

Universality of the Papacy



Every diocesan bishop is the chief pastor or local ordinary of a portion of the people of God territorially defined.

The term “Bishop of Rome” refers to the diocesan bishop who is the chief pastor or ordinary of the city of Rome.



Strictly speaking, the Pope is the Bishop of Rome in that he has all ordinary, proper, and immediate power that is required for the exercise of his pastoral function within the territorial limits of the Diocese of Rome.

St. Peter and Apostolic Succession

Since St. Peter, there has been an unbroken line of successors up to and including Benedict XVI, Pope Emeritus.

Pope Benedict XVI was elected on April 19, 2005 after the death of Pope John Paul II.

His Holiness, Benedict XVI was elected in a conclave, which means "with a key," since the voting Cardinals are locked in the Sistine Chapel for the process of electing a new pope.

The Bishop of Rome, as successor of St. Peter, is entrusted with unique powers not given to other bishops; he is given the power of the keys.

The Pope's title as *Bishop of Rome* is preeminent over all of the other titles of the Pope, such as head of the college of bishops, the Vicar of Christ and the pastor of the universal Church on earth.



The relationship between the Pope and the bishops of the Catholic Church is identical to the relationship between Peter and the other 11 Apostles.

The Gospels speak of the Apostles as “the Twelve,” indicating a corporate identity.

As a permanent assembly, Jesus chose Peter to be their head.

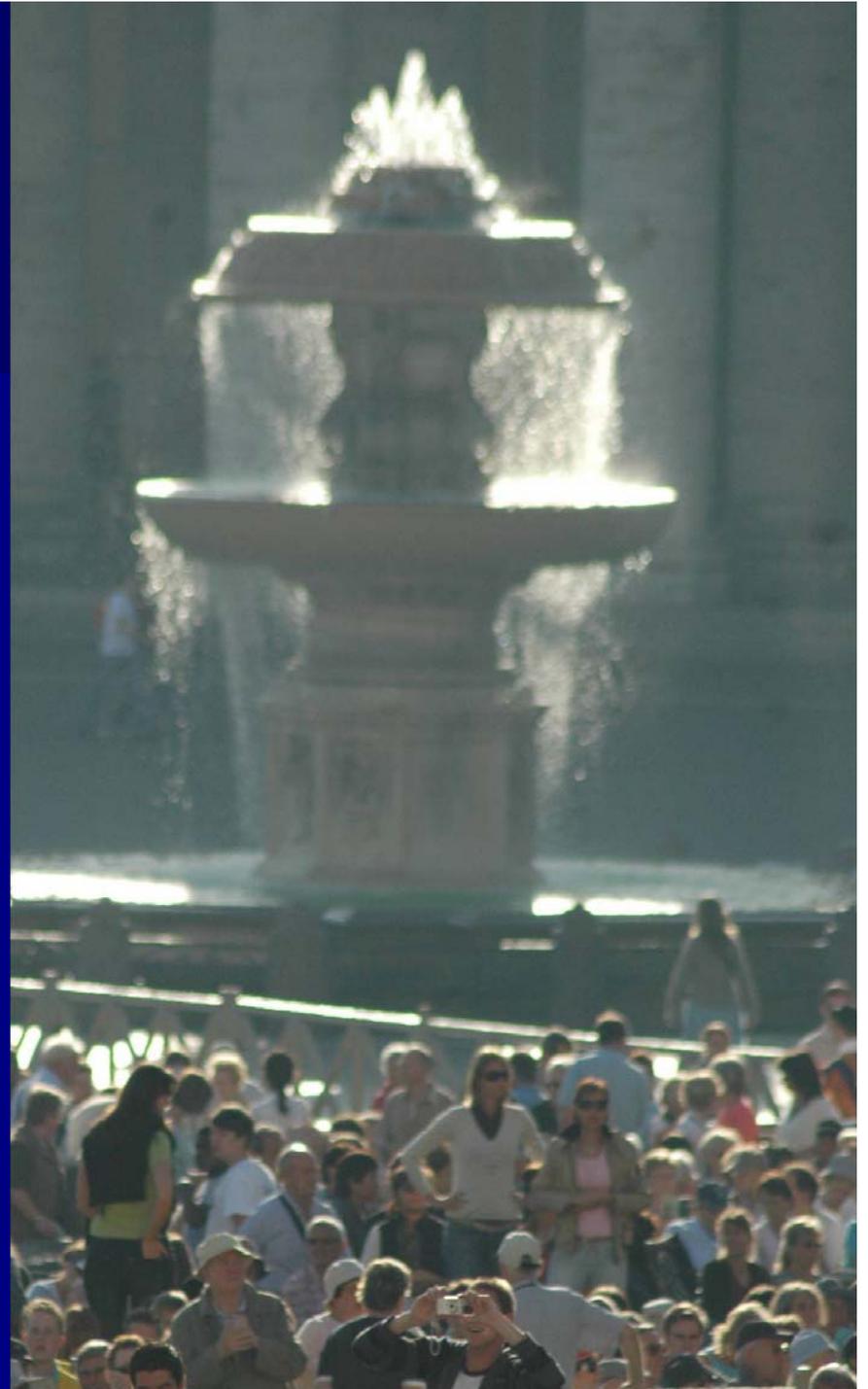
The Power of the Keys which Jesus Christ gave to Peter, indicates that Peter and his successors are the shepherds or leaders of the Church.



Jesus also gave Peter the power to bind and loose, a power which was shared with the other Apostles; this power continues in the Church today in the persons of the Pope and bishops as their successors.

It is to all of the Apostles, together with St. Peter, that the Lord gives the mission to “go forth 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.”

Mt. 28: 16-20



The Primacy of Peter as head of the Apostles is shown very concretely in the selection of bishops. The Pope calls those who are to be bishops and appoints them as members of the college of bishops.



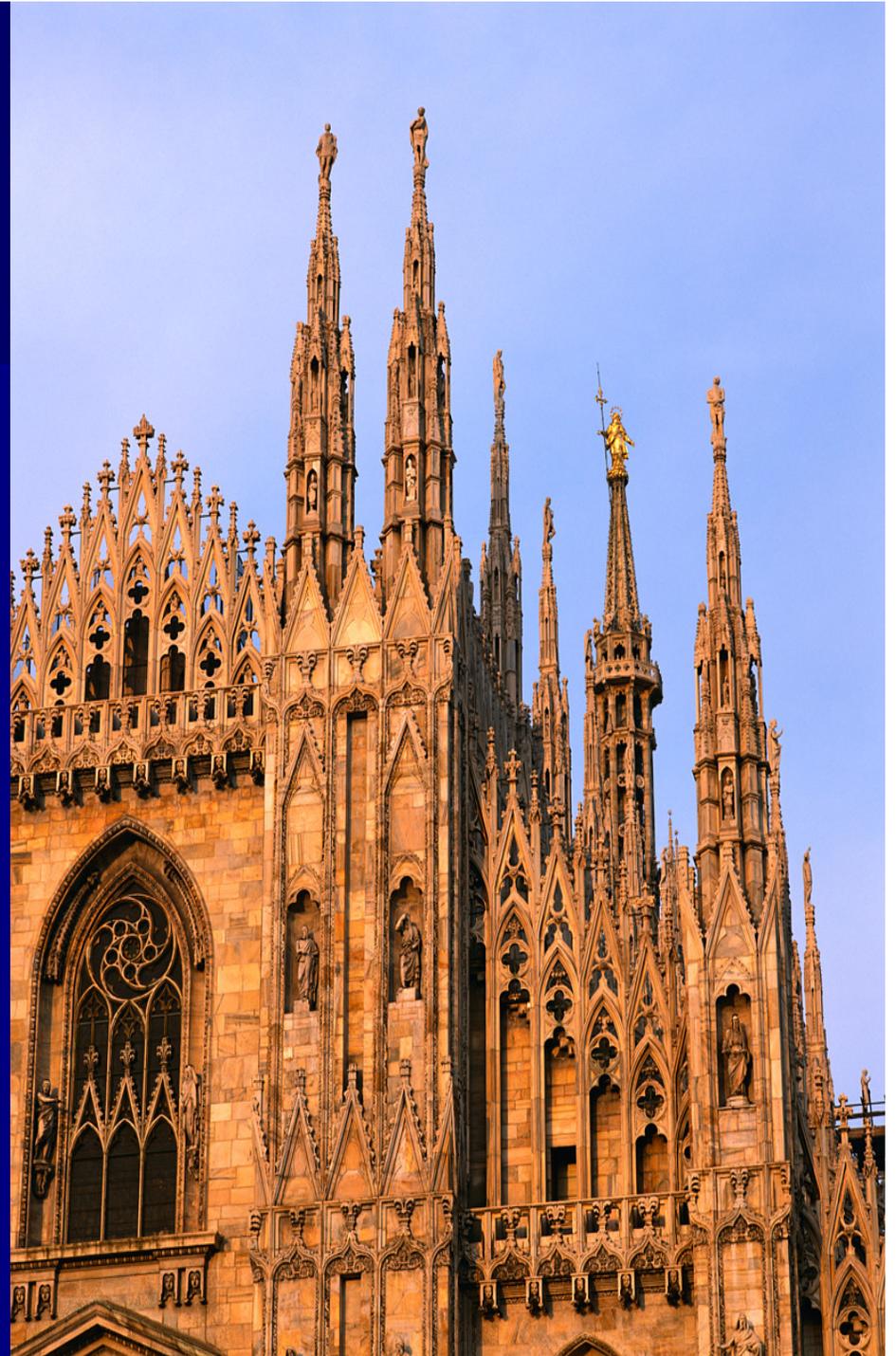
**Only the Pope, as the Vicar of Christ, can
appoint bishops as successors to the
Twelve Apostles.**



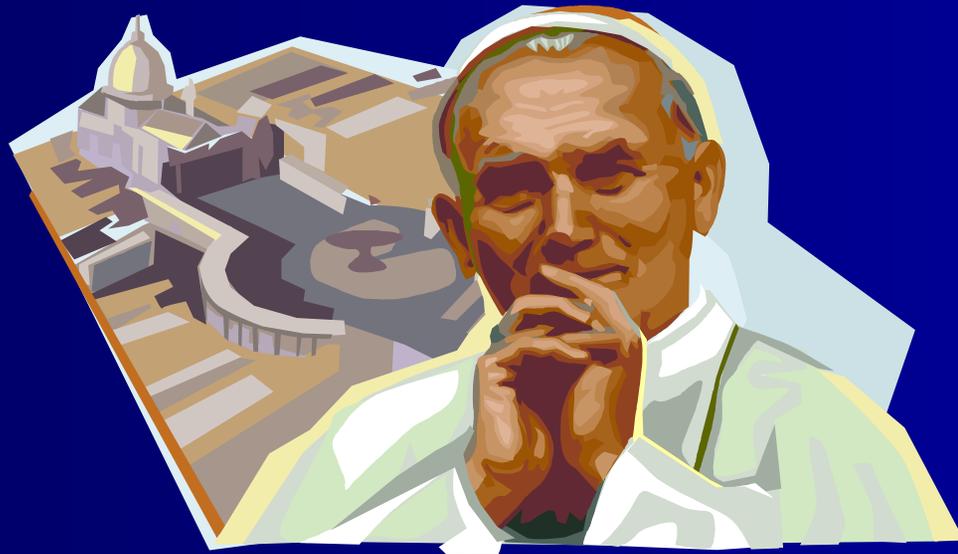


Just as the Pope is the visible source and foundation of unity for the universal Church, individual bishops, in union with the Pope, are the visible source and foundation of their own particular dioceses.

These particular Churches are not “branch offices” of the universal Church, nor should the universal Church be considered as simply the sum, or the federation, of all the particular Churches.



Rather, a diocese constitutes a particular Church in which the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church of Christ is truly present and operative.



The Pope is the head of the College of Bishops, and as such, exercises authority over all of the Church.

The Papacy

The Pope ("papa" from the Greek *papas*, a variant of pappas, meaning "father.")

The title Pope is employed solely to denote the Bishop of Rome, who, in virtue of his position as successor of St. Peter, is the chief pastor of the whole Church, the Vicar of Christ on earth.

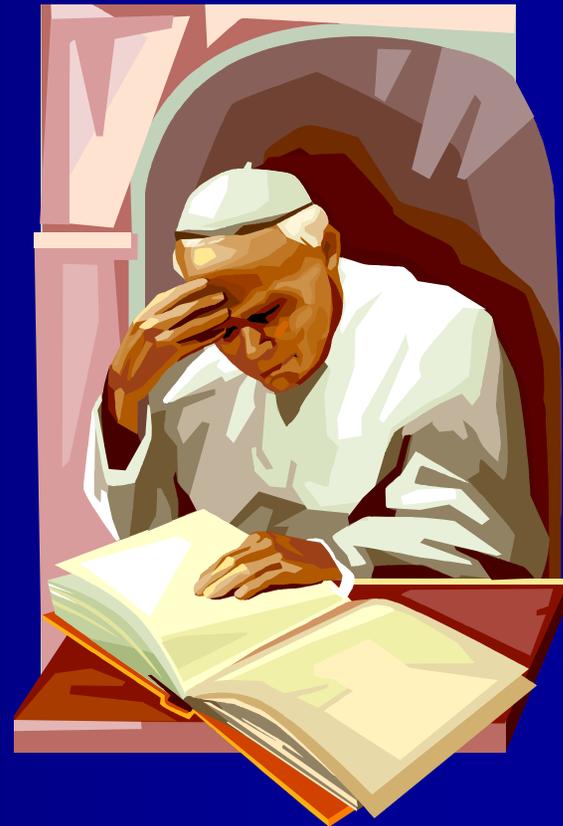
Papal Functions

The ordinary functions of the Pope are:

1. **Universal jurisdiction over the Church.**
2. **Immediate jurisdiction over the Holy See and jurisdiction over all Catholic Churches in the world.**
3. **The right of entertaining appeals in all ecclesiastical causes.**

Papal Functions

In virtue of his office as supreme teacher and ruler of the faithful, the chief control of every department of the Church's life belongs to the Pope.



Papal Functions

Further, the Pope directs all Catholic missions throughout the world and he can interpret authentically the natural law.

He legislates for the Church and has the authority to interpret Church law.

**The Pope oversees the worship and prayer
of the entire Church.**



The Pope as Teacher

**As supreme teacher of the Church,
the Pope can set forth creeds,
prescribe books to be written for the
religious instruction of the faith,
and establish a university.**

His Holiness, Benedict XVI, Pope Emeritus

