

# The Apostolic Church

This phrase “Apostolic Church” means that the teachings of the early apostles, which they passed down to future generations, form the foundation of our church’s teachings to this day. Revelation, which comes from God, ended with the death of the last apostle.

While there are no new teachings, there can be new understandings of the Apostolic teachings. The church defines itself as *Apostolic*, emphasizing the concept of Apostolic succession. St Peter, erappointed by our Lord as the first leader of the Church—and the other apostles, entrusted the Apostolic teachings to their successors. This transmission of grace occurs through the laying on of hands performed by a bishop on a new bishop.

When a man is ordained as a bishop, three co-consecrators assert that this person is now entrusted with the responsibility of teaching and spreading the faith within the Church assigned to him. To further signify that the bishop can only teach the faith of the Church and not any other doctrines, the Gospel book is placed upon his head during the ordination.

This line of succession is believed to trace back to one of the apostles. For instance, the Ukrainian Church holds that St Andrew’s visit to Ukraine included the vision of a future Church among the hills. There’s no historical evidence or explicit claim that he ordained bishops in Ukraine. The idea of him ordaining Stachys as the first bishop of Byzantium is mentioned in some historical sources, but this refers to a different location.

The ordination by the apostles’ successors assure they have since passed on what they received. When a bishop is ordained to the episcopacy, he is granted the grace to ordain not only bishops, but priests and deacons; he can give what he has received. Therefore, a priest cannot ordain a bishop because he does not possess that

If you are really a lover of Church History, the line of Pope Leo is found in <https://catholic-hierarchy.org/bishop/bprevost.html> His lineage consists of: Antonio Cardinal Samorè † (1950), Clemente Cardinal Micara † (1920), Pietro Cardinal Gasparri † (1898), François-Marie-Benjamin Cardinal Richard de la Vergne † (1872), Archbishop Joseph Hippolyte Guibert, O.M.I. † (1842), Bishop St. Eugène-Charles-Joseph de Mazenod, O.M.I. † (1832), Carlo Cardinal Odescalchi, S.J. † (1823), Giulio Maria Cardinal della Somaglia † (1788), Hyacinthe-Sigismond (Jean-François) Cardinal Gerdil, † (1777), Cardinal-Priest of Santa Cecilia Marcantonio Cardinal Colonna (Jr.) † (1762). It continues with Pope Clement XIII—an interesting figure during his pontificate, which was largely defined by the pressure to suppress the Society of Jesus. Despite this, he emerged as a strong supporter and defender of the order during that time. He was also one of the few early popes who advocated for dialogue with Protestants and aimed to heal the rift between the Catholic Church and the Anglican Church in England, as well as with other Protestant communities in the Low Countries.

Pope Benedict XIV (1724) was a scholar who was always open to learning. He faced criticism for his interest in the arts and sciences alongside theology. His goal was to be all things to all people, and he never allowed anyone to leave his presence feeling dissatisfied, angry, or without being strengthened and refreshed by his wisdom. As Pope, he worked diligently to improve seminary education.

Pope Benedict XIII, who reigned from 1675, was recognized not for his administrative skills but for his ascetic lifestyle. He is notable for declaring that certain bones found belonged to St Augustine. Additionally, he canonized several saints, including Isidore the Farmer, Vincent de Paul, Aloysius Gonzaga, and Boris

transmission of grace from a bishop. The laying on of hands serves another purpose beyond transmitting the faith; it also signifies the union of the newly-ordained with the Church of the bishop who ordained him. Consequently, a man ordained to the diaconate or priesthood cannot change his allegiance to another diocese without agreement from both the releasing bishop and the receiving bishop.

The ordination to the diaconate designates a cleric to a particular Church or religious order. Pope Leo XIV was ordained as a deacon by Bishop Thomas Gumbleton on March 4, 1968. Later, he was consecrated on May 1, 1968, by Archbishop John Dearden of Detroit not as a cleric of the Archdiocese of Detroit—to serve in the Augustinian religious community, to which he had made vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience.

As noted earlier, bishops are successors to the Apostles, and this succession is carried out through the laying on of hands during the consecration of a new bishop. Pope Leo XIV was consecrated a bishop by Archbishop James Patrick Green, who was a priest of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia and worked in the Vatican’s Diplomatic Corps as the Apostolic Nuncio to Peru.

Tracing this path of succession, Archbishop Green was ordained to the episcopacy by Angelo Cardinal Sodano, who served as the Vatican Secretary of State and as Dean of the College of Cardinals. The co-consecrators were Bishop Jesús Moliné Labarte, Bishop Emeritus of Chiclayo and Archbishop Salvador Piñeiro García-Calderón Archbishop of Ayacucho o Huamanga.

Remembering the reading of Christ’s genealogy quoting Old Testament counting naming who “begat so and so, who begat so and so” and on and on, we can appreciate the concept of Apostolic succession.

and Hlib of Kyiv.

The line continues back:

Paluzzo Cardinal Paluzzi Altieri Degli Albertoni † (1666), Ulderico Cardinal Carpegna † (1630), Luigi Cardinal Caetani † (1622), Ludovico Cardinal Ludovisi † (1621), Archbishop Galeazzo Sanvitale † (1604), Girolamo Cardinal Bernerio, O.P. † (1586), Giulio Antonio Cardinal Santorio † (1566), Scipione Cardinal Rebiba † Titular Patriarch of Constantinople.

Benedict XIII, whose lineage can be traced back to Scipione Rebiba, personally consecrated at least 139 bishops for various important European sees, including those in Germany, France, England, and the New World. These bishops subsequently consecrated bishops in their respective countries, leading to the decline of other episcopal lineages. As a result, more than 90% of present-day bishops can trace their episcopal lineage back to Cardinal Rebiba through him.

The Apostolic Church is founded not on human beliefs but on scriptural teachings. To ensure that the apostles’ teachings would be preserved after their deaths, Paul instructed Timothy, “What you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others as well” (2 Timothy 2:2). Hebrews 6:1-3 provides insight into the doctrine of apostolic succession: “Therefore, let us leave the elementary doctrines of Christ and move on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of [1] repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, [2] instruction about ablutions (*i.e.*, baptisms), [3] the laying on of hands, [4] the resurrection of the dead, and [5] eternal judgment. And this we will do if God permits.”

Apostolic succession keeps our Church “Apostolic” preventing false teaching from growing in our Church.

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