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Key Dates and Events in the History of Roman Catholicism

c. 33 to 100 CE: This period is known as the apostolic age, during which the early church was headed up by the 12 apostles of Jesus, who began missionary work to convert Jews to Christianity in various regions of the Mediterranean and Mideast.

c. 60 CE: Apostle Paul returns to Rome after suffering persecution for attempting to convert Jews to Christianity. He is said to have worked with Peter. The reputation of Rome as the center of the Christian church may have begun during this period, although practices were conducted in a hidden manner due to the Roman opposition. Paul dies about 68 CE, probably executed by beheading upon order of emperor Nero. Apostle Peter is also crucified around this time.

100 CE to 325 CE: Known as the Ante-Nicene period (before the Council of Nicene), this period marked the increasingly vigorous separation of the newly born Christian church from the Jewish culture, and the gradual spread of Christianity into western Europe, the Mediterranean region, and the near East.

200 CE: Under the leadership of Irenaeus, bishop of Lyon, the basic structure of the Catholic church was in place. A system of governance of regional branches under absolute direction from Rome was established. The basic tenants of Catholicism were formalized, involving the absolute rule of faith.

313 CE: Roman emperor Constantine legalized Christianity, and in 330 moved the Roman capital to Constantinople, leaving the Christian church to be the central authority in Rome.

325 CE: The First Council of Nicaea converged by Roman Emperor Constantine I. The Council attempted to structure church leadership around a model similar to that of the Roman system, and also formalized key articles of faith.

551 CE: At the Council of Chalcedon, the head of the church in Constantinople was declared to be the head of the Eastern branch of the church, equal in authority to the Pope. This effectively was the start of the division of the church into the Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic branches.

590 CE: Pope Gregory I initiates his papacy, during which the Catholic Church engages in widespread efforts to convert pagan peoples to Catholicism. This begins a time of enormous political and military power controlled by Catholic popes. This date is marked by some as the beginning of the Catholic Church as we know it today.

632 CE: Islamic prophet Mohammad dies. In the following years, the rise of Islam and broad conquests of much of Europe leads to brutal persecution of Christians and removal of all Catholic church heads except for those in Rome and Constantinople. A period of great conflict and long-lasting conflict between the Christian and Islamic faiths begins during these years.

1054 CE: The great East-West schism marks the formal separation of the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox branches of the Catholic Church.

1250s CE: The Inquisition begins in the Catholic church—an attempt to suppress religious heretics and convert non-Christians. Various forms of the forceful inquisition would remain for several hundred years (until the early 1800s), eventually targeting Jewish and Muslim peoples for conversion as well as expelling heretics within the Catholic Church.

1517 CE: Martin Luther publishes the 95 Theses, formalizing arguments against Roman Catholic Church doctrines and practices, and effectively marking the beginning of the Protestant separation from the Catholic Church.

1534 CE: King Henry VIII of England declares himself to be supreme head of the Church of England, severing the Anglican Church from the Roman Catholic Church.

1545-1563 CE: The Catholic Counter-Reformation begins, a period of resurgence in Catholic influence in response to the Protestant Reformation.

1870 CE: The First Vatican Council declares the policy of Papal infallibility, which holds that the Pope's decisions are beyond reproach—essentially considered the word of God.

1960s CE: The Second Vatican Council in a series of meetings reaffirmed church policy and initiated several measures aimed at modernizing the Catholic Church.

History of the Catholic Church in the United States

The Catholic faith in the United States first spread through the work of missionaries, such as Jesuits Isaac Jogues, Jacques Marquette and Eusebio Kino in the 1600s. In the 1770s, Spanish Franciscan Junípero Serra led the establishment of the California mission system.

Catholic education in the United States goes back to at least 1606, when Franciscans opened a school in what is now St. Augustine, Florida. Further north and a bit later, Jesuits instructed such dedicated Native American students as Kateri Tekakwitha (1656-1680). By the latter 1600s, English colonists had set up their own public schools, often with a heavily Protestant, if not blatantly anti-Catholic cast. Even in Catholic-founded Maryland, Catholics were a minority, and in 1677, in Newtown, the Jesuits established a preparatory school. In New Orleans, the Franciscans opened a school for boys in 1718. Ursuline sisters arrived there from France in 1727 to open an orphanage, school for street girls and health facility. This was the first formal Catholic charity in the present United States. Catholics in Philadelphia in 1782 opened St. Mary's School, considered the first parochial school in the United States.

Meanwhile the Catholic population continued to expand. By about 1776, it reached approximately 25,000 in Maryland, Pennsylvania and New York State alone. Not long after the American Revolution, John Carroll, cousin of Declaration of Independence signer Charles Carroll, saw his dream of a Catholic college take root with the 1789 establishment of Georgetown. The Bill of Rights, with the First Amendment guarantee of religious freedom, helped Catholics further cement their place in post-Revolutionary America. John Carroll was appointed prefect of the United States of America in 1784 and bishop of Baltimore in 1789. Baltimore, the

premier see, or first diocese in the country, was elevated to an archdiocese in 1808. Archbishop Carroll died in 1815. (There are now 195 Catholic dioceses and eparchies in the United States, with some 450 active and retired bishops.)

Elizabeth Ann Bayley Seton founded the Sisters of Charity of St. Joseph, set up a school for poor children in Emmitsburg, Maryland, in 1809 and made the creation of parochial schools a lifetime cause. In 1812, in rural Kentucky, Mary Rhodes, Christina Stuart and Nancy Havern, aided by a Belgium immigrant, Father Charles Nerinckx, formed the Friends of Mary (later the Sisters of Loretto) and began to teach poor children.

The middle of the 19th Century saw increasing Catholic interest in education in tandem with increasing Catholic immigration. To serve their growing communities, American Catholics opened their own schools, aided by religious orders such as the Sisters of Mercy, who arrived from Ireland in 1843, and the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, organized in 1845 to teach in Michigan. At the university level, Fordham University was founded in New York City in 1841. The University of Notre Dame was founded in 1842 by the Congregation of the Holy Cross in Indiana. The Catholic University of America was founded in Washington in 1887.

Such successes sparked a bigoted backlash, fomented by groups such as the Know-Nothing Society. Mobs burnt a convent and murdered a nun in Massachusetts in 1834, destroyed two churches in New England in 1854, and, in that same year, tarred-and-feathered and nearly killed Father John Bapst, a Swiss-born Jesuit teaching in Maine and ministering to the Passamaquoddy Indians and Irish immigrants, among others.

The late 19th Century saw the continued development of religious orders, including the founding of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament by rich heiress Katharine Drexel to meet the educational needs of blacks and Native Americans. It also saw the naming of the first U.S. cardinals, John McCloskey in New York and James Gibbons in Baltimore.

In 1904 Catholic educators formed a new organization, the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA). In 1915, the Catholic Hospital Association, later the Catholic Health Association, was formed. Their first convention brought together 200 sisters, lay nurses and doctors. Today, the organization represents more than 600 Catholic hospitals and 1,200 continuum of care facilities across the country. Every day, one out of six hospitalized patients is cared for in a Catholic health care facility.

In 1910, the National Conference of Catholic Charities was founded on the campus of The Catholic University of America. The organization played a key role in developing the National Housing Act, supporting the creation of Social Security and founding the National Catholic School of Social Service. The NCCC would later be renamed Catholic Charities USA, a national network of Catholic social service providers with its more than 170 member agencies that together served over 8.5 million in need in 2014.

In 1917 the U.S. bishops formed the National Catholic War Council (NCWC) to enable American Catholics to support servicemen during World War I. In 1919, Pope Benedict XV urged the hierarchy to join him in working for peace and social justice. In response, the bishops organized the National Catholic Welfare Council that same year, headquartered in Washington with a general secretary with some staff. In 1922

the National Catholic Welfare Conference was created to address such concerns as education, immigration and social action.

Msgr. John A. Ryan, head of NCWC's social action department, played a crucial role in developing the moral framework that would underpin the policies of President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal. In 1970, the bishops launched the Campaign for Human Development, a domestic anti-poverty program, which continues to fund groups led by low-income people seeking to address the root causes of poverty in their communities.

In 1966, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops (NCCB) and the United States Catholic Conference (USCC) were established out of the NCWC. The NCCB attended to the church's own affairs in this country, fulfilling the Second Vatican Council's mandate that bishops "jointly exercise their pastoral office" (Decree on the Bishops' Pastoral Office in the Church, #38). In 2001, the NCCB and the USCC were combined to form the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB).

Throughout the 20th Century, Catholic social justice teaching became deeply rooted, reflected in the founding of the Catholic Worker Movement by Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin in 1933, Catholic labor activism and participation by the Maryknoll community and other religious orders in missionary work around the globe. The Church played an active role in the Civil Rights movement. In 1960, John F. Kennedy became the first and so far only Catholic to be elected President of the United States.

In 1900, an estimated 3,500 parochial schools existed in the United States. Within 20 years, the number of elementary schools had reached 6,551, enrolling 1,759,673 pupils taught by 41,581 teachers. Secondary education likewise boomed. In 1900,

Catholics could boast of approximately 100 Catholic high schools, but by 1920 more than 1,500 existed. For more than two generations, enrollment continued to climb. By the mid-1960s, it had reached an all-time high of 4.5 million elementary school pupils, with about 1 million students in Catholic high schools. Four decades later, total elementary and secondary enrollment is 2.6 million. There are 8,000 Catholic schools across the United States today.

The United States received its first visits from popes in the years following the Second Vatican Council, including Paul VI (1965), several visits by John Paul II including the only World Youth Day in the United States hosted in Denver (1993), and Benedict XVI (2008). All three popes addressed the United Nations.

In 2002, the U.S. bishops adopted the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People, a landmark document in the church's response to the sexual abuse of minors by clergy. The norms of the Charter have been adopted by the Vatican and are being implemented around the world to ensure the Catholic Church is a safe environment for children.

Table of the Papacy of the Roman Catholic Church

Start year	End year	Number of days of Pontificate (max)	English name	Place of birth	Age at start of papacy	Age at end of papacy
2013			**Francis I**	**Buenos Aires**	**76**	
2005	2013	2,870	Benedict XVI	Marktl am Inn, Bavaria, Germany	78	85
1978	2005	9,658	Ven. John Paul II (John Paul the Great)	Wadowice, Poland	58	84
1978	1978	33	Servant of God John Paul I	Forno di Canale, Veneto, Italy	65	65
1963	1978	5,521	Servant of God Paul VI	Concesio, Brescia, Italy	65	80
1958	1963	1,678	Bd. John XXIII	Sotto il Monte, Bergamo, Italy	76	81
1939	1958	7,156	Ven. Pius XII	Rome, Italy	63	82
1922	1939	6,209	Pius XI	Desio, Lombardy-Venetia, Austrian Empire	64	81
1914	1922	2,696	Benedict XV	Genoa, Kingdom of Sardinia	59	67
1903	1914	4,031	St. Pius X	Riese, Lombardy-Venetia, Austrian Empire	68	79
1878	1903	9,275	Leo XIII, O.F.S.	Carpineto Romano, Rome departement, French Empire (now Italy)	67	93

1846	1878	11,465	Bd. Pius IX, O.F.S.	Senigallia, Marche, Papal States	54	85
1831	1846	5,594	Gregory XVI, O.S.B. Cam.	Belluno, Republic of Venice	65	80
1829	1830	610	Pius VIII	Cingoli, Marche, Papal States	67	69
1823	1829	1,960	Leo XII	Genga or Spoleto, Papal States	63	68
1800	1823	8,554	Pius VII, O.S.B.	Cesena, Papal States	57	81
1775	1799	8,955	Pius VI	Cesena, Papal States	57	81
1769	1774	1,951	Clement XIV, O.F.M.	Sant' Arcangelo di Romagna, Papal States	63	68
1758	1769	3,861	Clement XIII	Venice, Republic of Venice	65	75
1740	1758	6,464	Benedict XIV	Bologna, Papal States	65	83
1730	1740	3,494	Clement XII	Florence, Grand Duchy of Tuscany	78	87
1724	1730	2,093	Benedict XIII, O.P.	Gravina in Puglia, Kingdom of Naples	75	81
1721	1724	1,032	Innocent XIII	Poli, Lazio, Papal States	65	68
1700	1721	7,416	Clement XI	Urbino, Marche, Papal States	51	71
1691	1700	3,362	Innocent XII	Spinazzola, Kingdom of Naples	76	85
1689	1691	483	Alexander VIII	Venice, Republic of Venice	79	80
1676	1689	4,705	Bd. Innocent XI	Como, Duchy of Milan	65	78
1670	1676	2,274	Clement X	Rome, Papal States	79	86

1667	1669	902	Clement IX	Pistoia, Grand Duchy of Tuscany	67	69
1655	1667	4,425	Alexander VII	Siena, Grand Duchy of Tuscany	56	68
1644	1655	3,764	Innocent X	Rome, Papal States	70	80
1623	1644	7,658	Urban VIII	Florence, Grand Duchy of Tuscany	55	76
1621	1623	879	Gregory XV	Bologna, Papal States	67	69
1605	1605	26	Leo XI	Florence, Duchy of Florence	69	69
1605	1621	5,732	Paul V	Rome, Papal States	52	68
1592	1605	4,777	Clement VIII	Fano, Marche, Papal States	55	69
1591	1591	62	Innocent IX	Bologna, Papal States	72	72
1590	1590	12	Urban VII	Rome, Papal States	69	69
1590	1591	315	Gregory XIV	Somma Lombardo, Duchy of Milan	55	56
1585	1590	1,950	Sixtus V, O.F.M. Conv.	Grottammare, Marche, Papal States	63	68
1572	1585	4,712	Gregory XIII	Bologna, Papal States	70	83
1566	1572	2,305	St. Pius V, O.P.	Bosco, Duchy of Milan	61	68
1559	1565	2,073	Pius IV	Milan, Duchy of Milan	60	66
1555	1555	22	Marcellus II	Montefano, Marche, Papal States	53	53
1555	1559	1,547	Paul IV, C.R.	Capriglia Irpina, Campania, Kingdom of Naples	78	83
1550	1555	1,875	Julius III	Rome, Papal States	62	67
1534	1549	5,503	Paul III	Canino, Lazio, Papal States	66	81

1523	1534	3,953	Clement VII	Florence, Republic of Florence	45	56
1522	1523	613	Adrian VI Papa HADRIANUS Sextus	Utrecht, Bishopric of Utrecht, Holy Roman Empire (presently The Netherlands	62	64
1513	1521	3,187	Leo X	Florence, Republic of Florence	37	45
1503	1503	26	Pius III	Siena, Republic of Siena	64	64
1503	1513	7,048	Julius II	Albisola, Republic of Genoa	59	59
1492	1503	4,022	Alexander VI	Xativa, Kingdom of Valencia, Crown of Aragon	61	72
1484	1492	2,886	Innocent VIII	Genoa, Republic of Genoa	51	59
1471	1484	4,748	Sixtus IV, O.F.M.	Celle Ligure, Republic of Genoa	57	70
1464	1471	2,520	Paul II	Venice, Republic of Venice	47	54
1458	1464	2,187	Pius II	Corsignano, Republic of Siena	52	58
1455	1458	1,457	Callixtus III	Xativa, Kingdom of Valencia, Crown of Aragon	76	79
1447	1455	6,588	Nicholas V	Sarzana, Republic of Genoa	49	57
1431	1447	5,832	Eugene IV, O.S.A.	Venice, Republic of Venice	47	63
1417	1431	4,846	Martin V	Genazzano, Papal States	48	62

1406	1415	3,136			Venice, Republic of Venice	60	69
1404	1406	750	Innocent VII	Sulmona, Kingdom of Naples		65	67
1389	1404	5,444	Boniface IX	Naples, Kingdom of Naples		n.a	n.a
1378	1389	4,205	Urban VI	Naples, Kingdom of Naples		n.a	n.a
1362	1370	3,002	Bd. Urban V, O.S.B.	Grizac, Languedoc, France		n.a	n.a
1352	1362	3,553	Innocent VI	Les Monts, Limousin, France		n.a	n.a
1342	1352	3,863	Clement VI, O.S.B.	Maumont, Limousin, France		n.a	n.a
1334	1342	2,681	Benedict XII, O.Cist.	Saverdun, County of Foix, France		n.a	n.a
1316	1334	6,689	John XXII	Cahors, Quercy, France		n.a	n.a
1314	1316	730	interregnum			n.a	n.a
1305	1314	1,779	Clement V	Villandraut, Gascony, France		n.a	n.a
1303	1304	259	Bd. Benedict XI, O.P.	Treviso, Italy, Holy Roman Empire		n.a	n.a
1294	1294	223	St. Celestine V, O.S.B.	Sant' Angelo Limosano, Kingdom of Sicily		n.a	n.a
1294	1303	2,920	Boniface VIII	Anagni, Papal States, Holy Roman Empire		n.a	n.a
1292	1294	730	interregnum			n.a	n.a
1288	1292	1,460	Nicholas IV, O.F.M.	Lisciano, Papal States, Holy Roman Empire		n.a	n.a

1285	1287	730	Honorius IV	Rome, Papal States, Holy Roman Empire	n.a	n.a
1281	1285	1,460	Martin IV	Meinpicien, Touraine, France	n.a	n.a
1277	1280	730	Nicholas III	Rome, Papal States, Holy Roman Empire	n.a	n.a
1276	1276	151	Bd. Innocent V, O.P.	County of Savoy, Holy Roman Empire	n.a	n.a
1276	1276	38	Adrian V	Genoa, Republic of Genoa, Holy Roman Empire	n.a	n.a
1276	1277	263	John XXI	Lisbon, Portugal	n.a	n.a
1271	1276	1,460	Bd. Gregory X	Piacenza, Italy, Holy Roman Empire	n.a	n.a
1265	1268	1,095	Clement IV	Saint-Gilles, Languedoc, France	n.a	n.a
1261	1264	1,095	Urban IV	Troyes, County of Champagne, France	n.a	n.a
1254	1261	2,190	Alexander IV	Jenne, Papal States, Holy Roman Empire	n.a	n.a
1243	1254	4,015	Innocent IV	Genoa, Republic of Genoa, Holy Roman Empire	n.a	n.a
1241	1241	17	Celestine IV	Milan, Italy, Holy Roman Empire	n.a	n.a
1227	1241	5,110	Gregory IX	Anagni, Papal States, Holy Roman Empire	n.a	n.a
1216	1227	3,650	Honorius III	Rome, Papal States, Holy Roman Empire	n.a	n.a
1198	1216	6,570	Innocent III	Gavignano, Papal States, Holy Roman Empire	n.a	n.a

1191	1198	2,190	Celestine III	Rome, Papal States, Holy Roman Empire	n.a	n.a
1187	1187	57	Gregory VIII, Can.Reg.	Benevento, Papal States, Holy Roman Empire	n.a	n.a
1187	1191	1,095	Clement III	Rome, Papal States, Holy Roman Empire	n.a	n.a
1185	1187	365	Urban III	Cuggiono, Italy, Holy Roman Empire	n.a	n.a
1181	1185	1,460	Lucius III	Lucca, Italy, Holy Roman Empire	n.a	n.a
1159	1181	7,665	Alexander III	Siena, Italy, Holy Roman Empire	n.a	n.a
1154	1159	1,460	Adrian IV, O.S.A.	Abbots Langley, Hertfordshire, Kingdom of England	n.a	n.a
1153	1154	365	Anastasius IV	Rome, Papal States, Holy Roman Empire	n.a	n.a
1145	1153	2,920	Bd. Eugene III, O.Cist.	Pisa, Republic of Pisa, Holy Roman Empire	n.a	n.a
1144	1145	340	Lucius II, Can.Reg.	Bologna, Papal States, Holy Roman Empire	n.a	n.a
1143	1144	164	Celestine II	Citta di Castello, Papal States, Holy Roman Empire	n.a	n.a
1130	1143	4,745	Innocent II, Can.Reg.	Rome, Papal States, Holy Roman Empire	n.a	n.a
1124	1130	1,825	Honorius II, Can.Reg.	Fiagnano, Papal States, Holy Roman Empire	n.a	n.a
1119	1124	1,825	Callixtus II	Quingey, County of Burgundy, Holy Roman Empire	n.a	n.a

1118	1119	365	Gelasius II, O.S.B.	Gaeta, Principality of Capua	n.a	n.a
1099	1118	4,015	Paschal II, O.S.B.	Bleda, Papal States, Holy Roman Empire	n.a	n.a
1088	1099	365	Bd. Urban II, O.S.B.	Lagery, County of Champagne, France	n.a	n.a
1086	1087	365	Bd. Victor III, O.S.B.	Benevento, Duchy of Benevento	n.a	n.a
1073	1085	4,380	St. Gregory VII, O.S.B.	Sovana, Italy, Holy Roman Empire	n.a	n.a
1061	1073	4,015	Alexander II	Milan, Italy, Holy Roman Empire	n.a	n.a
1058	1061	730	Nicholas II	Chateau de Chevron, Kingdom of Arles	n.a	n.a
1057	1058	241	Stephen IX (Stephen X), O.S.B.	Duchy of Lorraine, Holy Roman Empire	n.a	n.a
1055	1057	730	Victor II	Kingdom of Germany, Holy Roman Empire	n.a	n.a
1049	1054	1,825	St. Leo IX	Eguisheim, Swabia, Holy Roman Empire	n.a	n.a
1048	1048	23	Damasus II	Pildenau, Duchy of Bavaria, Holy Roman Empire	n.a	n.a
1047	1048	365	Benedict IX	Rome, Papal States, Holy Roman Empire	n.a	n.a
1046	1047	289	Clement II	Hornburg, Duchy of Saxony, Holy Roman Empire	n.a	n.a
1045	1045	365	Sylvester III	Rome, Papal States, Holy Roman Empire	n.a	n.a
1045	1045	365	Benedict IX	Rome, Papal States, Holy Roman Empire	n.a	n.a

1118	1119	365	Gelasius II, O.S.B.	Gaeta, Principality of Capua	n.a	n.a
1099	1118	4,015	Paschal II, O.S.B.	Bleda, Papal States, Holy Roman Empire	n.a	n.a
1088	1099	365	Bd. Urban II, O.S.B.	Lagery, County of Champagne, France	n.a	n.a
1086	1087	365	Bd. Victor III, O.S.B.	Benevento, Duchy of Benevento	n.a	n.a
1073	1085	4,380	St. Gregory VII, O.S.B.	Sovana, Italy, Holy Roman Empire	n.a	n.a
1061	1073	4,015	Alexander II	Milan, Italy, Holy Roman Empire	n.a	n.a
1058	1061	730	Nicholas II	Chateau de Chevron, Kingdom of Arles	n.a	n.a
1057	1058	241	Stephen IX (Stephen X), O.S.B.	Duchy of Lorraine, Holy Roman Empire	n.a	n.a
1055	1057	730	Victor II	Kingdom of Germany, Holy Roman Empire	n.a	n.a
1049	1054	1,825	St. Leo IX	Eguisheim, Swabia, Holy Roman Empire	n.a	n.a
1048	1048	23	Damasus II	Pildenau, Duchy of Bavaria, Holy Roman Empire	n.a	n.a
1047	1048	365	Benedict IX	Rome, Papal States, Holy Roman Empire	n.a	n.a
1046	1047	289	Clement II	Hornburg, Duchy of Saxony, Holy Roman Empire	n.a	n.a
1045	1045	365	Sylvester III	Rome, Papal States, Holy Roman Empire	n.a	n.a
1045	1045	365	Benedict IX	Rome, Papal States, Holy Roman Empire	n.a	n.a

1045	1046	365	Gregory VI	Rome, Papal States, Holy Roman Empire	n.a	n.a
1032	1044	4,380	Benedict IX	Rome, Papal States, Holy Roman Empire	n.a	n.a
1024	1032	2,920	John XIX	Rome, Papal States, Holy Roman Empire	n.a	n.a
1012	1024	4,015	Benedict VIII	Rome, Papal States, Holy Roman Empire	n.a	n.a
1009	1012	730	Sergius IV	Rome, Papal States, Holy Roman Empire	n.a	n.a
1003	1003	214	John XVII	Rome, Papal States	n.a	n.a
1003	1009	1,460	John XVIII	Rapagnano, Papal States	n.a	n.a
999	1003	1,460	Sylvester II	Auvergne region of France	n.a	n.a
996	999	730	Gregory V	Germany, Holy Roman Empire	n.a	n.a
985	996	3,650	John XV	Rome	n.a	n.a
983	984	262	John XIV	Pavia	n.a	n.a
974	983	2,920	Benedict VII	Rome	n.a	n.a
973	974	365	Benedict VI	Rome, Papal States	n.a	n.a
965	972	2,190	John XIII	Rome	n.a	n.a
964	964	30	Benedict V	Rome	n.a	n.a
964	965	242	Leo VIII	Rome	n.a	n.a
955	964	2,920	John XII	Rome	n.a	n.a
946	955	3,285	Agapetus II	Rome	n.a	n.a
942	946	1,095	Marinus II	Rome	n.a	n.a
939	942	1,095	Stephen VIII (Stephen IX)	Germany	n.a	n.a

936	939	1,095	Leo VII, O.S.B.			n.a	n.a
931	935	1,460	John XI	Rome		n.a	n.a
928	928	245	Leo VI	Rome		n.a	n.a
928	931	730	Stephen VII (Stephen VIII)	Rome		n.a	n.a
914	928	5,110	John X	Romagna, Italy		n.a	n.a
913	914	200	Lando	Sabina, Italy		n.a	n.a
911	913	730	Anastasius III	Rome		n.a	n.a
904	911	2,555	Sergius III	Rome		n.a	n.a
903	903	92	Leo V	Ardea		n.a	n.a
900	903	1,095	Benedict IV	Rome		n.a	n.a
898	900	730	John IX, O.S.B.	Tivoli		n.a	n.a
897	897	122	Romanus	Gallese, Rome		n.a	n.a
897	898	30	Theodore II	Rome		n.a	n.a
896	896	15	Boniface VI	Rome		n.a	n.a
896	897	365	Stephen VI (Stephen VII)			n.a	n.a
891	896	1,460	Formosus	Ostia		n.a	n.a
885	891	2,190	Stephen V (Stephen VI)	Rome		n.a	n.a
884	885	365	St. Adrian III	Rome		n.a	n.a
882	884	365	Marinus I	Gallese, Rome		n.a	n.a
872	882	3,650	John VIII	Rome		n.a	n.a
867	872	1,825	Adrian II	Rome		n.a	n.a

858	867	3,285	St. Nicholas I (Nicholas the Great)	Rome	n.a	n.a
855	858	1,095	Benedict III	Rome	n.a	n.a
847	855	2,920	St. Leo IV, O.S.B.	Rome	n.a	n.a
844	847	1,095	Sergius II	Rome	n.a	n.a
827	827	30	Valentine	Rome	n.a	n.a
827	844	6,205	Gregory IV	Rome	n.a	n.a
824	827	1,095	Eugene II	Rome	n.a	n.a
817	824	2,555	St. Paschal I	Rome	n.a	n.a
816	817	226	Stephen IV (Stephen V)		n.a	n.a
795	816	7,300	St. Leo III	Rome	n.a	n.a
772	795	8,395	Adrian I	Rome	n.a	n.a
767	772	1,460	Stephen III (Stephen IV)	Sicily	n.a	n.a
757	767	3,650	St. Paul I	Rome	n.a	n.a
752	752	0	Pope-elect Stephen		n.a	n.a
752	757	1,825	Stephen II (Stephen III)		n.a	n.a
741	752	3,650	St. Zachary	Greece	n.a	n.a
731	741	3,650	Gregory III	Syria	n.a	n.a
715	731	5,475	St. Gregory II	Rome, Byzantine Empire	n.a	n.a
708	708	21	Sisinnius	Syria	n.a	n.a
708	7015	2,555	Constantine	Syria	n.a	n.a
705	708	730	John VII	Greece	n.a	n.a

701	705	1,095	John VI	Greece	n.a	n.a
687	701	4,745	St. Sergius I	Sicily	n.a	n.a
686	687	335	Conon		n.a	n.a
685	686	365	John V	Syria	n.a	n.a
684	685	317	St. Benedict II	Rome, Byzantine Empire	n.a	n.a
681	684	365	St. Leo II	Sicily	n.a	n.a
678	681	730	St. Agatho	Sicily	n.a	n.a
676	678	365	Donus	Rome, Byzantine Empire	n.a	n.a
672	676	1,460	Adeodatus II, O.S.B.	Rome, Byzantine Empire	n.a	n.a
657	672	5,110	St. Vitalian	Segni, Byzantine Empire	n.a	n.a
654	657	730	St. Eugene I	Rome	n.a	n.a
649	654	2,190	St. Martin I	Near Todi, Umbria, Byzantine Empire	n.a	n.a
642	649	2,190	Theodore I	Palestine	n.a	n.a
640	642	0	John IV	Zadar, Dalmatia, now Croatia	n.a	n.a
638	640	365	Severinus	Rome	n.a	n.a
625	638	4,380	Honorius I	Campania, Byzantine Empire	n.a	n.a
619	625	1,825	Boniface V	Naples	n.a	n.a
615	619	0	Adeodatus I (Deusdedit)	Rome	n.a	n.a
608	615	2,190	St. Boniface IV, O.S.B.	Marsi	n.a	n.a
607	608	267	Boniface III	Rome	n.a	n.a
604	607	365	Sabinian	Blera	n.a	n.a

590	604	4,745	St. Gregory I, O.S.B. (Gregory the Great)	Rome	n.a	n.a
579	590	3,650	Pelagius II	Rome	n.a	n.a
575	579	5,475	Benedict I		n.a	n.a
561	575	4,380	John III	Rome, Eastern Roman Empire	n.a	n.a
556	561	1,825	Pelagius I	Rome	n.a	n.a
537	555	6,570	Vigilius	Rome	n.a	n.a
536	537	365	St. Silverius		n.a	n.a
535	536	346	St. Agapetus I (Agapitus)	Rome, Ostrogothic Kingdom	n.a	n.a
533	535	730	John II	Rome	n.a	n.a
530	533	730	Boniface II	Rome to Ostrogoth parents	n.a	n.a
526	530	1,460	St. Felix IV (Felix III)	Samnium	n.a	n.a
523	526	730	St. John I	Tuscany	n.a	n.a
514	523	2,920	St. Hormisdas	Frosinone, Southern Latium, Italy	n.a	n.a
498	514	5,475	St. Symmachus	Sardinia	n.a	n.a
496	498	365	Anastasius II		n.a	n.a
492	496	1,460	St. Gelasius I	Africa	n.a	n.a
483	492	2,920	St. Felix III (Felix II)	Rome	n.a	n.a
468	483	5,475	St. Simplicius	Tivoli, Italy	n.a	n.a

461	468	2,190	St. Hilarius	Sardinia, Western Roman Empire	n.a	n.a
440	461	7,665	St. Leo I (Leo the Great)	Rome	n.a	n.a
432	440	2,920	St. Sixtus III		n.a	n.a
422	432	3,285	St. Celestine I	Rome, Western Roman Empire	n.a	n.a
418	422	1,095	St. Boniface I		n.a	n.a
417	418	365	St. Zosimus		n.a	n.a
401	417	5,475	St. Innocent I		n.a	n.a
399	401	730	St. Anastasius I		n.a	n.a
384	399	5,110	St. Siricius	&nsp;	n.a	n.a
366	384	6,570	St. Damasus I	Idanha-a-Velha, Portugal	n.a	n.a
352	366	5,110	Liberius	&nsp;	n.a	n.a
337	352	5,475	St. Julius I	Rome	n.a	n.a
336	337	263	St. Mark	Rome	n.a	n.a
314	336	7,665	St. Sylvester I	Sant'Angelo a Scala, Avellino	n.a	n.a
311	314	730	St. Miltiades (Melchiades)	Africa	n.a	n.a
309	311	365	St. Eusebius		n.a	n.a
308	309	365	St. Marcellus I		n.a	n.a
296	308	2,555	St. Marcellinus		n.a	n.a
283	296	4,380	St. Caius		n.a	n.a

275	283	2,920	St. Eutychian		n.a	n.a
269	274	1,825	St. Felix I	Rome	n.a	n.a
259	268	3,285	St. Dionysius	Greece	n.a	n.a
257	258	341	St. Sixtus II	Greece	n.a	n.a
254	257	42	St. Stephen I	Rome	n.a	n.a
253	254	256	St. Lucius I	Rome	n.a	n.a
251	253	730	St. Cornelius		n.a	n.a
236	250	5,110	St. Fabian	Rome	n.a	n.a
235	236	44	St. Anterus	Greece	n.a	n.a
230	235	1,825	St. Pontian	Rome	n.a	n.a
222	230	2,920	St. Urban I	Rome	n.a	n.a
217	222	2,190	St. Callixtus I	Spain	n.a	n.a
199	217	6,570	St. Zephyrinus (Zephyrin)	Rome	n.a	n.a
189	198	3,650	St. Victor I	Northern Africa	n.a	n.a
174	189	5,475	St. Eleuterus	Nicopoli, Epyrus	n.a	n.a
166	174	3,285	St. Soter	Fondi, Latium, Italy	n.a	n.a
155	166	4,015	St. Anicetus	Emesa, Syria	n.a	n.a
140	142	5,475	St. Pius I	Aquileia, Friuli, Italy	n.a	n.a
136	140	1,460	St. Hyginus	Greece	n.a	n.a
125	136	4,745	St. Telesphorus	Greece	n.a	n.a
115	125	7,300	St. Sixtus I	Rome or Greece	n.a	n.a
105	115	3,650	St. Alexander I	Rome	n.a	n.a
97	105	2,920	St. Evaristus (Aristus)	Bethlehem, Judea	n.a	n.a

88	97	?	St. Clement I	Rome	n.a	n.a
76	92	4,380	St. Anacletus (Cletus)	Probably Greece	n.a	n.a
64	76	4,380	St. Linus	Tuscia (Central Tuscany)	n.a	n.a
30	64	13,505	St. Peter	Bethsaida, Galilea	n.a	n.a
0	0	0			n.a	n.a
0	0	0				

Brief Overview of Catholic Church

The Catholic Church is the only church today that can claim to be the one church founded by Jesus Christ 2,000 years ago. Other denominations can trace their origins back to various human founders at a later date in history.

The History of the Catholic Church begins with Christ telling Peter that he is the rock on which He will build His church. When Catholics use the term apostolic succession, they are referring to the line of bishops that stretches all the way back to the apostles—to Peter—the first Pope (Saint Peter). Apostolic tradition (the authentic teaching of the apostles) was handed from Christ to the apostles, and from them to their successors. This unbroken line of popes (the bishops of Rome) and all other bishops have guided the Church for the past 2,000 years, just as Christ intended (Matthew 28:19-20).

The Roman Catholic Church is the largest group of Christians in the world. There are about 1 billion members, mostly in Europe, North and South America. The church goes back to about 30 A.D., to the life of Jesus Christ and his apostles. Roman Catholics believe that Jesus Christ is the son of God, and that he rose to heaven after being crucified. They believe that Jesus brought salvation to all people on Earth.

The leader of the Roman Catholic Church and successor of Jesus Christ on Earth is the Pope. He governs the church from the Vatican, a small state situated in the heart of Rome. The Pope selects cardinals and bishops to lead the church throughout the world.

The Roman Catholic Church has influenced history more than any other organization. It exercised its power throughout the Middle Ages. Missionaries travelled to other continents to spread Catholicism. Great architects created churches and cathedrals, artists drew paintings and made frescoes.

Brief History of the Roman Catholic Church in Latin America

When Christopher Columbus arrived in America, the Catholic Church moved quickly to establish its control in the newly discovered territory.

The first missionaries arrived shortly after the fall of the Aztecs. Most of the missionary work was done by Catholic orders—the Franciscans, Dominicans, Augustinians and Jesuits.

Thirty-five years after the first dozen Franciscans arrived, there were 800 missionaries in Mexico alone. Contemporary reports say the Franciscans alone baptized 5 million—roughly 1 percent of the world population at the time.

Spanish and Portuguese governors encouraged the spread of Catholicism among the native populations, and not just because it gave them political support from the Vatican. The Catholic Church was key to their ability to control the continent with only a small military.

By 1767, the Portuguese, Spanish and French had grown distrustful of the power of the Jesuits. They ordered their expulsion from their lands, breaking the Jesuits' power in Latin America. The Jesuits were escorted from the Spanish Empire, in many cases with a military escort to prevent the natives from breaking in and freeing them.

At the start of the 19th century, Spain began an effort to assert control over the Catholic Church as a whole.

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