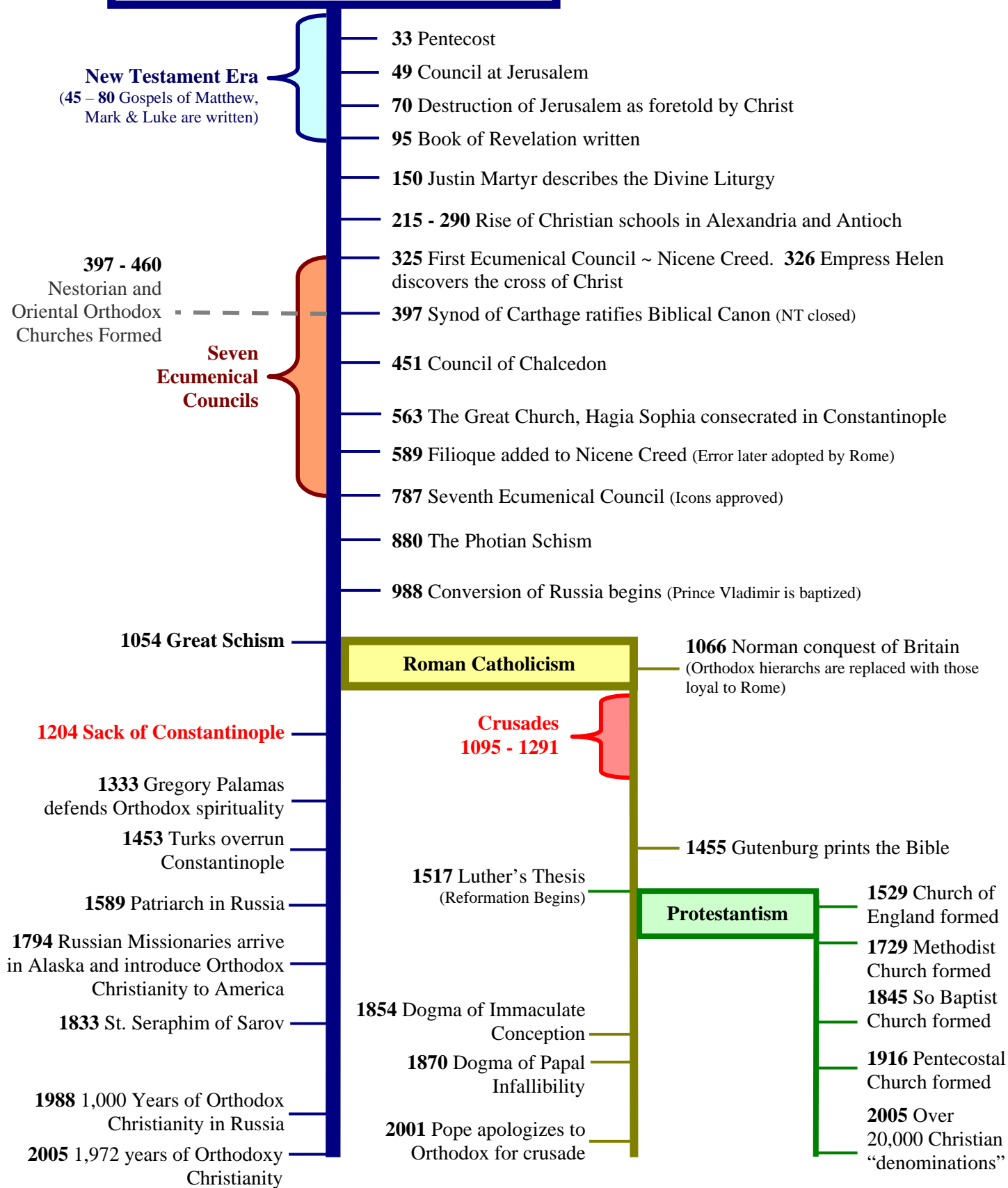


~ Timeline of Church History ~

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



Note: All Christian churches can be traced back historically to the Orthodox Church founded by the Lord Jesus Christ.

Chronology of Church History

- **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.
- **64-67** Persecution of Christians in Rome under Emperor Nero. Sts. Peter and Paul become martyrs.
- **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 ends persecution 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. Nicea 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.
- **330-410** Period of the great Fathers of the Church: Sts. Athanasius, Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian, Ambrose of Milan, John Chrysostom and others.
- **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 Sofia, consecrated in Constantinople.
- **584** St. Sabba 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, persecute 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.
- **771** Arabs invade Spain.
- **†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.