

*Delivering the Keys of the Kingdom to St. Peter* (Sistine Chapel), by Pietro Perugino (1448–1523)

Art selection and commentary by [Heidi J. Hornik](#) and [Mikeal C. Parsons](#)

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This painting was commissioned by Pope Sixtus IV for his private chapel. According to Roman Catholic tradition, Matthew 16:18–19 is the scriptural basis for apostolic succession and establishes Peter—here being handed the papal keys by Christ—as the first pope. The decoration of the Sistine Chapel, most famous for Michelangelo's ceiling (1508–12), began in the 1480s with the walls of the chapel. The plan, established by the pope in conjunction with his advisers, was to depict significant scenes from the life of Christ on the north wall and the life of Moses on the south wall. Many of the most popular Renaissance painters throughout Italy were brought to Rome to paint in the new style, using linear perspective, harmonious color, balanced compositions, and lifelike figures.