

## THE HIERARCHICAL STRUCTURE OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

“Some parts of the governmental system of the Catholic Church are of divine origin, and many of them are human institutions.” – *Externals of the Catholic Church*, p. 19.<sup>275</sup>

“If it is not identical in belief, government, etc., with the primitive Church, then it is not the Church of Christ.”— **John Francis Knoll**, *Catholic Facts*, p. 27.<sup>276</sup>

### THE ROMAN CHURCH'S HIERARCHY

The Pope  
The Cardinals  
The Curia

### ITS ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The Archbishop  
The Bishops  
The Priests

### REFUTATION

Christ is Head  
The Apostles  
The Prophets  
The Bishops  
The Deacons  
The Evangelists  
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## A. THE ROMAN CHURCH'S HIERARCHY:

### 1) The Pope

(a) He is the head of the organization, with almost unlimited power. Roman Catholics consider him to be the “successor of Peter.”<sup>277</sup> The pope<sup>278</sup> bases his claim to jurisdictional “primacy”<sup>279</sup> on the Petrine theory first affirmed by the Council of Florence

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<sup>275</sup> Sullivan, *Externals of the Catholic Church* (New York: J. P. Kennedy & Son, 1919), p. 19.

<sup>276</sup> John Francis Knoll, *Catholic Facts* (Huntington, Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1927), p. 27; quoted by O. C. Lambert, 1:64.

<sup>277</sup> For the pope to be a successor of apostle Peter, it must be proved from the New Testament (a) that Peter needs to have a successor; (b) that the pope qualifies as Peter's successor; (c) that God has chosen the pope to be Peter's successor. See our refutation of this teaching below.

<sup>278</sup> The term “Pope” is a religious title and means “Father.” The Lord prohibits the use of this religious title (Matthew 23:9).

<sup>279</sup> Primacy means he holds the highest rank (Cf. Microsoft Encarta Dictionary).

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(in Italy) in 1439,<sup>280</sup> defined as a matter of faith by the First Vatican Council in 1870,<sup>281</sup> and endorsed by the Second Vatican Council in 1964. According to the theory, Jesus conferred on Peter alone the position of primacy in His church, for which reason Peter became pope, and that the popes of Rome are Peter's successors. The texts used to buttress the theory are John 1:42,<sup>282</sup> John 21:15ff,<sup>283</sup> Matthew 16:18ff.<sup>284</sup>

(b) The pope of Rome, having "final authority in all matters," "appoints bishops to dioceses and transfers them to others. Although bishops enjoy their jurisdictional powers by reason of their office, they cannot legitimately exercise them without the permission of the pope."<sup>285</sup>

### 2) The Cardinals

(a) Cardinals<sup>286</sup> are often called "the princes of the church," and "the highest dignitaries in the Church after the pope."<sup>287</sup> Appointed by the pope, they constitute the supreme council of the Church, the Sacred College of Cardinal.

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<sup>280</sup> Otherwise known as the Council of Ferrara-Florence (1438-1445), it was the last of a series of Roman Catholic Church councils held during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance "at which attempts were made to reunite the Eastern Churches with the Western [or Roman Catholic] Church." One of the primary issues to be settled at the council was "whether the pope should be accepted as the supreme head of the Eastern Churches, overriding the authority of the Greek patriarchs." The Western beliefs were eventually accepted by the Eastern churchmen. "Efforts to enforce the agreement with the whole Eastern Church failed, however, at first because of the opposition of Greek monks and later because of the interference of the Turks, who captured the Eastern capital, Constantinople, in 1453 and sought thereafter to destroy all contact between the Eastern and Western Churches. The agreement ratified in Florence in 1439 ended, in effect, with the fall of Constantinople in 1453; it was formally rejected by a synod at Constantinople in 1472" (MEPS 2005, art. "Council of Ferrara-Florence").

<sup>281</sup> The council that promulgated the constitution "Pastor Aeternus" (July 18, 1870), declaring as doctrine the pope's "jurisdictional primacy over the entire Church and that, under specific conditions, he is endowed by God with the infallibility (freedom from error) in teaching faith and morals that God willed the Church to have." The definition of papal infallibility was hotly debated in this council (MEPS 2005, art. "First Vatican Council").

<sup>282</sup> John 1:42, "And he [Andrew] led him [Simon Peter] to Jesus. But Jesus, looking upon him, said, 'Thou art Simon the son of John; thou shalt be called Cephas (which interpreted is Peter).'" (The Holy Bible, New Catholic Edition).

<sup>283</sup> John 21:15ff, "When they therefore had breakfasted, Jesus said to Simon Peter, 'Simon, son of John, dost thou love me more than these do?' He said to him, 'Yes, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee.' He said to him, 'Feed my lambs.' And he said to him the second time, 'Simon, son of John, dost thou love me?' He said to him, 'Yes, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee.' And he said to him, 'Feed my lambs.' And the third time he said to him, 'Simon, son of John, dost thou love me?' Peter was grieved because he said to him for the third time, 'Dost thou love me?' And he said to him, 'Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee.' He said to him, 'Feed my sheep.'" (The Holy Bible, New Catholic Edition).

<sup>284</sup> Matthew 16:18ff, "And I say to thee, 'Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.'" (The Holy Bible, New Catholic Edition).

<sup>285</sup> MEPS 2005, art. "Roman Catholic Church."

<sup>286</sup> "Cardinal" from Latin, *cardinalis*, meaning "pivotal", "principal"; the word comes from *cardo*, "hinge." (MEPS 2005, art. "Cardinal, Title"). Grolier Academic Encyclopedia however says, "The precise origin of

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In the early days, three groups were given this title. (a) The priests permanently ruling the parish churches in Rome, called cardinal priests; (b) the deacons permanently administering the charities of a particular region of the city, called cardinal deacons; (c) and the bishops in charge of the suburban sees of Rome, called cardinal bishops.<sup>288</sup> However, most of the cardinals now “are bishops of dioceses located throughout the world; others are the chief members of the Sacred Congregations of the papal administration.”<sup>289</sup>

(b) In the past, the Sacred Congregation of Cardinals numbered 70,<sup>290</sup> as fixed by Sixtus V, pope of Rome, in 1586.<sup>291</sup> “The pope, however, was not obliged to maintain this number, and there were generally from 10 to 15 vacancies... In 1958 Pope John XXIII abrogated the legislation that limited the number of cardinals to 70,”<sup>292</sup> and in 1960 increased the number to 85. By the 1980s the number has again been increased-- to 130.<sup>293</sup> In 1993 the college included 148 cardinals.<sup>294</sup> By 2001 the number had reached 184, most of whom had been named by John Paul II.<sup>295</sup> By 2003, there were 185.<sup>296</sup> Their number keeps changing!

(c) “Precedence in the Sacred College is determined by the see held and by the date of consecration of the individual cardinal. Those consecrated earlier rank higher in the college. The dean of the Sacred College, a cardinal bishop, is elected to the post of dean, according to a ruling by Paul VI in 1965. The first cardinal bishop has the right to consecrate the pope if the pope is not a bishop at the time of his installation. The first cardinal deacon is first deacon of the college and has the right to proclaim and install the new pope. The cardinal camerlengo (chamberlain) takes care of the temporal goods of the Holy See and rules the Church during a papal vacancy.”<sup>297</sup>

(d) As chief members of the Sacred Congregations of the papal government, the cardinals “meet in consistory, or assembly, over which the pope presides. Cardinals are limited in

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the term *cardinal* is uncertain, but it began to achieve acceptance by the 6th century. At that time cardinals were those bishops whose dioceses had been overtaken by the barbarians and who were then assigned by the pope to vacant dioceses. Later, the term was applied to the senior priests of certain parish churches in Rome. By the 11th century, the organization of these Roman pastors had developed into the sacred college of cardinals. At first, the cardinals functioned as assistants and counselors to the popes, but after 1059 they became the papal electors as well. By the late 11th century, prelates outside of Rome were elected cardinals, a practice that continues to this day” (Richard P. McBrien, art. “Cardinals, College of,” GAE, 4:144).

<sup>287</sup> MEPS 2005, art. “Roman Catholic Church.”

<sup>288</sup> MEPS 2005, art. “Cardinal, Title.”

<sup>289</sup> MEPS 2005, art. “Roman Catholic Church.”

<sup>290</sup> “Consisting of 6 cardinal bishops, 50 cardinal priests, and 14 cardinal deacons” (MEPS 2005, art. “Roman Catholic Church”).

<sup>291</sup> MEPS 2005, art. “Cardinal, Title.”

<sup>292</sup> MEPS 2005, art. “Cardinal, Title.”

<sup>293</sup> GAE, 16:278.

<sup>294</sup> MEPS 2005, art. “Cardinal, Title.”

<sup>295</sup> MEPS 2005, art. “Roman Catholic Church.”

<sup>296</sup> MEPS 2005, art. “Cardinal, Title.”

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their duties according to age; like other high prelates, they are expected to retire at the age of 75 from administrative duties.”<sup>298</sup>

When a pope dies, the cardinals meet in Rome in the so-called College of Cardinals and elect a new pope. Usually one is chosen from their own number. After the election, the cardinals individually pledge their complete allegiance to him, even to the extent of prostrating themselves on the floor before him and kissing his foot as a symbol of submission. Then they disband and return to their respective countries. They have no authority to reassemble, or to remove a pope from office no matter what he may do. In the meantime they remain subject to him and may even be removed from office by him at any time, without explanation whatever, if he so desires. If the cardinal was a bishop or archbishop before his appointment, he would continue to hold that office and exercise that authority. “At 80 they are no longer permitted to serve as papal electors. These restrictions were announced by Paul VI in 1970. He also decreed that the number of electors should not exceed 120, but this ruling was later overturned by John Paul II. They enjoy extraordinary privileges and honours and are addressed as “Eminence”, usually either “His Eminence” or “Your Eminence”, or “lord cardinal.”<sup>299</sup>

### 3) The Curia

“The pope is assisted in his administration of the Church by a complex bureaucracy known as the Curia. Of ancient origin, the Curia is located in Vatican City. It is now directed by the Secretariat of State, to which the various other offices report. These offices now consist of the Sacred Congregation for the Public Affairs of the Church, as well as ten congregations, three tribunals, three secretariats, and other bureaux.”<sup>300</sup>

## B. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

“In keeping with early Christian traditions, the fundamental unit of organization in the Roman Catholic Church is the diocese, headed by a bishop. The Church comprises about 1,800 dioceses and about 500 archdioceses, which today are simply more distinguished sees without the special jurisdiction over nearby bishops that they once enjoyed. The major church in a diocese is the cathedral, where the bishop presides at worship and other ceremonies. The cathedral contains the bishop’s ‘throne’ or ‘chair’ (Latin cathedra), from which in the early Church he preached to his congregation.”<sup>301</sup>

### 1) Archbishop.

The Catholic archbishop has “the jurisdiction over an ecclesiastical province.” He also “superintends certain activities of the other bishops in his province and also exercises episcopal authority in his own diocese. The term “archbishop” was first used in the 6th century A.D. for the incumbents of the five chief sees of Christendom (Rome, Alexandria, Antioch, Constantinople, and Jerusalem), who exercised such authority within their

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<sup>298</sup> MEPS 2005, art. “Cardinal, Title.”

<sup>299</sup> MEPS 2005, art. “Cardinal, Title.”

<sup>300</sup> MEPS 2005, art. “Roman Catholic Church.”

<sup>301</sup> MEPS 2005, art. “Roman Catholic Church.”

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respective provinces. The function (though not the title) of archbishop developed from that of the metropolitan bishop, who presided over several dioceses.

In the Roman Catholic Church, archbishops occupy certain important sees and enjoy limited provincial authority. In the Church of England, the Archbishops of Canterbury and York are metropolitans of their respective sees and joint heads of the English Anglican Church, with precedence going to Canterbury. The title of archbishop in the Orthodox Churches is usually honorary.”<sup>302</sup> .

### 2) The Bishops

(a) A Catholic bishop, says *The Catholic Picture Dictionary*, “is a successor of the apostles.”<sup>303</sup> The book further says, “This office [that is, the bishop’s office] was founded by Christ with all spiritual powers, especially to ordain, confirm, and consecrate.”<sup>304</sup>

Catholic bishops are usually nominated by the cardinals but receive their appointments directly from the pope and remain immediately subject to him. They are the pope’s chief liaison officers through which he maintains contact with the church throughout the world. Each bishop reports directly to the pope concerning the affairs of his diocese. The diocese<sup>305</sup> is the district over which the bishop has charge.

(b) The bishop is distinguished from the priest “principally by the power to confer Holy Orders and to act as the usual minister of confirmation.”<sup>306</sup> The Catholic bishop also “wields the highest jurisdictional powers within the diocese: he has the right to admit priests to his diocese and to exclude them from the practice of ministry within it, and he assigns priests of his diocese to parishes and other duties. The bishop often delegates administrative details to his vicar-general, his chancellor, or other officials. In larger dioceses he may be assisted by auxiliary or coadjutor bishops.”<sup>307</sup>

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<sup>302</sup> MEPS 2005, art. “Archbishop.”

<sup>303</sup> H. A. Pfeiffer, S.J., *The Catholic Picture Dictionary* (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1948), p. 23. The Bible does not say the bishops are “successors of the apostles.”

<sup>304</sup> Pfeiffer, *The Catholic Picture Dictionary*, p. 23.

<sup>305</sup> “Diocese” (Greek, *diokesis*, “administration”), in the Roman Catholic Church, “the territory over which a bishop exercises ecclesiastical jurisdiction. The term was used as early as the time of the Greek orator Demosthenes to signify the treasury or department of finance. But in the organization of the Roman Empire introduced by the emperor Diocletian, the designation diocese was applied to the larger political divisions, which were subdivided into provinces, or eparchies. About the middle of the 5th century, the dioceses of the empire were Asia, Pontus, the East, Thrace, Macedonia, Dacia, Illyria, Italy, Africa, Gaul, Spain, and Britain. The government of the [Roman Catholic] Church, as established by Constantine I, emperor of Rome, adopted this division, and diocese, as well as other terms borrowed from the government of the Roman Empire, passed over into ecclesiastical usage. The term was first applied in an ecclesiastical context to a collection of metropolitan churches, or provinces (parishes), each under the charge of an archbishop. Later applied to a single metropolitanate, or province, it finally came to signify the local jurisdiction of any bishop of any rank, while the term province came to be used for the group of dioceses under the supervision of an archbishop, or metropolitan” (MEPS 2005, art. “Diocese”).

<sup>306</sup> MEPS 2005, art. “Roman Catholic Church.”

<sup>307</sup> MEPS 2005, art. “Roman Catholic Church.”

### 3) The priests

(a) Directly under the bishop of the diocese are the clergy, both secular and religious. “Secular clergy are not members of religious orders or congregations and have been incorporated (incardinated) into the diocese under the authority of the local bishop.”<sup>308</sup>

The bishop supervises their course of training, inquires into the fitness of the candidates, chooses those that shall be ordained, ordains them, assigns them as pastors to parishes in the diocese, transfers them, and removes them from office as he sees fit, without explanation, if he wishes. Each priest pledges complete allegiance to the bishop, and submits reports to him. No priest who has had difficulties with his bishop will be accepted for work in any other diocese until he has made satisfaction to his own bishop.

(b) “The religious clergy, on the other hand, are primarily committed to their orders or congregations, which transcend diocesan boundaries. While working within a given diocese, these clergy must adhere to the bishop’s decisions in matters of public worship but otherwise enjoy considerable discretion in their ministry. The same can be said of nuns (or sisters) and monks (or brothers), who are members of orders or congregations but are not clergy. These religious clergy and lay clergy tend to work in schools, hospitals, and other institutions of mercy and social service in the diocese. Since the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), the laity who are not members of religious orders have assumed an increasingly active role in advising pastors and bishops, especially in practical matters, and in the directly pastoral ministry such as catechesis (instruction given in preparation for adult baptism).”<sup>309</sup>

(c) The people in turn are expected to obey the priest and support him and the church through their services and money. No one from among them is to question the authority of the priest, even in domestic or family affairs. Democratic processes are discouraged. Some lay organizations may also be established within the Catholic church, but these organizations have very limited scope, are usually not encouraged, and are excluded from the authority of the church at-large.

### **REFUTATION:**

The Roman Catholic structure is unlike that of the New Testament church. Here is the organization of Christ’s church:

#### **1) Christ as head**

See the following texts: Ephesians 1:22-23; Ephesians 5:23; Colossians 1:18.

(a) Since there is only one body (Ephesians 4:4), the church (Ephesians 1:22-23), there ought to be just one head. A body with two heads is an abnormality.

(b) When Jesus ascended to heaven, He did not vacate his position as head of the church. He says, “I am with you always until the end of the ages” (cf. Mark 16:19-20; Matthew

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<sup>308</sup> MEPS 2005, art. “Roman Catholic Church.”

<sup>309</sup> MEPS 2005, art. “Roman Catholic Church.”

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28:19-20). A church having a head that gets replaced when he dies is not the restored church.

(c) The head of the body saves the body (Ephesians 5:23). Saving a church is something no pope of Rome nor any human being could do.

(d) The head of the body owns the body, since he actually paid for it (Acts 20:28). The pope of Rome did not die on the cross and shed his blood for the church. He does not own the church.

(e) The word “pope” is from the Latin “papa,” which means “father.” Christ prohibits his disciples from calling anyone “Father” as a religious title (Matthew 23:8-9).

(f) Catholic writings admit the Catholic Church has been wresting the Scriptures: (1) “Some parts of the governmental system of the Catholic Church are of divine origin, and many of them are human institutions.”<sup>310</sup> (2) “Writers of the fourth century were prone to describe many practices as Apostolic institutions which certainly had no claim to be so regarded.”<sup>311</sup> (3) “One is forced to admit that the gradual corruption of Christianity began very early.”<sup>312</sup>

(g) *Catholic Facts* says, “If it be not identical in belief, in government, etc., with the primitive Church, then it is not the Church of Christ.”<sup>313</sup> Indeed, the Roman Catholic Church is not the Church of Christ. Their statement that “at the end of the fifth century, the Roman Church was completely organized,”<sup>314</sup> is an admission that the Roman Church as an organization that we know of today was unknown before the fifth century.

Under Jesus Christ are both the temporary and permanent offices. See below.

## 2) The Apostles

See these texts: Luke 6:13-16; Matt. 10:2-4; Acts 1:26; 1 Cor. 15:9; Acts 14:14.

Temporary officers of the church at-large include the apostles<sup>315</sup> and the prophets. We use the term “temporary” to describe their gift that once was but is no more.

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<sup>310</sup> *Externals of the Catholic Church*, p. 19; quoted by O. C. Lambert, 1:61.

<sup>311</sup> *Catholic Encyclopedia*, 3:484; quoted by O. C. Lambert, 1:61.

<sup>312</sup> *Catholic Encyclopedia*, 12:414; quoted by O. C. Lambert, 1:61.

<sup>313</sup> *Catholic Facts*, p. 27; quoted by O. C. Lambert, 1:64.

<sup>314</sup> *Catholic Encyclopedia*, 9:61; quoted by O. C. Lambert, 1:65.

<sup>315</sup> Gr. *apostoloi*, singular *apostolos*, from *apostello*, “a compound of *stello*, put up, make ready, and the prep. *apo*, from, away, back, means send (both persons and things), send away, chase away, send off. Where delegation for a particular purpose is involved, the cause of sending is often particularly stressed. Since the envoy has full powers and is the personal representative of the one sending him, a close connection is established between the sender and the recipient... *apostolos* is derived from *apostello* first as a verbal adj. then as a noun. It is first found in maritime language, where it means a cargo ship, or the fleet sent out (Dem.). Later it denoted a commander of a naval expedition, or a band of colonists sent overseas... Only in

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(a) The apostles, together with the prophets, are the in the foundation with Jesus (Ephesians 2:20). Foundation of what? Of God's temple on earth (Ephesians 2:21), which is the household of God (Ephesians 2:19), or the church (1 Timothy 3:15).

(b) Apostles are "ambassadors" for Jesus (such is the meaning of the word "apostle").<sup>316</sup> In two instances, the apostle Paul uses the word "ambassador" to refer to the apostolic office (2 Corinthians 5:20; Ephesians 6:20).

(c) Christ gave the apostles the keys of the kingdom—which includes the commission to preach (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16), and the power to forgive sins (Matthew 16:19; Matthew 18:18).

(d) Christ promised them inspiration (John 16:13; 14:26; 15:26; Acts 1:8). Filled with God's Spirit, they preached the message with great power (Acts 4:33; Acts 5:12; Acts 2:43).

(f) What are the qualifications of the one who could be an apostle, or who could succeed an apostle? See **Acts 1:20-22, 24**.

(1) Firstly, His succession must be based on a prophecy [v. 20<sup>317</sup>]. There was a prophecy that says Judas would be replaced.

(2) Secondly, the candidate for apostleship must be one who has accompanied Jesus and the other apostles [v. 21<sup>318</sup>]. Of his association with Jesus and the apostles, the terminus a quo (or starting point) is "from the baptism of John" [v. 22a<sup>319</sup>]; the terminus ad quem is "unto that same day that He was taken up from us" [v. 22b<sup>320</sup>]. He who has not seen Jesus, or has not been with Jesus and the other apostles, could not qualify. In the first sense, Paul qualifies because he has seen the resurrected Christ; in the second Matthias qualifies because he has been with the apostolic group.

(3) Thirdly, He is a witness of Christ's resurrection [v. 22c<sup>321</sup>]. Apostles are witnesses of what they have seen and heard. In this sense, Paul and Matthias both meet the qualifications.

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two passages in Hdt. does *apostolos* mean envoy or emissary as a single person... Josephus uses the word for a group sent on a mission... All its usages have two ideas in common: (a) an express commission, and (b) being sent overseas..." (Colin Brown, 1:126).

<sup>316</sup> In Herodotus, an *apostolos* means an envoy or emissary who has full powers and is the personal representative of the one sending him; Josephus uses the word for a group sent on a mission. All its usages have two ideas in common: (a) an express commission, and (b) being sent overseas (Colin Brown, 1:126).

<sup>317</sup> Acts 1:20, "For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: and his bishoprick let another take." (KJV).

<sup>318</sup> Acts 1:21, "Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us" (KJV).

<sup>319</sup> Acts 1:22a, "Beginning from the baptism of John..." (KJV).

<sup>320</sup> Acts 1:22b, "unto that same day that he was taken up from us..." (KJV).

<sup>321</sup> Acts 1:22c, "must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection." (KJV).



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(4) Fourthly, He must be divinely chosen [v. 24<sup>322</sup>].

These are the qualifications. For which reason we say that Catholic popes and bishops, as well as Mormon apostles, do not qualify as apostles. Since they don't qualify, we say they are bogus apostles.

(g) What happens to the office upon the death of the man? The function of an apostle, that of revealing God's will, seems to be co-terminus with his life. **Acts 1:20-24**, the passage we have just quoted, mentions the special qualifications required of the one who would replace a dead apostle. It is the only incident of an apostle being replaced. There has been no other. *The qualifications are too stringent that today no one, definitely no one, could ever fill the office.* Hence, we may conclude that at death, the church's apostolic and prophetic foundations remain permanently embedded, buried, as any foundation of the old building should be (cf. Ephesians 2:20-22<sup>323</sup>). **They are never replaced.** Replace the old foundations, like one does as a Catholic church or as a Mormon church, and you have a new building, a new church, which is not the church of Jesus.

### 3) The Prophets

See the following texts: 1 Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 2:20; Acts 11:27-28; Acts 13:1; Acts 15:32.

(a) The prophets were inspired men (2 Peter 1:21),<sup>324</sup> and were the agents by whom God revealed His will.<sup>325</sup>

(b) Like the apostles, the prophets (as well as evangelists, pastors and teachers) are set in the church, for the edification of the body and for perfecting of the saints (Ephesians 4:11-13).

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<sup>322</sup> Acts 1:24-25, "And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen, That he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place." (KJV).

<sup>323</sup> Ephesians 2:20-22, "And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." (KJV).

<sup>324</sup> Gr. *prophetes*, singular, lit. one who speaks forth; a noun made up of the prefix *pro*, which as a temporal adv. has the meaning of before, in advance, and the stem *phe-* to say, to proclaim, which always has a religious connotation. "This may suggest the meaning: one who predicts, one who tells beforehand." The Hebrew word for prophet, *nabi*, "is usually derived from the Akkad. vb. *nabu*, to call, to proclaim" (Colin Brown, 3:74, 77).

<sup>325</sup> Prophetic pronouncements, revealed to the prophet, are "aimed at correcting a person's behaviour in view of events that may be expected" (Colin Brown, 3:76). "Especially before the exile, it was the task of the prophets to warn the people, their representatives or a group of the people about the approaching judgment. This could take various forms, such as droughts, earthquakes and wars. Since, however, the prophets were also responsible for exhorting and counseling the people, and preached with a view to repentance, the threat was accompanied by an explanation of the reason for judgment. Thus, the judgment comes about because of the sin of the nation, of the king, or of the group within the nation. For the prophets, sin is human behaviour which is out of accord with the actions of God" (Colin Brown, 3:79).

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(c) In the New Testament, there has been no example of any one of them being replaced. Again, it looks like the office is co-terminus with the life of the man who holds the office.

(d) The Bible says that both the apostles and prophets are in the foundation of the house of God, with Jesus Himself as the chief cornerstone (Ephesians 2:20). As an apostle, Peter is in the foundation, but the Catholic Church has replaced Peter! Jesus is the chief cornerstone, but they too have replaced Jesus.<sup>326</sup>

### 4) The Bishops

(a) Their qualifications are mentioned in 1 Timothy 3:1-7<sup>327</sup> and Titus 1:5-9.<sup>328</sup>

(b) They are called elders (cf. Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5) because they are older men.<sup>329</sup>

(c) They are called bishops (cf. Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:1; Titus 1:7) because their job is to oversee the church.<sup>330</sup>

(d) They are called pastors<sup>331</sup> because their job is to feed, to shepherd, the flock of God. (cf. Acts 20:28)<sup>332</sup>

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<sup>326</sup> 1 Corinthians 3:11, "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (KJV).

<sup>327</sup> 1 Timothy 3:1-7, "This is a true saying, If a man desires the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil." (KJV).

<sup>328</sup> Titus 1:5-9, "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee: If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly. For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; but a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers." (KJV).

<sup>329</sup> Elder, Gr. *presbuteros*, older, elder, presbyter. "The group of words probably first signified older in comparison with others; then, of greater importance...Finally, it meant more honoured. In the order of society the elders receive respect and authority on the ground of their experience and wisdom" (Colin Brown, 1:192).

<sup>330</sup> Bishop, Gr. *episkopos*, overseer, guardian, bishop, governor. "This group of words is formed from the root *skep-* with prefix *epi-* and denotes the activity of looking at or paying attention to a person or thing. *skopeo* suggests the continuing recurring character of such action." Jesus is also called Bishop or Guardian (1 Pet. 2:25) (Colin Brown, 1:188, 191).

<sup>331</sup> Pastor, Gr. *poimen*, shepherd, herdsman. "An Indo-European word (cf. Lithuanian *piemuo*) frequently used in metaphorical senses: leader, ruler, commander (Homer, Plato). It is also used as an alternative for *nomeus*, law-giver. *poimaino* means to be a shepherd, tend (act. and mid.); metaphorically, care for. *poimen* or *poimnion* is the herd, particularly the flock of sheep" (Colin Brown, 3:564).

<sup>332</sup> From Miletus, Paul sent for the elders of the church of Ephesus (Acts 20:17), and in verse 28, he told them to "take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock [Gr. *poimnion*], over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers [Gr. *episkopos*, bishops], to feed [Gr. *poimainein*, to shepherd] the church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood" (KJV).

## 07 The Hierarchical Structure of the Roman Catholic Church

(e) Bishops or pastors are to be appointed only they have met the qualifications. Some think this rule is stringent. But Paul, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, says, “A bishop MUST BE...” (1 Timothy 3:2).

### 5) The Deacons

Deacons are servants or ministers.<sup>333</sup> They, however, are mentioned with elders in Philippians 1:1, and their qualifications are enumerated after that of the elders’ (1 Timothy 3:8-13). Which would mean that they are a class unto themselves, a group of servants who minister to the needs of the church (cf. Acts 6:1-6).

### 6) Evangelists

(a) These are preachers of the gospel, or ministers who function as heralds or harbingers of good news.<sup>334</sup>

(b) Philip, one of the seven deacons in the church in Jerusalem, migrated to Ceasarea and became an evangelist (Acts 21:8).

(c) Timothy was never called a “pastor” but an evangelist (2 Timothy 4:5).

(d) Evangelists are mentioned as one of God’s gifts to the church (Ephesians 4:11).

### 7) Members

They are the baptized believes or Christians who are not holding any position like the ones mentioned above.

(a) We are one body but many members (Romans 12:4-5; 1 Cor. 12:12).

(b) We are many members but one body (1 Cor. 12:20).

(c) We are the body of Christ and members in particular (I Cor. 12:27).

(d) We are members of His body, of His flesh, of His bones (metaphorically speaking) (Ephesians 5:30).

(e) God sets the members in the one body as it pleases Him (I Cor. 12:18).

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<sup>333</sup> Deacon, Gr. *diakonos*, servant, deacon. “Basic in secular Gk. are: (a) to wait at table; this is expanded to (b) care for household needs and from this to the general meaning (c) to service generally” (Colin Brown, 3:545). *Diakonos* is found 29 times in the NT. Its primary meaning is the one who serves at table (Matt. 22:13), a servant in a wider sense (Matt. 20:26), a servant of the new covenant (2 Cor. 3:6), a servant of righteousness (2 Cor. 11:15), a servant of Christ (2 Cor. 11:23), a servant of God (2 Cor. 6:4), a servant of the gospel (Eph. 3:7), or a servant of the church (Col. 1:25) (Colin Brown, 3:546).

<sup>334</sup> Evangelist, Gr. *euangelistes*, proclaimer of glad tidings, preacher of the gospel, evangelist. It “is a term for one who proclaims the *euangelion*. This word, which is very rare in non-Christian literature but common enough in early Christian writings, is found in the NT at Acts 21:8... Eph. 4:11...and in 2 Tim. 4:5. In these three passages the evangelist is distinguished from the apostle. This is especially obvious in the case of the evangelist Philip, whose activity has to be ratified by the apostles Peter and John...” (Colin Brown, 2:107, 114).