



## THE CHAIR OF PETER

February 22 is the celebration of the feast of the Chair of St. Peter. His real name was Simon but Jesus changed it to Peter which means "rock". Jesus said to him, "You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church" (Matthew 16:18).

St. Peter is set at the head in order to prepare the work that God was proposing - to raise all His building or Churches on that stone. Jesus Christ, who is the true Stone, strong of Himself to Simon, who became the rock by the strength which Jesus Christ imparts on him. It is to him that Christ speaks, and in speaking acts on him, and stamps upon him

His own immovableness.

This feast brings to mind the mission of teacher and pastor conferred by Christ on Peter, and continued in an unbroken line down to the present Pope. We celebrate the unity of the Church, founded upon the Apostle, and renew our assent to the magisterium of the Roman Pontiff, extended both to truths which are solemnly defined "ex cathedra" and to all the acts of the ordinary magisterium.

The feast of St. Peter's Chair at Rome reminds us that St. Peter started the Christian community in that city. The special chair is a symbol of the authority that was given to him by Jesus. Kings sat on thrones and ruled. Peter's chair is a symbol of his authority from Jesus to rule the Church.

St. Peter was martyred for the faith, but down through the ages there has always been a bishop of Rome. He is the pope. The pope rules the whole Church, as St. Peter did, in Jesus' name. We call the Holy Father as successor of St. Peter.

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