

Pope facts for kids

Bishop of Rome
PONTIFEX MAXIMVS
Pope



Pope Francis in Rome, 2014.



Coat of arms

Location	
Ecclesiastical province	Ecclesiastical Province of Rome
Headquarters	Vatican City
Information	
Denomination	Catholic Church
Established	1st century
Cathedral	Archbasilica of Saint John Lateran
Governance	Holy See
Emeritus Bishops	Pope Benedict XVI
	
Reference style	His Holiness
Spoken style	Your Holiness



Statue of [Pope Sylvester I](#) before a church in [Pisa](#). He was the bishop of Rome 314–335

The Pope is the head of Catholic Church. His official title is the Bishop of Rome. He is the Chief of State of Vatican City and the head of the Catholic Bishops. The current Pope is Pope Francis. Popes are elected by Cardinals of the Catholic Church. Once they are elected they hold the position until they die or resign. Usually they do not resign, though; Pope Benedict XVI is the only Pope to resign in the last 500 years. A newly elected Pope chooses a special name. Everyone is told this new name when the *Habemus Papam* (a special speech) is read out. The current pope (Francis) was called Jorge Bergoglio before he became a pope.

The name *Pope* comes from the Greek word *pappas*, meaning "father". Catholics believe that when making speeches, that they are official statements teaching about faith and morals. The Pope is *infallible* - which means God will not allow his followers to be misled by allowing their leader to make a wrong statement (so the Pope is always correct). Popes today travel to a lot of countries around the world preaching. The Pope is the only person in the world who runs a country and a religion at the same time. Like other bishops he wears a big hat called a mitre and holds a staff called a crozier.