

St. Peter's marvels



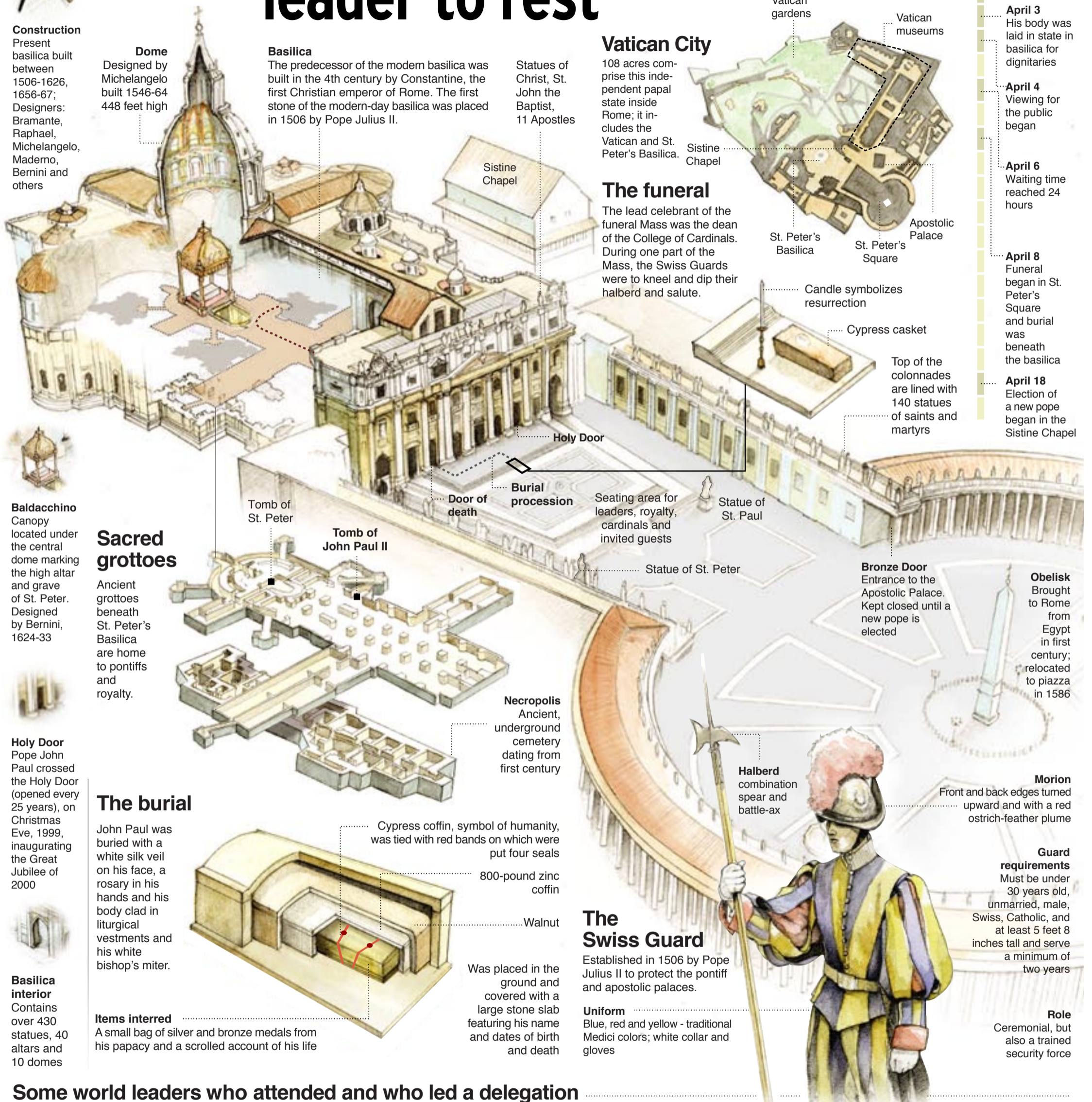
Construction
Present basilica built between 1506-1626, 1656-67; Designers: Bramante, Raphael, Michelangelo, Maderno, Bernini and others

Laying the Church's leader to rest

Pope John Paul II's entombment followed a funeral Mass in St. Peter's Square that was a ceremony filled with centuries-old traditions and elaborate rituals.

Papal transition

- April 2**
Pope John Paul II died
- April 3**
His body was laid in state in basilica for dignitaries
- April 4**
Viewing for the public began
- April 6**
Waiting time reached 24 hours
- April 8**
Funeral began in St. Peter's Square and burial was beneath the basilica
- April 18**
Election of a new pope began in the Sistine Chapel



Dome
Designed by Michelangelo built 1546-64 448 feet high

Basilica
The predecessor of the modern basilica was built in the 4th century by Constantine, the first Christian emperor of Rome. The first stone of the modern-day basilica was placed in 1506 by Pope Julius II.

Statues of Christ, St. John the Baptist, 11 Apostles

Vatican City

108 acres comprise this independent papal state inside Rome; it includes the Vatican and St. Peter's Basilica.

The funeral

The lead celebrant of the funeral Mass was the dean of the College of Cardinals. During one part of the Mass, the Swiss Guards were to kneel and dip their halberd and salute.

Sacred grottoes

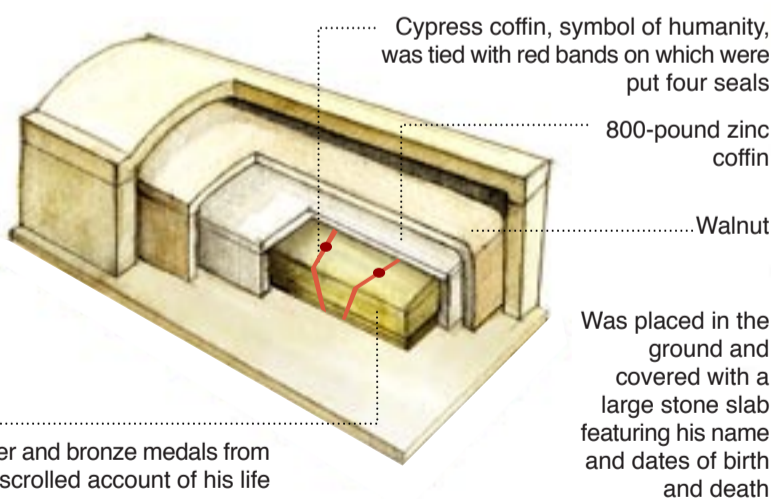
Ancient grottoes beneath St. Peter's Basilica are home to pontiffs and royalty.

The burial

John Paul was buried with a white silk veil on his face, a rosary in his hands and his body clad in liturgical vestments and his white bishop's miter.

Items interred

A small bag of silver and bronze medals from his papacy and a scrolled account of his life



Was placed in the ground and covered with a large stone slab featuring his name and dates of birth and death

The Swiss Guard

Established in 1506 by Pope Julius II to protect the pontiff and apostolic palaces.

Uniform

Blue, red and yellow - traditional Medici colors; white collar and gloves

Halberd
combination spear and battle-ax

Bronze Door
Entrance to the Apostolic Palace. Kept closed until a new pope is elected

Obelisk
Brought to Rome from Egypt in first century; relocated to piazza in 1586

Morion
Front and back edges turned upward and with a red ostrich-feather plume

Guard requirements
Must be under 30 years old, unmarried, male, Swiss, Catholic, and at least 5 feet 8 inches tall and serve a minimum of two years

Role
Ceremonial, but also a trained security force

Some world leaders who attended and who led a delegation

At least 35 presidents, 24 prime ministers and six queens attended John Paul's funeral, one of the largest gatherings of world leaders in history.



BRITAIN
Prime Minister Tony Blair, Prince Charles, Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams



CUBA National Assembly President Ricardo Alarcon. Not attending, Fidel Castro attended a Mass in the pope's honor, a rare sighting of Castro



IRAN
President Mohammad Khatami praised John Paul's efforts to promote coexistence between Islam and Christianity



ISRAEL
Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom, Haifa Chief Rabbi Shear-Yishuv Cohen



POLAND
President Aleksander Kwasniewski, Prime Minister Marek Belka, former President Lech Walesa



UNITED NATIONS
Secretary-General Kofi Annan; called pope a tireless advocate of peace, a true pioneer in interfaith dialogue



UNITED STATES
President George W. Bush; former Presidents Bush and Clinton; Secy. of State Rice