



PROUD TO BE

CATHOLIC

"...you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." JOHN 8:32

The Universal Church of Jesus Christ

Evidence that Jesus Christ instituted the Catholic Church as the original church is found through the Papal lineage, which dates back to Peter, the apostle of Jesus. There were 265 popes since Peter reigned as the first Pope. We know that Peter was the first authority in the New Testament. Only Peter was given a name change from Christ. This was his commission in the Jewish faith.

Importantly as well, only Peter was venerated upon his death at the site of the Vatican. It is called St. Peter's square. Underneath the main altar are the remains of Peter. They found the remains during the Second World War. Until then, it was just trusted that he was buried there. The new St. Peter's Basilica is over 950 years old. The old one only stood for about 350 years before it came under disrepair. So for nearly 1,300 years of the Basilicas that stood on this sight, the faithful just new he was buried under the altar. But was he? We never knew for sure that he was buried at this location until his burial tomb was found while excavating under the Basilica to make room for new Papal burial sights during World War II. The brick used was the first hint that the tomb may be of St. Peter. This brick resembled what the Romans used for construction; it did not match the current brick used in the construction of St. Peter's Basilica. Also found were the graffiti markings of Peter's name in different languages etched into the brick. They did not want the Nazi's to find this during the Second World War; Hitler was crazy to find anything of spiritual significance. So, they covered up the sight until after the war was over. In fact, they hid it until the early 1950's. Even after it was safe to excavate the bones of St. Peter, it was still done under scrutiny. The Church wanted to be absolutely sure of this find.

The skeleton in this tomb did not have any feet. St. Peter was crucified upside down remember? Well, the Romans were noted for not pulling out nails after crucifixion. They hacked off the limbs of the dead. This explains why this particular skeleton had no feet below the ankles.

In the 1980's, DNA testing was done. The skeleton age determined that it died between 65 and 67 AD. The exact time St. Peter would have been martyred.

To top it off, if you dropped a plumb line from the tip of St. Peter's dome, through the main altar, through the floor, beneath the basement, this tomb's skeleton was placed "exactly" dead center! So, it was built directly over what we know for fact, is St. Peter's tomb!

Peter was to be the shepherd **John 21:17**. Immediately after his denials were predicted, Peter was told, "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has claimed power over you all, so that he can sift you like wheat; but I have prayed for thee [singular] that thy faith may not fail; when, after a while, thou hast come back to me [after denials], it is for thee to be the support of the brethren" **Luke 22:31-32**. It was Peter that Christ prayed would have faith that would not fail and that would be a guide for the others, and His prayer, being perfect, was sure to be fulfilled.

So we have scripture that backs Peter's authority, his headship as a bishop, and the physical proof of his veneration and tradition that he was worthy of it. Not everything of faith is written in the bible. That is the beauty of the Catholic Church. The Church was here before the bible for over 300 years! So we rely on all proofs of faith, including that of St. Peter being laid to rest under the main altar and his body being so specifically placed directly dead center. To do this was a miraculous feat in itself. This man named Peter by Christ himself was thought of enough to do this by the faithful. He was surely important, and surely the leader of the Church.

"Let no one do anything of concern to the Church without the bishop. Let that be considered a valid Eucharist, which is celebrated by the bishop or by one whom he ordains [i.e., a presbyter]. Wherever the bishop appears, let the people be there; just as wherever Jesus Christ is, there is the Catholic Church" **Letter to the Smyrneans 8:2 [A.D. 110] written by Ignatius of Antioch, a disciple of the apostle John**

Matthew 16:18-19: "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."

"Feed my sheep" **John 21:17**

Jesus told Peter, "Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" **Matthew 16:19**

St. Paul writes "And what you heard from me through many witnesses entrust to faithful people who will have the ability to teach others as well." **2 Timothy 2:2**

Eucharist

“...we walk by faith, not by sight” **2 Cor 5:7**

Jesus proclaims His teaching on the Holy Eucharist to a crowd of listeners:

“...the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world” **John 6:51**

Obviously understanding Jesus’ words in their plain, literal sense, a number of the shocked listeners respond:

“...How can this man give us his flesh to eat” **John 6:52**

Rather than seizing this first opportunity to clarify His tough words if the crowd (who was taking His speech literally) was understanding Him wrongly, Jesus goes on to make even stronger statements to the crowd about the Holy Eucharist:

“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink His blood, you have no life in you; he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise Him up at the last day. For my flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him” **John 6:53–56**

Obviously still taking our Lord’s words literally, a number of Jesus’ stunned listeners respond:

“...This saying is hard; who can accept it” **John 6:60**

Jesus, fully aware that His listeners were understanding His teaching in a literal sense, chooses not to seize His second opportunity to make clarifications of His harsh words if they were being interpreted incorrectly, doesn’t back down an inch and responds to the unbelievers in the crowd:

“...Does this shock you” **John 6:61**

“As a result of this, many [of] his disciples returned to their former way of life and no longer accompanied him” **John 6:66**

Risking His whole mission, Jesus turns to His most intimate disciples (the Twelve Apostles) and says to them:

“Do you also want to leave” **John 6:67**

St. Peter speaking on behalf of the Twelve Apostles:

“Master, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life” **John 6:68**

Luke 22:19 “Then he took the bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body, which will be given for you; Do this in memory of me.”

“For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes” **1 Cor 11:26**

“...this **is** my body...this **is** my blood...” **Matthew 26:26-28**

“...this **is** my body...This **is** my blood...” **Mark 14:22-24**

“...This **is** my body...do this in memory of me...This **is**...my blood...” **Luke 22:19-20**

“...This **is** my body...do this in remembrance of me... This cup **is**...my blood...drink it, in remembrance of me...” **1 Cor 11:24-25**

“The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ?” **1 Cor 10:16**

St. Paul says very clearly in his letter to the Corinthians that a person who “eats the bread and drinks the cup of the Lord unworthily will have to answer for the body and blood for the Lord” **1 Cor 11:27**

St. Paul also goes on to say that anyone “who eats and drinks without discerning the body, eats and drinks judgement upon himself” **1 Cor 11:29**

Confession

“All wrongdoing is sin, but there is sin that is not deadly.” **1 John 5:17** (Venial and Mortals Sin)

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness" **1 John 1:9**

"As the Father has sent me, even so I send you. . . . Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained" **John 20:21–23**

“So whoever is in Christ is a new creation: the old things have passed away; behold, new things have come. And all this is from God, who has reconciled us to himself through Christ and given us the ministry of reconciliation” **2 Cor 5:17-18**

“Is anyone among you sick? He should summon the presbyters of the church, and they should pray over him and anoint [him] with oil in the name of the Lord, and the prayer of faith will save the sick person, and the Lord will raise him up. If he has committed any sins, he will be forgiven. Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed...” **James 5:14-16**

Mary

"Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you" **Luke 1:28**

"And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and she exclaimed with a loud cry, ‘Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb! And why is this granted me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?’" **Luke 1:41-43**

"And Mary said, ‘My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has regarded the low estate of his handmaiden. For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed; for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name’" **Luke 1:46-49**

Prayers to the Saints

"Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God; consider the outcome of their life, and imitate their faith" **Hebrews 13:7**

“the twenty-four elders [the leaders of the people of God in heaven] fell down before the Lamb, each holding a harp, and with golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints" **Rev 5:8**

"[An] angel came and stood at the altar [in heaven] with a golden censer; and he was given much incense to mingle with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar before the throne; and the smoke of the incense rose with the prayers of the saints from the hand of the angel before God" **Rev 8:3–4**

"Pay all of them their dues, taxes to whom taxes are due, revenue to whom revenue is due, respect to whom respect is due, honor to whom honor is due" **Romans 13:7**

The Holy Trinity

Matthew 28:19 - "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."

“And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever-- the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.” **John 14:16-17**

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all" **2 Cor 13:14**

Faith and Works

"Not everyone who says to me, "Lord, Lord," shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven" **Matthew 7:21**

"For he will render every man according to his works . . ." **Romans 2:6-8**

"For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified" **Romans 2:13**

James 2:14-26 (all about faith and works)

"So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead" **James 2:1**

"You see that a man is justified by works and not by faith alone" **James 2:24**

"...if I have all faith so as to move mountains but do not have love, I am nothing" **1 Cor 13:2**

"Behold, I am coming soon. I bring with me the recompense I will give to each according to his deeds" **Rev 22:12**

"For in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision nor un-circumcision counts for anything, but only faith working through love" **Gal 5:6**

"For we must all appear before the judgement seat of Christ, so that each one may receive recompense, according to what he did in the body, whether good or evil" **2 Cor 5:10**

"...All the dead were judged according to their deeds" **Rev 20:12-13**

"Now if you invoke as Father him who judges impartially according to each one's works, conduct yourselves with reverence during the time of your sojourning..." **1 Peter 1:17**

Purgatory

"For if he were not expecting that those who had fallen would rise again, it would have been superfluous and foolish to pray for the dead. But if he was looking to the splendid reward that is laid up for those who fall asleep in godliness, it was a holy and pious thought. Therefore he made atonement for the dead, that they might be delivered from their sin" **2 Maccabees 12:44-45**

"But nothing unclean shall enter it [heaven] . . ." **Rev 21:27**

"Each man's work will become manifest; for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. If the work which any man has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire" **1 Cor 3:13-15**

In **Matthew 5:26** Christ is condemning sin and speaks of liberation only after expiation. "Amen, I say to you, you will not be released until you have paid the last penny." Now we know that no last penny needs to be paid in Heaven and from Hell there is no liberation at all; hence the reference must apply to a third place.

Matthew 12:32 says, "And whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven; but whoever speaks against the holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come." The implication is that some sins can be forgiven in the world to come. But not in Hell from which there is no liberation; nor in Heaven because nothing imperfect can enter it as we see in the next part. Any remission of sin cannot occur in either of these places because they are a final destination unlike purgatory.

"For this is why the gospel was preached EVEN TO THE DEAD that, though condemned in the flesh in human estimation, they might live in the spirit in the estimation of God." **1 Peter 4:6**

"For Christ also suffered for sins once, the righteous for the sake of the unrighteous, that he might lead you to God. Put to death in the flesh, he was brought to life in the Spirit. In it he also went to preach to the SPIRITS IN PRISON." **1 Peter 3 18:19**

Why do we call priests "Father"?

I. Because he IS a Spiritual Father to us.

- a. In infancy he baptized us and, therefore, was the instrument . . . the agency . . . of our spiritual REBIRTH just as our physical fathers are responsible for our PHYSICAL birth.
- b. He gives us spiritual FOOD for our souls whenever we receive the Body and Blood of Christ in Holy Communion. "For my flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed." **John 6: 57**. PROVIDING NOURISHMENT IS ANOTHER OBLIGATION OF A FATHER.
- c. In confession, the priest not only forgives sin in the name of Christ, but also ADVISES us as to the best way to overcome our difficulties . . . spiritual and material. THIS, TOO, IS THE DUTY OF A FATHER.
- d. Like a father, the priest is always at the death-bed of a Catholic to console and assist him. No Catholic would WANT to die without a priest -- HIS SPIRITUAL FATHER -- beside him.

Therefore, a priest does not DEMAND this title. We call him "Father" as a sign of the affection he shares with our natural parents, and because he shares with them the duties and obligations of a parent.

II. Because the Bible does not mean that NO man should be called "Father."

- a. Cruden's Concordance (which is a non-Catholic concordance) at the beginning of the citation under the word "father" says: "In addition to its common use, this word is also used in the sense of seniors . . . of ancestors . . . founders of trades or professions . . . head of the inhabitants of a town, etc."

The word "Father" is found almost a 1,000 times and only about half of these refer to God. The others refer to HUMAN BEINGS who are called "Father."

- b. It was not the intention of Christ that NO man should be called "Father."
 1. In **Matthew 13:1-3** . . . He is admonishing the people to follow the teachings of the Pharisees . . . but not their example: "But do not act according to their works." According to these verses, no master is to be followed who would lead us away from Christ.
 2. Christ Himself permitted and used the word FOR OTHERS than God.
 - (a) In **John 4:12**, He did not correct the Samaritan woman who said: "Art thou greater than our father Jacob who gave us the well? . . ."
 - (b) In **John 8:56**, He Himself used the term, for Abraham: "Abraham your father rejoiced that he was to see my day . . ."
- c. Saint Paul, following the example of Christ, did not take these words in their literal sense.
 1. He calls the Corinthians his spiritual children: "For although you have ten thousand tutors in Christ, yet you have not many fathers. For in Christ Jesus, through the gospel, did I beget you." **1 Cor 4:15**
 2. He calls Timothy his "beloved SON in the faith." **1 Timothy 1:2**
 3. He speaks of the Corinthians as his CHILDREN: ". . . but I admonish you as my dearest children." **1 Cor 4:14**
 4. He tells the Philippians that the proof of Timothy's loyalty is to be found in the fact that he had served Paul in the Gospel as "a Son with the FATHER." **Philippians 2:22**
 5. See also: **1 Thessalonians 2:11**

III. If we adhere to the literal interpretation:

- a. All honorary titles would be forbidden. Judges, mayors, etc., could not be called "Your Honor." Presidents, ambassadors, etc., could not be called "Your Excellency."
- b. Physicians could not be called "Doctor" and ministers could not be called "Reverend."
- c. We could not call our own male parent "Father" for there would be no exceptions under the literal interpretation.
- d. Likewise we could no longer call Washington the "Father of the Country."
- e. We could not use the expression "Mister" for this is equal to "Master" and the same text says, "Neither be ye called masters...."
- f. Nor could we use the term "Sir" for this is a contraction of "Sire" which means "Lord" or "Master."

THEREFORE, this text of St. Matthew is not to be taken literally or as a general law. Catholic priests do not DEMAND this title. It is for them a source of HUMILITY rather than of PRIDE, for it reminds the priest of his OBLIGATIONS as a spiritual FATHER to his flock.

The Catholic Mass

Did you know that the ENTIRE MASS from start to finish is TOTALLY based on and founded in scripture? Virtually every prayer and response we say during the celebration of Mass is based on the Word of God, preserved in scripture. Rather than beg you or any one else, to believe, here are just a few examples:

- † In the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit...**Matthew 28:19**
- † Amen. **1 Chronicles 16:36**
- † The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you. **2 Cor 13:13**
- † The Lord be with you. **Ruth 2:4**
- † Glory to God in the highest and peace to His people on Earth... **Luke 2:14**
- † Blessed be God forever. **Ps 68:36**
- † May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands....**Ps 50:23**
- † Lift up your hearts, we lift them up to the Lord...**Lamentations 3:41**
- † Let us give thanks to the Lord our God...**Col 3:17**
- † Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might....**Is 6:3**
- † Hosanna in the highest, blessed is He who comes....**Mk 12:9-10**
- † Let us proclaim the mystery of our faith...**1 Tim 3:16**
- † Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again...**1 Cor 15:3-5**
- † Lord, you are holy indeed, the fountain of all holiness...**2 Maccabees 14:36**
- † From age to age....from east to west...**Ps 113:3**
- † Through Him, with Him, in Him...**Romans 11:36**
- † This is the lamb of God, happy are we who are called....**Revelation 19:9**
- † Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. **Luke 7:50, 2 Chronicles 35:3**

Hopefully you can now trust that it wasn't just like a bunch of priests sitting around a monastery a couple thousand years ago, making up random prayers like some wanna-be Hallmark convention. Let's give the Holy Spirit some credit, huh?

Our Mass, celebrated in countless languages around the world, hundreds of thousands of times a day, with the same readings, is totally, absolutely, unequivocally, 100% founded in scripture.

Take pride in the fact that you're part of a long and glorious tradition, and be proud to be Catholic! The apostles were.

Catholic Resources

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| Diocese of Lafayette | www.dol-louisiana.org |
| Diocese of Alexandria | www.diocesealex.org |
| Diocese of Lake Charles | www.lcdiocese.org |
| Franciscan Youth (Steubenville)..... | www.franciscanyouth.com |
| Steubenville South..... | www.steubenvillesouth.com |
| Catholic Answers | www.catholic.com |
| United States Council of Bishops..... | www.usccb.org |
| Catechism of the Catholic Church | www.nccbuscc.org/catechism |
| The Vatican | www.vatican.va |
| Good News Ministries..... | www.gnm.org |
| Our Lady of Lourdes Life Teen..... | www.erathcatholic.org |
| St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church..... | www.stanthonylt.org |