

FAITH CHAT

with James & John

Whom Did Jesus Call To Shepherd His Church?

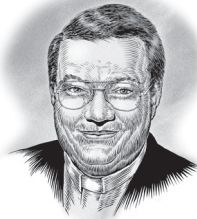
Know This...

Every family or organization, regardless of its size, is guided by a visible leader. The Pope, who is the successor to Peter, is the visible leader of the Church. Jesus called Himself the Good Shepherd and said, "A good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep." Before Jesus ascended into heaven He gave Peter His shepherd's staff. From that moment on, Peter and his successors have been the shepherds of the Christian sheep-fold.



John: A good shepherd knows each of his sheep and calls each by name. A shepherd dedicates his life to guarding and protecting his flock. Jesus did this throughout His earthly ministry. Peter and his successors have imitated our Lord.

James: We are not as vulnerable as sheep, but like sheep we can go astray. So we need a shepherd. The Pope is the visible shepherd we are called to follow. Like Jesus, the Pope will give his life for his flock.

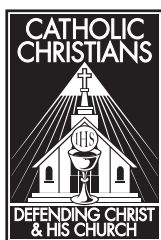


John: Jesus gave specific authority and responsibility to Peter and his successors: the authority to render binding decisions on all believers; the authority to declare who is or who is not in communion with the Church; the authority to speak for God through His Church; and the responsibility to feed and tend the faithful.

James: The Papacy, like the Church, is a 2000 year old institution guided and protected by the Holy Spirit. The Papacy is the perpetual and visible source of unity for all the faithful.

Deacon John Beckmann and Deacon James Russell are permanent deacons in the Archdiocese of St. Louis.

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Jesus said to the crowds and to His disciples, "The scribes and Pharisees sit on Moses' seat; so practice and observe whatever they tell you, but not what they do; for they preach, but do not practice." Mt 23:1-3 After His resurrection, Jesus entrusted Peter with

the care of His Church. "When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, 'Simon, Son of John, do you love me more than these?' He said to Him, 'Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.' He said to him, 'Feed my lambs.' He then said to him a second time, 'Simon, Son of John, do you love me?' He said to him, 'Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.' He said to him, 'Tend my sheep.' He said to him the third time, 'Simon, Son of John, do you love me?' Peter was distressed that He said to him a third time, 'Do you love me?' and he said to Him, 'Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.' Jesus said to him, 'Feed my sheep.'" Jn 21:15-17



"The Pope is the successor of St. Peter as Bishop of Rome and Supreme Pontiff of the universal Catholic Church. The Pope exercises a *primacy* of authority as Vicar of Christ and shepherd of the whole Church; he receives the divine assistance promised by Christ to the Church when he defines *infallibly* a doctrine of faith or morals... The Papacy is the supreme jurisdiction and ministry of the Pope as shepherd of the whole Church. As successor of St. Peter, and therefore Bishop of Rome and Vicar of Christ, the Pope is the perpetual and visible principle of unity in faith and communion in the Church." CCC Glossary "The Pope enjoys, by divine institution, 'Supreme, full, immediate, and universal power in the care of souls.'" CCC 937 (Vatican II, Christus Dominus, 2)

PAPA SAYS

After the ascension, Peter stood up in the midst of the Apostles and said, "My brothers, the scripture had to be fulfilled which the Holy Spirit spoke beforehand through the mouth of David, concerning Judas... He was numbered among us and was allotted a share in this ministry... For it is written in the Book of Psalms: 'Let his encampment become desolate, and may no one dwell in it.' And: 'May another take his office.' Therefore, it is necessary that one of the men who accompanied us the whole time the Lord Jesus came and went among us, beginning from the baptism of John until the day on which he was taken up from us, become with us a witness to his resurrection." Acts 1:16, 17, 20-21



Lord Jesus, You are the Good Shepherd who laid down Your life for me. You understand human nature and free will better than I do. You knew that I would sometimes stray from Your sheep-fold; so You instituted the Papacy to shepherd me on earth. I pray that I will always trust him whom the Holy Spirit selects as Pope. I pray that I will find the courage to accept and defend the authority and responsibility You gave him. I ask these prayers in Your Holy Name. Amen.

