

Compare/Contrast

- Orthodox
- Catholic
- Protestant

AGENDA

1. Holy Scripture
2. Apostolic Succession
3. The Bishop
4. Church Architecture
5. Articles of Faith - Creeds
6. Sacraments
7. Ecumenical Councils and Church Fathers
8. Liturgical Services
9. Icons and Relics
10. Salvation

Martin Luther and The 2 Planks of Sola Scriptura

The first plank of sola Scriptura is Scripture's nature which direct revelation through prophets and Apostles by the Holy Spirit. We respect the church fathers and ancient councils as guides, but only God can establish articles of faith

The second plank is the clarity of Scripture. Luther and other Reformers saw Scripture as clear on its central teachings and it was the Church that obscures rather than clarifies the message of the Bible.

"Christ has opened our understanding, that we might understand the Scriptures, and the Gospel is preached to every creature.

I certainly grant that many passages in the Scriptures are obscure and hard to elucidate, but that is due, not to the exalted nature of their subject, but to our own linguistic and grammatical ignorance, and it does not in any way prevent our knowing all the content of Scripture."

Bondage of Will



Holy Scripture – Catholic Approach

In the Catechism of the Catholic Church, Article 3, Sacred Scripture, it states:

112 *Be especially attentive "to the content and unity of the whole Scripture".*

Scripture is a unity by reason of the unity of God's plan, of which Christ Jesus is the center and heart, open since his Passover. Scripture has been opened since the Passion; since those who from then on have understood it, consider and discern in what way the prophecies must be interpreted.

113 *Read the Scripture within "the living Tradition of the whole Church".*

According to a saying of the Fathers, Sacred Scripture is written principally in the Church's heart rather than in documents and records, for the Church carries in her Tradition the living memorial of God's Word, *and it is the Holy Spirit who gives her the spiritual interpretation of the Scripture.*

Holy Scripture – Orthodox Approach

At the Moscow Conference held in 1976 between the Orthodox and the Anglicans, an excellent summary of the Orthodox view towards Scripture was expressed thusly:

The Scriptures constitute a coherent whole. They are at once divinely inspired and humanly expressed.

They bear authoritative witness to God's revelation of Himself in creation, in the Incarnation of the Word, and in the whole history of salvation, and as such express the word of God in human language.

We know, receive, and interpret Scripture through the Church and in the Church. Our approach to the Bible is one of obedience.

The Scriptural Mind

With this in mind, there are four key characteristics which mark the Orthodox “Scriptural mind” and approach to Scripture.

1. Reading of Scripture must be done in *obedience*
2. It is *Christ-centered*
3. It is *personal*.
4. It is read and understood *in* union with the Church

As can be seen, all three, Protestant, Catholic, and Orthodox, would agree with the first three points

however

it is only the Orthodox Church and Her sister Church, the Catholic Church which see reading of Scripture as understood within the Church.

For Orthodox, Scripture and Church cannot be separated.



Apostolic succession

1. The tracing of a historical direct line of the original apostles.
2. Adherence to and in agreement in Orthodox doctrine with and the Ecumenical Councils
3. Full communion the other Orthodox bishops from the Apostles to the current episcopacy of the Orthodox Church.

***All three elements are required of
Apostolic succession.***

Biblical Case for Apostolic Succession

We have heard that some went out from us without our authorization and disturbed you, troubling your minds by what they said.

Acts 15:24

For this reason I remind you to kindle afresh the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. (St Paul speaking to Timothy

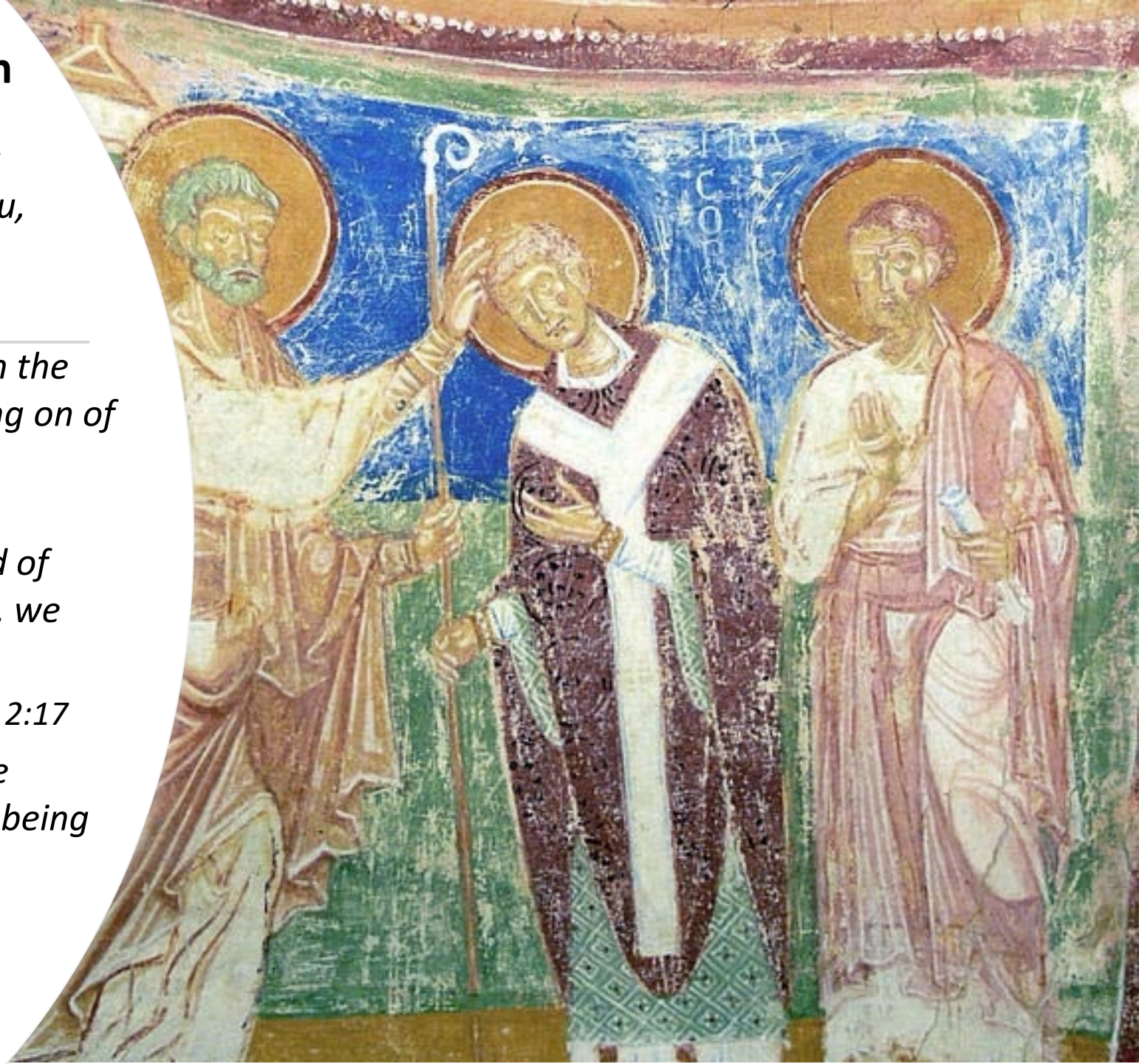
2 Tim. 1:6

For we are not like many, peddling the word of God, but as from sincerity, but as from God, we speak in Christ in the sight of God.

2 Corinthians 2:17

...having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone

Eph. 2:20



The “Bishop” as a Symbol

For both the Orthodox and Catholic, the Bishop is the Symbol of *fullness and unity* of the eschatological community that he presides over.

The Bishop is at once both:

- alter Christus as portrayed in the Eucharist as the presence of the Church [in unity].
- alter Apostolus as he maintains the continuity of the Apostolic teachings

*Hippolytus of Rome
3rd-century theologian*



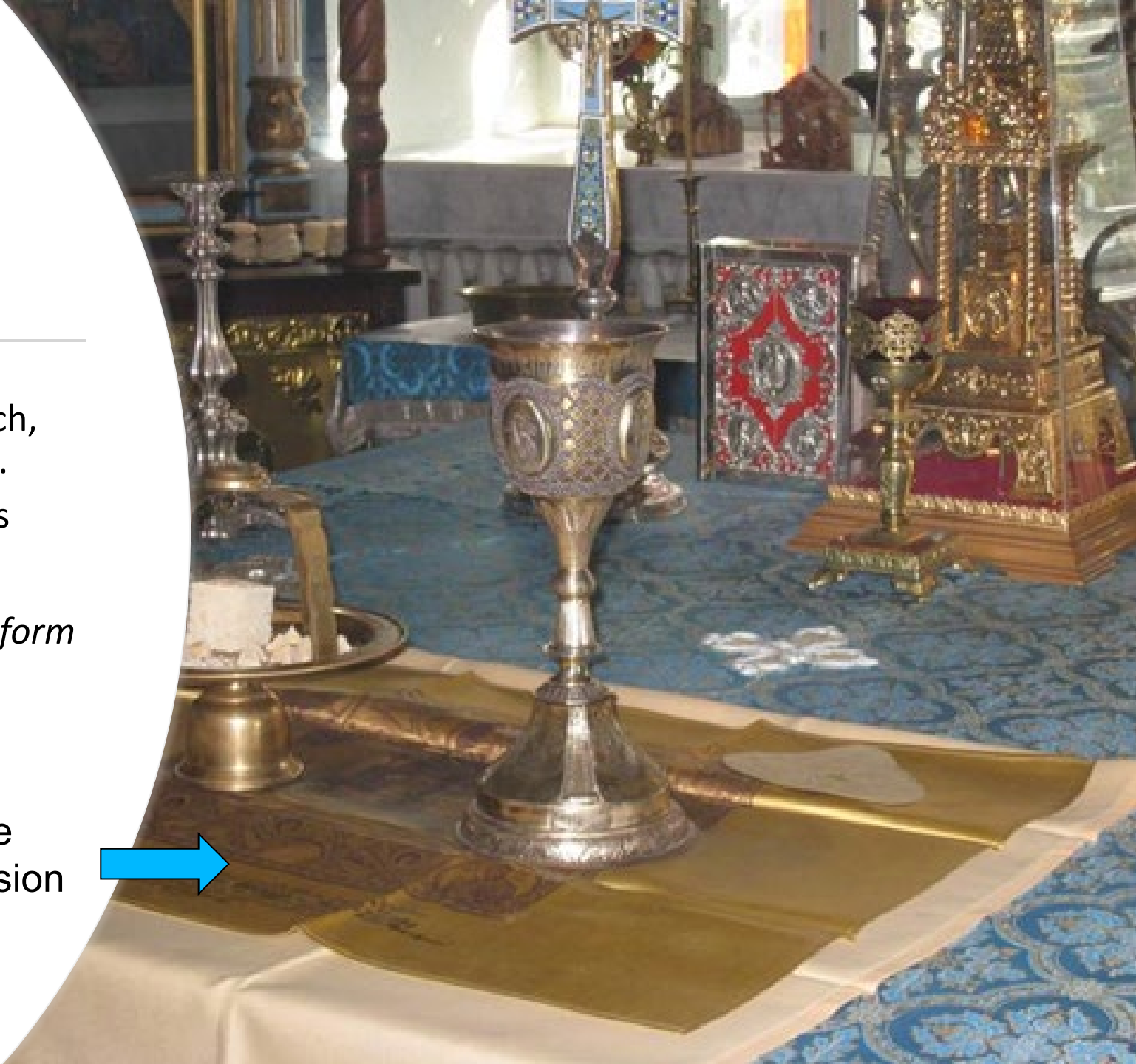
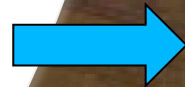
Relationship between Bishop and Priest

Wherever there is a Bishop there is a Church,
while priests are the image of the Apostles.

Ignatius

*A priest must be given the authority to perform
the sacrament of Liturgy from the Bishop.*

The authority to do this is present in the
Metropolitan's signature on the Antimesion
(Αντιμετσίον)



Role of Bishop in Protestantism

- The title of “bishop” in the Protestant church is more aligned with the Biblical title than an ecclesiastical title of Apostolic Succession.
- In this sense the title of bishop is more honorary and symbolic.
- The resistance to the title of bishop stemmed from a resistance to the abuses seen in hierarchal power by the Catholic Church to control individual churches and influence secular politics.
- The bishop’s function applies more to oversight of pastoral duties and symbolic of association and cooperation between individual churches as most Protestant churches are self-contained and organic.



Melissa Skelton
Archbishop - Province of BC and Yukon

The Importance of Church Architecture

Buildings introduce themselves by their sheer physical presence. Their size and scale, materials used, and sense of proportion and unity can draw our attention, bore us, or even repel us. Once past the initial 'introduction,' interesting buildings invite us to engage in a meaningful 'conversation,' holding out the promise of richer experiences embedded in their symbols and spaces

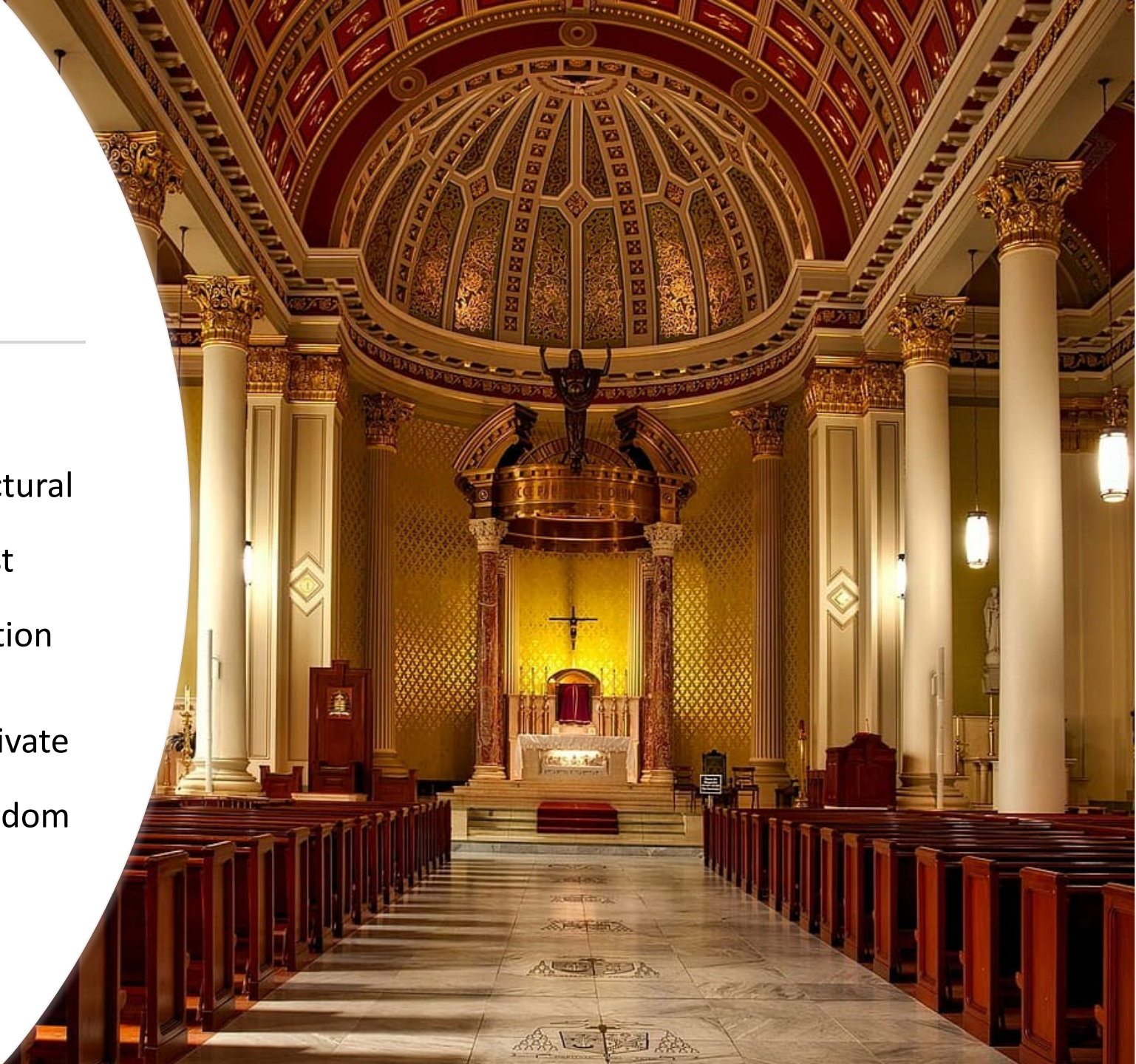
Between City and Steeple

For the Orthodox and Catholic

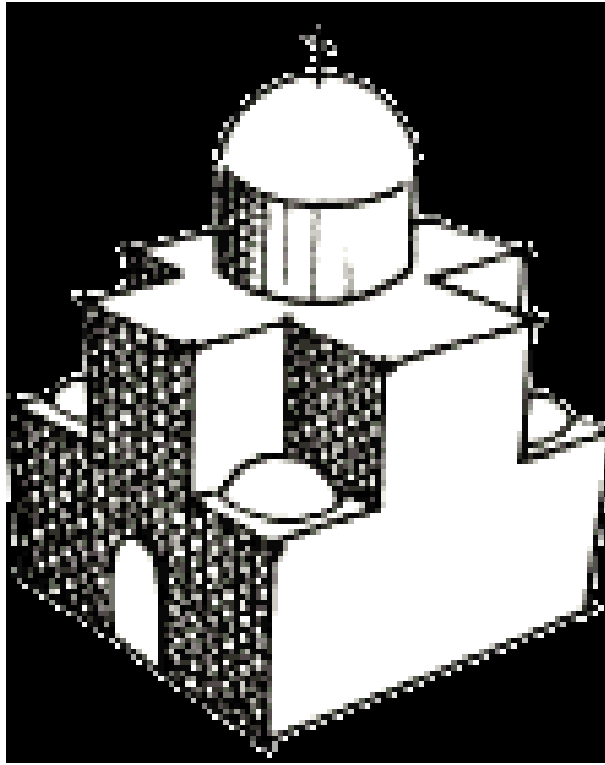
- The church building is a physical representation of the Church – the Body of believers who assemble for worship within.
- *The church building symbolically represents the kingdom of heaven.”*
- Liturgy, or communal worship, integrates both vertical and horizontal aspects to our faith. Both the temple (vertical axis) and the assembly (horizontal axis) are important scriptural images in symbolically representing the realities of the Liturgy.

Catholic Church Architecture

- God's presence through the senses, in the experience of "splendor" and "beauty."
- The Catholic church building is the architectural setting for the Liturgy.
- Mainly Basilica style churches became most widespread.
- Primarily designed to facilitate the celebration of the Eucharist.
- Specially designed separate "areas" for sacramental functions such as baptism, private prayer, and confession.
- Spires and high ceilings to enforce the Kingdom of Heaven



Orthodox Church Architecture



- God's presence through the senses, in the experience of "splendor" and "beauty."
- An emphasis on sensory involvement *and movement*.
- The Orthodox church building is the architectural setting for the Liturgy.
- Like the Catholic design principle, the church building was designed primarily to accommodate the celebration of the Eucharist.
- but also to facilitate baptism (baptistries) and burial (mausolea) and to commemorate important events in the lives of Christ and the saints (martyria).
- While there were Basilica style churches, the one that became most widespread was the "cross-in-square" plan, adopted in Constantinople during the Byzantine Empire which incorporated a dome.

Protestant Church Architecture

A rejection of the ornate styles of the Orthodox and Catholic Churches.

Focus on utilitarian purposes

- Simple designs and architecture
 - Clear windows for reflection on the world outside
 - Lack of iconography and stained glass so as not to distract from the sermon.
 - Pews and “stage” designed to direct the congregation members toward the front so that the sermon is most efficiently communicated.
- Reformation focus is on the spoken Word.



Articles of Faith - Creeds

The historical Church has sanctioned three creeds, Nicene Creed, Athanasius's Creed, and the Apostles' Creed.

CATHOLICISM

Two forms of a profession of faith, Nicene and Apostles, are regularly used during various liturgical rites.

The church community can choose either form for use on Sundays and other major feasts.

The Nicene Creed has traditionally been associated with the Eucharist.

The Apostles' Creed has traditionally been associated with baptism.

ORTHODOXY

The Nicene Creed is traditionally the only Creed recited during liturgical or sacramental services.

PROTESTANTISM

Article 8 of the Protestant Reformation Articles of Religion states that reciting of the Creeds,

“Ought thoroughly to be received and believed: for they may be proved by most certain warrants of holy Scripture.”

Even though one or more of these Creeds are recited during worship they are not seen as essential because they are seen as:

- too formulaic, or out of step with a culture which sees little value in rote repetition.
- not providing a true test of faith as they were intended to.
- not informative for matters of public discourse and debate.

Sacraments

CATHOLICISM

In Latin *sacramentum*, which means an oath or a solemn vow and is defined as an “*outward signs instituted by Christ to give grace.*”

This reveals three distinct ideas regarding sacraments:

- Outward sign
- Instituted by Christ
- Offer Grace

Sacraments must be administered in the Church only by canonical clergy.

The accepted seven (7) sacraments.¹

1. Eucharist
2. Baptism
3. Chrismation
4. Marriage
5. Confession
6. Holy Unction (anointing)
7. Holy Orders

ORTHODOX

Known as (Μυστηριά) Mysteries in which God discloses Himself through the prayers and actions of His people and serve to make us receptive to God.

All sacraments affect our personal relationship to God and to one another.

There has never been a universal declaration within the Orthodox Church that there are only seven sacraments since *everything is seen as sacramental.*

However, the Orthodox recognize the same seven sacraments as defined in the Catholic Church.

Sacraments must be administered in the Church only by canonical clergy.

PROTESTANISM

Most Protestant agree with the Council of Trent definition of a sacrament as “*a visible sign of an invisible grace.*”

However they only recognize two sacraments as explicitly commanded by Jesus.

- Baptism - Matthew 28:19
- Eucharist - Luke 22:19

While Protestants do not claim that the other sacraments such as marriage, chrismation, or ordination, lack grace, only that there is no biblical basis for them.

Ecumenical Councils

CATHOLICISM

Ecumenical Councils are assemblies of Patriarchs, cardinals, residing bishops, Abbots and male heads of religious orders and other juridical persons nominated by the Pope.

The purpose of an ecumenical council is to define doctrine, reaffirm truths of the Faith, and extirpate heresy.

Council decisions, to be valid, are approved by the popes.

The Catholic Church recognizes 21 councils over a period of 1900 years as ecumenical.

ORTHODXY

Ecumenical Councils are comprised of an extraordinary synod of bishops which primarily decide dogmatic and doctrinal statements to defend against heresies.

ECs also issue canonical legislation which governs the administration of the Church.

The Orthodox Church recognizes the historical 7 Ecumenical Councils, although certain Orthodox also include the 8th and 9th councils as ecumenical.

Successive councils, while not ecumenical, are referred to as Endemousa Councils.

PROTESTANTISM

Many Protestants (especially those belonging to the magisterial traditions, such as Lutheranism and Anglicanism) accept the teachings of the first seven councils, but do not ascribe to the councils themselves the same authority as the Catholic and Orthodox Churches.

The view is that these councils did not create new doctrines but merely expounded on doctrines already in Scripture that had been misinterpreted by heretics.

The primary value of these early Ecumenical Councils is their documenting of the early consensus of doctrines regarding the nature of Christ and the Godhead.

Liturgical Services

CATHOLICISM

All services are conducted according to a prescribed order and cannot be varied by the priest.

Modifications to the services have occurred through councils and continued to recent times, such as Vatican I and II.

Services can only be performed by canonically ordained clergy who are in communion with the hierarchal structure.

Physical elements are necessary to perform services, bread, wine, water, incense, etc.

Musical instrumentation allowed and music is choir or chant.

Vestments required to perform services although not as elaborate as Orthodox.

ORTHODOX

All services are conducted according to a prescribed order and cannot be varied by the priest.

Modifications to the services have occurred but ended with the Ecumenical Councils.

Services can only be performed by canonically ordained clergy who are in communion with the hierarchal structure.

Physical elements are necessary to perform services, bread, wine, water, incense, etc.

Musical instrumentation is NOT allowed, and music is choir or chant.

Vestments required to perform services.

PROTESTANTISM

Most Protestant churches have prescribed service structure based on historical texts, however flexibility in application and changes to service structure is permitted.

Services can be performed by both pastors and laypersons as the sermon is central to worship.

Physical elements are not necessary to perform services.

Vestments not used as the Reformers believed that vestments give the idea that priests are a special class of Christians, against the Protestant principle of the priesthood of all believers.

Musical instrumentation of all forms is allowed, and music is mainly choir.

Often robes are worn to emphasize the scholastic as opposed to the priestly as robes are associated with professors.

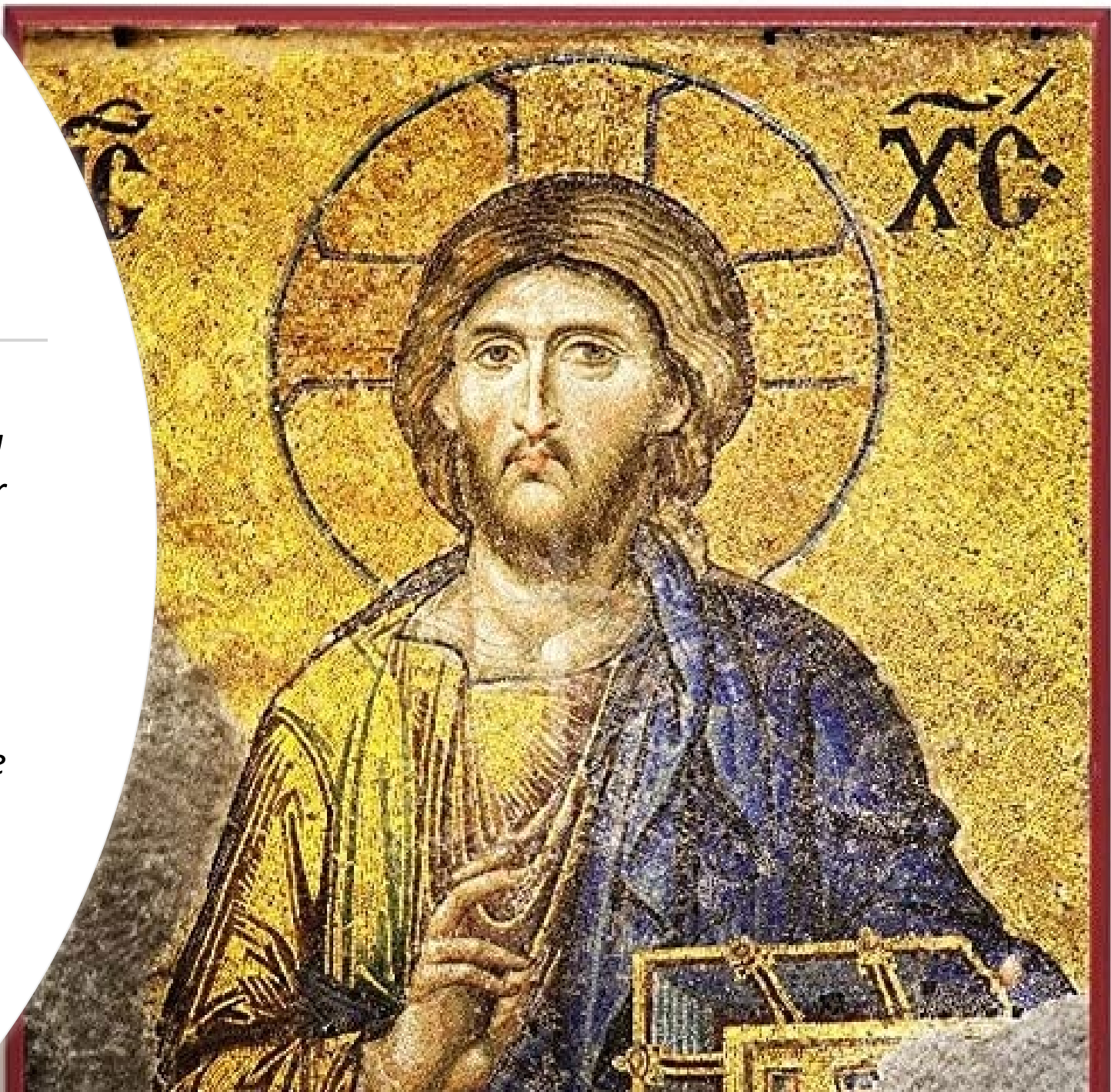
ICONS – In the Early Church

As stated in the 7th Ecumenical Council

Infinite, Lord, as divine, in the last times you willed to become incarnate and so finite; for when you took on flesh you made all its properties your own.

So we depict the form of your outward appearance and pay it relative respect, and so are moved to love you; and through it we receive the grace of healing, following the divine traditions of the apostles.

For the veneration given to the icon passes over, as [St.] Basil says, to its prototype.



ICONS

In Orthodoxy:

Icons are seen as a 'window to heaven' help focus on the divine and are the predominate art form in the church.

The material aspects of icons teach us to not reject the physical but instead to transform it.

Icons are only venerated, not worshipped as worship is reserved for God in the Holy Trinity.

In Catholicism:

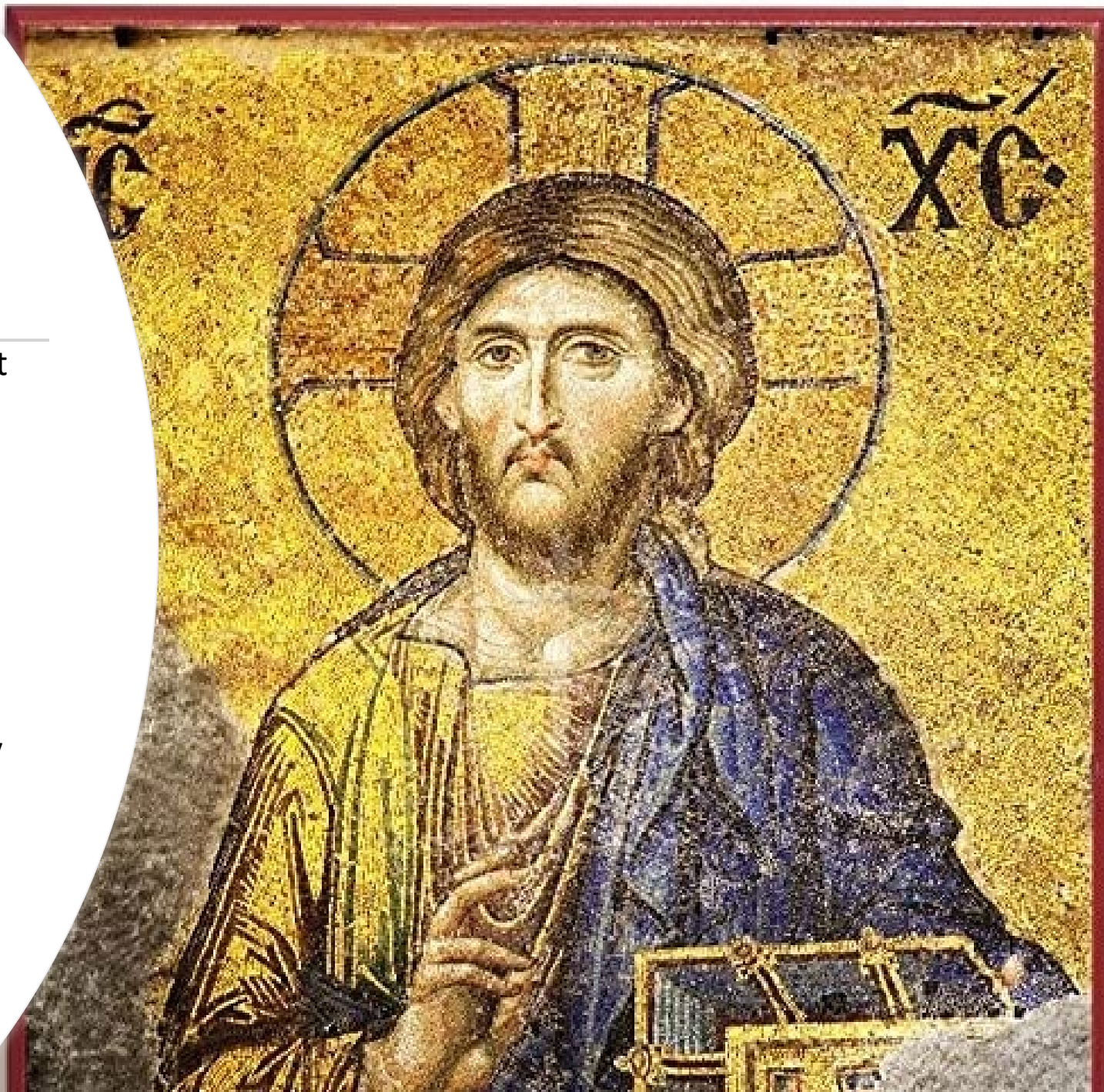
Similar to Orthodox view as they predispose us to grace but are not themselves channels of grace.

However the Catholic Church does not claim that the iconographic style is inherently superior to any other.

In Protestantism:

Not used in Protestant churches.

With the Reform Movement many Protestant leaders such as Calvin and Luther denounced this practice and the idolatry it encouraged.



Early Church

Our Lord Jesus Christ granted to us the relics of Saints as a salvation-bearing source which pours forth varied benefits on the infirm. Consequently, those who presume to abandon the relics of the Martyrs: if they be hierarchs, let them be deposed. (7th Ecumenical Council)

In Orthodoxy:

το σώμα του ανθρώπου, που προσλαμβάνεται στην Εκκλησία, γίνεται δοχείο της άκτιστης θείας ενέργειας, χριστοφόρο και πνευματοφόρο.

In Catholicism:

The holy bodies of holy martyrs and of others now living with Christ, of which bodies were the living members of Christ and the temple of the Holy Ghost and which are by Him to be raised to eternal life and to be glorified are to be venerated by the faithful, for through these [bodies] many benefits are bestowed by God on men.

In Protestantism:

With the Reform Movement, antagonism emerged, from many Protestant leaders such as Calvin and Luther who denounced this practice and the idolatry it encouraged.



RELICS

A relic is a piece of the body of a saint, an item owned or used by the saint, or an object which has been touched to the tomb of a saint.

The word relic comes from the Latin *relinquo*, literally meaning *I leave, or I abandon*.

The term in Greek is Αγίων Λειψάνων.



Relics in Scripture

OT: The use of the bones of Elisha brought a dead man to life.

“So Elisha died, and they buried him. Now bands of Moabites used to invade the land in the spring of the year. And as a man was being buried and was cast into the grave of Elisha. As soon as the man touched the bones of Elisha, he revived, and stood on his feet”
(2 Kgs. 13:20-21)

NT: A woman cured of a hemorrhage by touching the hem of Christ’s cloak
(Matt. 9:20-22)

And God did extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul, so that handkerchiefs or aprons were carried away from his body to the sick, and diseases left them and the evil spirits came out of them”
(Acts 19:11-12).

Salvation - *Extra ecclesiam nulla salus*

All salvation comes from Christ who said, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by me” (Jn 14:6).

When speaking of salvation, Jesus offered the means of salvation:

1. He who believes and is baptized will be saved. (Mk 16:16)
2. Unless you repent you will all likewise utterly perish (*become cut-off*). (Lk 13:3)
3. He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. (Jn 6:54)

These three means of salvation are obtained through the sacraments of baptism, confession, and the Eucharist, which are only administered through the **Church which is the Body of Christ**.

For the **Protestant** only the first is essential for salvation.

For the **Orthodox and Catholic** all three are essential as the Church is the sacrament of salvation, which aids in the communion of God and men, thus outside the Church there is no salvation.