

Lesson 6: Hierarchy of the Catholic Church

Please click twice to watch the video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cHEzyxxlktY>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CUiZpMLqA70>

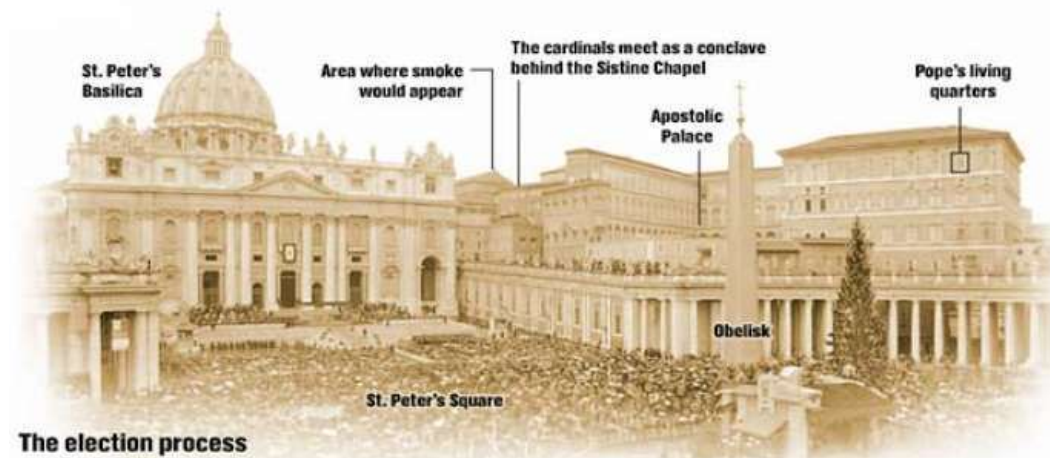
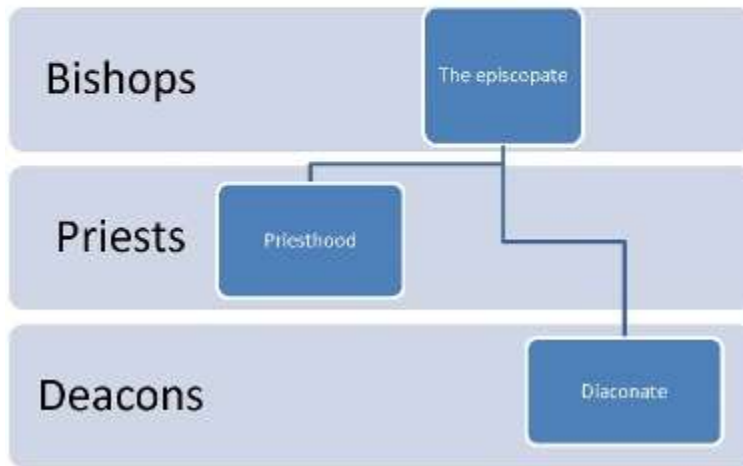
There is a set hierarchy in the Roman Catholic Church which has many levels. Starting from the **bottom** this is the order:

1. **Laity:** the body of religious worshippers, as distinguished from the clergy.
2. **Deacon:** A transitional deacon is a seminarian studying for the priesthood. A permanent deacon can be married and assists a priest by performing some of the sacraments.
3. **Priest:** An ordained minister who can administer most of the sacraments, including the Eucharist, baptism, and marriage. They take care of all the big day-to-day duties in their churches, from leading Mass to hearing confessions. He can be with a particular religious order or a diocesan priest.
 - Vicar General: They are priests who help the bishop govern the local churches.
4. **Bishop:** A bishop, like a priest, is ordained to this station. He is a teacher of church doctrine, a priest of sacred worship, and a minister of church government. The bishop – and archbishop – take charge of the churches in their respective geographical areas, called dioceses.
5. **Archbishop:** An archbishop is a bishop of a main or metropolitan diocese, also called an archdiocese. A cardinal can concurrently hold the title.
6. **Cardinal:** Appointed by the pope. As a body, it advises the pope and, on his death, elects a new pope.
7. **Pope:** Head of the Church, he is based at the Vatican. The pope is infallible in defining matters of faith and morals.



Hierarchy of Order

(by Divine institution)



The election process

- 1 Traditionally, each cardinal votes four times a day, twice in the morning and twice in the afternoon, until they reach a two-thirds majority. The votes are read aloud before the assembly.
- 2 If this majority is not reached, the ballots – which are destroyed after every vote – are burned in a way to create a black smoke.
- 3 Crowds gathered in St. Peter's Square witness the election's progress. If voting continues to be unsuccessful for 10 days, the cardinals may agree to a simple majority vote — half plus one.
- 4 When a majority is reached, the new pope chooses a name and the final ballots are burned in a way to make white smoke, signaling a successful election.
- 5 The camerlengo announces on the balcony of the Vatican; "Habeum papam!" ("We have a pope!") and the new pontiff appears and gives his blessing to the waiting world.

Heirarchy of the Roman Catholic Church



JOHN BLANCHARD / The Chronicle