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**The meaning of  
Catholic  
Pontifex Maximus  
and  
Vicar of Christ**

(2019)

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Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

# Meaning of Catholic, Pontifex Maximus, and Vicar of Christ (Vicarius Christi).

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## THE MEANING OF CATHOLIC

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The word Catholic:

- Comes from the Greek word (katholikos), which means universal, it carries the following ideas, all-embracing, diverse, wide, and broad.
- It was first used to describe the Catholic Church in the early 2nd century to emphasize universal scope and reach of the Roman Papal Church.
- The Popes of the Roman Papal Church assume to themselves the position and title, Catholic the Mother of all churches and universal authority in all religious matters.
- Many Christians and non-Christians assume the word Catholic, refers to all believers in Jesus Christ, regardless of denomination, and of doctrines, traditions, and practises, but this is a mistaken idea, for the title, Catholic, refers to the Roman Catholic Papal Church only, and encompasses both East and West churches that embrace the major beliefs of the Papal Church.

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## THE MEANING OF PONTIFEX MAXIMUS

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**Pontifex:** means bridge-builder.

**Maximus:** means greatest.

**Pontifex Maximus** was originally the title of the high priest of the Ancient Roman College of Pontiffs which was the most important position in the ancient Roman religion. It gradually became politicized and beginning with Emperor Augustus was incorporated into the Imperial office and became one of the many titles of the Roman Emperors.

It was later adopted by the leader of the Roman Catholic Church, the Bishop of Rome, who is also known as the Pope. According to Catholic theology, the Pope is, considered to be, the high priest of the Christian faith, after Christ.

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## THE MEANING VICAR OF CHRIST (VICARIUS CHRISTI)

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The title: "Vicar (Vicarius) of Christ," is a title used almost exclusively of the Bishop of Rome (the Pope) as successor (according to Catholic theology, not the Bible) of Peter.

**Vicarious:** from various dictionaries means:

- Something experienced in the imagination and emotions through the feelings or actions of another person.
- An action of suffering performed and undergone for another person as if one was taking part in the experience or feelings themselves.

- Serving as a substitute for another and taking their place.
- A situation in which one organ performs part of the functions normally performed by another.
- Having sympathetic participation in another's persons experiences.

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*As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.*

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