

THE PAPACY

CCC 880

“When Christ instituted the Twelve, ‘he constituted them in the form of a college or permanent assembly, at the head of which he placed Peter, chosen from among them.’”

CCC 881

“The Lord made Simon alone, whom he named Peter, the ‘rock’ of his Church. He gave him the keys of his Church and instituted him shepherd of the whole flock.”

“The office of binding and loosing which was given to Peter was also assigned to the college of apostles united to its head.”

CCC 882

“The Pope, Bishop of Rome and Peter’s successor, ‘is the perpetual and visible source and foundation of the unity both of the bishops and of the whole company of the faithful.’”

“For the Roman Pontiff, by reason of his office as Vicar of Christ, and as pastor of the entire Church has full, supreme, and universal power over the whole Church, a power which he can always exercise unhindered.”

CCC 883

“The college or body of bishops has no authority unless united with the Roman Pontiff, Peter’s successor, as its head.”

CCC 936

“The Lord made Saint Peter the visible foundation of his Church. He entrusted the keys of the Church to him.”

“The Pope, Bishop of Rome and Peter’s successor, is ‘the perpetual and visible source and foundation of the unity both of the bishops and of the whole company of the faithful.’”

APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION

CCC 77

“In order that the full and living Gospel might always be preserved in the Church the apostles left bishops as their successors.”

CCC 861

“In order that the mission entrusted to them might be continued after their death, the apostles consigned, by will and testament as it were, to their immediate co-workers the duty of completing and consolidating the work they had begun.”

CCC 862

“Just as the office which the Lord confided to Peter alone, as first of the apostles, is permanent and is to be transmitted to his successors, so also endures the office of the apostles to shepherd the Church.”

BISHOPS

CCC 1555

“Among the various ministries which have been exercised in the Church from the earliest times, the chief place, according to the witness of Tradition, is held by the office of those who, appointed to the episcopate, by a succession running from the beginning, are passers-on of the apostolic seed.”

CCC 1558

“Episcopal consecration confers, together with the office of sanctifying, also the offices of teaching and ruling.”

CCC 1560

“Each bishop has, as vicar and legate of Christ, the pastoral care of the particular Church entrusted to him.”

CCC 1594

“The bishop receives the fullness of the sacrament of Holy Orders which integrates him into the episcopal college and makes him the visible head of the particular Church entrusted to him.”

PRIESTS

CCC 1562

“Christ, whom the Father consecrated and sent into the world, has through his apostles made their successors, the bishops, sharers in his consecration and mission. The bishops have rightly entrusted in varying degrees various members of the Church with the office of their ministry.”

CCC 1564

“While being entrusted with a particular office in the ministry by the bishop, priests are united with one another in a sacramental brotherhood.”

CCC 1566

“It is in the Eucharistic cult or in the Eucharistic assembly of the faithful that priests exercise in a supreme degree their sacred office.”

CCC 1595

“Priests are united with the bishops in sacerdotal dignity and at the same time depend on them in the exercise of their pastoral functions.”

DEACONS

CCC 1569

“At a lower level of the hierarchy are to be found deacons, who receive the imposition of hands ‘not unto the priesthood, but unto a ministry of service.’”

CCC 1570

“Deacons share in Christ’s mission and grace in a special way.”

CCC 1596

“Deacons are ministers ordained for tasks of service of the Church.”

THE HIERARCHICAL STRUCTURE OF THE CHURCH

CCC 874

“Christ is himself the source of ministry in the Church. He instituted the Church. He gave her authority and mission, orientation and goal.”

CCC 875

“How are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without a preacher? And how can men preach unless they are sent?”

CCC 876

“The intrinsically collegial and communal character of the ordained ministry is manifested without delay in the relationship between the college of bishops and its head, the successor of Saint Peter.”

CCC 877

“Likewise, it is fitting that each bishop exercise his ministry in communion with the whole Church.”

CCC 896

“The Good Shepherd ought to be the model and ‘form’ of the bishop’s pastoral office.”

CARDINALS, PATRIARCHS, MONSIGNORS

The Catechism does not substantially discuss cardinals, monsignors, or patriarchs as distinct offices in the way it discusses bishops, priests, and deacons.

However:

Cardinals are senior clergy appointed by the Pope, principally to assist him and to elect a new Pope.

Patriarchs in the Eastern Catholic Churches are major heads of ancient apostolic sees.

Monsignor is an honorary title granted by the Pope to certain priests.

These are ecclesiastical dignities or offices developed historically and canonically, rather than ranks established directly in sacramental theology. The Catechism therefore focuses primarily on Holy Orders: bishop, priest, and deacon.

PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT SUMMARY PASSAGES

If you want the strongest concise citations on the papacy and hierarchy, these are the core texts:

CCC 77

CCC 861–862

CCC 874–877

CCC 880–883

CCC 936

CCC 1555–1560

CCC 1569–1570

CCC 1594–1596