



The Popes: Histories and Secrets

Claudio Rendina

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The papacy started in 30 A.D. when Jesus Christ declared that Simon Bar-Jona would be called Peter (rock). It was on that "rock" the Catholic Church was built and a legacy of 263 popes would follow St. Peter. This book is a chronological compilation of all the men who have received the title of Bishop of Rome and the part each played in the evolution of the Catholic Church and in impacting the history of the world.

Christianity took root in a land and time that was grudgingly tolerant at best or zealously persecutory at its worst. For the first four centuries, being named the Bishop of Rome often meant exile, imprisonment, torture, or martyrdom. As Christianity gained adherents among the rich and powerful the papal seat became one of global influence. The Popes shows the human aspects of the vicar of Christ while reassessing the myths surrounding the person. Theological evaluations are avoided to give readers a more realistic view of these men and the part they played in the shaping of history.

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