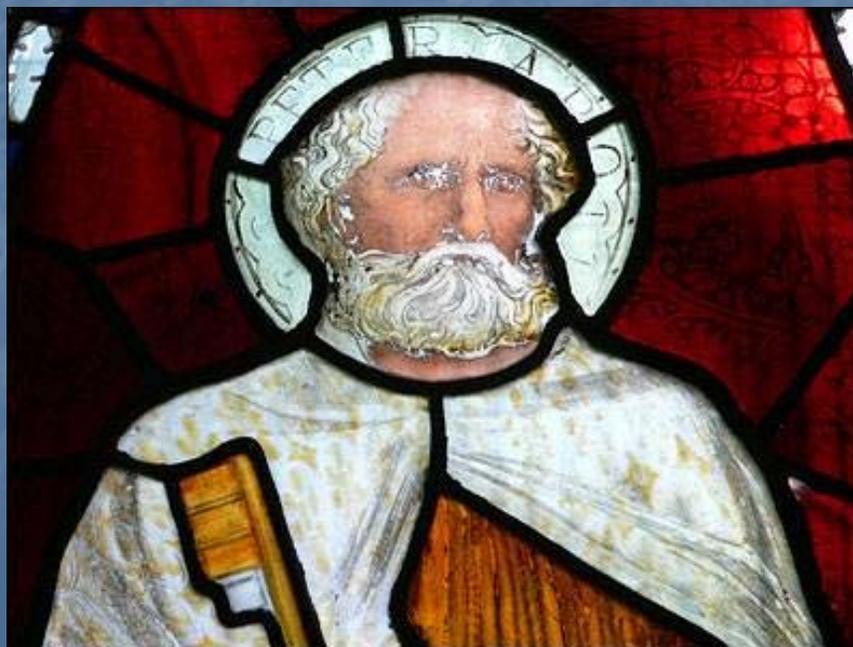
Peter led the first Council of Jerusalem (Acts 15).

It was to Peter that the revelation came that Gentiles were to be baptized and accepted as Christians (Acts 10:46-48).

Peter was imprisoned by King Herod Agrippa but was helped to escape by an angel. (Acts 12:5-17)

He continued his ministry in Jerusalem, Antioch, Corinth and, eventually, Rome.

Peter was martyred in Rome around the year 64 AD during the reign of the Emperor, Nero.



Reference to Peter's martyrdom can be found in the writings of Origen, Eusebius of Caesarea, St. Clement I of Rome, St. Ignatius, and St. Irenaeus.



It is part of the Church's tradition that Peter was crucified upside down because he felt unworthy to die in exactly the same way that Jesus had died.

- The Church honors St. Peter, along with St. Paul, on June 29. The primacy of St. Peter as Pope is celebrated on February 22, the Feast of the Chair of St. Peter.
- In pictures and statutes, St. Peter is usually portrayed as holding the keys and a book.
- Other symbols for St. Peter include an inverted cross and a boat.

**St. Peter's Basilica in Vatican City is built over the tomb of St. Peter.**



**Because St. Peter was the Bishop of Rome, this city has enjoyed a position of primacy within the entire Catholic Church.**