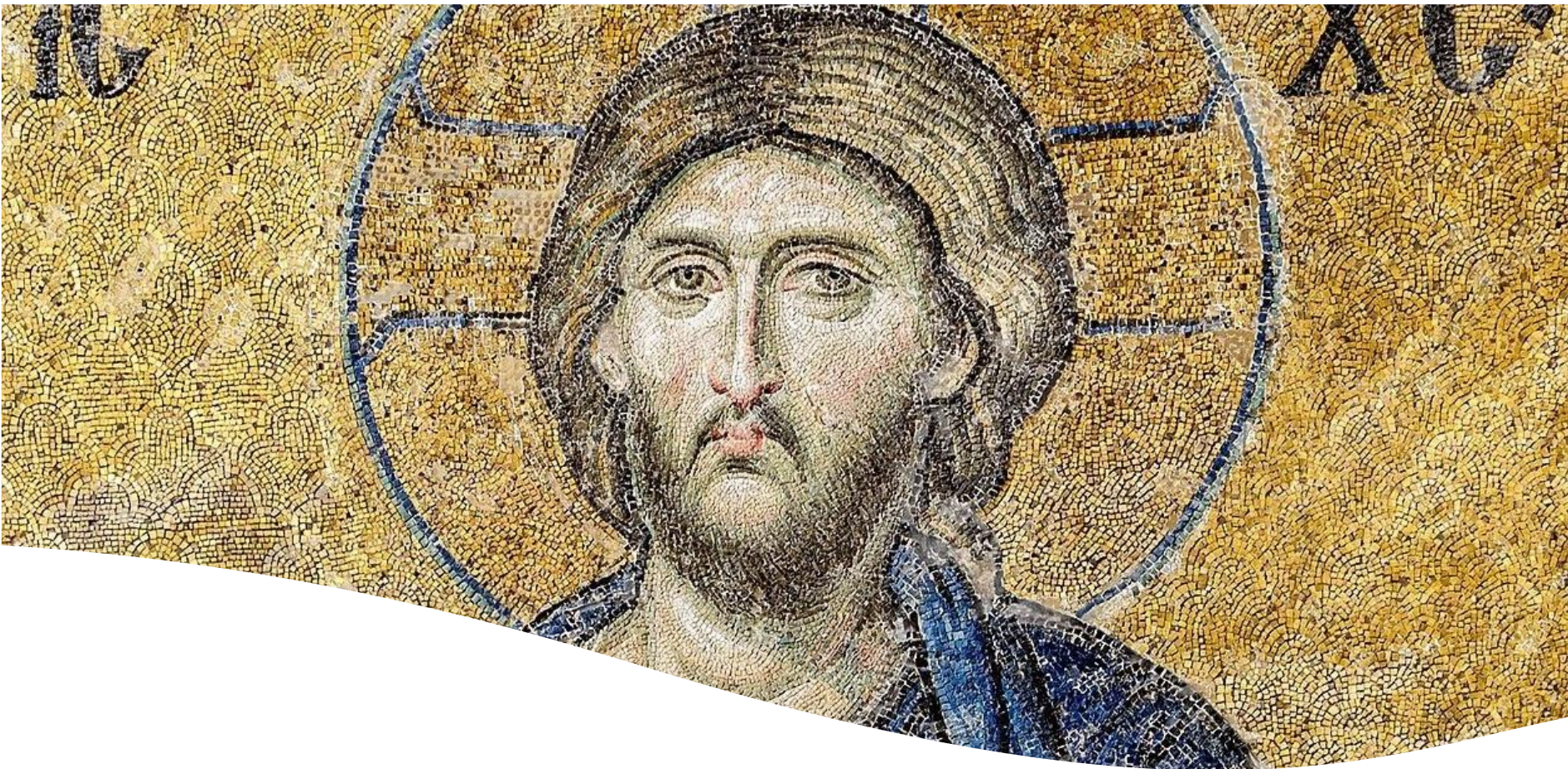




Byzantine Christianity (1054-1453)

HPAH5073 Athens and Attica

Recap: Byzantine Christianity 330-1054

- ❖ Monophysitism vs. dyophysitism
- ❖ Monoenergism & monotheletism
- ❖ The iconoclastic crisis (730-87 & 787-843)
- ❖ The 'Photian Schism' (863-67)
- ❖ The 'Great Schism' (1054)

Byzantium under the Comneni

- Alexius I Comnenus (1081-1118)
- Presented himself as the defender of orthodoxy.
- *Panoplia Dogmatica*
- *Bogomilism* = a dualist Christian sect founded in the 10th century.



The Fourth Crusade and the Sack of Constantinople

- Fourth Crusade launched in 1202 with the original intention of attacking Egypt *en route* to Jerusalem.
- Culminated in the conquest of Constantinople in April 1204.
- Constantinople sacked over the course of three days.
- The Byzantine Empire parcelled out between Venice and its allies.



East-West Relations after 1204

- Significant and lasting damage done to the relationship between Greek and Latin Churches.
- Constantinople given a Latin emperor and patriarch.
- Fourth Lateran Council (1215) – reaffirmed papal primacy but decision taken *not* to impose Latin rite on eastern Christians.
- Nevertheless, many churches and monasteries in Constantinople (and elsewhere) taken over by the Latins.
- Byzantine court and administration restored in Constantinople in 1261.

The Byzantine Empire Restored



- Michael VIII Palaeologus crowned in Hagia Sophia on 15 Aug 1261.
- Programme of rebuilding and restoration undertaken in Constantinople.
- The Second Council of Lyon (1274) – Greek and Latin Churches reunited. A major diplomatic triumph for Michael VIII.
- A cultural flowering under the Palaeologan dynasty.



The Council of Ferrara-Florence (1438-9)

- Advances by the Ottomans led John VIII Palaeologus to seek union with the west. Lengthy discussions held first in Ferrara and then in Florence.
- Agreement signed in early July 1439 (*Laetentur Caeli: Bulla Unionis Graecorum*). The Eastern bishops agreed to accept the Filioque and papal primacy. The western doctrine of purgatory also adopted.
- There was strong opposition to the union back in Constantinople and it was rejected by many (including some who had signed it!).

Let the heavens be glad and let the earth rejoice. For, the wall that divided the western and the eastern church has been removed, peace and harmony have returned, since the corner-stone, Christ, who made both one, has joined both sides with a very strong bond of love and peace, uniting and holding them together in a covenant of everlasting unity. After a long haze of grief and a dark and unlovely gloom of long-enduring strife, the radiance of hoped-for union has illuminated all

– excerpt from *Laetentur Caeli*

The Fall of Constantinople

- The Crusade against the Ottomans defeated at Varna in 1444.
- A unionist mass celebrated in Constantinople on 12 December 1452.
- Constantinople taken on 29 May 1453, marking the end of the Byzantine Empire.
- George Scholarius (a staunch anti-unionist) made patriarch.



The Legacy of Byzantine Christianity

- Despite the fall of the Byzantine Empire, Byzantine Christianity survived. Its legacy seen in Orthodox churches today.
- Eastern Orthodoxy accounts for approx. 260 million Christians worldwide.
- The influence of Byzantine Christianity clear in the main aspects of Orthodox belief and practice.



Lampeter Orthodox Church of the Three Hierarchs & St Cybi



Further Reading

*Hussey, J. M., *The Orthodox Church in the Byzantine Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990)

Jeffreys, E., J. Haldon and R. Cormack (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies* (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), various chapters

Louth, A., *Greek East and Latin West: The Church AD 681-1071* (New York: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2007)

*Meyendorff, J., *Byzantine Theology: Historical Trends and Doctrinal Themes* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1979)

*available online through UWTSD Library