

Incidents Leading to the Separation of the Church of Rome from Orthodoxy

1. In 154 the Roman church decided that Pascha would be celebrated on the first Sunday after Passover. The Eastern churches had long followed the tradition of celebrating Pascha on the Hebrew fourteenth day of Nissan. Saint Polycarp, of Polycarp, traveled to Rome and tried unsuccessfully to resolve the controversy. As the Eastern churches refused to change, Bishop Sylvester of Rome attempted unsuccessfully around 194 to excommunicate those Eastern churches.
2. Around 248, Saint Cyprian is elevated to bishop of Carthage. During a controversy over how to receive heretics into the Church, Pope Saint Stephen attempted to force his will upon the bishops of North Africa. Saint Cyprian, assembled together with 87 other bishops, responded with the following pronouncement: "It remains, that upon this same matter each of us should bring forward what we think, judging no man, nor rejecting any one from the right of communion, if he should think differently from us. For neither does any of us set himself up as a bishop of bishops, nor by tyrannical terror does any compel his colleague to the necessity of obedience; since every bishop, according to the allowance of his liberty and power, has his own proper right of judgment, and can no more be judged by another than he himself can judge another."
3. In 330 Emperor Constantine dedicated his new city, "New Rome", called Constantinople by others. For economic, political and personal reasons Constantine had created a magnificent city on major trade routes of the Bosphorus, as the center of the Empire. To build it quickly he moved materials, edifices and art from other areas, including Rome. This must have been resented by Romans, who saw their ancient capitol being supplanted.
4. Around 375 Saints Basil the Great and Gregory of Nazianzus wrote and preached of the Holy Spirit being coequal with God and Christ, establishing that in the mind of the Church. While not an immediate conflict, it certainly was in contradiction to Rome's future subordination of the Holy Spirit *via* their insertion of the *filioque* in the Nicene Creed.
5. In 387, Augustine converts to Christianity. Augustine was elevated to bishop in 396. Augustine's knowledge of Greek was very limited, and elements of his theology were different from the Church Fathers. Because he was one of the first theologians to write in Latin, his theology exercised an enormous influence in the West but none in the East (most of his writings were not translated into Greek until the 1360s). His teachings have either influenced or given rise to later Latin and Protestant innovations such as: the filioque, original sin as inherited guilt, the total depravity of man, and Calvinistic predestination.
6. In 395 Emperor Theodosius set the stage for conflict by dividing the Empire into Eastern and Western empires.
7. Around 410 Pope Innocent of Rome referred to his position as the "head of the episcopate", implying Rome's supremacy over all other patriarchates.

8. Around 450 Pope Leo I established his authority over all Western bishops, ending for the West the conciliar governing of the Church that had existed from apostolic times.
9. In 451 the Fourth Ecumenical Council said that, as Rome had achieved primacy in the Church because it had been the ancient capitol of the Empire, as New Rome (Constantinople) had equal primacy. The Roman church did not like this.
10. In 484 Pope Felix III of Rome excommunicated Patriarch Acacius of Constantinople because he did not accept Leo's Tome. This first schism lasted until 518.
11. In 553 Pope Vigilius of Rome refused to attend the Fifth Ecumenical Council because he felt there was not enough representation by the West.
12. In 589 Visigoth King Recared inserted the *filioque* in the Nicene Creed to counter Visigoth Arians. Although his reason had nothing to do with subordination of the Holy Spirit, it set the precedent for more widespread use in the West under Charlemagne, who was antagonistic towards the Eastern Empire.
13. From 632 to 636 Arab muslims conquered Eastern lands and cities, making communication between East and West more difficult.
14. In 731 Eastern Emperor Leo the Isaurian confiscated Roman churches in Southern Italy and Bulgaria because Pope Gregory III refused to embrace iconoclasm. Roman popes remembered this and ultimately took the regions back.
15. In 800 Pope Leo III crowned Charlemagne as a second emperor, clearly dividing East and West. He did this without Eastern support or knowledge, to gain Charlemagne's support against Lombards in Italy.
16. Around 810 Charlemagne began routine use of the *filioque* in the Nicene Creed. Again, this was done unilaterally and without consultation with the East. Eastern missionaries discovered its use when they came in contact with Western missionaries in Germany and Northern countries.
17. In 858 a conflict occurred between Pope Nicholas I (858-867) and Patriarch Photius of Constantinople, called the Schism of Photius. Eastern Emperor Michael III had deposed Patriarch Ignatius in favor of the scholar Photius. Ignatius appealed to Pope Nicholas who sent a delegation to Constantinople to negotiate the restoration of papal jurisdiction over churches in Southern Italy and on the Northern frontier. (Recall that when an earlier pope had refused Leo the Isaurian's command to recognize iconoclasm, Leo took Roman churches in Southern Italy and on the frontier.) And by now Eastern missionaries to Bulgaria had learned of the West's addition of the *filioque* to the Nicene Creed. Photius refused to negotiate and Nicholas excommunicated him, taking back the churches seized by Leo. In response in 862 Photius raised the issue of the *filioque* and pronounced anathema on Nicholas. The schism was short-lived because Basil I succeeded Emperor Michael by killing him, whereupon he reinstated Patriarch Ignatius. Photius peacefully stepped aside and encouraged the veneration

of Ignatius. But the several councils that resulted, Western and Eastern, marked the end of unity represented by the seven Ecumenical Councils.

18. In 1054 Cardinal Humbert, acting on his own as his Pope had died, challenged the Patriarch of Constantinople with Roman supremacy and excommunicated him. This is considered the beginning of the Great Schism between East and West.
19. In 1202 Western Venetians changed the objective of the Fourth Crusade from retaking Jerusalem from the Muslims to going to Constantinople. There they sacked the city, destroying edifices, defaming the Hagia Sophia (To plunder the cathedral knights took mules into the sanctuary.), burning much of the city and defaming and killing inhabitants. This cemented the Great Schism.

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