

0 – 500AD Early Christian Cornwall

0

Around this date, Jesus is born.

15

Legend has it that Jesus was brought to Cornwall by his tin trading uncle, Joseph of Arimathea.

33

Around this date, Jesus is crucified.

36

Legend has it that Jesus' uncle, Joseph of Arimathea, brought the pure Apostolic Gospel to Glastonbury shortly after the Resurrection.

200

Tertullian of Carthage describes "the haunts of the Britons, inaccessible to the Romans, but subjugated to Christ".

240

Christian theologian Origen records the presence of Christianity in Britain.

313

Constantine rules that Christians across the Roman Empire are allowed to practice their faith without persecution.

400

Around this date, Christians in Cornwall inscribe stones with the Chi-Ro.

402

The Roman Armies complete their withdrawal from Britain in order to defend Rome

500 – 1000AD AGE OF SAINTS

500

Around this date, Christians in Cornwall begin to make stone crosses. The making of stone crosses continues over many centuries although their design, function and location varies. The practice of setting up stone crosses continues to this day.

Cornish Saints begin to establish Christian communities in Cornwall and build chapels. The movement of Saints between Ireland, Wales, Cornwall and Brittany continues for centuries.

597

Pope Gregory the Great sends Augustine and 40 missionaries from Rome to Britain, to evangelise the Anglo-Saxons who had established themselves there. They landed on the east coast and Augustine established an archbishopric in Canterbury.

664

At the Synod of Whitby, the Saxon King Oswiu of Northumbria decides to celebrate Easter on the Roman date. This leaves the indigenous Christian practices in (what is now) Cornwall unaffected.

838

A Cornish-Danish alliance is initially successful against the Saxons, but they are eventually defeated in a pitched battle at Hingston Down, near Callington.

878

King Doniert is drowned and a stone is erected in his memory.

909

The Diocese of Crediton was created out of the Diocese of Sherbourne to cover Devon and Cornwall. In 926, King Athelstan established a bishopric in St Germans, near Saltash.

926

Around this time, King Athelstan sets up a bishopric at St. Germans.

1000 – 1500AD CHURCH CONSTRUCTION

1050

The Diocese was moved to Exeter and a cathedral was built there.

1066

Norman Conquest. Robert of Mortain becomes Earl of Cornwall and builds Launceston Castle.

1086

The Domesday Book mentions markets, fairs and churches. A period of church building ensues in the Norman style.

1375

Around this time the Cornish Language poem 'Pascon Agan Arluth', known as the 'Passion Poem', is written.

1400

Around this time and for the next 200 years Cornish Language plays are written, probably at religious and cultural centres like Glasney College, Penryn. Plays are performed in open air theatres known as Plain an Gwarry. Surviving examples include the 'Ordinalia', 'Gwreans an Bys', Bewnans Ke and Bewnans Meriasek.

1420

Pilgrimage routes across Cornwall are busy, as evidenced the development of a port to meet the needs of pilgrims at Landulph, on the River Tamar, at around this time.

1500 - 1600AD UPHEAVAL AND UPRISING

1534

Frustrated by the Pope's refusal to annul his marriage to Catherine of Aragon, Henry VIII breaks with Rome and declares himself Head of the Church of England. Later, he dissolves monasteries and Cornwall loses key centres of learning and culture.

1547

Edward VI (aged 9) and his Regency Council take the throne and the Church of England adopts a more assertive Protestant approach. Church interiors are stripped of images, rood screens and shrines. Practices perceived as Catholic are banned.

1548

Archdeacon William Body is stabbed to death in Helston following his perceived desecration of the Church. Ten men are executed locally for their part in his death.

1549

The Act of Uniformity enforces the use of Thomas Cranmer's Book of Common Prayer. Unrest across Cornwall culminates in an Uprising after which leaders are executed.

1553

Edward VI dies. Mary takes the throne and attempts to restore Catholicism. Around this time, John Tregear translates a series of Catholic sermons from English to Cornish.

1558

Elizabeth becomes Queen and reverses the legislation put in place by Mary. Parliament passes a law fining people who do not attend Sunday service in an Anglican church.

1570

Pope Paul V issues the Regnans in Excelsis, also known as the Roaring Bull, in which he excommunicates Elizabeth and makes it the religious duty of all Catholics to oppose her. In response the government announces that all Catholic priests and anyone sheltering them are guilty of treason.

1577

Golden Manor, the home of Francis Tregian is raided and he is imprisoned for over 25 years. The Catholic Priest, Cuthbert Mayne is imprisoned and executed for high treason.

1600 - 1750AD ANGLICAN TIMES

1605

James I issues the Popish Recusants Act 1605, forbidding Roman Catholics from practising law, medicine, acting as a guardian or trustee and increasing fines for recusants not attending church.

1642

The English Civil War begins, partly caused by the perceived leaning of King Charles I towards Catholicism, and some Cornish churches are damaged by Parliamentarians.

1688

The Religious Society of Friends is active in Cornwall. A Quaker Meeting House is built in Marazion and another in Come-to-Good twenty years later.

1690

The earliest surviving Bible extract translation in the Cornish Language is written by William Rowe, a farmer from Sancreed.

1743

Charles Wesley visits Cornwall, where the local Anglican clergy incite people against him and he is attacked. John makes his first trip to Cornwall, later in the year, the first of over 30 visits during his lifetime.

1750 – 1900AD FREE AND NON-CONFORMIST

1795

Wesleyan Methodism formally separates from the Church of England.

1796

The number of Baptists in Cornwall grows significantly as a result of a series of missions.

1815

Methodist preacher William O'Bryan founded the Bible Christian Church in North Cornwall, which became the faith of well-known lay preacher, Billy Bray.

1823

Irish lawyer Daniel O'Connell founds the Catholic Association in 1823 and uses his membership of thousands to pressurise the Government.

1829

The threat of unrest compels the British Prime Minister to pass the Emancipation Act which finally allows Roman Catholics to hold a seat in Parliament.

1840

A Unitarian Chapel was established in Falmouth.

1880

Truro Wesleyan Middle Class College (later to become Truro School), an early free daily school opens. Chapel and churches become increasingly responsible for the education of the young.

1876

The Cornish Diocese was re-established, after 30 years of intense lobbying.

1877

Edward White Benson becomes the first Bishop of Truro

1879

Work begins on Truro Cathedral and the architect, John Loughborough Pearson, incorporates parts of the old parish church, into the new Cathedral.

1900 – 2015AD WORKING TOGETHER

1908

Thomas Merritt of Illogan, son of a copper miner and composer of Cornish carols, dies.

1910

Truro Cathedral is opened by Bishop Benson.

1948

At the first World Council of Churches meeting, participating denominations decide to co-operate in order to address the damage created by the Second World War.

2000

The Cornish Language is recognised as a minority language by the Council of Europe.

2011

Nicholas Williams translates the Bible into the Cornish Language.

2012

Christian groups participate in the development of 'Dor Kemmyn', an Interfaith Centre for Cornwall.