~ Timeline of Church History ~

One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church
~ The Orthodox Church ~

New Testament Era
(45 – 80 Gospels of Matthew, Mark & Luke are written)

33 Pentecost
49 Council at Jerusalem
70 Destruction of Jerusalem as foretold by Christ
95 Book of Revelation written
150 Justin Martyr describes the Divine Liturgy
215 - 290 Rise of Christian schools in Alexandria and Antioch
325 First Ecumenical Council ~ Nicene Creed. 326 Empress Helen discovers the cross of Christ
397 Synod of Carthage ratifies Biblical Canon (NT closed)

Seven Ecumenical Councils

397 - 460 Nestorian and Oriental Orthodox Churches Formed

1054 Great Schism

1204 Sack of Constantinople

1333 Gregory Palamas defends Orthodox spirituality
1453 Turks overrun Constantinople
1589 Patriarch in Russia
1794 Russian Missionaries arrive in Alaska and introduce Orthodox Christianity to America
1833 St. Seraphim of Sarov

1988 1,000 Years of Orthodox Christianity in Russia
2005 1,972 years of Orthodox Christianity

451 Council of Chalcedon
563 The Great Church, Hagia Sophia consecrated in Constantinople
589 Filioque added to Nicene Creed (Error later adopted by Rome)
787 Seventh Ecumenical Council (Icons approved)
880 The Photian Schism
988 Conversion of Russia begins (Prince Vladimir is baptized)

1066 Norman conquest of Britain (Orthodox hierarchs are replaced with those loyal to Rome)

Crusades 1095 - 1291

1194 Russian Missionaries arrive in Alaska and introduce Orthodox Christianity to America
1833 St. Seraphim of Sarov

1517 Luther’s Thesis (Reformation Begins)
1529 Church of England formed
1579 Methodist Church formed
1845 So Baptist Church formed
1916 Pentecostal Church formed
2005 Over 20,000 Christian “denominations”

1455 Gutenberg prints the Bible

Roman Catholicism

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Protestantism

1854 Dogma of Immaculate Conception
1870 Dogma of Papal Infallibility
2001 Pope apologizes to Orthodox for crusade

Note: All Christian churches can be traced back historically to the Orthodox Church founded by the Lord Jesus Christ.
33 Pentecost - The Holy Spirit descends on the Apostles and gives birth to the Church. 33-100 known as the Apostolic age. Rapid spread of the Church throughout the Roman Empire and beyond.

45-80 Apostles Paul, Peter, James, John and Judas write their epistles. Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke are written.

49 Council at Jerusalem (Acts 15) establishes precedent for addressing Church disputes in Council. James presides as bishop. Gradually Sunday (called the Lord's Day) replaces the Sabbath as the day of worship.

60-180 Several Gnostic sects appear which attempt to infiltrate Christian communities.


69 Bishop Ignatius consecrated in Antioch in heart of New Testament era; St. Peter had been the first bishop there. Other early bishops include James, Polycarp, and Clement.

70 Destruction of Jerusalem, foretold by Jesus (Matt. Ch. 24).

95 Book of Revelation written by the Apostle John on island of Patmos; later John writes his Gospel.

96-98 Persecution of Christians under Emperor Domitian.

†110 St. Ignatius Bishop of Antioch, the author of several important epistles, is (†) martyred at Rome.

150 St. Justin Martyr describes the liturgical worship of the Church centered in the Eucharist. Liturgical worship is rooted in both the Old and New Testament.

†202 St. Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons is martyred, author of several books against heresies.

215-290 The rise of Christian schools in Alexandria and Antioch.

244-49 The Roman Emperor Decius persecutes Christians.

†258 St. Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, author and theologian, is martyred.

300 Christianization of Britain

†303 St. Alban is martyred

300-305 The Emperor Diocletian vows to vanquish Christianity. Thousands of Christians, including St. George, St. Barbara, and St. Catherine are martyred.

313 Emperor Constantine end persecutions of Christians and gives them the right to freely exercise their faith. The Edict of Milan marks an end to the period of Roman persecution of Christianity.

325 The Council of Nicea settles the major heretical challenges to the Christian Faith posed when the heretic Arius asserts Christ was created by the Father. St. Athanasius defends the eternity of the Son of God. Nicae is the first of Seven Ecumenical (Church-wide) Councils (325 - 787).

326 Empress Helena finds the Cross of Jesus Christ in Jerusalem. Later she builds the Church of the Resurrection on the place of Christ's Resurrection, where each year on the Orthodox Pascha (Easter) the Holy Fire descends.

330 Beginning and spread of monasticism in Egypt: St. Anthony and Pachomius.

397 Synod of Carthage ratifies Biblical Canon.

†343 St. Nicholas, Bishop of Myra in Lycia.


381 The Second Ecumenical Council in Constantinople reaffirms the need to have five Patriarchates: Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem.

410 Alaric, leader of the Germanic Visigoths, takes Rome

451 Council of Chalcedon affirms apostolic doctrine of two natures in Christ.

563 The Great Church, Hagia Sophia, consecrated in Constantinople.

584 St. Sabha founds his monastery in the Judean wilderness, where later the Typicon for church services is developed.

589 A local synod of the Roman Catholic Church in Toledo, Spain, adds filioque to the Nicene Creed. This error causes division between the Eastern and the Western Churches.

630 First the Persians, then the Arabs threaten the Byzantine Empire, persecutes Christians and destroy churches.

685 The spread of monasticism on Mt. Athos begins.

726 Emperor Leo the Isaurian starts his campaign against the veneration of icons.

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†780 St. John Damascene the author of the Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith.

787 The era of Ecumenical Councils ends at Nicea; the Seventh Council restores the centuries old use of icons to the church.

864 The Prince Boris of Bulgaria is baptized. About this time Sts. Cyril and Methodius spread the Orthodox faith among the Slavs.

988 Prince Vladimir is baptized and begins conversion of the Rus (Russians) to Christianity.

1051 Sts. Anthony and Theodosius found their monastery near Kiev.

1054 The Great Schism occurs. Two major issues include Rome's claim to a universal papal supremacy and her addition of the filioque clause to the Nicene Creed. The Photian Schism (880) further complicates the debate.

1066 Norman conquest of Britain. Orthodox hierarchs are replaced with those loyal to Rome.

1095 The Crusades, begun by the Roman Church, weaken the Eastern Orthodox churches in Palestine and Syria.

1204 The Sack of Constantinople by the crusaders adds to the estrangement between East and West.

1333 St. Gregory Palamas defends the Orthodox practice of hesychast spirituality and the use of the Jesus Prayer.

1438 St. Mark of Ephesus defends the Orthodox faith at the Council of Florence.

1453 Turks overrun Constantinople; Byzantine empire ends.

1455 Gutenberg prints the Bible.

1517 Martin Luther nails his 95 Theses to the door of the Roman Church in Wittenburg, begins Protestant Reformation.

1529 Church of England begins pulling away from Rome.

1782 First publishing of the PHILOKALIA, a classic of spirituality.

1794 Russian missionaries, St. Herman and others arrive in Alaska; introduce Orthodoxy to North America.

1871 St. Nicholas establishes a Japanese mission.

1870 Papal infallibility becomes Roman Dogma.

1917 The revolution in Russia begins. Christians are persecuted and martyred.

1918 Bishop Tikhon of San Francisco becomes Patriarch of Russia.

1988 1000 years of Orthodoxy in Russia, as Orthodox Church worldwide maintains fullness of Apostolic Faith.

1990 Beginning of renewal of Orthodoxy in Russia.

2005 1,972 years of Orthodox Christianity.