

These churches are rooted in the split between **Roman Catholicism** and **Greek Catholicism** in **1054 AD**. They are rooted in the Eastern part of the Roman Empire. They accept the **first seven councils of the Church** in common with Roman Catholicism. They all have **seven sacraments** and all use the original **Nicene creed** (no *filioque* clause). All have their own liturgical languages, church calendars, and special traditions. All of them have the same tradition of **ordaining married men**. They have not preserved Jesus' prohibition of divorce nor the Church's teaching against artificial methods of birth control. They use the same **canon** of Sacred Scripture: 46 books of the *Septuagint* and 27 books of the New Testament.

The Orthodox have no pope. They reject the claims of the Roman Catholic Pope to be the head of the Church, although they respect his ordination as Bishop of Rome. They reject the teachings of the 13 councils which have taken place between the 8th and 20th century under Rome's leadership. Since the first seven councils were all conducted in Greek territory and in the Greek language, and since the Septuagint and the New Testament are all in Greek, the Greek Orthodox may make an excellent argument that they represent primitive Christianity and that the switch to Latin was a lamentable innovation (change) from Tradition. As in the Roman Church, the Eastern Churches venerate Our Lady, the angels, and the saints.

Autocephalous (self-headed) Churches

1. The Church of Constantinople
2. The Church of Alexandria
3. The Church of Antioch
4. The Church of Jerusalem
5. The Church of Russia
6. The Church of Georgia
7. The Church of Serbia
8. The Church of Romania
9. The Church of Bulgaria
10. The Church of Cyprus
11. The Church of Greece
12. The Church of Albania
13. The Church of Poland
14. The Church of the Czech and Slovak Republics
15. The Orthodox Church in America

Autonomous (independent, self-ruled) Churches

1. The Church of Sinai
2. The Church of Finland
3. The Church of Japan
4. The Church of Ukraine

The autonomous churches have heads appointed by an autocephalous Church and receive the Holy Chrism for Confirmation from the mother Church.

The **Orthodox Churches** are NOT **Protestants**. Protestantism is a further group of schisms in **Western Christianity** and dates from October 31, 1517, when Luther made 95 objections (protests) against the Church's teachings on sin and salvation.

The **Roman Catholic Church** acknowledges the **validity** of all of the sacraments in the Eastern Orthodox Churches. We recognize that there is an **authentic apostolic succession** maintained by the bishops in the Eastern Churches.