

ORTHODOXY

“right belief” “right glory”

“Christian” Churches

The ***Chalcedonian Christological Definition*** was formulated after the Fourth Ecumenical Council ... Chalcedon ... 451 CE.

Chalcedonian Churches:

- Roman Catholic
- Protestant (mainline)
- **Eastern Orthodox**

Non-Chalcedonian Churches:

- Coptic (Egyptian)
- Syrian (Jacobite)
- Ethiopian
- Eritrean
- Armenian
- Malankara (Indian)

Church of the East (Nestorian)

- Central Asia, Tibet, India, China, Mongolia

Orthodox Churches

- Eastern Orthodox
 - The Church of the Seven Councils.
 - 15 *Autocephalous*, i.e., “self-headed” churches.
- Oriental (Non-Chalcedonian) (“Monophysites”)
 - Rejected the Chalcedonian Christological definition of the Fourth Ecumenical Council (Chalcedon 451 CE).
 - 6 major churches.
- Eastern (Byzantine) Catholic (“Uniates”)
 - Orthodox under Rome.

“Orthodox Churches”

Orthodox Churches:

Constantinople (Finland), Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem, Russia (Japan) (Ukraine), Cyprus, Georgia, Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria, Albania, Greece, Poland, Czechlands and Slovakia, Orthodox Church in America.

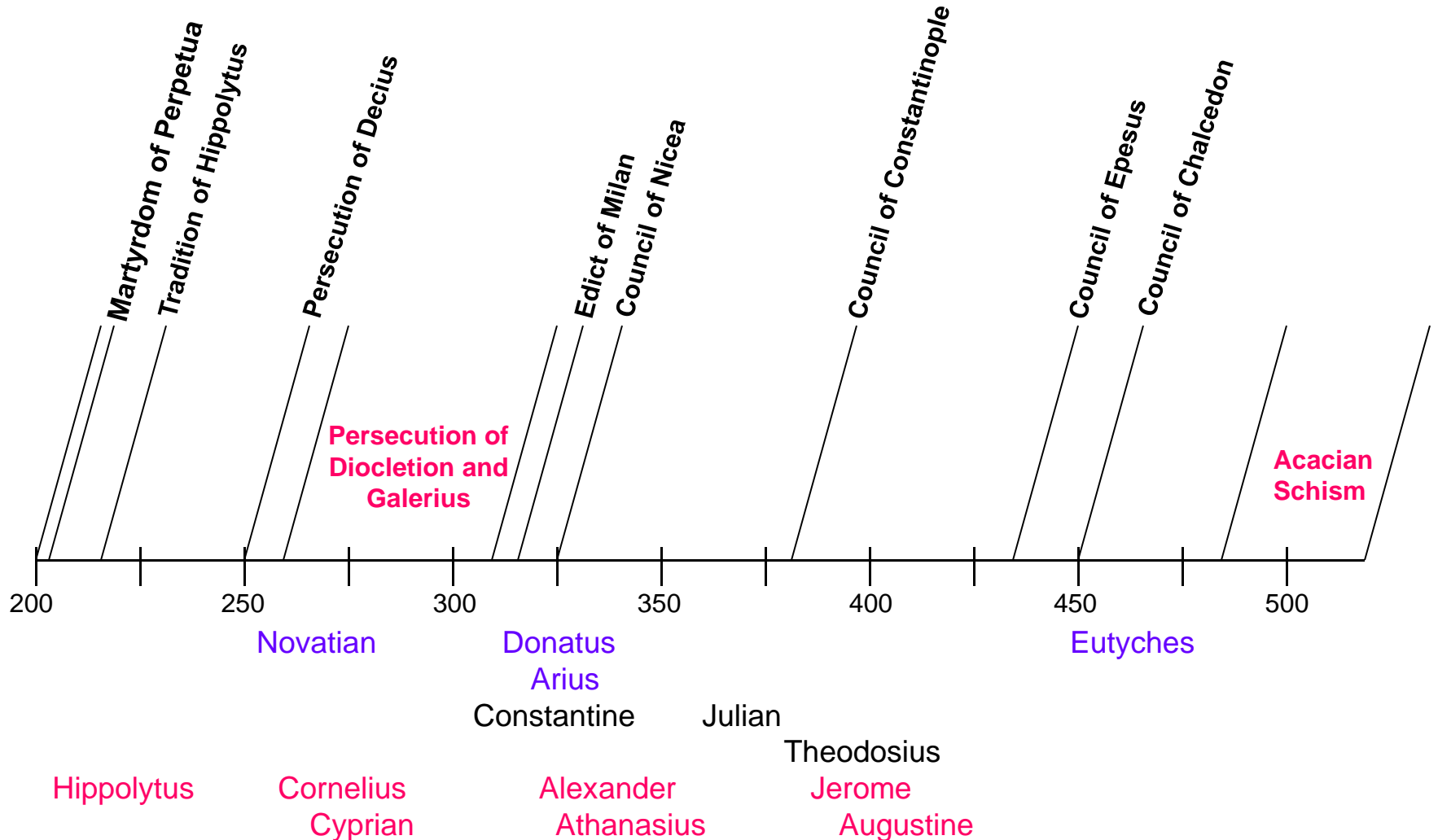
Non Chalcedonian Churches:

Copts (Egyptian), Armenian, Ethiopian, Eritrean, Syrian (Jacobites), Malankara (Indian).

Orthodox Churches under Rome:

Armenian, Chaldean, Coptic, Maronite, Melkite, Syriac, Ukranian, Syro-Malabar, Syro-Malankar, Ethiopian (Abyssinian), Romanian, Ruthenian.

A History of the Church



The Early Church

After the Edict of Milan resulted in end of official persecution in 313 CE, the Church held its first General Council at Nicea in 325 CE.

- Originally (4th century) three Patriarchates were recognized ... Rome ... Antioch ... Alexandria.
- Jerusalem was “honored.”

Two “schools” of theology had developed:

- Antioch ... stressed the humanity of Jesus.
- Alexandria ... stressed the divinity of Jesus.

After Constantine consolidated his authority over the empire, he decided to move the capital east to a new city, Constantinople.

- This move was completed in 330 CE.
- The fourth General Council of the Church at Chalcedon (451 CE) added Constantinople and Jerusalem ... with Constantinople the “New Rome.” (Canon XXVIII)

Constantinople ... Canons

Constantinople I (381 CE)

- Canon II
 - Major “episcopates,” ... Antioch, Alexandria, Constantinople, Thrace.
- Canon III
 - “Because it is new Rome, the bishop of Constantinople is to enjoy the **privilege of honor** after the bishop of Rome.”

Chalcedon Canon XXVIII

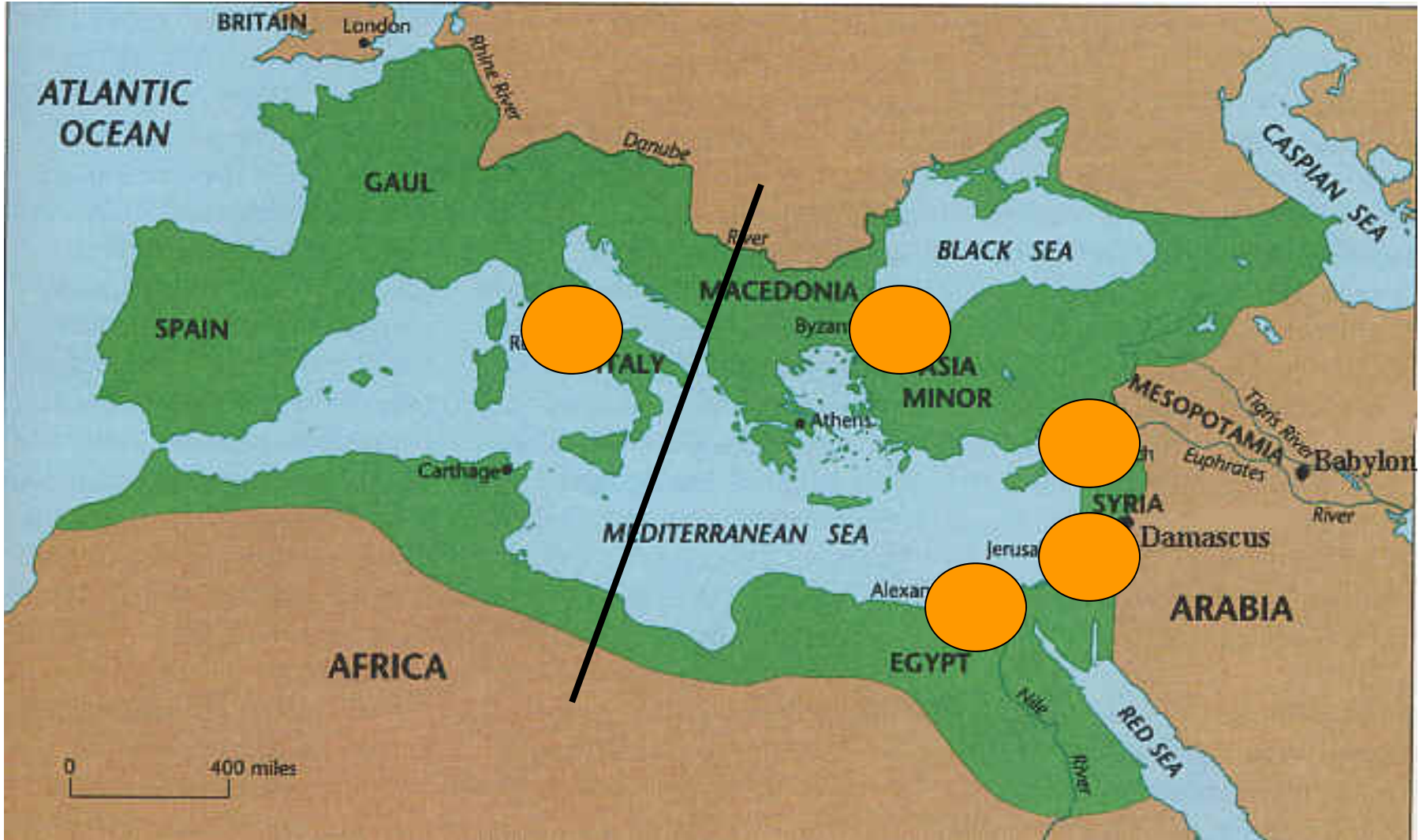
“Following in all things the decisions of the holy Fathers, and acknowledging the canon, which has been just read, of the One Hundred and Fifty Bishops beloved-of-God (who assembled in the imperial city of Constantinople, which is New Rome, in the time of the Emperor Theodosius of happy memory),

we also do enact and decree [the same things concerning the privileges of the most holy Church of Constantinople, which is New Rome.](#)

[For the Fathers rightly granted privileges to the throne of old Rome, because it was the royal city.](#)

And the One Hundred and Fifty most religious Bishops, actuated by the same consideration, gave equal privileges to the most holy throne of New Rome, justly judging that the city which is honored with the Sovereignty and the Senate, and enjoys equal privileges with the old imperial Rome ...”

Roman Empire



Orthodox Theology/ Beliefs

- **Defined by the first four Ecumenical Councils.** The earliest General Councils of the Church were convened to deal with serious doctrinal issues. The first four General Councils of the Church generally all dealt with the question of the nature and being of Jesus.
 - Nicea (325 CE), Constantinople (381 CE), Ephesus (431 CE) and Chalcedon (451 CE).
 - Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed.
 - Chalcedonian Christological Definition.
 - Disciplinary and Administrative Canons.
 - Formal Anathemas.

Orthodox Theology/ Beliefs

- Great reverence for the **early Fathers** of the Church and the organization established in the **Pentarchy** and defined by the **Canons**.
 - The **Fathers** ... definers of the Faith, developers of the creeds, commentators on the scripture ...
 - The **Pentarchy** ... the five great centers of Christianity ... Antioch, Alexandria, Rome, Jerusalem, Constantinople.
 - The **Canons** ... disciplinary and administrative ... to regulate church life and the life of the believer.

Orthodox Theology/ Beliefs

Salvation through the Gospel message ...

- *Metanoia*
 - Truly accepting **Christ** and realizing one's own sinfulness causes one to repent, i.e., turn one's life around ... a profound change.
 - Much more than a simple sorrow for one's sins.
- *Synergia*
 - Man working with God in cooperation with his grace.
 - “Therefore, my beloved...work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.” (Philippians 2:12)
 - “For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.” (1 Corinthians 1:18)

Orthodox Theology/ Beliefs

Salvation through the Gospel message ...

- *Theosis*
 - Seeking to return to the “unflawed” image and likeness of God. “God became man so that man could become more like God.”

“... who can be saved? ... For mortals it is impossible, but for God all things are possible.” (Matt 19:25-26, see also Mark 10 & Luke 18)

Orthodox Theology/ Beliefs

- Orthodox belief is more mystical and spiritual than the scholastic theology that developed in the West during the Middle Ages.
 - The Orthodox have not “defined” new doctrine since the seventh Ecumenical Council of 787 CE.
- In Orthodoxy, there is a clear distinction between the Immanent (creation) and the transcendent (God).
 - We cannot explain God, either his attributes or his actions, given the limitations of both mind and language. We believe based on his revelation to us.
 - *Apophatic* theology

Orthodox Liturgies

The Liturgy represents a mystical meeting of the faithful with their God. It is a participation in a divine eternal mystery, the mystery of our salvation.

- A form of the pure worship that goes on endlessly in heaven. (Rev 4)
- St. John Chrysostum
 - “Normal” liturgy of the East.
- St. Basil the Great
 - An expansion of the liturgy of John Chrysostum ... used during the Great Lent.
- St. James
 - Primarily used by Oriental churches.

Orthodox Liturgies

- Lengthy.
- The people stand.
- Recognizable to Western liturgical Christians.
- Largely unchanged since 9th century.

Orthodox Isolation

- Much of the Orthodox world was overrun by Arab conquest by the end of the 7th century.
 - Antioch falls 637, Jerusalem falls 638, Alexandria falls 642.
 - Constantinople survived until 1453.
 - Remnants of the Moslem Empire were not defeated until World War I.
- The Orthodox Christian world therefore ... missed:
 - Scholasticism, the Protestant Reformation, the Renaissance, the Enlightenment.
- Large parts of the Orthodox world were captive to Moslems or Communists for 12 centuries.
 - The Orthodox Church was forced to be (in the 20th century) what it had been in the 7th century.

Early Moslem Conquests

7th & 8th centuries



Loss of Major Centers



The Incident

Traditional date of schism: 16 July 1054.

- Patriarch Michael Cerularius (1043-1058)
- Constantinople makes gains against Moslems ... Armenia brought back into Empire.
- Non-Chalcedonian Churches under pressure by Emperor and Patriarch.
- Peter I, Catholicus of the Armenian Church stands firm.
- Antioch cleared of non-Chalcedonian Monophysites.
- Moves against Latins in the East.
- Italy threatened by Normans.
- Patriarch writes to Rome as “Universal Patriarch of the New Rome.”
- Pope replies ... sends Cardinal Humbert ... 16 July 1054.
- Humbert excommunicates Patriarch ... Patriarch excommunicates Humbert.
- Real short term affect is minimal.

Situation After 1054

Greeks and Romans are not in schism through the 12th century ... do not consider each other heretics.

- No real theological differences are emphasized, although the *filioque* problem does exist.
- However, Byzantines begin to write against papal primacy during the 12th century.
 - Eastern view – No one bishop or patriarchate – including the primary see in Christendom – possessed universal jurisdiction as an exclusive prerogative.
 - No confusion of “primacy” with universal authority or infallibility.
- Cordial public debates:
 - Anselm of Havelberg vs. Nicetas of Nicomedia 1136.
 - Primacy, type of bread in liturgy, *filioque*.

Attempts at Reunion

Attempts at union...half hearted.

- **Council of Lyons 1274**
 - Purgatory, papal supremacy and the *filioque* were all acknowledged and confessed by the emperor's representatives. Eastern clerical hierarchy did not attend.
 - Delegates return, Church rejects council, people rise up against imperial decision.
- **Council of Florence 1439**
 - Eastern delegates seriously overwhelmed by Western scholastic arguments.
 - Eastern delegates agree to Western wording.
 - Union not announced in the East until 1452.
- May 29, 1453, Constantinople falls.

Western Church now becomes more concerned with Protestant schism beginning in early 16th century. The East is under Moslem control, without firm leadership and there is no real authority to confer with.

Differences Today

Orthodox/ Roman Catholic

- Papal Primacy/ Infallibility
- Immaculate Conception
- *Filioque*
- Interpretation of Theological Language
- Original Sin
- Married Clergy
- Divorce and Remarriage
- Calendar

Chalcedon Canon XXVIII

“Following in all things the decisions of the holy Fathers, and acknowledging the canon, which has been just read, of the One Hundred and Fifty Bishops beloved-of-God (who assembled in the imperial city of Constantinople, which is New Rome, in the time of the Emperor Theodosius of happy memory),

we also do enact and decree **the same things concerning the privileges of the most holy Church of Constantinople, which is New Rome.**

For the Fathers rightly granted privileges to the throne of old Rome, because it was the royal city.

And the One Hundred and Fifty most religious Bishops, actuated by the same consideration, gave equal privileges (*isa presbeia*) to the most holy throne of New Rome, justly judging that the city which is honored with the Sovereignty and the Senate, and enjoys equal privileges with the old imperial Rome ...”

The “New Rome”

To Rome, there is only one Rome, the seat of Peter.

- “You are Peter, and on this rock (*petra*) I will build my church ... whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven ...” (Matt 16:18-19)
- Early schisms/heresies in the East were “settled” by Rome.
- Primacy is one of power, jurisdiction and authority.

The East rejects the idea of personal, universal primacy.

- Why would anyone think that Peter’s leadership would be passed down to his successors ... and only his successors in Rome?
- The Church, by the power of Christ, “binds and loosens.”
- Only councils, made up of bishops, have authority over individual bishops.
- Primacy has to do with prestige (honor) not authority.
- No Roman bishop ever even attended the first general councils of the Church

It's All In The Words

Scriptural Understanding

From the Gospel of Matthew

“Who do people say that the Son of Man is?”

“And I tell you, you are *Petros* (Peter), and on this *petra* (rock) I will build my *ecclesia* (church), and the *gates of Hades* will not prevail against it. (16:13 & 18)

– Does this mean ...

- Hell ... Satan ... will not prevail against the church ...

or

- Death will not prevail against the assembly of believers ... i.e., they will live ... and death has been defeated.

- In Greek mythology Hades had many sections ... it is not the equivalent of hell.
 - The Elysian Fields ... similar to Paradise or Heaven.
 - Tartaroo (Tartarus) ... similar to Hell.
- Hades should be thought of as equivalent to Sheol in the Hebrew Scriptural context. The abode of the dead.

Matthew 16:18

KJV ... “... the gates of **hell** shall not prevail against it.”

NKJV ... “... the gates of **Hades** shall not prevail against it.”

NIV ... “... the gates of **Hades** will not overcome it.”

RSV ... “... the powers of **death** shall not prevail against it.”

NRSV ... “... the gates of **Hades** will not prevail against it.”

Interpretation

- “And I tell you, you are **Petros** (Peter), and on this **petra** (rock) I will build my **ecclesia** (church), and the **gates of Hades** will not prevail against it. (Matthew 16:13 & 18)
 - **Peter** ... as leader ...
 - Council of Jerusalem ... 37 CE ??
 - Paul and Barnabas meet with Peter and James ... the elders and apostles.
 - James makes the decision ... circumcision is not necessary for Gentiles who are coming into the Church. (Acts 15)
 - Rome ... church of Peter **and** Paul.
 - Antioch
 - Promise to Peter’s successors ??
 - Why ?
 - History

Interpretation

- “And I tell you, you are *Petros* (Peter), and on this *petra* (rock) I will build my *ecclesia* (church), and the **gates of Hades** will not prevail against it. (Matthew 16:13 & 18)
 - *Ecclesia* means an “assembly” ... from the Greek roots “ecc” “kaleo” ... “to be called out” ... usually by a higher authority.
 - In the Christian context ... *ecclesia* is **an assembly of believers ... called out ... by God.**
 - Called out of what ... **the world.**
 - For what purpose ... **to be God’s people.**
 - “The Church of God which sojourns at Rome, to the Church of God sojourning at Corinth ...”
 - 1st Epistle (letter) of Clement

The Immaculate Conception

Meaning of Dogma

Immaculate Conception

The dogma of the Immaculate Conception:

“The most Blessed Virgin Mary was, from the first moment of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege of almighty God and by virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ, Savior of the human race, preserved immune from all stain of original sin.”

Catechism of the Catholic Church

Libreria Editrice Vaticana

pg 124

Summa Theologica

According to Thomas Aquinas ...

Immaculate Conception:

- “Whether the Blessed Virgin was sanctified before animation.”
(union of soul and body)
 - “Now sin cannot be taken away except by grace, the subject of which is the **rational creature** alone. Therefore before the infusion of the rational soul, the Blessed Virgin was not sanctified.”
 - “It remains, therefore, that the **Blessed Virgin was sanctified after animation.**”
 - “**If the soul of the Blessed Virgin had never incurred the stain of original sin, this would be derogatory to the dignity of Christ, by reason of His being the universal Saviour of all.**”

The doctrine of the Immaculate Conception was defined as a dogma binding on Roman Catholics by Pope Pius IX (*Ineffabilis Deus*) in 1854.

Filioque

Who can change the creed?

The Nicene Creed and the *Filioque*

... *filioque* ... and the Son.

- Original Nicene-Constantinopolitan creed (325 & 381 CE) does not contain the *filioque* clause.
 - *Filioque* was added by the western Church in Spain to combat Arian heresy. Gradually it was accepted throughout the West ... but creed cannot be changed.

“We believe in One God ...

... And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of life, Who proceeds from the Father **and the Son**; Who together with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified; Who spoke through the Prophets.”

Filioque

“The affirmation of the *filioque* does not appear in the Creed confessed in 381 at Constantinople. The use of this formula in the Creed was gradually admitted into the Latin liturgy (between the 8th and 11th centuries).

The introduction of the *filioque* into the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed by the Latin liturgy constitutes moreover, even today, a point of disagreement with the Orthodox Churches.”

Catechism of the Catholic Church
Libreria Editrice Vaticana
pg 65

Anglican Communion

- In 1978 the Anglican Communion's Lambeth Conference requested "that all member Churches of the Anglican Communion should consider [omitting the Filioque from the Nicene Creed](#), and that the Anglican-Orthodox Joint Doctrinal Commission through the Anglican Consultative Council should assist them in presenting the theological issues to their appropriate synodical bodies and should be responsible for any necessary consultation with other Churches of the Western tradition."
- In 1988 the conference "ask(ed) that further thought be given to the Filioque clause, recognising it to be a major point of disagreement (with the Orthodox) ... recommending to the provinces of the Anglican Communion that [in future liturgical revisions the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed be printed without the Filioque clause.](#)"
- At a subsequent joint meeting of the Anglican Primates and Anglican Consultative Council in 1993, a resolution was passed urging Anglican churches to comply with the request that "in future liturgical revisions the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed be printed without the Filioque clause."[\[21\]](#)

Theology - Words Have Meanings

The Trinitarian example:

- In Greek ... three *hypostases* in one *ousia*.
- In Latin ... three *personae* in one *substantia*.
- In English ... three persons in one substance.

But ... the Greek words do not translate at all well into Latin and our English meaning has been derived from the Latin.

Example - The Trinity

- **Prayer of John Chrysostom**

- “... for thou art God, ineffable, inconceivable, invisible, incomprehensible, ever-existing and eternally the same, thou and thine only-begotten Son and Holy Spirit.”

- **St. Basil the Great**

- “God is neither three nor one, he simply is.”
- “... if we must use numbers, we will not let a stupid arithmetic lead us astray to the idea of many gods.”

- **Karl Barth**

- “The Christian Church has never taught that there are in God three persons and therefore three personalities in the sense of a threefold ego, a threefold subject. This would be tritheism.”

Original Sin

Damned by Association

Augustine and Original Sin

Adam and Eve had free will before the Fall.

- After the Fall ...
 - Corruption entered into them ...
 - Descended to all their posterity ...
 - Who ... by their own power cannot abstain from sin.

 - Therefore ... “All who die unbaptized, even infants, will go to hell and suffer unending torment. We have no reason to complain of this, since we are all wicked.”
 - ... no one would be saved unless they freely accepted baptism, and thus became a member of the church. ... those who are saved had been predetermined. Damnation proves God's justice; salvation His mercy.
(This remains an anomaly in his teaching when compared with his views on free will.)

Original Sin and Baptism

- “... by the generation of the flesh only that sin is contracted which is original ...”

“All who die unbaptized, even infants, will go to hell and suffer unending torment. We have no reason to complain of this, since we are all wicked.”

- “... infant children have no other means of salvation except Baptism.” (The Catechism of the Council of Trent, 1566)
- “As regards children who have died without Baptism, the Church can only entrust them to the mercy of God ... to hope that there is a way of salvation.” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2nd ed. 1997)

Differences Today

Orthodox/ Roman Catholic

- Married Clergy
 - Celibacy mandatory only after Second Lateran Council in 1139.
- Divorce and Remarriage
 - No *oikonomia* in the West.
- Easter
 - When ?
- Calendar
 - Gregorian vs. Julian
- Eucharistic Bread
 - Leavened vs. unleavened.
 - Alternate traditions accepted.

Differences Today

Orthodox/ Roman Catholic

In 325, at the Council of Nicæa the date of Easter was fixed by declaring that Easter should be **the first Sunday after the first full moon occurring on or after the vernal equinox ... but not before the date of the Jewish Passover.**

This declaration was intended to be the end of a long dispute between eastern and western Christian communities.

Nicea II

- 787 CE Can “images of Jesus, Mary, saints, be venerated and used in worship.
- Iconoclasts
 - also called "icon-smashers," they were suspicious of any art depicting God or humans; they demanded the destruction of icons because they saw icons as idolatry.
- Iconodules
 - also called "venerators of icons," they defended the place of icons in the Church.
- The controversy, however, was more than a struggle over different views of Christian art. Deeper issues were involved, and it is these the Council addressed:
 - The character of Christ's human nature.
 - The Christian attitude toward matter.
 - The true meaning of Christian redemption and the salvation of the entire material universe.

Rationale

The argument (*apologia*):

Iconodules

- God, although invisible by nature, can and must be represented in his human nature, as Jesus Christ. To the Orthodox iconoclasm amounted to a denial of the incarnation.

Iconoclasts

- A representation of Christ implied a denial of his divinity which is inseparable from his humanity, or a separation of Christ into two beings (Nestorianism).
 - A misrepresentation of the “hypostatic union” of the human and divine in the person of Jesus.

ICONS

(Images)

The icons of our Savior Jesus Christ, and of the ever-virgin Theotokos and of other Saints are worthy to be possessed and honored and through contemplation thereof, we may be filled with piety and moved to emulate the deeds of the holy persons represented by those icons.

- Veneration vs. worship
- Decalogue and incarnation
- View the saints through the light of Christ
- Aids to the “illiterate”

Anastasis



The Descent into Hades

- Jesus pulling Adam and Eve from their tombs.
- Righteous Old Testament figures on the left.
- New Testament figures on the right.
- Jesus stands on the covers of the tombs of Adam and Eve ...usually in the shape of a cross.
- Below is the abode of Satan with keys and devices of torture.