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# Millennium Moment

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## Top Ten Church Moments of the Last Two Millennia

- 1. Pentecost.** The Church is born with the coming of the Holy Spirit in the Upper Room in Jerusalem.
- 2. Conversion of St. Paul.** The former persecutor of Christians becomes a follower of Jesus and an apostle.
- 3. Freedom for the Church.** Roman Emperor Constantine's victory in battle over opposing Roman forces in 313 ends several hundred years of persecution and makes Christianity a lawful religion.
- 4. The Council of Chalcedon.** In 451 the Council settles a pivotal doctrinal dispute, defining Jesus as one divine person with two natures—human and divine.
- 5. Christianization of the barbarians.** The founding of the Benedictine Order at Monte Cassino in 520 allows St. Benedict and his monks to create a network of monasteries that bring Christian education to Europe, and help civilize nomadic barbarians who had dismantled the structures of the Roman Empire.
- 6. Rise of the mendicant orders.** At the start of the 13th century Dominican and Franciscan friars take religious life out of the cloister and into the world, bringing about widespread Church renewal.
- 7. The Protestant Revolt.** In 1517 Martin Luther publicly challenges Church teaching, signaling the start of the Protestant Reformation.
- 8. The Council of Trent.** The bishops at the Council of Trent (1545-63), which defined key doctrines of the Church and introduced many reforms, sparked the Counter-Reformation.
- 9. The First Vatican Council.** The popes had lost their political power, but this Council (1869-71) enhanced the potential for papal ministry in the Church and spurred an internal spiritual renewal of the Church.
- 10. The Second Vatican Council.** The doors of the Church were opened to the world at Vatican II (1962-65), giving birth to a New Pentecost and a Church more fully committed to the contemporary needs of the modern world.

*The above is adapted from ["Ten 'Peak Moments' of Church History,"](#) Catholic Update, June 1987 (St. Anthony Messenger Press), by Father Alfred McBride, O.Praem.*

