

TIMELINE OF CHRISTIAN CULTURE TO c.600 AD

4BC/0

c33AD

c34- 44AD

c50 AD

64 -68 AD

70 AD

Christianity is viewed as a small cult within Judaism. There are few expressions of distinctly Christian culture.

70- 250AD

250-300AD

313 AD

325AD

Due to persecutions, almost all Christian art is limited to the walls of the catacombs in Rome (e.g. Catacomb of Priscilla; Catacomb of Domitilla) and of small house churches. These contain portrayals of Christ as the Good Shepherd (or Christ performing miracles), murals of Old Testament stories, and much symbolic art simply carved into walls and onto stones, such as a fish representing Christ, a dove for peace, an anchor for hope, and bread and wine as symbols of the Eucharist. After 312, the Chi Rho becomes common Christian symbol.

361-363AD

380AD

410AD

430's

476AD

485AD

Once Christianity becomes the official religion of the Empire, Christian art and architecture begin to flourish. Many large churches are built on the pattern of the Roman basilica (e.g. St Peter's and St Paul's in Rome). In the East, the Byzantine style begins to develop but this also influences church design in the West (e.g. the Basilica San Vitale in Ravenna)

530AD

527-565 AD

532-537 AD

590AD

596 AD

The Byzantine style continues to flourish under the Emperor Justinian (e.g. building of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople); such churches are notable for their outstanding mosaics, use of high domes, round arches, naturalistic carvings on columns and complex geometrical structures such as circular or octagonal. The Roman style develops from the original pagan basilica to a cruciform (cross) shape; this became the basis for the great cathedrals of the Medieval Age.