

ALIVE IN CHRIST

GRADE 8

The Church

aliveinchrist.osv.com



Our Sunday Visitor

THE CHURCH



How is the Church an instrument of salvation through her teaching and missionary work?

CHURCH HISTORY TIMELINE

- 33 The Holy Spirit appears at Pentecost
- 35 Saint Paul's conversion
- 1565 St. Augustine, Florida becomes first Catholic presence in America
- 1769 Junipero Serra establishes the first of the California missions

Go to page 348 for more



© Our Sunday Visitor

Our Catholic Tradition

- The Church continues the mission Christ gave to his Apostles. She continues to teach the truth of Christ through the Magisterium—the Pope, and bishops in union with him, guided by the Holy Spirit. (CCC, 890)
- As members of the Church, we are called to proclaim the Good News of Christ to the world. We are called to share in the missionary work of the Church. (CCC, 942)
- All baptized Catholics are called to share in Jesus' ministry as Priest, Prophet, and King to serve the mission of the Church, but there are different roles in serving. These roles help the Church as she seeks to unite all people. (CCC, 783)

Our Catholic Life

- The faith we profess in the Creeds is the faith we celebrate in the liturgy, live out by following God's will for us, and strengthen through prayer. (CCC, 26, 1064)
- The Church is universal, going out to the whole world, welcoming people of all cultures and ages. (CCC, 868)
- Members of religious orders consecrate their lives as a sign of God's love and holiness and serve an important part of the Church's mission. (CCC, 916)

The Church Is Apostolic

Let Us Pray

Leader: Father of us all, may your Spirit guide us as we reach out to others and serve in your name.

“I sing of mercy and justice;
to you, LORD, I sing praise.” **Psalm 101:1**

All: Lord, teach us.

Scripture

“They devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles and to the communal life, to the breaking of the bread and to the prayers. Awe came upon everyone, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles.” **Acts 2:42-43**

A missionary priest in Cambodia



Have you ever thought...

- How are things we think and do today as a Church connected to people from the past?
- Why should we care about what people in the Church believed long ago?

Getting Started

In this chapter, you will explore how the Catholic Church traces her authority, leadership, and teaching back to Christ and his Apostles. You will also learn about the role of ordained ministers in carrying on the work of the Apostles.

Catholic Faith Words

- Pope
- Apostolic Succession
- Magisterium
- infallible
- Nicene Creed

Ordained Ministry in the Church

Fill in the chart with the ordained minister who leads and/or serves the Church in the manner described.



The _____ leads the _____.



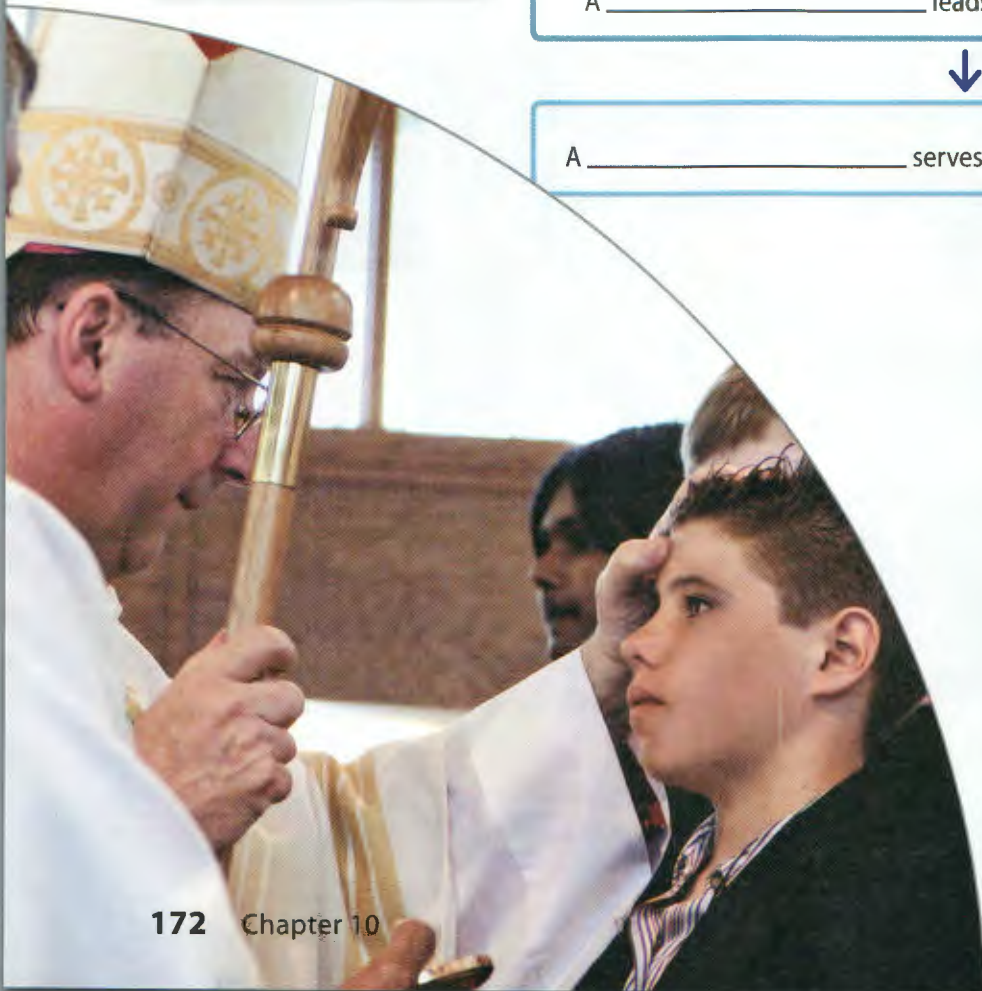
A _____ leads a _____.



A _____ leads a _____.



A _____ serves in a _____.



IDENTIFY AND DESCRIBE

Traditions Passed On The earliest Christian communities established new rituals and traditions following Jesus' command to baptize, teach, and celebrate the Eucharist.

List some traditions that have been passed on in your school, family, and parish.



Then, in each category above, circle the ones that seem most important to you.
Describe how you know about these traditions.

What do you know about their origins?



Upon This Rock

How has the Catholic Church kept the faith of Jesus after so many centuries?

People like to follow traditions that have been passed down from generation to generation. Maybe it makes us feel connected to the people who came before us, or helps us see that we are part of something important.

Or, it might be that following the tradition identifies us as a group. Many things identify us as Catholics. Catholics make the Sign of the Cross. We do not eat meat on the Fridays of Lent and are asked to make a sacrifice every Friday of the year. While these are some of the traditions of the Catholic Church, we use the word Tradition to mean something even more vital. It refers to Sacred Tradition, the teaching handed on to us from Jesus and his Apostles. It is sacred because it is one source of the Word of God. Although some of our practices may have changed since Jesus

called his first disciples, the Catholic Church has always proclaimed the same Gospel handed on to us from Jesus and his Apostles.

Peter the Apostle

As Jesus began his public life, he called many followers. From among those disciples, he chose twelve men to be his Apostles. He taught them everything he could. He sent them out to share in his mission to tell others the Good News he brought, and to build up God's Kingdom. Jesus gave his Apostles and their successors the authority to act in his name.

Jesus chose the Apostle Simon, who was a fisherman, to be the leader of the Apostles and his Church. Jesus gave him the name "Peter." This was a play on words—the word *Peter* means "rock."



Scripture

"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 16:18–19**

Once Jesus ascended to Heaven to be with the Father, he was no longer visible to us. So he gave the Church a visible head, Saint Peter, who was his Vicar, or representative on Earth. Jesus formed the Apostles into a permanent gathering or assembly (also called a "college"), which together leads the Church. The authority given to that college of Apostles with Peter at its head has stayed with the Church ever since.

Leaders of the Church

All of the Apostles, along with Mary, were present on the day of Pentecost. Their successors, the Pope and bishops, are present to lead the Church today.

The **Pope** is the successor to Saint Peter as bishop of Rome and as the leader of the entire Catholic Church. He is also called the “Vicar of Christ,” the Church’s visible head. Another title the Pope has received from Saint Peter is “Pastor of the universal Church.” Jesus not only gave Peter authority over the Church, but he also told Peter to be a pastor, or shepherd, and to “feed my sheep” (**John 21:17**).

Jesus gave all his twelve Apostles authority to lead the Church under Saint Peter. This authority has been handed down directly from the Apostles to the Pope and bishops of the Church today. This is called **Apostolic Succession**.

We can trace the leadership of the Church all the way back to Jesus, Saint Peter, and the other Apostles. As the Apostles traveled to spread the Gospel, they appointed other leaders to continue the work Jesus had given them. From the Apostles to the Pope and bishops today, the Holy Spirit has helped us to know the truth that Jesus came to reveal through his life, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension. We call that truth the Sacred Tradition of the Church—the truth that guides the decisions of each member of the Catholic Church.

Catholic Faith Words

Pope the successor of Peter, the bishop of Rome, and the head of the entire Catholic Church

Apostolic Succession the term used to describe that the authority to lead and teach the Church can be traced through the centuries from the Apostles to their successors, the Pope and bishops

IDENTIFY

Read the parable in Matthew 7:24–27. Do you think Jesus might have had this parable in mind when he called Peter a “Rock”? What kinds of floods and storms has the Church had to endure?

What qualities do you think Church leaders need today?



Teaching from the Apostles

Where do the Church's teachings come from?

Our Sacred Tradition starts with Jesus. After his Resurrection and Ascension, Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to continue teaching the Apostles. Everything Jesus entrusted to them, the Apostles handed down to the whole Church by their preaching and writing. Until Christ returns at the end of time, the Church faithfully hands down his teachings to all generations.

The teaching office of the Church is the Pope and all of the bishops in union with him. The **Magisterium** has the teaching authority to interpret the Word of God found in Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition. To this day, the college of bishops, in union with the Pope as bishop of Rome, makes up the authentic teachers who pass on the faith to the People of God and make pronouncements on moral questions.

The most important teachings from the Church are **infallible**, free from error. That is, when the Pope, as head of the



Catholic Faith Words

Magisterium the teaching office of the Church, which is all of the bishops in union with the Pope. The Magisterium has the teaching authority to interpret the Word of God found in Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition.

infallible the quality of being free from error. A teaching is infallible when the Pope, as head of the Magisterium, speaks officially on a matter of faith or morals that is to be believed by everyone in the Church.

Nicene Creed a summary of foundational truths about the Holy Trinity, the Church, and eternal life. We usually say the Nicene Creed at Mass.

Magisterium, speaks officially on a matter of faith or morals that is to be believed by everyone in the Church, his teaching is infallible. This infallibility also extends to the full body of bishops when they teach, in union with the Pope, about faith and morals, most especially in ecumenical councils. We can trust that it comes from Christ because he has handed on his teaching authority and sent the guidance of the Holy Spirit to the Pope and bishops today through the ages from the Apostles. This is why one of the Marks of the Church is that she is **apostolic**.

Creeds

From the beginning of the Church, believers have professed their faith using summaries called creeds. We have two main creeds, the Apostles' Creed you already studied, and the **Nicene Creed**. The Nicene Creed was written at the Council of Nicaea in A.D. 325. The Council of Constantinople added even more detail to the Creed later, in A.D. 381. We profess the Creed at Sunday Mass.

Pope Francis meets with bishops of the Italian Episcopal conference.

WHERE IT HAPPENED

Why is the Nicene Creed so much longer than the Apostles' Creed? At the time the Nicene Creed was written (A.D. 325), there were heresies (false teachings) being spread that Jesus was not really a man, but was God who made himself look like a man, and did not already exist as the second Divine Person of the Holy Trinity before he was born on Earth.

The Pope and bishops met together in several councils at Nicaea and Constantinople expressly to answer these heresies. They declared that Jesus Christ is both true God and true man. The councils wrote the Nicene Creed with very clearly defined details, which stated this belief once and for all.



Iznik, Turkey, formerly Nicaea

Unity Amid Diversity

The Christian churches of the world can be called a world Christian family. But not every Christian is a member of the Catholic Church. There are Christian faith communities that are not in union with the Pope, but they share some of the same important beliefs about Jesus. Only the Catholic Church contains all the teachings of Christ handed on directly to us from Peter and the Apostles to the Pope and the bishops. But we hope for and work toward unity among all Christians. We do this by praying together, discussing what we have in common, respecting one another, and learning more about what other Christians believe.

Of course, down through the ages, the Church has grown to be a worldwide community, and there is a lot of diversity in the ways people worship and express their

faith. However, all Churches in communion with the Pope and the Catholic Church are united by fidelity to Apostolic Tradition: they are in union with the Pope and bishops. They carry on the faith and the Seven Sacraments that came from Christ through his Apostles.

IDENTIFY

Name three truths of faith we profess in the Nicene Creed.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

The Work of the Apostles

How do ordained ministers continue the work of the Apostles?

As the Church grew, the Apostles ordained more bishops who later ordained priests, deacons, and more new bishops. The line of succession from the Apostles has never been broken. People still come to faith in Christ through the Pope, bishops, priests, and deacons.

Saint Paul reminds us that God wills that everyone be saved, but it cannot happen unless someone is sent to preach the Good News:



Scripture

“For ‘everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.’ But how can they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how can they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone to preach? And how can people preach unless they are sent?” **Romans 10:13–15**

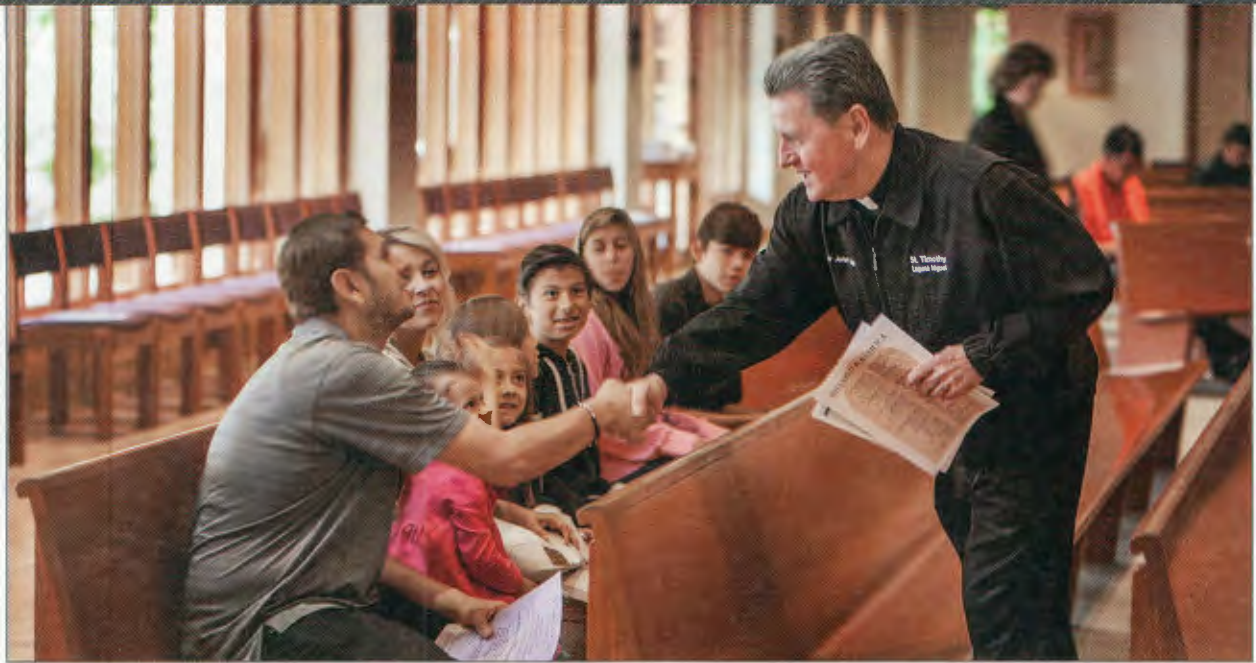
The Sacrament of Holy Orders is “the sacrament of apostolic ministry” (CCC, 1536). The mission Christ gave to his Apostles continues in the Church until the end of time through this Sacrament. We speak of orders, instead of just one order, because Holy Orders are conferred in three degrees: bishops, presbyters (priests), and deacons.

Bishops receive the fullness of the Sacrament of Holy Orders. A bishop was first ordained a deacon and then a priest. Under the authority of the Pope, he is the visible head of the particular Church entrusted to him.

The bishop is the chief teacher, shepherd, and priest for his particular Church, called a diocese. Each diocese is divided into smaller faith communities called parishes. The bishop acts as Christ’s representative.

Presbyters, or **priests**, belong to the second degree of Holy Orders. A priest can celebrate most of the Seven Sacraments; however, he cannot confer the Sacrament of Holy Orders. Under certain circumstances, a priest can confirm.





© Our Sunday Visitor

Priests share the dignity of priesthood with their bishops, but they also depend on the bishops to delegate them to act as priests in the diocese. Priests are called to be the bishops' co-workers. Each priest receives the charge of a parish or some other ministry.

Deacons belong to the third degree of Holy Orders. A deacon is ordained for tasks of service to the Church. They have a special role in the ministry of the Word (Scripture), the worship of the Church, works of charity and service, and outreach to the community. A deacon can preside at the Sacrament of Baptism and witness at Matrimony.

All three roles are necessary for the Catholic Church's mission to be carried out.

> **What would be missing if we didn't have each of these orders today?**

INTERVIEW

Does your own parish have a full-time pastor or does your parish share a pastor with another parish? Do you have more than one priest in your parish? Make a list of the ways priests serve your parish. Write a question you would like to ask your priest about his role.

IN SUMMARY Catholics Believe

The Church is apostolic, continuing the mission Christ gave to his Apostles.

- Jesus named Peter to be head of his Church and gathered the rest of the Apostles as a united "college" to help lead it. The Pope is the direct successor of Peter as head of the Church, and the bishops are direct successors of the Apostles.
- The Church continues to teach the truth of Christ and his Church through the Magisterium—the Pope, and bishops in union with him, guided by the Holy Spirit.
- Particular Churches, or dioceses, are led by bishops, who appoint priests to be pastors and deacons to perform important works of service.

Our Catholic Life

The **Nicene Creed** is a summary of the foundational truths of the Catholic faith. In it, we profess our belief in the Triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—and we proclaim that belief at Mass every Sunday throughout the world. The proclamation of the Nicene and Apostles' Creeds are two of the many elements of the Catholic Church. We end the Nicene Creed with "Amen," which, in Hebrew, has the same root word as "believe." By saying "Amen," we are saying God is faithful to us and we trust in him and his faithfulness. We will celebrate our "I believe" by participating in the liturgy, and live it out by following God's will for us, and strengthen it by praying.

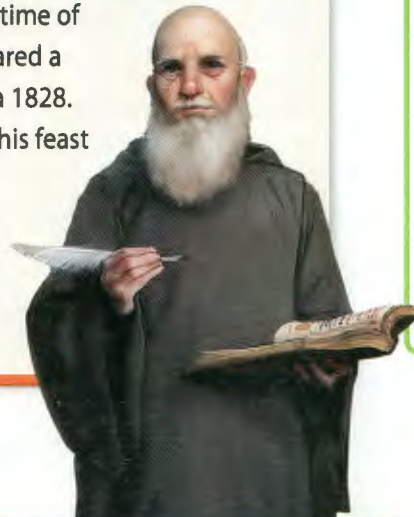


> What part of the Nicene Creed speaks to you the most? Why?

People of Faith

Saint Peter Damian, 1007–1072

Peter Damian was a Benedictine monk in Ravenna, Italy, who saw ordinary people and Church officials engaged in practices that violated Church principles. He lashed out at corrupt practices, and defended celibacy at a time when many priests and bishops were married and had families. He preferred a monastic life, but Peter's intelligence made several Popes ask for his help. He resolved disputes among clergy and helped keep the Church intact during a time of schism. Peter was declared a Doctor of the Church in 1828. The Church celebrates his feast day on **February 21**.



For more, go to
aliveinchrist.osv.com

LIST

Obtain a copy of your parish bulletin or visit your parish or diocesan website. What does it tell you about the universal Church?

What does it tell you about your bishop or diocese?



Prayer of Petition

Leader: Let us take this time to allow the Holy Spirit to enter our hearts.

All: Lord, lead us as children of light.

Reader 1: Father of us all,
through your Son, Jesus,
you called friends and disciples,
servants and teachers,
to spread your Word,
your Good News, and your mission.

We want to be called
to reach out to others
and serve in your name.

All: Lord, lead us as children of light.

Reader 2: Lord,
through those Saints and leaders
who have gone before us,
your story continues
to heal, to teach, to spread hope
through all the world.
We want to be called
to keep sharing the message of your love
and your care.

All: Lord, lead us as children of light.

Reader 1: Father,
you have chosen us to be your “Church,”
a living, breathing,
spirit-filled community,
that challenges all
to live with passion and joy,
care and compassion,
and to spread the Good News
and hope that you bring meaning to life.

Call us to be like your Son, Jesus,
and all those who have followed him,
We ask this through your Son, Jesus,
our Lord. Amen.

All: Amen.

 *Sing or play “Go Light Your World”*



A Work with Words Circle the letter of the choice that best completes the sentence.

- When the Pope speaks officially on a matter of faith or morals that is to be believed by everyone in the Church, the teaching is ____, free from error.
 - apostolic
 - infallible
 - Papal law
 - Tradition
- The teaching office of the Church, which is all of the bishops in union with the Pope, is called the ____.
 - Magisterium
 - Tradition
 - Scriptures
 - Apostolic Succession
- The particular Church that is led by a bishop is called a ____.
 - vicar
 - presbyter
 - parish
 - diocese
- ____, or priests, belong to the second degree of Holy Orders.
 - Presbyters
 - Deacons
 - Bishops
 - Cardinals
- Because of ____, we can trace the leadership of the Church all the way back to Jesus, Saint Peter, and the Apostles.
 - Tradition
 - Scripture
 - Papal Infallibility
 - Apostolic Succession

B Check Understanding Complete each sentence with the correct term from the Word Bank.

cardinal	Pope
Nicene Creed	Tradition
presbyters	archbishop
Vicar of Christ	deacons

- The Pope, as the successor to Saint Peter and the leader of the entire universal Church, is called the _____.
- To this day, the bishops in union with the _____ are the authentic teachers who pass on the faith to the People of God and make pronouncements on moral questions.
- The _____ is a profession of faith in foundational truths about the Holy Trinity, the Church, and eternal life.
- Apostolic _____ unites all Churches in communion with the Pope and the Catholic Church.
- _____, who are ordained for tasks of service to the Church, belong to the third degree of Holy Orders.

C Make Connections On a separate sheet of paper, write a one-paragraph response to the question: What is the importance of Apostolic Succession to the Church?