

“If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.”

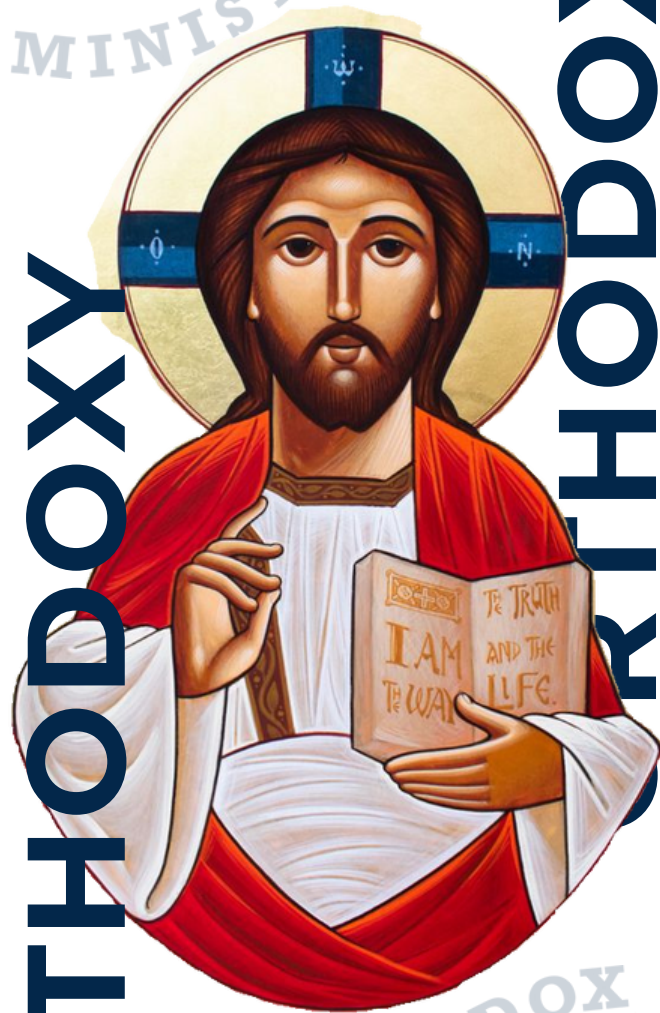
1 JOHN 1:7



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ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY



OUR CORE BELIEFS

The core beliefs of the Orthodox Church date back to the inception of Christianity by Christ himself. These beliefs are best summarized by the Nicene Creed. The Nicene Creed (“Orthodox Creed”) is the statement of faith of the Coptic Orthodox Church, written in the early fourth century by one of the Coptic Church’s most important figures, St. Athanasius the Apostolic. Orthodox Christianity traces its foundation back to 33 A.D., rooted in the teachings directly imparted by Christ to His apostles. Unique among Christian denominations, the Orthodox Church places paramount importance on safeguarding these teachings in their most authentic and unaltered state. The church’s commitment is evident in its unwavering adherence to established beliefs, intricate worship rituals, and revered traditions, passed down meticulously through generations. At the heart of its doctrine lies the Trinitarian belief, emphasizing the inseparable unity of God the Father, Jesus Christ the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Through centuries, the Orthodox Church has stood as a beacon, ensuring the preservation and continuity of genuine Christian principles and practices.

TRINITARIAN

The Orthodox Church believes in the Holy Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit (being one God); and that our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ, the true Son of God, became incarnate, was born of the Virgin Saint Mary, died for us on the Cross that He may grant us Salvation, rose on the third day that He may grant us everlasting life with Him, and ascended to heaven after forty days, sending the Holy Spirit to His disciples as He promised them, on the day of Pentecost.

TIMELESS

Over the past two thousand years, the Orthodox Church has consistently upheld its core beliefs without wavering. Unlike some institutions that adjust their doctrines to align with contemporary trends, the Orthodox Church remains anchored in its Faith, Dogma, and Tradition. However, it's essential to note that while foundational beliefs remain unchanged, adaptations in language and everyday practices are made to better serve the congregation and address the evolving needs of ministry. The journey of preserving this faith hasn't been without challenges; the Orthodox Church has faced and overcome numerous persecutions throughout history.

SACRAMENTAL

In all authentic Orthodox Churches, the Seven Mysteries (Sacraments) are practiced: Baptism, Confession, Chrismation or Confirmation, Communion or Eucharist, Priesthood, Marriage, and Unction Anointing of the Sick. The sacraments, deeply rooted in tradition, are believed to have been instituted by Christ Himself and are affirmed by the teachings of the Bible. The adherence to these sacraments underscores the Orthodox Church's commitment to preserving its ancient practices and beliefs.

APOSTOLIC

Each Orthodox Church finds its origin in the teachings of the Apostles, with every clergy member able to trace their authority directly back to the Apostles of Christ. For instance, St. Mark spread the faith in Egypt, St. Thomas in India, St. Peter in Antioch, and Sts. Thaddeus and Bartholomew in Armenia. As the Apostles propagated the teachings of Christ, they established churches and appointed bishops, priests, and deacons to guide and nurture the newly converted Christian communities. This historical and apostolic connection forms a vital part of the organizational structure and spiritual lineage within Orthodox Christianity.



BIBLICAL

The Church's main point of reference is the Holy Scripture, as depicted in literal translations such as King James (KJV), New King James (NJKV), and the Revised Standard Version (RSV). Although the Orthodox Church accepts any New Testament translation that is faithful to the Greek Textus Receptus translation, She prefers only the Septuagint (LXX) translation of the Old Testament and not the Masoretic text found in most Bibles today.

SCRIPTURAL

The Orthodox Church holds the Holy Bible in high regard, considering it the divinely inspired and trustworthy word of God. To understand and interpret its teachings, we often turn to the Early Church Fathers, who were close followers and direct successors of the New Testament authors. It's worth noting that in the early stages of Christianity, there wasn't a universally agreed upon set of books that constituted the Bible. However, in 367 A.D., Pope Athanasius of Alexandria, an influential figure in early Christianity, compiled a collection of 27 books, solidifying what we now recognize as the New Testament.

TRADITIONAL

The Orthodox Church maintains its teachings through a rich written and oral tradition handed down from the Apostles, supplemented by writings from the Early Church Fathers and pivotal councils like those in Nicaea, Ephesus, and Constantinople. As the Apostles journeyed to spread the teachings of Christ, communities absorbed these teachings and faithfully relayed them to subsequent generations through spoken narratives. These Early Church Fathers, often seen as direct disciples of the Apostles, provide invaluable insights into interpreting the Holy Bible within the Orthodox context. All genuine Orthodox congregations hold firm to her foundational Faith, Dogma, and Tradition. Variations may arise in cultural expressions, such as hymn choices, languages used, or liturgical attire, but the core beliefs and practices remain consistent across authentic Orthodox churches.