

12. The individual members of the College of Bishops are each directly responsible for the pastoral care and governance of the Catholic Church within their own particular diocese (see below).
13. The College of Bishops acting as whole has juridical personality, meaning that it is recognised as a separate legal entity within canon law. The College of Bishops acting as a whole has supreme power over the entire Catholic Church, the Pope being the first amongst equals.
14. The College of Bishops meets very rarely (there have only been twenty meetings in the entire history of the Catholic Church). Only the Pope has the authority to call a meeting, which is known as an "Ecumenical Council". The last time that a meeting of the College of Bishops occurred was in 1962-1965. Prior to this there had not been a meeting since 1870.

Canon law

15. Canon law is the system of laws which governs the Catholic church. Laws are articulated in a code, known as the "Code of Canon Law." The current code is the 1983 Code of Canon Law. It superseded the 1917 Code of Canon Law, which was the first comprehensive codification of canon law in the Latin Church.

Bishops and Archbishops

16. Archbishops and bishops are appointed by the Pope. By choosing them the Pope appoints these men to have episcopal oversight over the faithful in the dioceses and whoever is the ordaining bishop bestows the episcopal power upon them, which comprises three elements: to teach, to sanctify and to govern (canon 375). No other members of the Catholic Church are endowed with the fullness of these tasks.
17. Under canon law, the Catholic Church is not a universal church *per se*. Rather, there are local manifestations of the Universal Church in the form of dioceses (see canon 369).