A Time For Everything

To everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven.

A time to give birth
And a time to die;
A time to plant
And a time to pluck what is planted.
A time to kill
And a time to heal:
A time to pull down
And a time to build up.
A time to weep
And a time to laugh:
A time to mourn
And a time to dance.
A time to throw stones
And a time to gather stones;
A time to embrace
And a time to refrain from embracing.
A time to seek
And a time to lose;
A time to keep
And a time to throw away.
A time to tear
And a time to sew;
A time to keep silent
And a time to speak.
A time to love
And a time to hate;
A time of war
And a time of peace.

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

The eternal Word - the beginning and the end, came into time and redeemed all things. He turned our weeping into joy, our mourning into dancing, our hatred into love, and our time into eternity.

(From the Orthodox Study Bible, page 872)
gold, frankincense and myrrh. The Wise Men left but did not return to Herod. They had a dream that warned them that if they found Jesus, they fell to their knees and worshipped Him. They gave Jesus gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. The Wise Men went on to look for Jesus. The Star led them to Jesus and Mary. When the Wise Men found Jesus, they fell to their knees and worshipped Him. They gave Jesus gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. The Wise Men left but did not return to Herod. They had a dream that warned them that Herod wanted to harm Jesus. Instead, they returned to their native country by a different route.

The Theotokos

For two thousand years the Church has preserved the memory of the Virgin Mary as the prototype for all Christians; the model of what we are to become in Christ. Mary was truly pure and unconditionally obedient to God. The tradition of the Church holds that Mary remained a virgin all her life. She is a model for all Christians to follow. Mary's spiritual purity, her wholehearted devotion to God, is certainly to be emulated.

Mary is also our model in that she was the first person to receive Jesus Christ. As Mary bore Christ in her womb physically, all Christians now have the privilege of bearing God within them, spiritually. By God's grace and mercy we are purified and empowered to become like God. The honor we give to Mary also signifies our view of who Jesus is. From early times the Church has called her Mother of God. (Greek Theotokos, lit. “God-Bearer”) a title which implies that her Son is both fully man and fully God. As His Mother, Mary was the source of Jesus’ human nature, yet the One she bore in her womb was also the eternal God.

Therefore, because of her character and especially because of her role in God’s plan of salvation, Christians appropriately honor Mary as the first among the saints. The archangel Gabriel initiated this honor in his address to her: “Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!” (Luke 1:28). This salutation clearly indicates that God Himself had chosen to honor Mary. Her favored status was confirmed when she went to visit her cousin Elizabeth, who was then six months pregnant with John the Baptist. Elizabeth greeted Mary with these words: “Blessed are you among women!” (Luke 1:40). Mary, both listening to them and asking them questions. (Luke 1:25, 28).

Theology

The Miracle of the Virgin Birth

The miracle of the Virgin Birth is another prominent theme among the Old Testament types of Mary. One of the most striking of these is found in Ezekiel 43:27-44:4, the only Old Testament passage read at all four of the major Feasts of the Theotokos. This reading tells about the east gate of the heavenly temple remaining shut even as the Lord God of Israel, and He alone, goes in and out through it. This is prophetic of the Lord entering Mary’s womb and being born nine months later with her virginity remaining intact. Hence in various hymns the Church proclaims her as “the Gate that looks towards the East,” “the Gate through which none may pass,” and “the East Gate . . . (who) awaits the entrance of the Great Priest.”

Another such image occurs in Daniel 2:45, where the Theotokos is the mountain out of whom a stone (that is, Christ; 1 Corinthians 10:6) is cut “without hands.” This refers to Christ’s birth from the Virgin, untouched by a man.

Mary is the culmination of the whole history of the ancient Hebrews. She is the personification of the perfection to which all of faithful Israel aspired through the long centuries of preparation for the coming of the Messiah, beginning with the promise given to Abraham: “God promised to our forefather Abraham that in his seed the Gentiles would be blessed (Genesis 22:18). O pure Lady; and through thee today, the promise receives its fulfillment” (Matins, Feast of the Annunciation).

A.D. 2

While we do not know the actual dates (calendar days) of the Nativity of Christ or any of the other events that are dated based upon it, such as the Annunciation, or Entrance into the Temple, if we use December 25th as the date of The Nativity of Christ, then the Presentation into the Temple would be 2 A.D.

The Presentation of Christ in the Temple

Mary and Joseph were faithful Jews and observed their religious customs. An important custom was for the couple to take their first born son to the Temple. The baby was taken to the Temple forty days after his birth and was dedicated to God. As they arrived at the Temple, Mary and Joseph were met by a very old man named Simeon. He was a holy man and was noted as a very intelligent scholar. Simeon spent much time studying about the prophets of Israel. It was during his studies that he learned of the coming of the Messiah. The Jewish people were waiting for the Messiah to come and deliver Israel from their conquerors. From that time on, Simeon spent his time praying for the Messiah to come.

He spent many years in prayer. Finally, while Simeon was praying, he heard the voice of God. God promised Simeon that he would not die until he had seen the Messiah.

When Simeon saw Jesus, he took the baby in his arms and blessed the Lord and said: “Lord, now let Your servant go in peace according to Your promise, because my eyes have seen Your salvation which you have prepared before the face of all peoples, a light to bring revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory to your people Israel.” After Jesus was presented in the Temple, the family returned to Galilee to the town of Nazareth. The Bible tells us that: “Jesus grew and became strong, and was filled with wisdom.” (Luke 2:22-29).

A.D. 12

Jesus in His Father’s House

Jesus goes to Jerusalem with Mary and Joseph, to celebrate the holy days. After the celebration, the Boy Jesus lingered behind. His parents supposed that he was with others in their company of relatives and acquaintances, but when they did not find him they returned to Jerusalem seeking Him. After three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions. (Luke 2:41-52).

A.D. 12

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 Shortly before Jesus began His public ministry, John went "John came baptizing in the wilderness and preaching a
The Baptism of Our Lord, God and Savior, Jesus Christ
A.D.  29

 Luke 11.14-23
 Luke 7.1-10
 Centurion's Servant Healed  Matthew 8.5-13
 Mark 11.12-14
 Fig Tree Withers   Matthew 21.18-22
 Mark 9.11-16
 Jesus Walks on Water  Matthew 14.22-27
 Mark 6.45-52
 John 6.1-15, 25-59
 John's work was crucial to Jesus' ministry. Jesus considered
John's testimony important – not because Jesus, the Son
of God, needed to be validated by any human witness, but
because the people's acceptance of John as a godly man
prepared them to accept Jesus as well (John 5:33-35). Jesus' first
disciples came from John's brotherhood (John 1:35-
39), and the vacancy in the apostolic college left by Judas'
betrayal was filled by one who had been John's follower
(Acts 1:22). John the Baptist died a martyr for Christ (Mark
6:24-29). The Orthodox Church commemorates him in
special hymns every Tuesday, as well as on designated feast
days throughout the year.
A.D. 30

Jesus begins his ministry at about 30 years of age.
Sometime during the first year of Christ's earthly
ministry, John the Baptist was beheaded by
King Herod at the request of Herodius' daughter,
Salome.

Right: Icon of Christ, Monastery Of Chora.

The Miracles of Christ
As recorded in the Four Gospels
Miracle                     Scripture                                     Mark   Matthew

Mute Man Healed             Matthew 9.32-34                              8.26-28
Temple Tax Provided         Matthew 17.24-27                            21.20-28
Deaf and Mute Man Healed    Mark 7:31-37                               13.11-13
Blind Man's Sight Restored   Mark 8.22-26                               18.34-35
Fig Tree withers            Luke 5:1-11                                11.13-18
Woman's Son Raised          Luke 7:11-17                               9.30-37
Crippled Woman Healed       Luke 13:10-17                              9.2-9
Man's Dropsy Healed         Luke 14:6-8                                10.20-21
Ten Lepers Healed           Luke 17:11-19                              7.32-43
Malchus' Ear Healed         Luke 22.50-51                              14.7-8
Official's Son Healed       John 4:46-54                               4:1-6
Healing at the Pool         John 5:1-9                                  9.3-19
Man Born Blind Healed       John 9                                      9.1-13
Lazarus Raised from the Dead John 11:38-44                             14.4-9
Miraculous Catch of Fish    John 21:1-14                               11.19-21
Cananite Girl Healed        Matthew 15.21-28                            11.20-24
Feeding of the 4000         Matthew 15.32-39                              15.21-32
Fig Tree Withers            Matthew 21.18-22                              21.7-15
Centurion's Servant Healed  Matthew 8.5-13                               7.2-15
Blind and Mute Demonic Healed Matthew 12.22-32                            15.26-37
Man with Evil Spirit Healed  Matthew 16.21-28                              8.26-30
Spiritual discipline. John himself lived by an ascetic rule of
poverty and fasting. In fact, he may have been a lifelong
Nazirite (Luke 1:15; Numbers 6). His eyes were set not on
the body and its desires, but on Christ the Lord, and his
influence was widespread (Mark 11:32; Luke 7:29; Acts

John prophesied that the Messiah was coming. One
immeasurably greater than himself, "who is able of
me to be on my right hand, and whom I shall cast into
the bottomless pit" (Mark 8:31). Thus, came about the event so familiar
as recorded in the Four Gospels

The Parables of Christ
As recorded in the Four Gospels
Parable                      Scripture                                     Mark   Matthew
Master and Servant          Luke 17:7-10                               17:10
The Pharisee and the Tax Collector
The Ten Gold Coins          Matthew 24:24-36, 30-44                         24:24-30
House Built on the Rock     Matthew 7.24-27                               7.24-27
The Weeds
Hidden Treasure            Matthew 14.45-46                              14:45-46
Pearl of Great Price        Matthew 14.47-50                              14:47-50
Parable of the Net          Matthew 18.21-35                              18:21-35
The Unmerciful Servant      Matthew 20.1-16                               20:1-16
Workers in the Vineyard     Matthew 21.28-32                              21:28-32
The Two Sons
The Wedding Banquet        Matthew 22.1-14                               22:1-14
The Talents
Sheep and Goats            Matthew 25.14-30                              25:14-30
The Growing Seed           Matthew 25.29-46                              25:29-46
Household Watching         Matthew 25.30-46                              25:30-46
The Two Debtors            Matthew 25.5-6                                 25:5-6
The Good Samaritan         Matthew 25.7-12                               25:7-12
Jesus' Teaching on Prayer   Matthew 25.7-13                               25:7-13
The Rich Fool              Matthew 25.7-13                               25:7-13
The Mustard Seed           Matthew 25.33-36                              25:33-36
Watchful Servants          Matthew 25.33-36                              25:33-36
Cost of Being a Disciple   Matthew 25.11-30                              25:11-30
The Lost Son               Matthew 25.31-46                              25:31-46
The Fig Tree

Church History Timeline

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A.D. 33
Six days before Passover Jesus went to Bethany and visited Martha and Mary and raised their brother Lazarus, who had been dead for four days, from the dead. (John 12:1)

The next day, Jesus makes His triumphant entrance into Jerusalem. (Palm Sunday) (John 12:12-16)

Great and Holy Saturday
On Great Saturday the Church contemplates the mystery of the Lord’s descent into Hades, the place of the dead. Death, our ultimate enemy, is defeated from within. “He (Christ) gave Himself as a ransom to death in which we were held captive, sold under sin. Descending into Hades through the Cross ... He loosed the bonds of death” (Liturgy of St. Basil). The hymnographer of the Church describes the mystery with these words:

“Come, let us see our Life lying in the tomb, that He may give life to those that in their tombs lie dead. Come, let us look today on the Son of Judah as He sleeps, and with the prophet let us cry aloud to Him: Thou hast lain down, Thou hast slept as a lion; who shall awake Thee, O King? But of These own free will do Thou rise up, who willingly dost give Thyself for us. O Lord, glory to Thee.”

“Today a tomb holds Him who holds the creation in the hollow of His hand; a stone covers Him who covered the heavens with glory. Life sleeps and hell trembles, and Adam is set free from his bonds. Glory to Thy dispensation, whereby Thou hast accomplished all things, granting us an eternal Sabbath, Thy most holy Resurrection from the dead.”

Great and Holy Friday
Great and Holy Friday is the day of the pre-eminent rest. Christ observes a Sabbath rest in the tomb. His rest, however, is not inactivity but the fulfillment of the Divine Will and plan for the salvation of humankind and the cosmos. He who brought all things into being, makes all things new. The re-creation of the world has been accomplished once and for all. Through His incarnation, life and death, Christ has fulfilled all things with Himself. He has opened a path for all flesh to the resurrection from the dead, since it was not possible that the author of life would be domimated by corruption.

Moses mysteriously prefigured this present day, saying, “And God blessed the seventh day.” For this is the blessed Sabbath; this is the day of rest on which the only-begotten Son of God restted from all His Works. Suffering death in accordance with the plan of salvation, He kept the Sabbath in the flesh; and returning once again to what He was, through His Resurrection, He has granted us eternal life, for He alone is good and loves mankind.

“Today Hades lets out a groan, ‘My sovereignty is destroyed. I received Him as a mortal, one among the dead; but this One I am powerless to contain; instead with Him I lose all I had governed. I had held the dead for ages, but behold, He resurrects all. Glory, Lord, to Your Cross and Your Resurrection.” Hymn of Great and Holy Saturday

33 AD
Pascha Sunday
The Holy Resurrection of Our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ
On Great and Holy Feast of Pascha Orthodox Christians celebrate the life-giving Resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This feast of feasts is the most significant day in the life of the Church. It is a celebration of the defeat of death, as neither death itself nor the power of the grave could hold our Savior captive. In this victory that came through the Cross, Christ broke the bondage of sin and through faith, offers us restoration, transformation, and eternal life.

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ is the fundamental truth and absolute fact of the Christian faith. It is the central experience and essential kerygma of the Church. It confirms the authenticity of Christ’s remarkable earthly life and vindicates the truth of His teaching. It seals all His redemptive work - His life, the model of a holy life; His compelling and unique teaching; His extraordinary works; and His life-creating death. Christ’s Resurrection brings salvation. Together with His Ascension it brings to perfection God’s union with us, for all eternity.

The Resurrection makes possible the miracle of the Church, which in every age and generation proclaims and affirms “God’s plan for the universe, the ultimate divination of man and the created order.” The profound experience of and the unshakable belief in the risen Lord enabled the Apostles to evangelize the world and empowered the Church to overcome paganism. The Resurrection discloses the indesrtuctible power and inscrutable wisdom of God. It disposes of the illusory myths and belief systems by which people, bereft of divine knowledge, strain to affirm the meaning and purpose of their existence. Christ, risen and glorified, releases humanity from the delusions of idolatry. In Him, grave-bound humanity discovers and is filled with incomparable hope. The Resurrection bestows illumination, energizes souls, brings forgiveness, transforms lives, renews saints, and gives joy.

The Resurrection has not yet abolished the reality of death. But it has revealed its powerlessness (Hebrews 2:14-15). We continue to die as a result of the Fall. Our bodies decay and fall away; “God allows death to exist but turns it against corruption and its cause, sin; and sets a boundary both to corruption and sin.” Thus, physical death does not destroy our life of communion with God. Rather, we move from death to life; from this fallen world to God’s reign.

"It is the day of Resurrection; let us then make ourselves resplendent for the festival and embrace one another. Let us say, brethren, even to those who do not love us: Let all be forgiven in the Resurrection, and so exclaim: Christ is risen from the dead, by death He has trampled down death, and to those in the tombs, He has granted life." 
Doxastikon of Pascha
A.D. 33

The Ascension

The biblical account of the Ascension of our Lord, celebrated as one of the Twelve Great Feasts of the Church, is found in the book of the Acts of the Apostles 1:3-11. It is also mentioned in the Gospels of Mark (16:19) and Luke (24:50-53). The moment of the Ascension is told in one sentence, "He was lifted up before their eyes in a cloud which took Him from their sight." (Acts 1:9)

(left: Icon of the Ascension of Christ)

Christ made His last appearance on earth forty days after His Resurrection from the dead. The Acts of the Apostles states that the disciples were in Jerusalem. Jesus appeared before them and commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the "Promise of the Father". He stated, "You shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." (Acts 1:5)

After Jesus gave these instructions, He led the disciples to the Mount of Olives where He commissioned them to be His witnesses "in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." (Acts 1:8) It is also at this time that the disciples were directed by Christ to "go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit." (Matthew 28:19)

Jesus also told them that He would be with them always, "even to the end of the age." (Matthew 28:20)

As the disciples watched, Jesus lifted up His hands, blessed them, and then was taken up out of their sight (Luke 24:51; Acts 1:9). Two angels appeared among the disciples and asked them why they were gazing into heaven. One of the angels responded, "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as you have seen Him going into heaven." (Acts 1:11)

The biblical account of Pentecost is found in the book of The Acts of the Apostles. In Chapter 2 we are told that the Apostles of our Lord were gathered together in one place. Suddenly, a sound came from heaven like a rushing wind, filling the entire house where they sat, then tongues of fire appeared, and one sat upon each of the Apostles. They were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages as directed by the Spirit. (Acts 2:1-4)

This miraculous event occurred on the Jewish Feast of Pentecost, celebrated by the Jews on the fiftieth day after the Passover, as the culmination of the Feast of Weeks (Exodus 34:22; Deuteronomy 16:10). The Feast of Weeks began on the third day after the Passover with the presentation of the first harvest sheaves to God. It concluded on Pentecost with the offering of two loaves of unleavened bread, representing the first products of the harvest (Leviticus 23:17-20; Deuteronomy 16:9-10).

Since the Jewish Feast of Pentecost was a great pilgrimage feast, many people from throughout the Roman Empire were gathered in Jerusalem on this day. When the people in Jerusalem heard the sound they came together and heard their own languages being spoken by the Apostles (Acts 2:5-6). The people were amazed, knowing that some of those speaking were Galileans and not men who would normally speak many different languages. They wondered what this meant, and some even thought the Apostles were drunk (Acts 2:7-13).

Saint Peter, hearing these remarks, stood up and addressed the crowd. He preached to the people regarding the Old Testament prophecies about the coming of the Holy Spirit. He spoke about Jesus Christ; His death and glorious Resurrection. Great conviction fell upon the people and they asked the Apostles, "What shall we do?" Saint Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." (Acts 2:38-39)

The Bible records that on that day about three thousand were baptized. Following, the book of Acts states that the newly baptized continued daily to hear the teaching of the Apostles, as the early Christians met together for fellowship, the breaking of bread, and for prayer. Many wonderful signs and miracles were done through the Apostles, and the Lord added to the Church daily those who were being saved (Acts 2:42-47).

The Troparion of Pentecost

Blessed are You, O Christ our God, who made the fishermen all-wise, sending upon them the Holy Spirit and, through them, drawing the world, O Loving One, glory to you.”

The Establishment of the Orthodox Christian Church

The Feast of Holy Pentecost commemorates the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles on the day of Pentecost, a feast of the Jewish tradition. The day also celebrates the preaching of the Apostles and the baptism of the thousands who on that day believed in the Gospel message of salvation through Jesus Christ. The Feast is also seen as the culmination of the revelation of the Holy Trinity.

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The Establishment of the Orthodox Christian Church

50 days after the Resurrection

Pentecost

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c. 155
The Martyrdom of Saint Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna and disciple of Saint John the Evangelist. The first ‘Apology’ of Justin Martyr (the second c. 161).

215
Death of Clement of Alexandria, teacher of Origen and a founding father of the Christian School of Alexandria.

232-254
Origen deposed in 231 as head of the School of Alexandria, established the School of Caesarea. He was instrumental for the development of Biblical interpretation.

258-365
Life of Saint Anthony. Saint Anthony is often regarded as the first monk and spent most of his life in the Egyptian desert. He practiced a form of monasticism known as eremiticism, which means that he lived as a hermit. Nevertheless, his great spirituality eventually led others to live near him in the hope that they could imitate his piety.

285
The Roman Emperor Diocletian rearranged the administration of the empire, dividing it into Eastern and Western halves, which corresponded to the breakdown between Greek and Latin populations around the Mediterranean. Although the Roman Emperor Saint Constantine the Great would reunify the empire, Diocletian’s separation anticipated the geographic division between the Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholics that would take place in the middle ages.

306
The Martyrdom of Saint Barbara the Great. A sacred relic of Saint Barbara, the Great Martyr, may be venerated at the Saint Barbara Greek Orthodox Church in Orange, Connecticut. Right: Icon of Saint Barbara

313
The Edict of Milan was issued by Constantine the Great. His co-emperor Licinius also recognized Christianity as a lawful religion.

318
Saint Pachomius established a communal form of monastic life, as compared with the solitary life of earlier hermits.

325
First Ecumenical Council This Council was held at Nicaea, Asia Minor, under Emperor Constantine the Great. 318 Bishops present. It was the first such Council, condemning the false teaching of Arius (Arianism). Arianism denied the divinity of Christ, teaching that if Jesus was born, then there was time when He did not exist; if He became God, then there was time when He was not. This Ecumenical Council declared Arius’ teaching a heresy, unacceptable to the Church and further decreed that Christ is God. The Council stated that Christ is of the same essence “homoousios” with God the Father. The Creed The first part of the seven articles of the Creed were ratified at the First Ecumenical Council. The text reads as follows: Saint Basil the Great (330-379) A natural leader and organizer; spoke and wrote against Arianism; founded hospitals, orphanages, welfare agencies; revised the Divine Liturgy; made a great contribution to Monasticism (East and West); one of the famous Cappadocian Fathers (together with St. Saint Gregory of Nyssa, his younger brother and St. Gregory of Nazianzus the Theologian, his close friend). The Cappadocians, along with St. Athanasius the Great, presented the pattern for formulating the doctrines related to the mystery of the Holy Trinity. St. Basil the Great, St. Gregory of Nazianzus (the Theologian) and St. John Chrysostom are called the Three Hierarchs.

326
Discovery of the Cross on which Christ was crucified. In the twentieth year of his reign (326), the Emperor Constantine sent his mother Saint Helen to Jerusalem to venerate the Holy places and to find the site of the Holy Sepulchre and of the Cross, relying upon the oral tradition of the Cross. Right: Icon of the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross

330
The founding of “New Rome” or Constantinople, by Constantine the Great.

355-407
The Three Hierarchs Saint Basil, Saint Gregory and Saint John Chrysostom were actively ministering to the Church, during this period.

379
Death of Saint Basil. His numerous writings have been preserved including theological, apologetical, ascetical, canonical, and the Holy and Divine Liturgy named after him. He was the inspiration for the modern practice of Orthodox monasticism.
The Patriarchate of Constantinople was recognized as the Senior See among the churches of the East.

### The Second Ecumenical Council

**Held in Constantinople, under Emperor Theodosius the Great. There were 150 Bishops present.**

The Macedonian Controversy

Macedonius, somewhat like Arius, was misinterpreting Church’s teaching on the Holy Spirit. Macedonius taught that the Holy Spirit was not a person ("hypostasis"), but simply a power ("dynamis") of God. Therefore he falsely taught that the Spirit was inferior to the Father and the Son. The Council condemned Macedonius’ teaching and defined the doctrine of the Holy Trinity. The Council decreed that there was one God in three persons ("hypostases"): Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The Creed

The Holy Fathers of the Council added five articles to the Creed. They read as follows:

> "And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Creator of life, who proceeds from the Father, who together with the Father and the Son, is worshipped and glorified, who spoke through the prophets. In one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. I confess one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the age to come. Amen."

Defenders of Orthodoxy

Saint Gregory of Nazianzus, the Theologian (329–390)
Saint Gregory of Nazianzus was a scholar who studied in Athens with St. Basil the Great; became Patriarch of Constantinople (379); presided at the Second Ecumenical Council; was a poet and profound thinker. He wrote many poems, hymns, essays, and sermons. Saint Gregory of Nyssa (331–396)
Saint Gregory of Nyssa was the younger brother of St. Basil the Great. He was a theologian who delved deeply into the truths of the Faith.

386 Saint Jerome, who translated the Old and New Testaments into Latin (the Vulgate Version), settles in a monastery at Bethlehem.

### The Council’s Pronouncement

"Christ had two natures with two activities: as God working miracles, rising from the dead and ascending into heaven; as Man, performing the ordinary acts of daily life. Each nature exercises its own free will." Christ’s divine nature had a specific task to perform and so did His human nature.
Each nature performed those tasks set forth without being confused, subjected to any change or working against each other. The two distinct natures and related activities were mystically united in the one Divine Person of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”

**Defenders of Orthodoxy**

St. Maximus the Confessor (580-662). A simple, but enlightened monk, he died in exile (Caucasus). His writings are numerous and reflect Orthodox thinking.

St. Andrew of Crete (+740) Participated in the deliberations of the Sixth Ecumenical Council; author of the famous “Canon” which is read during Great Lent.

*Right: Icon of Saint Andrew of Crete*

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**692**

**The Quinisext or Trullan Ecumenical Council**  
The Quinisext or Trullan Ecumenical Council was held in Constantinople in 692 in the dome (In Trullo) of the Imperial Palace. Hence the name, Trullan Council.

**Legislative Matters**  
The Council is regarded as supplementing the Fifth and Sixth Ecumenical Councils. It is therefore referred to as the Quinisext. Its work was purely legislative, ratifying 102 canons and the decisions of the previous Ecumenical Councils.  

**Doctrinal and Disciplinary Canons**  
Sanctioned the so-called “Eighty-five Apostolic Canons” and approved the disciplinary decisions of certain regional councils. The Council added a series of disciplinary decisions or canons to the existing ones. The “Quinisext” Council laid the foundation for the Orthodox Canon Law. Some of its canons on clergy and celibacy were cited as reasons for further alienation between the Eastern and Western Churches.

**726-841**  
The Iconoclastic Movement and its impact on all Byzantine Orthodox peoples, was devastating.

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**754**

**Martyrdom of Boniface in Frisia.**  
A small piece of the Martyr Boniface’s relics can be found in the Altar Table at Saint Barbara Greek Orthodox Church in Orange, Connecticut. Saint Boniface is known for being generous to the poor, hospitable to strangers and compassionate to those in need.

**787**

**Seventh Ecumenical Council**  
Held in Nicaea by Empress Irene. The Seventh Ecumenical Council dealt with the restoration of Icons. There were 367 Bishops present.

The *Iconoclast Controversy*

The Iconoclast controversy centered around the use of icons in the Church and the controversy between the iconoclasts and iconophiles. Iconoclasts were suspicious of religious art; they demanded that the Church rid itself of such art and that it be destroyed or broken, as the term “iconoclast” implies. Iconophiles believed that icons helped preserve the doctrinal teachings of the Church. They considered icons to be man’s dynamic way of expressing the divine through art and beauty. The Iconoclast Controversy was a form of Monophysitism.

The *Council’s Proclamation*

“We define that the holy icons, whether in color, mosaic, or some other material, should be exhibited in the sacred vessels and liturgical vestments, on the walls, furnishings, and in houses and along the roads, namely the icons of our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ, that of our Lady the Theotokos, those of the venerable angels and those of all saintly people. Whenever these representations are contemplated, they will cause those who look at them to commemorate and love their prototype. We define also that they should be kissed and that they are an object of veneration and honor.”

**843**

**The Triumph of Orthodoxy**

An Endemousa (Regional) Synod was called in Constantinople in 843, under Empress Theodora, at which time the veneration of icons was solemnly proclaimed at the St. Sophia’s Cathedral for the “Triumph of Orthodoxy.” On this day Monks and clergy came in procession and restored the icons in their rightful place. Since that time, this event is commemorated yearly with a special service on the First Sunday of Lent, which is referred to as the “Sunday of Orthodoxy.”

**857**

Photius, a great statesman and intellectual, became patriarch of Constantinople. He was Patriarch during one of the most significant controversies between the Eastern and Western Churches of the Middle Ages, often erroneously referred to as the “Photian Schism.”

**863-4**

Saint Cyril (d. 869) and Saint Methodios (d. 865) were consecrated bishops. The Apostles of the Slavs, they devised an alphabet for the Slavonic language and translated the Gospels and Divine Liturgy into it. They are widely recognized as missionaries of the Christian Faith.

**955**

Saint Olga, of the Russian royal family, was baptized.

**961**

Founding of the Great Lavra Monastery at the Holy Mountain of Athos by Saint Athanasius the Athonite.

**988**

Vladimir, Prince of Russia, baptized. Founding of the Russian Church under a Greek Bishop.
### Church History Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1097</td>
<td>The first Crusade began. The Crusades hardened the cultural, political, and theological animosity between East and West.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1186</td>
<td>The founding of a Bulgarian-Vlachic Orthodox state.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1343-39</td>
<td>Council of Ferrara-Florence—the most serious attempt at reunion during the Middle Ages. It ultimately failed because the Orthodox had been required to concede on all points of dispute.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1438</td>
<td>The fall of Constantinople to the Ottoman Turks, marking the end of the Byzantine Empire.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1460</td>
<td>The Presbyterian denomination is established in Scotland by John Knox, a Scottish clergyman and leader in the Protestant Reformation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1489</td>
<td>The Congregationalist denomination is established by Robert Browne.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1500</td>
<td>The establishment of the Russian Orthodox Patriarchate, which was later suppressed in 1794.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1560</td>
<td>The Ecumenical Patriarchate settled in Fanar, a small neighborhood in Istanbul.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1593</td>
<td>The first modern edition of the New Testament in Greek is printed, by Erasmus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1579</td>
<td>The establishment of the French Reformed Church.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1600</td>
<td>The Baptist denomination is established by John Smyth in Holland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1620</td>
<td>The Mayflower sails from Holland and England to America.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1638</td>
<td>The Murder of Ecumenical Patriarch Cyril Loukaris, at the hands of the Turks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1673</td>
<td>The Methodist denomination is established by John and Charles Wesley in England.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1688</td>
<td>Orthodox Greeks from the Peloponnesse settle in New Smyrna, Florida.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1776</td>
<td>American Independence. American Independence is declared on July 4, 1776, with the signing of the Declaration of Independence, thereby establishing the United States of America.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1778</td>
<td>John Geannopoulos teaches children about the Orthodox Church in Saint Augustine, Florida. His house is considered the oldest Orthodox school-house in the United States.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1782</td>
<td>The Philokalia is published in Venice. This body of work is a collection of spiritual writings centered on practicing virtues and spiritual living. It has since been translated into many languages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1801</td>
<td>Beginning of the Russian Orthodox mission in Alaska. Greeks were recorded among the first missionaries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1805</td>
<td>The Episcopal Church, an offset of the Church of England, is founded by Samuel Seabury in the American colonies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1808</td>
<td>The Bulgarian Schism, the separation of the Church of Bulgaria from the Ecumenical Patriarchate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1879</td>
<td>The Patriarchal Decree (Tomos) establishing the Autocephalous Church of Serbia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>Greek immigrants began arriving in America in large numbers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1885</td>
<td>The Patriarchal Tomos establishing the Autocephalous Church of Romania. In 1925 it was elevated to the status of a Patriarchate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1886</td>
<td>Establishment of the first Greek Orthodox congregation in the Western Hemisphere - Holy Trinity of New Orleans, Louisiana. The first Orthodox Church in America was later built there.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1897</td>
<td>The Congregationalist denomination is established by Robert Browne.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>The Methodist denomination is established by John and Charles Wesley in England.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1908</td>
<td>The Ecumenical Patriarchate settled in Fanar, a small neighborhood in Istanbul.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Right: The Mayflower**

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<tr>
<td>1796</td>
<td>Death of Hiermonk Juvenaly, the first Orthodox martyr in America.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1821</td>
<td>Greek revolt against Ottoman rule; execution of Gregory, Patriarch of Constantinople.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1830</td>
<td>The London Protocol recognized the independence of the Greek state.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1852</td>
<td>The establishment of the Autocephalous Church of Greece.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1861-1865</td>
<td>The American Civil War. The victory of the Northern States in the Civil War preserved the United States as one nation and ended the institution of slavery that had divided the country from its inception.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1872</td>
<td>The Bulgarian Schism, the separation of the Church of Bulgaria from the Ecumenical Patriarchate.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Above: Greek immigrants are pictured arriving in the United States by boat.**
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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<tr>
<td>1902</td>
<td>Ecumenical Patriarch Joachim III issues an encyclical through which he calls the Primates of the Orthodox Autocephalous Churches to collaborate and face the problems concerning the Church. This document would serve as the spark which initiated the preparation of a great panorthodox council.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1907</td>
<td>The peak of Greek immigration. During this year 46,283 Greeks arrived in the U.S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1912</td>
<td>The first Balkan war - it involved various Orthodox countries, including Greece, and resulted in many territorial adjustments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1914-1918</td>
<td>World War I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1916</td>
<td>Massacre of the Orthodox Armenian population of Asia Minor by the “Young Turks.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1919</td>
<td>The Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Parish in Ansonia, Connecticut is officially established.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>The Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America is incorporated. Patriarch Meletios organizes the new Church under the authority of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1922</td>
<td>The Greek Orthodox Church is incorporated in the State of New York. Bishop Alexandros of Radostolou becomes its first Archbishop.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1922</td>
<td>Founding of the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association (AHEPA) to promote the ideals of ancient Greece, which include philanthropy, education, civic responsibility, family and individual excellence to the Greek-American community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1922</td>
<td>The catastrophic uprooting of the native Greek Orthodox population from Asia Minor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1924</td>
<td>The Ecumenical Patriarchate and numerous other Orthodox churches accept a modified Gregorian Calendar, while still using the Julian Calendar to calculate the date of Pascha and all of the associated feasts and fasts. The change occurred in March 1924.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>Establishment of the Autocephalous Albanian Orthodox Church.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 1931 | Enthronement of Archbishop Athenagoras as Archbishop of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America. Right: Archbishop Athenagoras
Elected Ecumenical Patriarch in 1948 |
| 1931 | The “Philoptochos Ladies Society” of the Greek Orthodox Church in America is organized. |
| 1937 | Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology is founded in Pomfret, Connecticut. |
| 1937 | The Saint Barbara Greek Orthodox Parish in New Haven, Connecticut is officially established. |
| 1931 | Ecumenical Patriarch Photios II convenes an inter-Orthodox preparatory committee meeting at the monastery of Vatopedi on Mount Athos, during which they establish an initial list of seventeen topics to be discussed at an upcoming Holy and Great Council. |
| 1939-1945 | World War II |
| 1940 | Italy attempts to invade Greece, and is beaten by Metaxas. |
| 1941 | Germany invades Greece with the support of Italy. This is known as the German occupation of Greece. (March 18, 1941 - Oct. 12, 1944). |
| 1944 | Saint Basil Academy is established
Archbishop Athenagoras of North and South America, founds Saint Basil Academy, with the valuable assistance of the Greek Orthodox Ladies Philoptochos Society, purchasing the 400-acre Jacob Ruppert estate in Garrison, New York, on the shores of the Hudson River, overlooking West Point Academy. The Saint Basil Academy continues to be a philanthropic center of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America that provides love, shelter, food, education, protection and a home for orphans, children of chronically ill or destitute parents or children from broken homes. The Academy’s mission is to facilitate shelter, protection, love, and education in youth so they can grow up to be healthy, wholesome, well-rounded Orthodox Christians, as well as productive members of society, with vision and hope. |
| 1946 | Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology relocates to Brookline, Massachusetts. As an accredited Graduate School of Theology, Holy Cross has become one of the most important institutions of the Orthodox Church in the Western hemisphere. |
Orthodox Churches in America, and foster ties of unity among the canonical churches of North and South America, is founded. Its purpose is to create the Standing Conference of the Canonical Orthodox Bishops in America (SCOBA), the Standing Conference of the Canonical Orthodox Bishops in America, in 1960. The Standing Conference of the Canonical Orthodox Bishops in America, or SCOBA, was established in 1960 to foster unity among the canonical Orthodox churches in North and South America. Its purpose is to create and foster ties of unity among the canonical Orthodox Churches in America.

1948
Patriarch Athenagoras elected Archbishop of Constantinople, New Rome and Ecumenical Patriarch.

1948
Enthronement of Archbishop Michael as Archbishop of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America.

1955
The Orthodox Church is officially recognized by the Federal Government as a major faith of the United States.

1957
His Eminence Archbishop Michael of North and South America founds the Greek Orthodox Youth of America (GOYA).

1958
Saint Michael’s Home for the Aged is established in Yonkers, New York under the spiritual leadership of His Eminence Archbishop Michael of North and South America, who recognized the critical need for a facility that would care for the growing number of Greek Orthodox elderly in America.

1959
Enthronement of Archbishop Iakovos as Archbishop of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America.

1960
SCOBA, the Standing Conference of the Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas, is founded. Its purpose is to create and foster ties of unity among the canonical Orthodox Churches in America.

1961, 1962, 1963
First, Second and Third Pan-Orthodox Conferences are held in Rhodes.

1964
Patriarch Athenagoras meets with Pope Paul VI in Jerusalem.

1965
Archbishop Iakovos of North and South America joins Martin Luther King Jr. in the Selma to Montgomery March of 1965, which is often viewed as one of the most decisive events in the history of the American Civil Rights movement.

1966
Hellenic College, a four-year fully accredited, liberal arts college, is established in Brookline, Massachusetts. It is the only fully accredited four-year liberal arts college in the Americas centered upon Orthodox Christian beliefs and enriched by the ideals of a Hellenic classical education.

1967
Visit of Pope Paul VI to Constantinople.

1968
Fourth Pan-Orthodox Conference is held in Chambésy, Switzerland.

1969
Ionian Village is established at the initiative of Archbishop Iakovos of North and South America, as a means to preserve cultural and religious ties to Greece for the children of Greek immigrants in United States and Canada. It is a private summer camp facility on the shores of the Ionian Sea.

1972
Patriarch Dimitrios is elected Archbishop of Constantinople, New Rome and Ecumenical Patriarch.

1974
A Turkish invasion seized 40% of Cyprus. Over 200,000 Orthodox Cypriots were persecuted and fled their homes, while numerous Orthodox churches were turned into mosques.

1976
The first Pre-Conciliar Pan-Orthodox Conference is held in Chambésy, Switzerland establishing a process for the preparation of the Holy and Great Council. As a result, it was agreed to have the following ten subjects on the agenda of the Holy and Great Council: the impediments to marriage; the adaptation of the rules of fasting to contemporary conditions; the relations of the Orthodox Church with other Churches and Christian confessions; the relations of the Orthodox Church to the ecumenical movement; the relations of the Orthodox Church in the world; the issue of the Orthodox diaspora; autocephaly and the manner of its proclamation; autonomy and the manner of its proclamation; and the diptychs of the Orthodox Church.

1980
President Jimmy Carter presents Archbishop Iakovos of North and South America with the Medal of Freedom.

1982
The second Pre-Conciliar Pan-Orthodox Conference is held in Chambésy, Switzerland during which the text on the issue of the impediments to marriage, of the adaptation of the rules of fasting to contemporary conditions, of the question of the calendar (mainly about the common date of Easter/Pascha) were adopted. The conference directly followed a conference of Orthodox astronomers and canonists.

1983
The Saint John Chrysostom Oratorical Festival is established by the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese, to provide Greek Orthodox teenagers the opportunity to write and speak about their faith. The National Program begins at the parish level and is divided into three divisions: Elementary Division (grades 4–6 parish level only); Junior Division (grades 7–9); and Senior Division (grades 10–12). The top speakers in the Junior and Senior Divisions advance to the district level. Two finalists in each district division represent their district at the Metropolis Oratorical Festival with the top speakers in each Metropolis advancing to the Archdiocesan Finals.
Orthodox Christian Missions Center

The Clergy-Laity Congress of 1984, with the blessing of Archbishop Iakovos, expanded the work of the Missions Committee that had been in existence since 1966, into the Greek Orthodox Archdiocesan Mission Center. In 1994, Archbishop Iakovos and the Greek Orthodox Clergy-Laity Congress, with the blessing of SCOBA, transformed the Mission Center into a SCOBA program with a new name, Orthodox Christian Mission Center (OCMC). Since 1995 the OCMC has reached out to over 31 countries worldwide with mission programs.

The Holy Cross Chapel on the grounds of Ionian Village.

1986

The Third Pre-Conciliar Pan-Orthodox Conference is held in Chambésy, Switzerland during which the text on “the contribution of the Orthodox Church to the realization of peace, justice, liberty, fraternity and love among peoples, and the elimination of racial discrimination and other forms of discrimination,” the relationship of the Orthodox Church to the ecumenical movement, the relationship of the Orthodox Church with the Christian world are adopted, along with the bylaws of the preparatory pre-conciliar conferences and the inter-Orthodox preparatory committees.

1988

The movement “Religion, Science and the Environment” is established on the Island of Patmos out of concern for the water environment of the planet. The leading spirit of the movement is Metropolitan Bartholomew of Philadelphia (elected Ecumenical Patriarch in 1991). He seeks to establish common ground on the implications and imperatives of the ecological crisis, between representatives of faith communities, professional scientists, and environmental non-governmental organizations.

1990

Patriarch Dimitrios visits the United States. It marks the first visit to America of an Ecumenical Patriarch.

1991

Patriarch Bartholomew is elected Archbishop of Constantinople, New Rome and Ecumenical Patriarch.

1992

International Orthodox Christian Charities

IOCC is established as an international humanitarian organization of the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas. The mission of IOCC is to offer emergency relief and development programs to those in need worldwide, without discrimination, and strengthen the capacity of the Orthodox Church to respond in the spirit of Christ’s love.

1995

Aegean Sea Symposium

The first “Religion, Science and the Environment” Symposium, was held as part of the celebration of the 1900th anniversary of the composition of the Book of Revelation by Saint John the Theologian. The symposium brought together 200 scientists, religious leaders, philosophers, economists, artists and policy makers, to examine the nexus of religion and the environment. Subsequent symposia were held on the Black Sea in 1997; the Danube River in 1999; the Adriatic Sea in 2002; the Baltic Sea in 2003; the Amazon in 2006; the Arctic in 2007; the Nile Delta in 2010; the Mississippi River in 2010; the Saronic Islands in 2018.

1996

Enthronement of Archbishop Spyridon as Archbishop of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America.

1997

His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew is awarded the highest and oldest honor that the United States Congress can bestow, the Congressional Gold Medal. Throughout its history, the Congressional Gold Medal has been selectively bestowed upon individuals who have been deemed worthy of such recognition by the Congress of the United States. The awardees include George Washington, Thomas Edison and Winston Churchill.

1999

The Archbishop Iakovos Library and Learning Resource Center on the grounds of Hellenic College and Holy Cross School of Theology, is dedicated. President George H. W. Bush serves as the Honorary Chairman of the Dedication Committee.

1999

Enthronement of Archbishop Demetrios as Archbishop of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America.

2000


2001

September 11

Terrorists attack the United States. Two airliners were purposely crashed into the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center in New York City, killing everyone onboard and many who were working in the buildings, in addition to hundreds of emergency response workers who heroically fell in the line of duty, attempting to save others. Within two hours, both buildings collapsed, destroying nearby buildings, including Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church.
The terrorists crashed a third airliner into the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia, just outside of Washington, D.C. A fourth plane crashed into a field near Shanksville in rural Pennsylvania, after some of its passengers and flight crew attempted to retake control of the plane, which the hijackers had redirected toward Washington, D.C. There were no survivors from any of the flights. This terrorist attack brought about the death of approximately 3,000 men, women and children from nations around the world.

2003
www.goarch.org
The Web Site of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America wins the prestigious Webby Award for best “spirituality” Web site. This award winning Web site continues to minister to Orthodox and non-Orthodox faithful throughout the world.

2004
Historic meeting between Patriarch Bartholomew I and Pope Benedict XVI in Rome. The Relics of Saint Gregory the Theologian and Saint John Chrysostom are returned to Constantinople.

2006
Patriarch Bartholomew hosts Second World Youth Conference in Istanbul.

2006
Historic meeting between Patriarch Bartholomew I and Pope Benedict XVI in Constantinople.

2009
The Fourth Pre-Conciliar Pan-Orthodox Conference is held in Chambésy, Switzerland during which the final text on the Orthodox diaspora, which ratified the Orthodox Episcopal Assemblies in twelve regions: North and Central America; South America; Australia/New Zealand/Oceania; Great Britain / Ireland; France; Belgium/Netherlands/Luxembourg; Austria; Italy and Malta; Switzerland; Germany; Scandinavia; Spain and Portugal, was adopted.

The region of North and Central America was later divided between Canada and the USA during the Synaxis of the Primates of the Orthodox Church in 2014, while Mexico was attached to the South American region and renamed “Latin America.” This Pre-Conciliar Pan-Orthodox Conference also adopted the working procedure of these episcopal assemblies.

2009
The Archbishop Anastasios and Archbishop Demetrios Missionary Training and Administration Building, opens and serves as the headquarters of Orthodox Christian Missions Center supporting communications with missionaries around the world.

2014
Ground blessing ceremony is held at Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church at the World Trade Center. The Church will function as a parish and National Shrine of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese.

2016
The Synaxis of the Primates of the Orthodox Churches met in Chambésy, Switzerland in January. As a consensus could not be reached, despite many efforts, it was decided to remove the ‘question of autocephaly and the manner of its proclamation’ and the ‘question of the diptychs’ from the agenda of the Great and Holy Council. This Synaxis also decided to remove the issue of the calendar from the agenda because some local Orthodox Churches stated that they did not desire, and are not ready for, a calendar reform.

The Synaxis approved the six items to be discussed at the Holy and Great Council. Due to the difficult political situation in the Middle East, it was decided not to assemble the Council in Constantinople, as previously agreed, but rather to convene the Holy and Great Council at the Orthodox Academy of Crete in June 2016.

2014
Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and Pope Francis make an Apostolic Pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

2015
The Fifth Pre-Conciliar Pan-Orthodox Conference is held in Chambésy, Switzerland during which the text on “Autonomy and the manner of its proclamation,” developed in 2009 by the Inter-Orthodox Preparatory Commission, is approved. The conference also examined the draft documents of the Panorthodox Council reviewed by the Special Inter-Orthodox Commission, from the meetings of October 2014, February and March/April 2015.

2016
Holy and Great Council
The Holy and Great Council is held at the Orthodox Academy of Crete from June 18-27. The Council commenced on the Sunday of Pentecost with the Pan-Orthodox celebration of all the Primates of the participating Orthodox Churches, in the Holy Cathedral Church of St. Minas in Heraklion.
The Council which gathered representatives from 14 autocephalous (internally self-governing) Orthodox Churches, to discuss issues ranging from the mission of the Orthodox Church in the modern world and its relations with other Christian churches, to the importance of fasting and the Sacrament of Marriage.

The Patriarchs of the ancient churches of Constantinople, Alexandria, Jerusalem, as well as the more recent churches of Albania, Cyprus, Czech Lands and Slovakia, Greece, Romania, Serbia and Poland, also discussed how the Orthodox Church determines autonomy and matters related to the Orthodox diaspora.

The Churches had prepared for this Council for almost a century. It is the first of its kind to be held in 1,200 years.

The Patriarchs of Antioch, Georgia, Russia and Bulgaria participated in all the preliminary discussions, including the Synaxis of the Primates of the Orthodox Churches in Chambésy, Switzerland in January, but chose not to participate in the Holy and Great Council.

The following items were discussed during the Council - the importance of fasting and Its observance today; relations of the Orthodox Church with the rest of the Christian world; autonomy and the means by which it is proclaimed; the Orthodox diaspora; the Sacrament of Marriage and its impediments; the mission of the Orthodox Church in today’s world.

At the conclusion of the Holy and Great Council official documents stating the Orthodox Church’s position on the above topics, were agreed to and issued.

Icons from the Saint Barbara Greek Orthodox Church in Orange, Connecticut are used in many areas throughout the Academy, including the banner on the official Holy and Great Council Web site.

Timeline Compiled and Edited by:
Rev. Peter J. Orfanakos
Presbytera Vangie E. Orfanakos
Eleni Hojnowski

List of Resources:
Orthodox Study Bible;
The Learning Bible, American Bible Society;
The Oxford Illustrated History of Christianity;
A Companion to the Greek Orthodox Church;
www.patriarchate.org;
www.goarch.org;
www.abiblestudy.com;
www.biblestudy.org;
www.orthodoxwiki.org