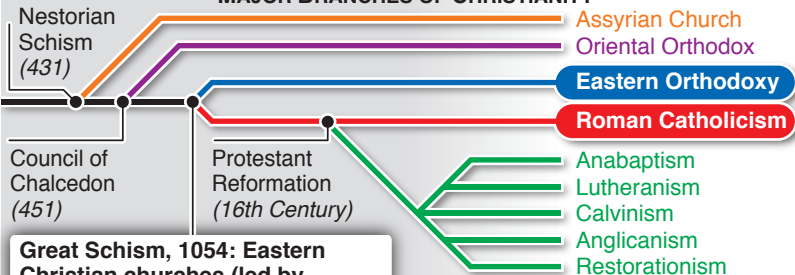


# Church leaders hold historic meeting

A Roman Catholic Pope and the Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church will meet for the first time in a bid to heal the 1,000-year-old rift between the Western and Eastern branches of Christianity

## MAJOR BRANCHES OF CHRISTIANITY



**Great Schism, 1054: Eastern Christian churches (led by *Patriarch of Constantinople, Michael Cerularius*) and Western Church (led by *Pope Leo IX*) separate over cultural, political, and religious differences**

### EASTERN ORTHODOX CHURCH

Communion of 14 self-governing churches, with Istanbul-based Patriarch of Constantinople considered "first among equals"

### Russian Orthodox Church

Largest and most powerful Church in Orthodoxy

**165m**

### ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

**1.2 billion**  
members  
worldwide

### ORTHODOX CHURCH

**250m**  
members

**Pope Francis**  
*Elected in Mar 2013*

**Patriarch Kirill**  
*Elected in Feb 2009*