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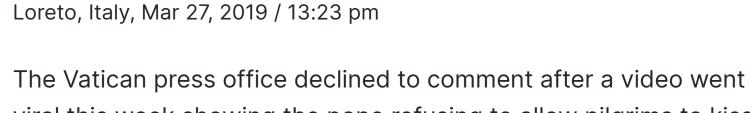
Why do people kiss the pope's ring?







By Hannah Brockhaus



greeting line.

viral this week showing the pope refusing to allow pilgrims to kiss his ring as they greeted him.

The clip was taken from video footage of pilgrims meeting the pope after his celebration of Mass in the Holy House in Loreto, Italy, March 25.

In the clip, which is just over a minute in length, Pope Francis appears to pull his hand away each time a person approaches to greet him and attempts to kneel and to kiss his hand or ring.

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CHRISTENIOM COLLEGE A more full video by Vatican Media showed that the pope was receiving people for much longer than the first clip presented – around 13 minutes in total – and that he had allowed some people to kiss his ring, without visible protest, during the earlier part of the

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gesture of respect in the Church for longer than can be remembered, but likely started in the late Middle Ages, according to Fr. Roberto Regoli, who teaches contemporary Church history at the Pontifical Gregorian University. He said kissing the pope's ring "expresses devotion not to the

person of the pope, but to whom and what he represents: the

successor of the fisherman of Galilee" and "indicates fidelity and

The custom of kissing the ring of the pope or a bishop has been a

love for the Church." **Approved** Mary Rosa Mystica devotion to

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Loreto March 25. Outside of papal ceremonies, Francis is typically seen wearing only his episcopal ring. The custom of kissing the Fisherman's Ring, while it begun much earlier, was systematized in the 15th century in a text on pontifical

ceremonies, Regoli said.

century.

has been anointed with chrism to consecrate the Body of Christ. The prayer traditionally said by a bishop before vesting with his ring for pontifical Mass is: "The digits of my heart and my body, O Lord,

adorn with virtue, and with the sanctification of the sevenfold Spirit

dignity as a successor of the apostles, and the hand of a priest, as it

It is customary to kiss the ring of a bishop, out of reverence for his

surround them." The Fisherman's Ring is one of several rings typically worn by the Roman pontiff. The ring takes its name from its image of St. Peter as a fisherman, which became the standard design around the mid-15th

Litany

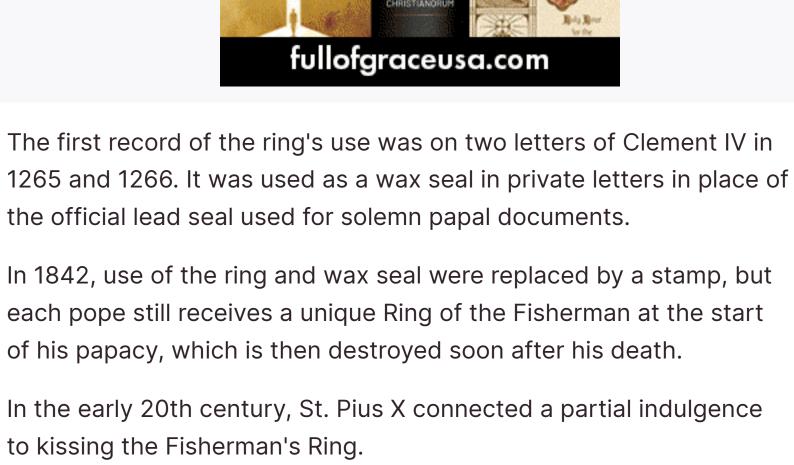
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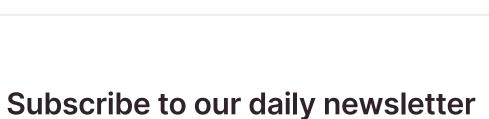
The custom started to change with St. Paul VI in the last decades of the 20th century, when he eliminated other forms of showing papal obedience and subservience, such as kissing the pope's foot,

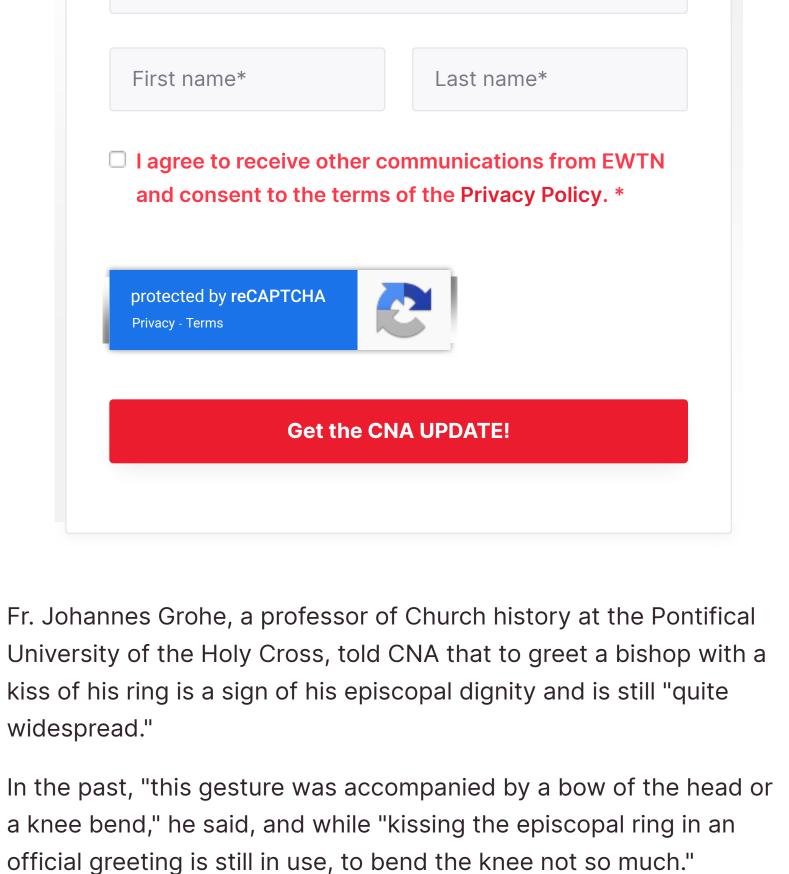
shoulder, and cheek, Regoli explained.

Email\*

(Story continues below)







allows it, sometimes he denies it (even in an apparent way)." Regoli said that with Francis "there is a further sensibility, different from his predecessors, so we tend to further simplify the ceremonial by omitting the greeting of genuflection towards him."

Pope Francis, he continued, "seems to be against it. Sometimes he

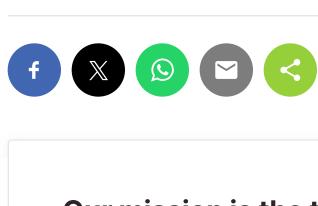
According to Grohe, "there is in [Pope Francis] an attitude contrary

added, "some customs in ceremonies and pontifical audiences have

to everything that could recall court customs," and "certainly," he

a long tradition and therefore also have the form of other time

Hannah Brockhaus is Catholic News Agency's senior Vatican correspondent. After growing up in Omaha, Nebraska, she earned a degree in English from Truman State University in Missouri. In 2016,



periods."

Tags: Ring of the Fisherman

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she moved to Rome, Italy, where in her spare time she enjoys

reading and going on adventures with her husband and son.

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he is no longer Pope – a simple white cassock, and

brown shoes given to him in Leon, Mexico.



Deep in the heart of Texas, a campus chaplain is

busy making his final spiritual and practical

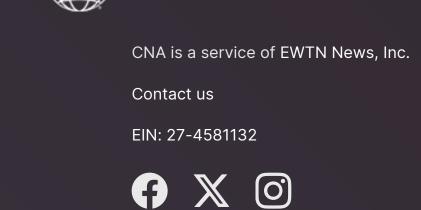
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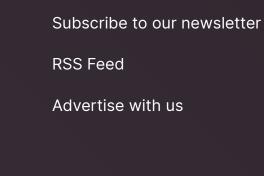
preparations for becoming a bishop.



today, the two major symbols of the authority he

received were connected to previous Popes.





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