



Grades 9 -12 Resource Guide

WHAT IS THE MISSION OF THE POPE?

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The Office given uniquely by the Lord to St. Peter continues in the Bishop of Rome. He carries out his office of teaching, governing and sanctifying the universal Church. The other bishops of the Church are united with the Pope and assist him by carrying out the tasks of teaching, sanctifying and governing in local dioceses all the while in union with the Pope.

- *Office of Teaching*
The Pope preaches the Gospel to all people and ensures that the faith is authentically taught throughout the world. This is done through his encyclicals, apostolic letters, exhortations, addresses and homilies. He is the chief shepherd and all are entrusted to his care (Mt 28:19-20).
- *Office of Governing*
Governance of the universal Church is entrusted solely to the Pope as the successor of St. Peter. By virtue of his office as the Vicar of Christ and as pastor of the entire Church, the Pope possesses full, supreme, and universal power over the whole Church (Mt. 16:16-19). The Pope is the supreme legislator of the Church.
- *Office of Sanctifying*
By virtue of his office and through a special outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the Pope is entrusted with forming the People of God as a holy nation. Christ imparts his own holiness to the Church through the life of prayer, worship and the Sacraments. The Church's unity under the Holy Father is a sign of unity with Christ from whom holiness flows.

What Roles or Titles Does the Pope Have?

- Bishop of Rome
- Vicar of Christ on Earth
- Successor to St. Peter
- Holy Father
- Supreme Pontiff

- Servant of the Servants of God
- Head of the College of Bishops
- Primate of Italy
- Sovereign of the Vatican City State

What is the Focus of Pope Francis?

Among other things, Pope Francis has a particular focus on showing the mercy of God. He reminds us over and over that God loves us and that in his mercy he is always waiting to forgive us. Because bringing God's mercy to the world is so important to Pope Francis has called for a special Holy Year called "The Year of Mercy" to be celebrated from Dec. 8, 2015 to Nov. 20, 2016. Pope Francis is also challenging us to make the poor a priority. He says service is the most perfect way to show the love of God and grace in our hearts to the world.

Scriptural Passages:

- Apostles preaching and fellowship: Acts 2: 42-46
- Peter's confession about Jesus: Mt 16:13-18
- Jesus declares Peter "the rock" and gives him "the keys": Mt 16:18-20
- Washing of the disciples' feet: Jn 13:1-11
- "Feed my sheep" Peter with Jesus: Jn 21:15-19
- Choosing Judas's replacement: Acts 1:15-26
- Peter's preaching: Acts 3:11-26
- Peter's escape from prison: Acts 12:6-19

Suggested Activities:

- Show Power Point on the Universality of the Papacy
- Have the students research the following websites along with others to gather information on the papacy, apostolic succession, the apostolic see, the Holy See and Peter and the Papacy. Students can then make a Power Point on the information they have researched and/or report on the material in class.
 - <http://www.usccb.org/about/leadership/holy-see/index.cfm>
 - <http://www.catholic-hierarchy.org>
 - <https://www.ewtn.com/holysee/index.asp>
 - www.catholiceducation.org
 - <http://w2.vatican.va/content/vatican/en.html>
- Students can research various websites and find information on the pope and Vatican City. The websites below provide information on Vatican City, and how the city-state looks and develops. Teachers are encouraged to take the information provided and, through questioning and discussion, relate the universality of the papacy to the individual and show how the primacy of Peter is important for the functioning and teaching authority of the Church.
 - <http://www.vaticanstate.va/content/vaticanstate.html>

<http://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/europe/va.htm>
<http://w2.vatican.va/content/vatican/en.html>

- Begin the session with a brief summary on the institution of the papacy, role of the papacy in the life of the church, and the tasks of the papacy and the process of electing a pope using the Power Point materials provided and <http://www.catholic-pages.com/pope/election.asp>. Following the presentation, invite the youth to role play a papal conclave. Ask for volunteers to take on the role of Cardinals. Instruct the Cardinals to state their vision for the church and the youth of the world and then have the Cardinals vote for the next pope. Youths who do not serve as Cardinals pray for the success of the conclave.

Related Enrichment Resources:

- *Outreach ideas:*
<http://resources.crs.org/>
- *Vatican:*
www.vatican.va
<http://www.news.va/en>
<http://www.vaticanstate.va/content/vaticanstate.html>
- DVD: *National Geographic: Inside the Vatican*
 - This DVD provides a rare glimpse inside the secret archives and private chapels of the Vatican. Privileged accounts from Vatican officials, historians, and devoted individuals. (DVD can be purchased at www.nationalgeographic.com or, in some instances borrowed from a library.)
- *A list of popes:*
<http://www.catholic-hierarchy.org/bishop/spope0.html>
- *St. Peter:*
<http://www.ccel.org/s/schaff/encyc/encyc08/htm/ii.xiv.ii.htm>