

# INTRODUCTION

## 1. In the footstep of *Ecclesia in Asia*

Saint John Paul II in the paragraph 9 of his post-synodal Exhortation *Ecclesia in Asia* gave us a short synthesis of the history of the Church in the continent under the title “The Church in Asia: past and present”. With this handbook of Asian Church History we intend to offer students and readers a suitable development of the essential data and intuitions we find in the post-synodal document. Our purpose is principally academic. Hopefully, it should be a tool for teachers and students, but we do not exclude other possible readers, or consultants for a specific event or chapter of this rich and long history. In fact, as we know from history and experienced when we were there, the Christian presence in some parts of Africa and America is much more recent. Instead, Asia is really the cradle of Christianity and the origins of many Asian communities are apostolic. We think especially of Middle East Churches and St. Thomas’ Christians (India).

Knowing that the majority of Asian students are non-native English speakers, we have tried to write our manual in a very simple language in order to facilitate its comprehension and use.

Among our limitations we point to the lacking development of Protestant Missions that appear so abundant since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and deserve an accurate attention in the present moment of evangelization. Instead we presented the different Oriental Churches with the ecumenical purpose of spreading their knowledge among Catholic public, and foster increased collaboration.

Some other limitations concern the geographical and historical points of view. Since the Asian continent is so vast, we could not embrace all the countries, and since last developments in some Asian countries are very recent, we have been forced to disregard the present situation of the Middle East – Iran, Israel, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Iraq, Lebanon, Qatar, Yemen, Jordan, Kuwait, Bahrain, Oman, Tunisia and Cyprus – . In fact, after the end of the Ottoman Empire – 1918 – and the subsequent Western Protectorates, since the full independence of these countries there is a situation of great instability and frequent wars. Let us, for example, consider the end of the regime of the Sha Reza Pahlavi in Iran, and the beginning of an Islamic theocratic state, with ayatollah Khomeini, seed of radical islamization

in the region. Similarly the two wars of the Gulf and the end of the regime of Saddam Hussein in Iraq – 1991 and 2003 –, the civil war in Syria, since 2011, the creation of the Islamic State in Syria and Iraq (ISIS) – declaration in 2014 – and the recent *coup d'état* in Turkey. All these recent events entice persecution against the very old Christian minorities of different Churches in these countries. Benedict XVI had the initiative to celebrate a special Synod for the Church in Middle East in 2012. In this sense, our handbook is still an invitation to read complementary essays and productions, to follow the evolution of the Christianity in Asia.

The consultation of *Bibliographia Missionaria* (annually published by Urbaniana University Press) could complete the deficiencies of our information.

We tried to enrich the chapters with some selected texts at the end of the volume in order to facilitate the direct contact with the sources. This aspect could give an enhancement to students' understanding. The abundant maps are also a precious tool for the study of this rich history.

Therefore, following for the most part the description of John Paul II in *Ecclesia in Asia*, we divided our matter in the following chapters:

1. The Patristic and Byzantine Period: Oriental Churches
2. Muslim Period: Islam expansion and Christianity
3. Mongol Period: the Church in China
4. Discovering Period – New Asian Routes: Portugal and Spain Patronage, Salient Missionaries, Japan, Philippines, *Propaganda Fide*, Vietnam and Chinese Rites Controversy
5. Western Empires Period: Netherlands, England and France; new Missionaries in Asia; the Holy See and the Churches in Asia
6. Asian Churches after II World War and Vatican II: End of colonialism and the action of the Holy See until John Paul II.

We can conclude this brief introduction with the words of John Paul II in *Ecclesia in Asia* (n. 9):

A survey of the Catholic communities in Asia shows a splendid variety by reason of their origin and historical development, and the diverse spiritual and liturgical traditions of the various Rites. Yet all are united in proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ, through Christian witness, works of charity and human solidarity. While some particular Churches carry out their mission in peace and freedom, others find themselves in situations of violence and conflict, or feel threatened by other groups, for religious or other reasons. In the vastly diversified cultural world of Asia, the Church faces multiple philosophical, theological and pastoral challenges. Her task is made more difficult by the fact of her being a minority, with the only exception the Philippines, where Catholics are in the majority.

## 2. Principles

The Church in its Mystery – universal sacrament of salvation – is together and inseparably the Mystical Body of Christ and the Visible Society structured with hierarchical organs.

We can approach its inexhaustible richness in its theological essence but also in its historical development, to deepen our comprehension of the saving presence of the Paschal Mystery in the world.

Therefore, the History of the Church on the one hand is the phenomenological approach of persons, events, situations, struggles and suffering, expansion and victories of the People of God in its pilgrimage, but on the other hand it is the theological contemplation of the deep and amazing ways of the Divine Providence to gather up all things in Christ (Ep 1: 10).

We intend to apply this global vision to the vast continent of Asia, where «God revealed and fulfilled his saving purpose from the beginning»<sup>1</sup>, to realize in a concrete manner the path of the Spirit of Christ, and the stumbling but perseverant and often heroic human answer in the past, and to take a new awareness of the present mission to face a future of hope and peace for the coming Kingdom of God.

## 3. Motivations

**INTELLECTUAL:** it should be impossible to *understand* the present reality of the Asian Church without knowing the historical roots of every ecclesiastical situation in its unlimited variety.

**SPIRITUAL:** it is a duty to *live* the Communion of Saints in a concrete manner, with a heartily thanksgiving and a full acknowledgement of the past Christian generations that entrust to us the treasure of the Faith, since without them we had never existed as Christians.

**PASTORAL:** this historical consciousness of our Christian heritage will help us to understand the present trends of our Christian communities and to choose in preaching, celebrating and leading, the pastoral ways that can help persons and societies, avoiding the possible errors or lacks we discovered in the past, and grasping the importance of being careful to conserve the ecclesiastical data for the future historians, for ourselves and our Local Churches.

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<sup>1</sup> JOHN PAUL II, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Ecclesia in Asia*, n. 1.

#### 4. Objectives

At the end of this course the student will be able to:

- I. Handle the sources of the Asian Church History;
- II. Master the knowledge of the great periods of the Christianity in Asia with their essential events, in the framework of the world History;
- III. Analyze the historical documents in their context and content;
- IV. Understand the present situation of Christianity in the main regions of the continent for wished “new evangelization”.

I-VI	VII-XII	XIII – XIV	XV-XVII	XVII-XX	XX
<b>Patristic</b> Apostles Jerusalem Antioch of Syria Constantinople  <b>Byzantine</b> West: Jacobites East: Nestorians India: Syro-Malabar Byzantine Empire: Orthodox	<b>Muslim</b> Jacobites in Damascus Nestorians in Baghdad and in China Latin in Palestine: Crusades	<b>Mongol</b> Franciscans in Beijing  <b>Turkish</b> Palestine	<b>Portuguese</b> Franciscans and Jesuits in Goa, Cochin, Malacca, Macau, Moluccas and Funay  <b>Spanish</b> OSA, OP, OFM and SJ Philippines  <i>Propaganda</i> MEP: India Vietnam	<b>Dutch</b> Calvinists in Sri Lanka, Malacca and Indonesia  <b>British</b> Anglicans and Protestants in India-Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Singapore, Hong Kong  <b>Catholic New</b> Missionary Congregations: <b>French</b> MEP and CM in India, Indochina, China and Japan <b>German</b> SVD in China, New Guinea, US Philippines, Maryknoll in China and the Philippines	I-II World Wars, Independences <b>Vatican II</b>

Essential Timeline<sup>1</sup>

<b>I</b>	<b>CENTURY</b>
30	Paschal Mystery and Pentecost in Jerusalem
36-37	Martyrdom of Stephen
37-40	Christianity in Antioch of Syria
44	Martyrdom of James the Great
48-49	Council of Jerusalem
52	Arrival of St. Thomas, Apostle in India
62	Martyrdom of James the Less
66	Christians flight to Pella
70	Destruction of Jerusalem
	Jewish Synod of Jamnia
72	† St. Thomas, Apostle, tomb at Maylapore (Chennai, India)
<b>II</b>	<b>CENTURY</b>
110	Martyrdom of Ignatius of Antioch
165	Martyrdom of Justin, apologist
<b>III</b>	<b>CENTURY</b>
202	† Irenaeus of Lyons, disciple of John apostle in Smyrna
	Persecution of Septimius Severus: flight of Clement from Alexandria
	Origen teacher in Alexandria
231-232	Origen in Caesarea in Palestine – new school
<b>IV</b>	<b>CENTURY</b>
313	Edict of Milan: peace for the Church
325	Council of Nicaea I: divinity of the Son
332	† Gregory the Illuminator, apostle of Armenia
345	Thomas of Cana from Edessa to Cranganore (India)
373	† Ephrem of Edessa, doctor of the Church, deacon
387	† Cyril of Jerusalem
<b>V</b>	<b>CENTURY</b>
441	† John Patriarch of Antioch, author of “formula unionis”
451	Council of Chalcedon: Christological and jurisdictional issues
486	Synod of Seleucia-Ctesiphon accepting Nestorianism

<sup>1</sup> The present timeline covers only major events in the History of Eastern Christianity referred to in the manual and uses the most commonly accepted chronology although some dates are still under question.

488	† Peter the Fuller, first Monophysite, rejecting Chalcedon
491	† Barsauma of Nisibis, Nestorian
<b>VI</b>	<b>CENTURY</b>
502	† Narsai of Nisibis, Nestorian
538	† Severus of Antioch, Monophysite
578	† Jacobus Baradaeus of Edessa, Monophysite: Jacobite Church
<b>VII</b>	<b>CENTURY</b>
622	<i>Hegira</i> journey of Muhammed from Mecca to Medina: Starting point of Muslim chronology
632	Death of Muhammed
635	Nestorian Monk Alopen reached Chang'an (China)
638	† Sophronius of Jerusalem after the conquest of the city by Muslims
647-709	Muslim conquest of North Africa
656	Ali, father of Shiites, appointed caliph
661	Ali assassinated, Mu'awiya crowned as the first Caliph of the Ummayad dynasty, capital Damascus
680	Husayn, Ali's son, is killed in the battle of Karbala
<b>VIII</b>	<b>CENTURY</b>
707	† John Maron, first Maronite patriarch of Antioch
711	Arabic conquest of Spain
750	Abbasid Dynasty capital Baghdad until 1258
781	Nestorian tablet in China
<b>IX</b>	<b>CENTURY</b>
826	Sapor and Prot, twin Chaldean bishops to Kerala (India)
<b>X</b>	<b>CENTURY</b>
961	Foundation of the kingdom of Ghazna (new Muslim state influential in the expansion of Islam from Persia to Ganges Valley)
<b>XI</b>	<b>CENTURY</b>
1054	Schism between Rome and Constantinople
1071	Victory of Turks in Manzikert
1095	Council in Clermont-Ferrand (France), proclamation of the 1 <sup>st</sup> Crusade
1099	Conquest of Jerusalem by Crusaders on June. Until 1291 Latin Patriarch in Jerusalem
<b>XII</b>	<b>CENTURY</b>
1169	Saladin caliph until 1193
1184	Maronite in communion with Rome
1187	Recapture of Jerusalem by Muslims

XIII	CENTURY
1204	4 <sup>th</sup> Crusade: conquest of Constantinople by Latin army
1206	Genghis Khan proclaimed Mongol Emperor, capital in Karakorum
1260	Kublai Khan, until 1294, capital in Da-tu (Beijing)
1215	Council Lateran IV (Rome) under Innocent III
1219	Francis of Assisi in Egypt and Holy Land
1224	Latin Empire in East until the year 1261 in which Michael Paleologus conquers again the capital
1229	Frederick II during the 6 <sup>th</sup> Crusade obtains Jerusalem by negotiation
1244	Muslims win Jerusalem back
1274	John of Plano Carpini OFM, receives letters from Innocent IV to the Mongol emperor
1270	† Louis IX king of France in the 8 <sup>th</sup> Crusade (the last)
1291	John of Monte Corvino OFM in Maylapore, tomb of Thomas Apostle
1294	John of Monte Corvino reaches Khanbaliq (Da-tu i.e. Peking)
XIV	CENTURY
1328	† John of Monte Corvino OFM in Khanbaliq
1336	Timus Lenk (Tamerlane) Mongol Emperor until 1405
1368	Ming Dynasty in China, until 1644
XV	CENTURY
1403	Foundation of Malacca
1414	Malacca becomes Muslim
1418	Pope Martin V issues the encyclical <i>Sane Charissimus</i> – overseas patronage for Portugal
1453	May 29, the Turk Muhammad II conquers Constantinople (Istanbul)
1455	Nicholas V issues the bull <i>Romanus Pontifex</i> – Portuguese Patronage
1456	Callixtus III issues the bull <i>Inter caetera</i> , new privileges to Portugal
1460	† Henry the Navigator of Portugal (first navigation school)
1487	Bartolomeu Diaz reaches the Cape of Good Hope
1492	October 12, Columbus arrives in America under the crown of Castile, (Queen Isabel)
1493	Alexander VI gives to Spain the bull <i>Inter caetera</i> with the same privileges of Portugal
1494	Treaty of Tordesillas, for the distribution of the newly discovered lands between Spain and Portugal
1495	Emmanuel the Fortunate, king of Portugal until 1521, Portuguese expansion
1498	Vasco de Gama (Portuguese) reaches Calicut (India)

XVI	CENTURY
1508	Julius II issues the bull <i>Universalis Ecclesiae</i> , both to Portugal and Spain
1510	Portuguese in Goa, capital of their Empire – Albuquerque governor
1511	Portuguese conquest of Malacca
1514	Erection of the diocese of Funchal (Madeira Islands) jurisdiction to India and Brazil
1520	Selim II the Magnificent, Ottoman Caliphate
	Franciscans open novitiate in India
1521	Magellan arrives in Cebu (Philippines), cross and baptisms, but is defeated and killed by Lapu Lapu
1526	Mohacs, victory of Turks and occupation of Hungary
	Babur initiates the great Mughal Empire in India. Cities: Lahore, Agra and Delhi
1534	Paul III, erection of the diocese of Goa, bull <i>Equum reputamus</i>
1542	Francis Xavier arrives in Goa – Jesuits accept of the college of St. Paul
1543	Portuguese arrive in Japan
1545	Francis Xavier in Moluccas until 1547
1545-1563	Council of Trent
1548	Dominicans arrive in Goa
1549	Francis Xavier in Kagoshima (Japan)
1552	Francis Xavier back to Cochin and Goa
	On December 3 he dies in Shangchuan in front of China
1556	Akbar the Great Mughal emperor until 1605
1557	Erection of the dioceses of Cochin (Kerala) and Malacca as suffragan of Goa erected archdiocese
1565	Arrival in Cebu (Philippines) of Lopez de Legazpi (Spain) with Augustinians friars
1566	† Selim II in the battle of Sigetwar (Hungary)
1567	First Provincial Council of Goa under Archbishop Leao Pereira
1571	Victory of Christian armies against Turks in Lepanto (Greece)
1572	Augustinians arrive in Goa
1575	Second Provincial Council of Goa
1576	Erection of the diocese of Macau (China), suffragan of Goa
1578	Fr. Alexander Valignano SJ arrives in Macau, and calls Michael Ruggieri and Matthew Ricci, to study Chinese
	Franciscans arrive to the Philippines
1579	Erection of the diocese of Manila (Philippines)
1581	Jesuits arrive in the Philippines
1582	Synod of Manila (Philippines)

1584	Maronite College in Rome (under Jesuits)
1585	Erection of the diocese of Funay (Japan), suffragan of Goa
	Third Provincial Council of Goa under Archbishop Vincent de Fonseca
1586	Timor East under Portugal (until 1975)
1587	Arrival of Dominicans in the Philippines
1592	Fourth Provincial Council of Goa under Matthew de Medina
1595	Erection of the archdiocese of Manila and of the dioceses of Cebu, Nueva Caceres and Nueva Segovia (Philippines), by Clement VIII
	Alexis de Jesus Meneses OSA, archbishop of Goa until 1612
1597	Martyrs of Nagasaki (Japan)
1599	Synod of Diamper (India), Latinization of St. Thomas' Christians
<b>XVII</b>	<b>CENTURY</b>
1600	First meeting of Fr. Matthew Ricci with the Emperor
	Elizabeth I erects the Honorable East India Company (England)
1602	Dutch East India Company (VOC)
1605	Roberto de Nobili SJ, arrives in India and moves to Madurai (Tamil Nadu)
1606	Fifth Provincial Council of Goa under Alexis de Meneses
	† Alexander Valignano in Macau
	Arrival of Recollects to the Philippines
1607	Discalced Carmelites arrive in Goa
1610	† Matthew Ricci in Beijing
1619	Foundation of Batavia in Java island
1622	Erection of the Congregation of <i>Propaganda Fide</i>
	Canonization of Francis Xavier by Gregory XV
	Arrival of Alexander de Rhodes SJ at Malacca and Macau
1623	Bull <i>Romanae Sedis Antistites</i> of Gregory XV in favor of De Nobili (Malabar rites)
1624	† Francis Ros SJ, bishop of Cranganore
1627	Mission of Rhodes in Tonkin (Vietnam)
1630	Rhodes' expulsion from Vietnam. He reaches Macau
1633	Juan Bautista de Morales OP arrives in China from Philippines
1636	Francis dos Mártires OFM archbishop of Goa
	Netherlands begins the conquest of South India and Ceylon
1637	Rebellion of Jesuits at Shimabara (Japan)
1639	Seclusion of Japan from all foreign countries, except Netherlands, China and Korea

1640	Arrival of Theatines in Goa from Italy
	Mission of Rhodes in Cochinchina (Vietnam)
1641	Dutch conquer Malacca
	Netherlands in Formosa (Taiwan)
1644	In China began the Qing (or Manchu) dynasty, until 1911
1645	Document of <i>Propaganda Fide</i> against Chinese Rites (Innocent X)
1646	Defeat of Dutch navy in Manila (feast of Santísimo Rosario)
1652	Rhodes in France, promoting “Missions Étrangères de Paris” (MEP)
1653	In Kerala (India) split from Rome: Coonan Cross in Cochin (Kerala)
1656	Rescript of <i>Propaganda Fide</i> in favor of Chinese Rites (Alexander VII)
	Netherlands in Ceylon (Sri Lanka)
1658	Mgr. François Pallu (MEP) Apostolic Vicar of Tonkin (North Vietnam)
	Mgr. Lambert de la Motte (MEP) Apostolic Vicar of Cochinchina (South Vietnam)
1660	† Rhodes in Persia
1661	Return of Thomas’ Christians of Kerala to Rome under bishop Sebastiani
1663	Dutch conquest of Cochin
	Approval of Paris Foreign Missions by Louis XIV
1664	Synod of Ayutthaya (Siam): document <i>Monita ad Missionarios</i> (MEP)
	Approval of Paris Foreign Missions by <i>Propaganda Fide</i>
	Foundation of French East India Company
1665	Seminary of St. Joseph in Thailand until 1767, called College General
1667-1668	Canton Conferences
	Foundation of the female congregation of the Lovers of the Cross in Siam
1669	Apostolic Vicariate in Thailand with Mgr. Louis Laneau MEP
1670	Lambert de la Motte establishes the first convent of the Lovers of the Cross at Kien Lao village, diocese of Buy Chu (Vietnam)
1674	French settlement in Pondicherry (India)
1682	Foundation of the Oratory in Batim (India)
	Baptism of Constantine Phaulkon in Thailand, later accused and executed (1688)
1683	Siege of Vienna by the Turks, victory of John III Sobieski of Poland against Ottoman
1688	† Ferdinand Verbiest, SJ, missionary in China (Institute in his honor in Leuven – Belgium)
1690	Erection of the dioceses of Beijing and Nanjing
<b>XVIII</b>	<b>CENTURY</b>
1704	Decree of Holy Office against Chinese Rites under Clement XI – Maillard de Tournon pontifical legate to the Emperor Kangxi

1707	Order of Nanjing prohibiting the Chinese Rites
1710	† Maillard de Tournon in Macau
1715	Constitution <i>Ex illa die</i> of Clement XI prohibiting Chinese Rites to Christian
1717	† Saint Joseph Vaz from the Oratory in Sri Lanka
1721	Eight Permissions of Mezzabarba
1742	Constitution <i>Ex quo singulari</i> of Benedict XIV final document against Chinese Rites
1759	Expulsion of the Society of Jesus from Portugal
1762	British occupation of Manila
1764	Spain with Filipinos regains Manila
1767	Expulsion of the Society of Jesus from the Spanish Empire
1771	Provincial Council of Manila, under Archbishop Basilio Sancho sch.p.
1773	Suppression of the Society of Jesus by Clement XIV
	Warren Hastings first British governor of India (period of expansion)
	Foundation of San Carlos Seminary in Manila (Philippines)
1774	Pigneau de Béhaine MEP begins his action in Vietnam
1784	Conversion of Yi Sun-Hun first Korean catholic
1796	British conquest of Sri Lanka from Dutch
1798	Apparitions of Mary in La Vang (Vietnam)
<b>XIX</b>	<b>CENTURY</b>
1807	Apostolic Prefecture of Batavia (Jakarta), Indonesia
1808	College General in Penang (Malaysia) called <i>Seminarium Martyrum</i>
1814	Restoration of the Society of Jesus by Pius VII
1819	Thomas Raffles (British) founds Singapore
1825-1826	Edicts of Emperor Minh Mang of Vietnam against Christian, many martyrs
1831	Foundation of Carmelites of Mary Immaculate at Mannanam (Kerala, India) belonging to the Syro-Malabar Rite
1833	† Ram Mohan Roy founder of Brahman Samaj
1834	Erection of the Apostolic Vicariate of Ceylon (Sri Lanka)
1838	Decree <i>Multa Praeclare</i> of Gregory XVI against Portuguese Patronage (difficulties)
1839	In Korea, Martyrs of Paris Foreign Missions
1840-1841	First War of Opium with results of openness of China to the West commerce
	Martyrdom of Jean Gabriel Perboyre CM in Hebei (China)
1841	Mgr. M. Pallegoix until 1862 outstanding bishop of Thailand
1842	Hong Kong under British Empire
	French Polynesia

1844	Catholic missionaries allowed in China under France protection
	Synod of MEP in Pondicherry (India)
1845	Instruction <i>Neminem Profecto</i> , under Gregory XVI (his missionary testament)
1846	† Andreas Kim, first Korean priest and martyr
1847	Restoration of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem
	Arrival of Oblates of Mary Immaculate (OMI) in Sri Lanka
1848	Arrival in Macau of the Daughters of Charity
	Sisters of the Charity of St. Paul of Chartres arrive in Hong Kong
1849	Concession of Shanghai to France
1851	Persecutions in Vietnam under the Emperor Tu Duc, many martyrs
1853	Jesuits back to Java (Indonesia)
	French takes control of New Caledonia
1854	The Religious of the Good Shepherd reach Bangalore (India)
1856	Second war of opium until 1860 – humiliation of China (treatise in English)
1855	Ordination of Carlos Cuarteron, appointed Prefect of Labuan and Borneo
1857	Sepoy's Mutiny in India, first independence war against British Army, end of Mughal Empire
1858	Dissolution of East Indian Company (England)
	British Raj until 1947
1859	French occupation of Saigon (Vietnam)
1861	† Clement Bonnard MEP, Apostolic Vicar of Pondicherry and visitor
1862	Arrival of the Congregation of Mission (Vincentians) to lead seminaries in the Philippines
1863	† Pedro Peláez, leader of Filipino secular priests
1865	Paris Foreign Missions are allowed to reach Japan; they find the “hidden Christians”
1866	Foundation of Mill Hill Missionaries by Cardinal Vaughan (England)
1867	Commission for the Eastern Church and Missions for the preparation of Vatican I
1868	† Theophile Verbist in Inner Mongolia, founder of Missionaries of Scheut (Belgium)
	Congregation of Immaculate Heart of Mary (CICM)
	Restoration of Emperor Meiji, modernization of Japan
1869	Meetings of bishops from China in Vatican I under Mgr. L. Faurie
1870	Rebellion of Tientsin: murder of French consul and catholic sisters
1872	Three catholic priests – Gomez, Burgos y Zamora – accused of rebellion executed by Spanish government in the Philippines
1874	Peace Treaty with France in Vietnam: religious liberty
1876	Victoria queen of England proclaimed empress of India

1877	The Franciscans Missionaries of Mary (FMM) arrive in Ootacamund (India)
1879	Leo XIII, restoration of Scholasticism (St. Thomas) through the encyclical <i>Aeterni Patris</i>
1883	Danayand Saraswati – Hindu traditions
	Arrival of Cistercians from Sept Fontaines (France) at Hebei (China)
1885	Foundation of the Indian National Congress (Political party)
1886	Erection of Catholic Hierarchy in Sri Lanka by Leo XIII: Colombo archdiocese, Jaffna and Kandy dioceses
	Erection of Catholic Latin Hierarchy in India by the bull <i>Humanae Salutis Auctor</i> of Leo XIII: seven Metropolitan Sees
1887	Proclamation of French Indochina (Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia)
1888	† Ramakrishna
1891	Erection of the hierarchy in Japan by Leo XIII
1894	Leo XIII, encyclical <i>Orientalium dignitas</i>
1895	SVD in Wilhelm's Land (New Guinea)
	Benedictines of Montserrat in the Philippines
1896	Execution of José Rizal, the hero of Filipino independence, after reconciliation with the church
1898	Independence war of the Philippines against Spain, US annexing the archipelago under President McKinley. The leaders, often masons, against the power of the friars
<b>XX</b>	<b>CENTURY</b>
1900	Boxer Rebellion, final defeat by an international coalition
1902	† Vivekananda, Hindu reform movement
	Constitution <i>Quae Mari Sinico</i> of Leo XIII, reorganization of Church in the Philippines
1905	Foundation of Kuomintang (nationalist party) by Sun Yat-Sen
1906	Muslim League (India)
1907	Provincial Synod in Manila, with arrival of many non-Spanish Congregations
1908	† Joseph Freidanemetz SVD in Shandong, China
	Arrival of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart (MSC) in the Philippines
1909	Mgr. Perros, bishop of Bangkok, many Congregations arrive
	† Arnold Jansen, founder of the Society of the Divine Word (SVD)
1911	End of Chinese Empire
	Approval of Maryknoll Missionary Society (US)
1912	Proclamation of Chinese Republic
1914-1918	First World War
1915	Armenian genocide by Ottoman Empire
	Felix Manalo founds <i>Iglesia ni Cristo</i> , in the Philippines

	Foundation of the University of Sophia in Tokyo by Jesuits
	Erection of Clergy Union for Missions by Fr. P. Manna and Bishop G. Conforti
1916	Foundation of the Society of St. Columban (Ireland)
1917	Erection of the Congregation for Oriental Churches by Benedict XV
1918	Protectorate of France over Lebanon and Syria
	First Cistercian monastery in Thu Duc (Vietnam)
1919	Massacre of Amritsar, shrine of Sikh religion (India)
	<i>Maximum Illud</i> , Missionary Encyclical of Benedict XV
1921	Mgr. Verstraelen SVD, bishop of Flores (Indonesia), expansion of the Church
1922	Apostolic Delegation in China with Mgr. Celso Costantini
	Arrival of Salesians of Don Bosco in India
1923	Foundation of the University of Fu Jen (Beijing) by the Benedictines of Latrobe (Pennsylvania)
1924	First Plenary Council of Catholic Church in China (Shanghai)
	Arrival of the Priests of the Sacred Heart (SCJ), Dehonians, in Indonesia
	Arrival of the Congregation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (CMF), Claretians, in China, spread later to India, Japan and the Philippines
1925	Missionary Exhibition in Rome under Pius XI
1926	Ordination in Rome of the first six Chinese bishops
	Missionary encyclical <i>Rerum Ecclesiae</i> of Pius XI
	Erection of the Salesian Province of China
	Erection of the Pontifical Institute for Foreign Missions (PIME)
1927	Fides Agency (for missionary news)
1930	Syro-Malankara in communion with Rome
	Civil war between nationalists (Chiang Kai-Shek – Kuomintang) and the communists (Mao Zedong – Communist Party of China, CPC) until 1934 – afterwards the “Long March” of CPC
1932	† Cardinal W.M. Van Rossum, Prefect of <i>Propaganda Fide</i> ; successor P. Fumasoni-Biondi (1933)
1933	Nguyen Ba Tong, first Vietnamese catholic bishop
1935	Celso Costantini, former delegate in China, secretary of <i>Propaganda Fide</i>
1939	Election of Pius XII, motto <i>Opus Iustitiae Pax</i>
	September: beginning of II World War
	Release of prohibition of Chinese Rites by the document <i>Plane compertum</i> of <i>Propaganda Fide</i> (Pius XII)
1940	Mgr. Albert Sugijapranata SJ, Apostolic Vicar of Semarang, first native bishop of Indonesia

	† Vincent Lebbe CM, founder and great missionary in China
1941	† Rabindranath Tagore, Nobel prize in literature in 1913
	Japan attacks Pearl Harbor and enters in the II WW with Germany and Italy – expansion in Asia Pacific, imposing Japanese bishops
1942-1945	In Langgur (Indonesia), during Japanese occupation, Mgr. Aerts and 12 priests are executed
1943	Full independence of Lebanon
1945	April-May German surrenders
	Atomic bombing of Hiroshima (August 6) and Nagasaki (August 9)
	Surrender of Japan (August 15)
	Division of Korea along the 38 <sup>th</sup> parallel: North Korea (pro Soviet) and South Korea (Pro American)
	Constitution of United Nations to prevent conflicts
	Mgr. Benjamin Thomas Cooray, archbishop of Colombo and first Sri Lanka cardinal (servant of God)
1946	Erection of the hierarchy in China by Pius XII and establishment of diplomatic relations with the Vatican. Thomas Tien Ken-Sin SVD, archbishop of Beijing and cardinal
	Independence of the Philippines, President Manuel Roxas
1947	Independence of India
1948	† Mohandas Gandhi hero of peaceful independence of India
	Proclamation of the State of Israel by Ben Gurion
1949	October 1 <sup>st</sup> proclamation of the Socialist Republic of China
	Independence of Indonesia from Netherlands, president Sukarno
1950-1953	Korean War with a final Armistice Agreement ratifying division: one million deaths
1951	Encyclical <i>Evangelii Praecones</i> of Pius XII about missions
1952	Nunzio Riberi is expelled from China
1954	Defeat of French army in Dien Bien Phu – partition of country – many catholics from North to South. Ho Chi Minh leader of the North, in war with US
	Encyclical for Chinese Church <i>Ad Sinarum Gentem</i> of Pius XII
1955	Erection of the hierarchy in Malaysia and Myanmar by Pius XII
1957	In China, foundation of the Chinese Patriotic Catholic Association
1958	Last Encyclical of Pius XII <i>Ad Apostolorum Principis</i> for Chinese Church
1959	Encyclical <i>Princeps Pastorum</i> of John XXIII about missions
	Announcement of Ecumenical Council Vatican II
1960	Erection of the hierarchy in Vietnam by John XXIII

1961	Erection of the hierarchy in Indonesia by John XXIII
1962	Erection of the hierarchy in Korea by John XXIII
1962-1965	Council Vatican II in Rome
1963	† John XXIII
	Assassination of J.F. Kennedy
1964	January: meeting between Paul VI and Athenagoras in Jerusalem
	Vatican II, decree <i>Orientalium Ecclesiarum</i>
	Paul VI at the International Eucharistic Congress of Bombay (India)
1965	Erection of the hierarchy in Thailand by Paul VI
	Vatican II: decree <i>Ad Gentes</i> about Mission
1966	Cultural Revolution in China under Mao Zedong
1967	† Maximos IV Melkite, active in Vatican II
	Journey of Paul VI to Istanbul
	Encyclical <i>Populorum Progressio</i>
1968	May cultural revolution in Paris (against De Gaulle)
	Assassination of Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy
	End of “Prague Spring” (Dubcek) by Soviet army
	Meeting of CELAM in Medellin (Colombia): Theology of Liberation
	Massacre in Tlatelolco (Mexico), before Olympic Games
1969	Yu Pin, archbishop of Nanking, created cardinal
1970	Journey of Paul VI to Asia, Oceania and Australia, including: Teheran (Iran), Dacca (East Pakistan), Philippines, West Samoa, Sidney (Australia), Jakarta (Indonesia), Hong Kong, and Colombo (Sri Lanka). Erection of the Federation of Asian Bishops’ Conferences (FABC) in Manila (Philippines)
1972	Martial Law in the Philippines by Ferdinand Marcos
1975	End of the Vietnam war – unification under the communist party
	Timor East annexed to Indonesia – war of resistance
	Paul VI Post-synodal Exhortation <i>Evangelii Nuntiandi</i> , about evangelization
1977	Canonization of the Maronite monk Charbel Makhlouf (†1898)
1978	† Paul VI; election of John Paul I; election of John Paul II
1980	† Paulinus Lee, Cistercian, in Lantau (Hong Kong)
1983	Mgr. Carlos Ximenes Belo SDB, bishop of Dili (East Timor), leader of human rights (Nobel Prize for Peace in 1996)
1985	Encyclical <i>Slavorum Apostoli</i> about Cyril and Methodius, by John Paul II
1986	EDSA Revolution in the Philippines, end of Marcos era, call of Cardinal Sin
1990	Encyclical <i>Redemptoris Missio</i> of John Paul II about Mission

1991	Aung San Suu Kyi, hero of Myanmar, Nobel Prize for Peace
1994	Catholic and Chaldean Church sign a common Christological Declaration
1995	John Paul II, letter <i>Orientalis Lumen</i>
1996	John Paul II and the Armenian Catholicos Kakerin I sign a common Christological declaration
1999	Independence of East Timor from Indonesia
	Post-synodal Exhortation <i>Ecclesia in Asia</i> , of John Paul II
<b>XXI</b>	<b>CENTURY</b>
2000	Pilgrimage of John Paul II to the Holy Land in the Jubilee Year
2002	† Cardinal Nguyen Van Thuan, for 13 years in prison, and in exile in Rome since 1991
2004	Tsunami in the coasts of Thailand and Indonesia, India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Somalia: 250.000 victims
2005	† John Paul II and election of Benedict XVI
2011-2016	Syrian Civil War, the constitution of the Islamic State (ISIS), with Christian persecutions and flights: 407.000 deaths and 3.8 million refugees
2012	John Tong Hon archbishop of Hong Kong, created cardinal by Benedict XVI
2013	Resignation of Benedict XVI and election of Pope Francis
	Louis Raphael Sako Patriarch of Chaldean Catholic Church (persecution in Syria)
2014	Meeting between Patriarch Bartholomew and Pope Francis
	Canonization of John XXIII and John Paul II
	Beatification of Paul VI
	Pope Francis visits South Korea and beatifies 124 Korean martyrs
2015	Pope Francis visits Sri Lanka and Philippines to comfort the victims of typhoon Haiyan