

In keeping with the spirit of the document '[Dominus Iesus](#)' the following valid apostolic succession, as traced from the [Assyrian Church of the East](#) and the ancient Mar Thoma Church of India, is provided below for the Most Reverend Robert W. Burgess, Jr.

Church of the East Apostolic Succession

of Mar Yokhannan, The Most Reverend John M. Stanley,
and Mar Khananishu, The Most Reverend Robert W. Burgess, Jr. (Successor)

Maran Eshu M'Shikha (Our Lord Jesus Messiah)

33-73 AD Tooma Shlikha (Thomas, Apostle)

The Apostle Thomas established churches in Mesopotamia and Persia then went on to India where, having established several churches, he was martyred by being run through with a spear while in prayer. This occurred on a high hill outside Mylapore near Madras. According to ancient tradition, he sold himself as a slave to the master of a ship. In this way, serving as ship's carpenter, he was able to reach southern India. It may have been that he went as a slave of Jesus, responding to a call from India for carpenters. It is known that around this time, Greek carpenters were held in high regard by Indian rulers and many made their way there. There are two ancient traditions about where Thomas went in India. One has him travelling to the north, the Punjab, and preaching to Gundaphar, king of all northern India. The other has him traveling in the south and establishing seven churches in the area of Cochin and Madras. There remains a Christian community in the Cochin area that, to this day, looks back to Thomas. Neither tradition is impossible. In recent years the previously unknown Gundaphar has become known to history as a great king living at precisely the time and place of the tradition. It is also possible that both are true and that Thomas traveled in both areas. His arrival in India was probably sometime from AD 50 to 52.

33 Bar Tulmay Shlikha (Bartholomew)

The Apostle Bartholomew, according to tradition, was a missionary to India and to Lycaonia and Armenia. In Armenia he was martyred by being flayed alive at Alanopolis, now Derben in Azerbaijan.

33-45 Addai Shlikha (Taddai, Thaddeus)

There is some confusion as to whether this person was Judas Thaddeus (also known as Jude and Lebbeus) one of the Twelve or a different Thaddeus, one of the Seventy. (Different sources vary.) Under the direction of St. Thomas, he preached the Gospel in Osrhoene, a small Syriac-speaking, Arabian buffer kingdom between the Roman Empire and Persia, founding the church in its capital, Edessa (modern Urfa in south western Turkey), which became one of the greatest centers of the Church of the East. It is believed that he died there after appointing his disciple Aggai to be his successor. He is also credited with founding the Church in Nisibis as well as travelling and preaching to Mesopotamia. According to the tradition of the Church of the East, he brought leaven from the bread of the Last Supper (actually served and eaten prior to Passover as in the Gospel of John). It is understood that the leaven used to make communion bread in the churches throughout the East is descended from this same yeast.

45-81 Aggai (Haggai)

Disciple of Addai and one of the Seventy commissioned by Jesus in Luke 10:1. He may have been martyred by the king of Osrhoene.

48-81 Mari

Disciple of Addai and one of the Seventy. The major liturgy of the Church of the East is attributed to Addai and Mari. Their feast day is honored in the Western Church. He may have been martyred by the king of Osrhoene. Early traditions attribute to Addai and Mari the evangelism of the neighboring kingdom to the east, the Persian Adiabene with its capital at Arbela (modern Irbil in Iraq), the only Assyrian city to be continuously occupied from ancient times to the present day.. They are also thought to have continued into the Persian Empire itself and as far as the borders of India.

90-107 Abris

A relative of the Virgin Mary. In 1909 a fascinating document, *The Odes of Solomon*, was discovered. It dates from this period (possibly as early as AD 80) and appears to be the first Christian hymn book. During this period, Osrhoene was under Roman domination. It may have been under the Emperor Trajan that the first martyrdoms occurred in Edessa. In Arbela, the Parthian king Xosroes martyred the second bishop of that city in 107. In 115, the Romans invaded Adiabene and named it Assyria.

130-152 Oraham (Abraham)

Native of Kashkar, a city in western China.

171-190 Yacob I (Jacob)

Jacob I was a relative of Joseph the Carpenter, earthly father to Jesus. About the year 172 Tatian the Assyrian (ca. 110-180) returned from Rome—where he had gone some twenty years earlier and had studied under Justin Martyr—to the area of Adiabene and founded a catechetical school there. His writings and teaching were to have a profound and long lasting effect on the Syriac Church. He wrote the Syriac harmony of the Gospels known as the *Diatessaron*. This was the first translation of a major part of the New Testament into another language. He was later accused by Western Church Fathers, especially Jerome, of being Father of the Encratites, monks who followed a path of overly ascetic self-denial. His own extant writings, while emphasizing asceticism do not go to the extremes of which he was accused; however the Syrian monks through the succeeding centuries were known for their extreme asceticism.

In AD 177 Abgar VIII ascended to the throne of Osroene. He may have been a Christian for, though he was known as "a friend of Rome" he protected the Christians during the periods of Roman persecution of the Church. Abgar's boyhood companion, Bardaisan, himself a deacon in the Church, in his *Book of the Laws of Countries*, refers to "when King Abgar had come to the faith." Abgar's faith is also corroborated by Roman historian, Sextus Justus Africanus who visited Edessa in 195, who refers to Abgar as a "holy man," an unusual complement from one of the Romans who generally despised the Osroeneans as a deceitful people. It may be said that from this time Osroene was the first Christian kingdom.

Around AD 180 or 190 (depending on the dating of the death of John Mark), Pantaenus of Alexandria was sent to India by Demetrius, Bishop of Alexandria, in response to the request from that land for a deputation. Upon his return to Alexandria, he reported that he had met Christians in India who had the Gospel of Matthew in Hebrew (possibly Aramaic) brought there by the Apostle Bartholomew when he evangelized in India. Pantaenus, a Jewish convert to Christianity, well schooled in Greek philosophy, was head of the great Catechetical School of Alexandria. He was acknowledged as the greatest scholar of his day and was teacher to Clement of Alexandria and Origen from whom they learned much about the Indians.

191-203 Ebed M'shikha

"Servant of the Messiah"

The *Chronicle of Edessa* records a great flood in the year 201 in the city which destroyed the palace of King Abgar and damaged the nave of the Christian church building. This is the earliest historical record of a church building. We do not know when this church was built. Prior to this the Christians had assembled in homes or large houses converted for worship such as the one excavated in Dura-Europus on the Euphrates.

205-220 Akhu D'awu

224-244 Shakhlupa

of Kashkar. In the year 226, the religiously tolerant Parthian dynasty fell to the Persian Sassanids who were initially indifferent of Christianity but became persecutors of the Church. They ruled the empire for the next four centuries. By this time, the *Chronicle of Arbela* reports more than twenty bishops in the Persian empire with jurisdictions from the mountains of Kurdistan in the east to the Caspian Sea in the west. At some point during this period, the *Didascalia Apostolorum (Teaching of the Apostles)* was written in Syriac by a bishop living between Antioch and Edessa. It is the oldest manual of church order extant. Though composed within the Roman Empire, it circulated throughout Persia. In 241, during the first year of the reign of the second Sassanid emperor, Shapur I, a new prophet, Mani, began preaching. His followers were the Manichaeans. His new religion spread throughout the Persian empire, into India, and into China.

247 (or 285)-326 Papa Bar Gaggai

Papa bar Gaggai was the first to hold the title of Catholicos ("Holder of All"). In 280 (or 285), he was made the first bishop of the see of Seleucia-Ctesiphon, about 20 miles south of Baghdad and some 50 miles north of ancient Babylon. His consecrators were the bishops of Arbela and Susa. To this day, the Catholicos of the East has been titular

primate of Seleucia-Ctesiphon. Papa sought to bring all other bishoprics into submission to him as bishop of the capital city, including the deeply revered Miles, bishop of the ancient imperial city of Susa and his own consecrator. At the synod called by Papa to settle this issue, Miles chastised him severely, where upon he, in a fit of anger, pounded on the Book of the Gospels calling on it to speak. At this, he suffered a paralyzing stroke which was considered a judgement on his sacrilege. He was deposed and his archdeacon, Shimun Bar Sabbai was made bishop in his stead. In spite of this beginning, the need for a single Catholicos to lead the whole church was recognized and the position that Papa established has continued to the present day. Upon the death of Shapur I, the Zoroastrian priest, Kartir, rose very rapidly to the highest position within the official imperial religion. He immediately set about destroying the Manichaeans. After an initial persecution that included the capture and execution of Mani, there was a brief respite, but during the reign of Varahran (Bahram) II, a fresh persecution of the Manichaeans broke out. This time it spilled over to include the Christians, even to the emperor's Christian wife. In the Syriac *Acts of the Martyrs*, this is called the First Persecution. In 301 Tiridat I, King of Armenia, was converted to Christianity. It is from this that Armenia lays claim to the title of first Christian kingdom. As Osroene ceased to exist as a Kingdom or a people, the Armenians may claim to be the first Christian nation still in existence. Sometime around the year 306, Ephrem the Syrian, Mar Aprem, was born in Nisibis. He lived until 373. A deacon and founder of the catechetical school in Nisibis, he is considered to have been the greatest hymn writer of the ancient Church, Eastern and Western. In 350, he helped repel a Persian attack on Nisibis. In 363, he moved to Edessa which, at that time was under Roman rule. He composed such hymns as *The Father of Truth* and *The Pearl*. In 325, Constantine convened the first ecumenical council, the First Council of Nicea.

326-341 (or 344/5)

Shimun Bar Sabbai (Simon, Simeon)

Shapur II began a severe persecution of the Church that lasted forty years. Shapur was at war with the Byzantine Empire and decided to impose a severe tax on the Christians as a means to raise money for his war and to crush the Christian community which was growing steadily. The Zoroastrian priesthood was deeply incensed by such growth and instigated this action. Shimun bar Sabbai, the Catholicos refused to implement the tax on his people whereupon he, along with the rest of the Church, was accused of being friends of Rome and traitors to the empire. Refusing to recant he was martyred outside Susa on Good Friday (the year may have been 339, 341, or 345) after being forced to watch the execution of five bishops and about one hundred priests. His sister, Mart Tarbula, followed some time later. The period from 340 to 363 and 379 (or 383) to 401 is known as the Great Persian Persecution. It ended with the death of Shapur II. During this period, 16,000 names of martyrs were recorded. In addition to the 16,000 known, there were countless numbers whose names were not recorded.

344-345 Shahdost

Martyred under Shapur II

345-346 Bar Bashmin

Tortured and beheaded with many others.

346–364 (vacancy in the Catholicate)

There follows a break in the line of the Catholicate (but not the Apostolic succession—there were other bishops to carry that on) because of the extensive persecution that the Church underwent within the Persian Empire. About 370, Ephrem celebrated the translation of the bones of St. Thomas from India to Edessa with the following words:

“I stirred up death”, the devil howled. . .

“But now I am struck all the harder.

The Apostle whom I slew in India

Has overtaken me in Edessa.”

364-373 Tomarsa

372-380 Qaiyuma

Persecution renewed.

380-399 (vacancy in the Catholicate)

399-410 Eskhaq (Isaac)

Mar Isaac's reign was a period of respite from persecution. Peace was brought to the Church through the diplomatic support of Mar Maruta, sent by the Emperor of Rome to Yezdegard I, Shah of Iran from 399 to 410. Yezdegard I gave permission for a synod to be called at Seleucia-Ctesiphon in 410 at which his Edict of Toleration was read bringing great rejoicing to the Church (even as the Western Church was grieving at the fall of Rome to Alaric the Goth). The Shah's approval for the appointment of successors to the Cathilocos was agreed to. Bishops were given official status in the realm. Yezdegard I never embraced Christianity but he caused many churches to be rebuilt. General and severe persecution returned upon the deaths of Yezdegard and Mar Isaac. The decrees of the First Council of Nicea (AD 325) and the First Council of Constantinople (AD 381) were published and accepted in the East at the council of 410. This made these first councils truly ecumenical (world wide) and are the only ones that are so recognized by the Church of the East. The Nicene Creed was formulated at these two councils and is accepted by the Church of the East as the primary credal statement of the Faith. At this same council in 410, along with accepting the doctrines of the first two councils the Church of the East asserted it's right to govern itself and not be governed from the Roman Empire. By the time of the Council of Ephesus in 431 (which is considered to be ecumenical by the Byzantine and Western Churches), political and linguistic barriers had permanently separated the Catholic Church of the West from the Catholic Church of the East in the Persian Empire.

411-414 Akhi (Akha, Ahai)

415-420 Yoalaha I (Yaballaha) "The Lord is God."

After many years as a missionary to the pagans, Yoalaha returned to build a monastery on the Euphrates where he longed to devote his life to praising God, singing songs and hymns, but this was not to be. He was called to the Catholicate and then sent on a diplomatic mission to the Constantinople. Returning from that, he had to deal with schisms in his own church. He called a council in 420 which accepted the canons of the Western councils. In the year 420, the last of Yezdegerd's reign, he who had been a friend of the Christians turned against the Church and instituted a persecution that lasted for several years and, while not seeing the martyrdom of as many as under Shapur II, outdid it in ferocity and cruelty.

420 Maana

Varahan V (Bahram) was Shah from 420 to 438. Maana was banished by the Shah for refusing to rebuke Christians who had burned a Zoroastrian fire temple.

421 Qarabukht

Qarabukht was forced upon the Church by the Shah after which, he was deposed.

421-456 Dad Ishu "Beloved of Jesus"

In 422 Vharhan's war with the Byzantine empire was brought to an end and with it the persecution of the Church. A treaty decreeing freedom of religion in both empires, Zoroastrians in the Byzantine and Christians in the Persian. This was most likely helped by the generosity of the Byzantine ambassador, Acacius, bishop of Amida, a city just across the border on the Tigris. Mar Acacius sold the golden vessels of his church to succor 7000 Persians, prisoners of the Romans. Dad Ishu was imprisoned early in his Catholicate under the accusation of being pro-Roman. During his imprisonment a pseudo-catholicos attempted to create an alliance with the anti-Christian Zoroastrians. Upon his release, Dad Ishu refused to lead the Church and went off to a hermitage in the northern mountains to pray for and mourn the spiritual fall of the Church of God. Only the petition of thirty-six penitent and weeping bishops induced him to return and preside at a council to reform the Church.

Mar Dad Ishu was called Patriarch, equal to any in the West, at the council of Markabda in 424, the third council of the Church of the East. In so doing this Church declared itself free of and of equal standing with the Church in the Roman Empire. This was a declaration of independent equality not of separation. Upon the death of Varahan V (438/9), persecution of the Church once again swept the land, and once again, it was connected with war with Byzantium. Yazdegerd II (438 to 457) began his reign by declaring war. Even though this war was short and inconclusive, the persecution continued. The worst years of the persecution were 445 to 448. In the latter year, in Kirkuk, a horrendous massacre occurred. Ten bishops and 153,000 clergy and laity were slaughtered on the mound outside of town over a period of several days. The Persian executor, Tamasgerd, was so moved by the steadfastness of the Christians that he finally joined them to be baptized in his own blood. Within the Byzantine Empire, the Third Ecumenical Council, that of Ephesus, in 432 condemned Nestorius, Patriarch of Constantinople for the heresy that came to bear his name. For centuries he bore this

stigma in the West, his own writings had all been destroyed. In 1889 a Syrian priest discovered an eight-hundred-year-old manuscript of a Syriac translation of Nestorius's own Greek account of his controversies. This manuscript of the *Bazaar of Heracleides* had been made about 540. (Bazaar or market, was a term used to refer to an anthology.) Modern scholarship has come to recognize that Nestorius was actually much more Orthodox than he been given credit for.

Coming from a Syrian background and using Aramaic language, Nestorius, who was strongly influenced by Theodore of Mopsuestia, used terminology that did not translate well into Greek (or Latin). It is now understood that the conflict was more the result of political maneuvering and linguistic misunderstanding than real differences. The Church of the East was not represented at the Council of Ephesus and never accepted its statements, or those of any succeeding councils. As far as the Church of the East is concerned there have been only two truly ecumenical councils, Nicea in 325 and Constantinople in 381. Nestorius was never condemned in the East. Because of this and because of the fact that it used the same terminology that Nestorius had, the Church of the East became known as the Nestorian Church. This is a complete misnomer for it was not "Nestorian" in doctrine (as that was understood) nor did Nestorius ever rule in it. His jurisdictions were all within the Byzantine realm.

457-484 Bawai I (Babowai, Babu)

Bawai spent the majority of his patriarchate in prison. He also had a series of clashes with Barsauma, Bishop of Nisibis. Barsauma also clashed with bishops on the western side of the border. One of the issues was on the two natures of Christ. He was strongly "Nestorian" or diophysite while they were monophysite. He was also married which brought him into conflict with both the Western bishops and Bawai. In an attempt to appease the Western bishops and solicit their support in putting pressure on Peroz the Shah to grant the Church greater freedom, Bawai secretly sent them a letter which was intercepted by Barsauma who revealed it to Peroz who then had Bawai executed for treason. Unfortunately for Barsauma, before he could be appointed Patriarch by the Shah, Peroz perished in battle with the Huns on his eastern border. His successor, Vologases (Balash, 484-488) sought peace in the empire and appointed Acacius as Patriarch.

484-496 Aqaq (Acacius)

In 486, Acacius convened the fourth general synod of the Church of the East which condemned Monophysitism, confirmed the formula of Nestorius concerning the two natures of Christ and affirmed the right of all Christians to marry regardless of whether they were laity, priests, or bishops. What was remarkable about this synod was that the three main prelates of the Church, Acacius, Papa of Beit Lapat, and Barsauma of Nisibis, all present, and all representing differing stances, maintained the unity of the Church and accepted the authority of this synod while maintaining relations with the Byzantine Church. There was in the Eastern Church truly diversity within unity. To this day, the Church of the East has been more tolerant of diversity than the Western Church, both Greek and Latin.

496-502 Bawai II

Mar Bawai II assumed the title Patriarch of the East in 498. It then became standard for the primate of the Church of the East to be known as Catholicos-Patriarch. This practice is still followed. Bawai was a prolific writer.

505-523 Shila (Silas)

In 519, in the Kingdom of Himyar (modern Yemen), there was a fierce persecution of the Christians. Men, women, and children were forced into the Church, some 2000 of them, so packed in that there was no room to move. The Church was then set to the flame and all perished. Those who were not in the Church were hunted down from house to house.

524-538 Elisha

Period of dual patriarchate. Elisha was appointed by Silas, his father-in-law, to be his successor.

524–535 Narsai (Narses)

The bishops of the Church, rejecting Silas' s nepotism, elected Narses to be Patriarch. Both parties appealed to Shah Kavad to decide the issues which he refused to do.

539-540 Polos (Paul)

540–552 Aba I

Aba , a convert from Zoroastrianism, was in a precarious position, not only because of his conversion (a capital offense in Persia) but because in the year of his accession, Persia launched a war against Constantinople—a state of affairs that was always treacherous for the Christians. Aba ruled the Church from prison or exile for seven years during his reign, yet managed to do so with great ability. Aba is known for four great accomplishments. They were a thoroughgoing reorganization of the Church by means of a grand tour of all provinces, a reinvigoration of theological studies, a successful calling of the Church back from decadence to spiritual rejuvenation, and the work of reunion within the sadly divided Body, healing the wounds within his own church and reaching out to restore broken relationships between Christians east and west. Shortly after his conversion, Aba made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, Egypt, Greece, and Constantinople where he was received to communion as a matter of course.

552-567 Yosip (Joseph)

Joseph was personal physician to Shah Chosroes I and proposed to the bishops by him. They accepted him as Patriarch but soon regretted his unscrupulous and autocratic rule. Eventually, they were able to put enough pressure on him that he called a council in 554, the church's seventh. This council laid restrictions on the Patriarch's ability to act alone and condemned secular governmental influence in the affairs of the Church. Finally, in 566 or 567, the bishops called a synod to depose Joseph; however he remained in power until removed by the Shah in 570.

570-581 Khazqiyil (Ezekiel)

581-595 Eshuyow I, Arzunaya (Yeshuyab) "Jesus has given"
He wrote against heresies and on the sacraments.

596-604 Sorishu I, Garmaqaya (Sabr Ishu) "Hope of Jesus"
He was more effective as a hermit and a missionary than as Patriarch.

605-608 Greghor, Partaya (Gregory)
The Shah nominated Gregory, Bishop of Nisibis, but the bishops preferred another Gregory and tricked the Shah, Chosroes II, into thinking they had elected his man. In fury at the deception, the Shah refused to confirm any more Patriarchs for the rest of his reign.

608-628 (vacancy in the Patriarchate)
During this period, which ended with the death of Chosroes, no bishops or metropolitans were consecrated. The Shah's death followed his downfall and removal in favor of his son, Siroes, Kavad II, as a consequence of the failure of his war with the Roman Byzantine empire. Babai the Great, abbot of the Great Monastery on Mt. Izla, was elected by a number of metropolitans and bishops to the post of Inspector of Monasteries which enabled him to travel freely. His prestige was such that he was able to function as administrator of the whole church. With the end of Chosroes' reign, he was chosen to be Catholicos but refused the honor and returned to the solitary life of his monastery.

628-644 Eshuyow II, Gdalaya
Mar Eshuyow was an Arab. The early part of his reign was marked by political chaos within the Persian Empire and the threat of war with Rome. He was sent by the imperial family, along with a delegation of bishops to sue for peace with the Romans. He also negotiated with Mohammad the first agreement on the favorable status of the Church of the East under Islam. In 637, Seleucia-Ctesiphon fell to the Arabs. He created the first metropolitanate of India and sent out the first known mission to China (Peking) in 635. During his patriarchate there began a revitalization of the Church and flowering of evangelism. He wrote a commentary on the Psalms, poetry and other works.

647-650 Immeh

650-660 Eshuyow III, Kdayawa

661-680 Gewargis I (George)
Mar George wrote hymns and poetry. During his Patriarchate, the Church suffered persecution at the hands of the Ummayyad Caliph, Muawiyyah. Mar George was imprisoned and many churches destroyed.

681-683 Yokhannan I, Bar Marta (John)

683-685 Vacancy in the Patriarchate

685-693 Khnanishu I "The Mercy of Jesus"
Martyr.

693-694 Yokhannan II, Garba

694–714 Vacancy in the Patriarchate

714-728 Sliwazkha "The Victory of the Cross"

728–731 (vacancy in the Patriarchate)

731-740 Pethyon

In 737, Caliph Mahdi decreed that all churches built since the Muslim conquest be destroyed. Some 5000 Christians were forced to convert to Islam or face death.

741-751 Awa

Awa translated the Old Testament into Syriac from Greek for scholarly use, not to supplant the Peshitta (the ancient Syriac version of the Bible, still the official translation of the Church of the East. He also wrote a number of commentaries, hymns, letters on discipline and canons.

752-754 Surin

Surin was deposed by the new Caliph, Mansur, the second of the Abbasid dynasty. During his reign (754 – 775) Mansur built his new capital near the ruins of Seleucia-Ctesiphon, using its stones. Its official name was *Madinat as-Salam* or “City of Peace,” but it was known by the name of the Persian village that had been there before—Baghdad.

754-773 Yacob II

In 762 the physical seat of the Catholicos-Patriarch was moved to Baghdad.

774 -780 Khnanishu II

780-820 Timotheus I (Timothy)

In 781 a monument, known as the Nestorian Monument, was erected in China to commemorate 150 years of Christianity in that country. The erectors stated that Khnanishu was Patriarch. The news of his death some three years prior had not yet reached China. The monument, discovered by Jesuits in 1625 and still in very good condition, documents the early spread of Christianity in China during the Tang Dynasty. It was financed by a Chinese Christian nobleman and prepared by Syrian monks from a monastery in Peking. Surmounting the monument is a Cross, known as the "Nestorian Cross," which forms the main device of the seal of the Evangelical Apostolic Church of North America. On the monument, the Cross is above clouds and a lotus blossom to show the superiority of the Cross over Islam and Buddhism. Above it is a flame representing the Holy Spirit. Modern copies of the monument stand in Diamond Mountains of North Korea and in a Buddhist cemetery on Koya-San (Mt. Koya) in Japan

820–824 Eshu Bar Non (Joshua Son Of Nun)

He wrote theology, Inquiries into the Bible, philosophical and liturgical works.

825–832 Gewargis II

832-836 Soreshu II

837-850 Oraham II, Margaya

In 845, Wu Tsung, Emperor of China, set about to destroy Buddhism in China which had been growing rapidly during the same period as Christian missions there. At the time of his decree, there were some 44,600 Buddhist monasteries in China occupied by more than 265,000 monks and nuns. By the end of his persecution Buddhism had been nearly wiped out in China. It was during this same period that Christianity, equated to Buddhism in the Chinese mind because of its monks and monasteries, was eliminated. Just as Christians had been caught up in the persecution of the Manichaeans in Persia, so they once again suffered in a persecution of another religion.

850-852 Teadasis (Theodosius)

During the Patriarchate of Theodosius, Caliph Mutawakkil imprisoned the Patriarch on the false charge of being a Byzantine spy. The Caliph also decreed that the Christians wear identifying badges.

852–860 (vacancy in the Patriarchate)

860-872 Sargis, Suwaya

873-884 Annush D'beth Garmay

884-892 Yokhannan III, Bar Narsai

892-898 Yokhannan IV
Nephew of Theodosius

900-905 Yokhannan V, Bar Ogare

906-937 Oraham III, Abraza

937-949 Ammanoel I (Emmanuel)

961-962 Esrail (Israel), Karkhaya

963-986 Odishu, Garmaqaya "Servant of Jesus"

967-1000 Mari Aturaya

1001–1012 Yokhannan VI

1013-1022 Yokhannan VII, Bar Nazuk

In 1014, during the reign of Caliph Qadr, the Church was persecuted, buildings were destroyed, the people tortured and murdered.

1023–1027 Eshuyow IV, Bar Khazqiyil

During Eshuyow's Patriarchate, Kurds attacked Edessa and took about 3000 captives.

1028–1049 Elia I, Terhan

1049-1057 Yokhannan VIII, Bar Tragala

1057-1072 Sorishu III, Bar Zanbur

1072-1090 Odishu II, Bar Ars, Aturaya

1092–1109 Makkikha I, Bar Shlemon "Lowly One, Son of Solomon"

1111–1132 Elia II, Bar Maqli

1133-1135 Bar Soma of Suwa

1135-1136 Bar Gabbara

1138-1147 Odishu III

nephew of Elia II

1148-1175 Eshuyow V

from Beth Zodia, Baladaya

1176-1190 Elia III, Abukhalim

1191–1222 Yoalaha II, Bar Qaiyuma

During this period, the Mongols began their conquests of east, northern and central Asia. Jenghiz Khan began his conquests in 1206 and continued until his death in 1227. The Mongols, for the most part (and until Timur Lenk) were not hostile to Christian. Their number included many Christians. Jenghiz Khan had a Christian wife and the mother of his grandson, Kublai Khan, who became emperor of China, was also a Christian. As a matter of principle Jenghiz Khan did not embrace any religion, treating them all with equality. Even so, as the Mongols expanded their conquests destroying city after city, many Christians were caught up in the general slaughter. References to the slaying and martyrdom mentioned below are only those where Christians were singled out for specific persecution.

1222-1226 Sorishu IV

1226-1256 Sorishu V from Baghdad

Jenghiz Khan was succeeded by his son Ogotai Khan who took his conquests into Europe, overrunning Poland and Hungary. He died in 1241 and was succeeded by the election of his son Guyuk to be ruler of the Mongols. Guyuk Khan was a professing Christian and immediately brought an end to the massacres and devastation that had characterized the reigns of Jenghiz and Ogotai. The fact of his faith is probably the single most important factor in the sparing of Christian Europe from destruction at the hands of the Mongol armies. In 1248 Guyuk died and was succeeded by his cousin, Hulaku Khan, son of Tulu, brother of Ogotai.

1257-1265 Makkikha II

In 1258 the seat of the Catholicos-Patriarch was moved to Mosul. During that same year, Hulaku Khan had one of every twentieth Christian man and his family put to death in the city of Tikrit.

1265-1281 Dinkha I, (Epiphanius) Arbilaya

Dinkha was from Arbela. In 1268, the Sultan of Egypt slew all Christian men in Syrian Antioch and had the churches torn down. He also took many children into captivity.

1281-1318 Yoalaha III, Bar Turkaye (Yahbalaha Morkos)

Yoalaha "Son of the Turks" was the son of a Uighur (a Mongol tribe) archdeacon. He was born in Koshang, northern China. (Uighur is still the predominant language of Sinkiang province, China.) Around 1255 he went on pilgrimage to Jerusalem with another monk, Bar Sauma. Because of fighting, they were unable to get to Jerusalem so returned to Baghdad where they settled. He was raised to Patriarchate in 1281. In 1287, Argun, Il-Khan of Persia sent Rabban Bar Sauma, under Yoalaha's direction, on a mission to Western Europe to seek an alliance against the Moslems for a new Crusade. Bar Sauma met with Andronicus II, Palaeologus, Emperor of Byzantium, Phillip IV of France and Edward I of England. Because of the press of internal affairs, none were interested. In 1289, Kurds attacked over 70 Assyrian Christian villages, killing over 500 men and taking over 1000 children captive. In 1295, the Mongol, Kazan Khan, ordered the destruction of all churches in Mesopotamia. Yoalaha was imprisoned and tortured by Arabs carrying out the Khan's orders. Two years later (1297), Ala Al-Din, son of a Mongol, massacred the Christian inhabitants of the city of Amedia and burns the churches. He took over 12,000 into captivity. In 1310, Arabs, with Mongol assistance, captured Arbela and slew all inhabitants that could not be sold into slavery. Many died of starvation in the siege that took place.

1318-1328 Timotheus II, Arbilaya

With Timothy of Arbela, a hereditary patriarchate began. The office of Catholicos was passed from uncle to nephew. This was continued until 1976 when the present Catholicos was elected by the Episcopal college.

1329-1359 Dinkha II

1359-1364 Dinkha III

1365-1392 Shimun III

During this period, the Mongol, Tamerlane (Timur Lenk, 1336? - 1405), rejecting Christianity and embracing Islam, launched a war of extermination against the Church. Within a generation the Church of the East, numbering some 84 million souls at its peak, was reduced to about two million. These were scattered and isolated in Southern India and Kurdistan (eastern Turkey, northern Iraq and northwestern Iran). He established his power in 1369 by usurping power from Chagatni Khan in Samarkand. Thirteen years later he had established his rule throughout central Asia. Examples of his ruthless policy are the pyramid of 70,000 heads after taking the city of Isfahan, the 90,000 head pyramid on the ruins of Baghdad, and his total destruction of the Christian city of Tikrit after a weeks long siege, some 72,000 souls.

1392–1403 (vacancy in the Patriarchate)

1403-1407 Shimun III

1407-1437 (vacancy in the Patriarchate)

1437 Elia IV

1437–1497 Shimun IV, Basidi

In 1450, Shimun Basidi began a hereditary Patriarchate within the Bar Mama (Abuna) family known as the Patriarchate of Hormizd after the monastery where he lived and where he and many of his line were buried. He began this practice through enacting a canon because of the decimation of the Church under the attacks of Timur Lenk (Tamerlain), the Mongol. Mar Shimun Basidi felt that the only way to assure the survival of the Church was to keep the patriarchate within his family. Unfortunately, because this new canon violated the established canons of the church that no bishop may nominate a successor, this sowed seeds of contention that lasted until the 20th Century.

1497-1502 Shimun V

In 1500, the Portuguese arrived in India, beginning a period of tumultuous relations between the Church of the East in India and the Church of Rome. The first Roman missionaries were Franciscans who worked among the non-Christian Indians and, for the most part, left the ancient Christianity community alone.

1502–1504 Elia V

1504–1538 Shimun VI

From this point until 1976, all Catholicos-Patriarchs of the Church of the East were named Shimun (Simon), generally with another name preceding, but the number referring to the generation of Shimun.

1538–1558 Eshuyow Shimun VIII

During this period the Patriarchal see was moved from Alkosh, near Mosul, Iraq, to Azerbaijan province in northwestern Iran. It was then moved to Qudshanis, Hakkari, in

Turkish Kurdistan. The remnants of the Church hung on in the far mountains of Kurdistan, enduring severe persecution down to and including the present. The Patriarchal see remained in this isolated area until many Chaldeans fled from Turkish persecutions to the United States at the time of World War I. At that time the see was translated to San Francisco, California. In 1542, Francis Xavier arrived in India heading up a Jesuit mission. In 1551, the Portuguese governors, through the Jesuits, began putting pressure on the indigenous Christians to accept Roman doctrine and practice.

1558–1572 unclear

From about this time, there were two separate patriarchal lines, that of Hormizd remaining in the Bar Mama family, which eventually became the Chaldean Catholic line, and this one outside the family. Within the Bar Mama family, Eshuyow Shimun was succeeded by Eliya VI, Giwargis. Different sources give different names within the other line. This was the period when Roman doctrines began to be introduced into the Church, largely through the work of the monk, Rabban Sulaka d'beth Ballo. With this influence, deep and enduring divisions entered into the Church of the East, already weakened by persecutions and the fact that during the generations following Tamerlane's massacre of the Church there were attempts to seek support and strength from Roman, Byzantine, Jacobite and Armenian sources. All this contributed to the present multiplicity of separate Eastern churches having a common history back to the Apostles. However, with the signing of the *Common Christological Declaration* by Pope John Paul II and Mar Dinkha IV on November 11, 1995, a period of cooperation between the independent Church of the East and the Uniate Chaldean Catholics has begun, seeking to repair the rents in the fabric of Eastern Christianity.

1572 (1558?)-1580 Yolaha Shimun VIII

In 1578 a Kurdish force of 10,000 attacked the Assyrian city of Urmi (in modern Iran) and carried off over 1000 prisoners. A short time later the Turkish Pasha of Rawandoz sacked the villages of Alqosh and Tel Kepe and pillaged the monastery of Robban Hormizd, killing many monks and a bishop. In 1599, at the Synod of Diamper, the majority of Indian Christians, yielding to Portuguese pressure, professed allegiance to Rome. Some 30,000 refused to submit and the Church was divided. These dissenters continued as the core of the Syro-Chaldean Christians in southern India down to the present day.

1580-1600 Dinkha Shimun IX

He was recognized by Rome.

1600-1638 Elia Shimun X

1638–1656 Eshuyow Shimun XI

Eshuyow Shimun may have been removed because of attempts at union with Rome. In India, by 1653, the rule of the Jesuits over the Indian Church had become so harsh and Portuguese power so weakened by their defeat at the hands of the Dutch, that the vast majority of those who had submitted to Rome in 1599 pledged to reject Roman authority at the Coonen Cross Secession. The Indian Christians made this pledge on the large

granite cross, called the “coonen” or “bent” cross, in front of the Church at Matancheri, Cochin, India. Long ropes were tied to the cross so that more people could “touch” the cross. Of some 200,000 Indian Christians, only a few hundred stayed within the Roman fold.

1656–1662 Yoalaha Shimun XII

In 1657, the Pope sent a Carmelite bishop and a number of Carmelite priests to bring the Indians back into allegiance to Rome. Through these efforts some two thirds of those who had recanted returned.

1662–1700 Dinkha Shimun XII

In 1665, the Jacobite Patriarch of Antioch sent Mar Gregory, Metropolitan of Jerusalem to India managing to get to Malabar where he was welcomed warmly. Those of the secessionists who did not return to the Roman Church, accepted the new Jacobite leadership. This Jacobite Orthodox Syrian Church is today the largest portion of the ancient Chaldean Church in India. The Chaldean Catholics are next in size. The remnant which remained true to the Church of the East is now the smallest church. In 1681 Yosep I received Papal recognition and started a third patriarchal line, this one in full communion with Rome. In 1830, the Patriarchate of Hormizd (Bar Mama) was recognized by the Pope in this succession, bringing the two lines together. This is the line of the Chaldean Catholic Church. The present Chaldean Patriarch is Raphael I Bidawid.

1700–1740 Shlemon Shimun XIV (Sulaiman)

1740–1780 Mikhail Shimun XV (Mukhattis)

1780–1820 Yokhanan Shimun XVI

1820–1860 Oraham Shimun XVII

In 1829, Kurds attacked Alqosh and other Christian villages. Several hundred Christians were killed amidst numerous acts of barbarism throughout the region. In 1842, Badr Khan Bey, a Hakkari Kurdish Amir, combined with Kurdish forces led by Nurallah, attacked the Assyrians in order to exterminate them from the mountains. They seized the Patriarch’s aged mother, raped her, then cut her body in two and through it in the river Zab. This persecution lasted until the fall of 1846. During that time well over 10,000 Christians were brutally and treacherously murdered and another 10,000 women and children taken captive to be sold into slavery. In 1860, Druze and Kurdish forces launched a persecution of the Christians in Lebanon. One Ottoman garrison commander offered sanctuary to a large number of Maronites, then slaughtered them all when they were together and unarmed. This persecution spread from Lebanon to Damascus. By the time it was over some 12,000 Christians had been killed in Lebanon and another 11,000 slain during the burning of Damascus’s Assyrian Quarter.

1860-1903 Ruwil Shimun XVIII (Reuben)

On New Year’s Day, 1895, Kurdish forces attacked the city of Urfa, slaughtering 13,000 Christians. During the course of the year well over 100,000 more were killed.

1903-1918 Binyamin Shimun XIX (Benjamin)

During the period from 1915 to 1918, a fierce persecution of the Christians occurred throughout the region. The number of martyrs is unknown but runs well into the tens of thousands, possibly hundreds. Whole villages and regions were depopulated. A massive exodus of Assyrians and Armenians fleeing the genocide took many of the survivors to Europe, America and Australia. On March 3, 1918, Mar Binyamin Shimun was gunned down treacherously by some 700 Kurdish marksmen as he and his retinue were departing from a “friendly” meeting with the Kurdish chieftain, Simkoo.

1918–1920 Polos Shimun XX (Paul)

1920–1975 Eshai Shimun XXI

Eshai Shimun had the office of Catholicos-Patriarch thrust upon him at the age of twelve upon the murder of his uncle, Polos Shimun. To escape Turkish persecutions, he moved his see to San Francisco, California. In 1973, he abdicated and in 1975 was assassinated. The hereditary Patriarchate ended with his death. He called himself the XXIIIrd. This is the result of confusion over the members of this line in the turbulent 16th Century. Persecutions and murders of Assyrian Christians continued in the Middle East (though not on the scale of the previous years) including incidents in the years 1923, 1930, 1933, 1945, 1962 and 1969.

1975- Dinkha IV

Mar Dinkha IV was elected by one party within the Church of the East, “the Patriarchal group”, but was not accepted by “the Metropolitan group.” Tensions between these two groups had lasted for several decades. On November 17, 1995 the separate parties declared their reconciliation and unity under Mar Dinkha IV at a special celebration in Trichur, India at the Mart Maryam Big Church, the oldest in Trichur. At that time it was reported that “the Chaldean Syrian Community [in India] has about 30,000 members, mainly in and around Thrissur. There are small Churches in Cochin, Calicut, Coimbatore, Madras, Bangalore, etc.” Within India, there are two Metropolitans, Mar Timotheus, the Patriarchal delegate and Mar Aprem, Metropolitan of India. Both live in Trichur, Kerala, India. Since the reconciliation, they have been in cooperation. Mar Dinkha resides in Chicago, USA. On November 11, 1994 Mar Dinkha IV and Pope John Paul II jointly signed a *Common Christological Declaration Between the Catholic Church and the Assyrian Church of the East* which declared that both the Church of Rome and the Church of the East held a common understanding of Jesus Christ, fully God and fully man, eternally begotten of God the Father and born of the Virgin Mary. It recognized that the titles of the Virgin Mary used by each communion—“Mother of Christ our God and Savior” used by the Church of the East and “Mother of God” used by the Church of Rome—are both acceptable as portraying the truth and to be respected by both communions. It rejected the anathemas and divisions of the past as arising from misunderstanding and not true doctrinal difference.

In November, 1996 the Roman Catholic National Conference of Catholic Bishops issued *Guidelines for the Reception of Communion for Catholics*. In this document is the following statement. “According to Roman Catholic discipline, the Code of Canon Law

does not object to the reception of communion by Christians of these Churches (canon 844 §3).” The Churches referred to are the Orthodox Churches, the Assyrian Church of the East, and the Polish National Catholic Church. (The “ Assyrian Church of the East” is the Church of this apostolic line with Mar Dinkha IV as Catholicos Patriarch.) On July 8, 1997, Mar Dinkha IV, at the commencement of the Third Non-Official Consultation on Dialogue Within the Syriac Tradition sponsored by the Pro Oriente Foundation, decreed “that every clause containing anathemata be removed from the Divine Office and other liturgical texts, for we were created to bless with our mouth and not to curse.”

On August 15, 1997 Mar Dinkha IV and Mar Raphael I Bidawid, Catholicos Patriarch of the Chaldean Catholic Church promulgated a *Joint Synodal Decree for Promoting Unity Between the Assyrian Church of the East and the Chaldean Catholic Church* which declares full cooperation between the two Churches in the preparation of educational and liturgical materials, pastoral ministry and other areas while pursuing a more fuller union which respects on the one hand the full independence of the Church of the East and, on the other hand the Chaldean Catholic Church’s full communion with the See of Rome.

1918-1920 AD Polos Shimun XXII (Paul)

In order to restore the Syro-Chalean jurisdiction in India, in the Church of Mar Saba, Ipper Tiari, Kurdistan, continuing in this line, consecrated (with dates of consecration where available):

Mar Abdeeso Antonios

Consecrated Metropolitan of the Syro-Chaldean Christians of Malabar, India

Mar Basilius

Metropolitan of India, Ceylon, Mylapore, Socotra and Messina and The Most Reverend Luis Mariano Soares July 24, 1899. This consecration took place in the Syro-Chaldean Cathedral, Trichur, Cochin, India.

The above "Annotations to the Apostolic succession presented here, through the reign of Binyamin Shimun XXI, are the work of The Rev. Ben Torry, Archdeacon, Evangelical Apostolic Church of North America (unless otherwise noted) and are ©copyright of the EACNA, 1992, 2000, all right reserved. Used with permission."

The continuing annotations to the Apostolic succession come from the records of Mar Yokhannan, The Most Rev. John M. Stanley, Metropolitan of North America, and are added to the above.

Mar Jacobus (The Most Reverend Ulric Vernon Hereford)

November 30, 1902 consecrated by **Mar Basilius** in the Church of the Epiphany, Pallithanam, Madura District, South India. He consecrated:
He consecrated:

Mar Paulus (The Most Reverend William Stanley McBean Knight)

October 18, 1931, in the Chapel of St. John, Pembridge Castle, Monmouth, England. Bishop of Kent. He consecrated:

Mar Hedley

August 15, 1938, Bishop of Siluria, succeeding as Administrator of the Syro-Chaldean Metropolitan See of India, Ceylon, Mylapore, Socotra, and Messina. He consecrated:

Mar Georgius I

May 20, 1945. Patriarch of Glastonbury, Apostolic Primate of the West, Administrator of the Syro-Chaldean Metropolitan See of India, Ceylon, Mylapore, Socotra, and Messina in the Chapel of St. John, Pembridge Castle. Mar Georgius, I, is George De Willmont Newman, Patriarch of Glastonbury. Bishop Newman's orders were examined by a Roman Catholic panel of scholars headed by Yves Congar in 1954. They declared that he was Orthodox in faith and practice and possessed "an effective power of orders." He consecrated (conditionally):

Mar Boltwood (The Most Reverend Dr. Charles Boltwood)

April 13, 1952, a Bishop of another catholic communion, in London, England. He consecrated:

Mar Yokhannan (The Most Reverend John M. Stanley)

May 3, 1959 (conditionally). Bishop of Washington in the pro-Cathedral Church of St. Andrews, London, England. A year later Mar Boltwood granted Mar Yokhannan full power and authority to rule an autocephalous church. As Ecumenical Patriarch, Mar Georgius elevated Mar Yokhannan to Metropolitan of the United States, on April 10, 1963. On December 4, 1965 he was made Metropolitan of North America. The church in the United States was first given the Syro-Chaldean Diocese of Washington. Then as part of the North American Archdiocese, the church used the name Chaldean Church of the East (similar to the Chaldean-Syrian Church of India. After the death of Wolodymer I, the church body under the jurisdiction of Mar Yokhannan, having voted at the Holy Synod in 1978, changed their official church name to the Orthodox Church of the East or O.C.E. He consecrated:

Mar Khananishu (The Most Reverend Robert W. Burgess, Jr.)

June 25, 1989, Bishop of Washington.

Greek Orthodox Apostolic Succession

of Mar Yokhannan, The Most Reverend John M. Stanley,
and Mar Khananishu, The Most Reverend Robert W. Burgess, Jr.

- **Bishop Joachime Souris** of the Greek Orthodox Diocese of New York and **Archbishop Theodotus** of the Syro-Russian Orthodox Church consecrated **Bishop Walter Myron Propheta** in 1964, in the Cathedral Church of the Holy Resurrection.
- **Archbishop Theokiltos**, Old Calendar Greek Orthodox of Salamis, Greece, and **Archbishop Theodotus** (Syro-Russian Orthodox) elevated and consecrated as Archbishop, **Bishop Walter Myron Propheta** in 1965, in the Cathedral Church of the Holy Resurrection.
- **Archbishop Bishop Walter Myron Propheta** was elected Patriarch by the Holy Synod of the American Orthodox Catholic Church. He took the name **Wolodymer I**, as Patriarch.
- **Wolodymer I** with **Economia** consecrated (*sub-conditions*) on November 18, 1971 in the Cathedral Church of the Holy Resurrection, **Mar Yokhannan (the Most Reverend John Marion Stanley)** and appointed him as Exarch Plenipotentiary.

After the death of Wolodymer I, the church body under the jurisdiction of Mar Yokhannan, having voted at the Holy Synod in 1978, changed their official church name to the Orthodox Church of the East or O.C.E.

- **Mar Yokhannan** consecrated **Mar Khananishu - The Most Reverend Robert W. Burgess, Jr.** as Bishop of Washington on June 25, 1989. Bishop Burgess was elected to the succession of Mar Yokhannan, October 12, 1989.

Russian Orthodox Apostolic Succession

of Mar Yokhannan, The Most Reverend John M. Stanley,
and Mar Khananishu, The Most Reverend Robert W. Burgess, Jr.

- **Archbishop Tikhon** of the United States (later Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church) consecrated **Bishop Raphael** and **Archbishop Evdokin** (who succeeded Tikhon as Archbishop for the United States).
- **Archbishop Tikhon** and **Archbishop Evdokin** consecrated **Archbishop Aftimos Orfeish** and **Bishop Zuk** (Ukrainian Orthodox).

- **Archbishop Evdokin** and **Bishop Zuk** consecrated **Archbishop Ignatius Nikols** and **Bishop Ambrosius** (Russian Orthodox).
- **Archbishop Ignatius Nikols** and **Bishop Ambrosius** consecrated **Archbishop Theodotus** (Syro-Russian).
- **Archbishop Theodotus** and **Archbishop Theokiltos** (Old Calendar Greek Orthodox, Salamis, Greece) consecrated **Archbishop Walter Myron Propheta**, in 1965.
- **Archbishop Walter Myron Propheta** was elevated to Patriarch by the Holy Synod of the American Orthodox Catholic Church, taking the **Wolodymer I**.
- **Wolodymer I** with **Economia** consecrated (sub-conditione) on November 18, 1971 in the Cathedral Church of the Holy Resurrection, **Mar Yokhannan (the Most Reverend John Marion Stanley)** and appointed him as Exarch Plenipotentiary.

After the death of Wolodymer I, the church body under the jurisdiction of Mar Yokhannan, having voted at the Holy Synod in 1978, changed their official church name to the Orthodox Church of the East or O.C.E.

- **Mar Yokhannan** consecrated **Mar Khananishu - The Most Reverend Robert W. Burgess, Jr.** as Bishop of Washington on June 25, 1989. Bishop Burgess was elected to the succession of Mar Yokhannan, October 12, 1989.