

The church is hierarchical essay

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The Church is Hierarchical Introduction Many times do we encounter from the priest's homily, church minister, or a professor of a Theology class that the " Church is hierarchical," but what does this statement really mean in the Catholic Church society? Hierarchy, as conceptually defined in relation to the church means: " order ranking, category or arrangement of the religious clergy according to their functions in church" (Murphy). Thus, this paper aims to focus on explaining the reason behind the church being considered as hierarchical. The sacred scripture states that God appointed the apostle Peter to be the rock or the foundation of God's Church here on earth (cf.

Mt. 16: 18-19 at Murphy). Since then, the hierarchy started from Peter as the head or leader of the church, and he fulfilled his mission and task of spreading God's word to unite God's people and deliver them the promise of salvation (Murphy, 2007). Apparently, Bishop Murphy (2007) also writes that the significance of the current pope, bishops, priests, and deacons is to continue Peter's mission of perpetuating the members of the Catholic Church, proliferating the gospel of the Lord, and explaining the keys to attain God's promise of salvation and His Kingdom.

Functions and Significance of the Hierarchy in Church Hierarchy among the church leaders such as the pope, bishops, priests, and the clergy denotes the different functions and responsibilities that each leader has to fulfill. Since they are carefully appointed by their superiors or church leaders and even the apostles themselves who came before them, they have the obligation to God and to the people to execute their tasks and unify the whole Catholic community in one belief, one faith, and one God. Thus, such <https://assignbuster.com/the-church-is-hierarchical-essay/>

responsibilities include the following: 1) the pope—has the primary power to head and manage the church; 2) the bishops—have the function of utilizing their power to be responsible to complete their tasks of reaching out to the entire Catholic community and to serve them using one's God-given wisdom and to extend one's helping hand to provide the welfare of the whole community; 3) the priests—function to serve as the “ eye” of the local church and respect the order of the bishop before executing their tasks of providing sacraments for the Church community; they also have the mission to educate, inform, and ensure the plenary indulgence and salvation of the souls of their whole local entrusted church community assigned to them; lastly, (4) the deacons—they have function to work on the provision of service and charity and to maintain the pastoral activities for the local church community (Murphy). Conclusion The Catholic Church is hierarchical because God says so. It is God's will to establish the start of the church through Peter's leadership and the apostles. Thus, it shall continue to propagate among the church community and to unite the people in God's reign.

The church leaders of the present then serve as instruments to fulfill God's plan of salvation. It is therefore their obligation to spread the gospel and educate the people of God's good news, to continue serving the people as being “ true leaders in the likeness of God (e. g. in facilitating charitable works and foundations for the poor and the less fortunate in the community), and to provide the sacraments to the church's people and purify their souls before they become deserving receivers of God's promise of salvation. In brief, in the church's hierarchy, every function is essential to carry out God's

overall plan for His people. From the pope to the ordinary church member, each member makes up the church community. Without the people as the sheep, there would be no need for a shepherd or a leader and vice versa.

Work Cited Murphy, William. "The Church is Hierarchical." Catholic Exchange. 21 March 2007. 23 February 2009