

**News and Current Events :: Pope to bury schism with saints' bones**

Pope to bury schism with saints' bones - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2004/11/21 16:45

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FOR 800 years the bones of two of the Orthodox Church's most famous saints have been held at the Vatican, a symbol of the deepest division in Christianity.

Now the remains of St John Chrysostom and St Gregory Nazianzen are to be returned to Istanbul where they were stolen by drunken soldiers attached to the Fourth Crusade who sacked Constantinople in 1204.

At a historic reconciliation ceremony at the Vatican next weekend, Pope John Paul II plans to open up a new age of inter-denominational Christian co-operation when he hands back the bones.

Next Saturday, the frail 81-year-old leader of the world's Roman Catholics, will for the second time in six months publicly embrace the 51-year-old Turkish-born head of the Greek Orthodox Community, Archbishop Bartholomew I, and ask for forgiveness for what theologians call "sins of action and omission" by Catholics against Orthodox Christians including the sacking of Constantinople, the ancient capital of the Byzantine Empire.