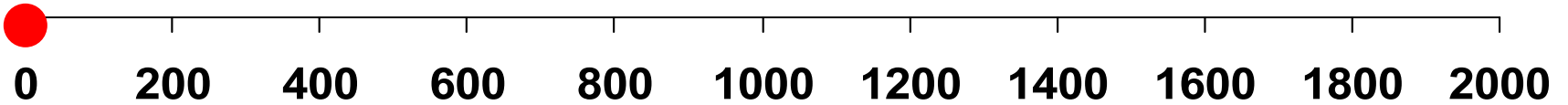




Baptism, Communion and Confirmation in context



The New Testament



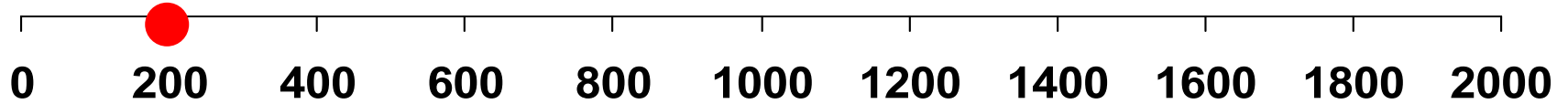
- No explicit teaching on Children & Communion
- Clear that Baptism is the sole rite of entry into the Church



The New Testament



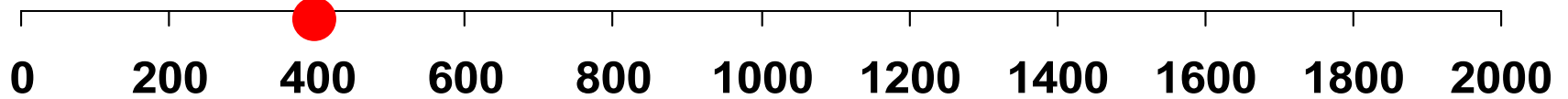
- Acts 2v38-47 pattern is:
 - Repent
 - Be baptised
 - Receive the Spirit
 - Join the fellowship – including the breaking of bread
- There are no additional rites
 - The coming of the Spirit is a baptismal Gift



Third Century



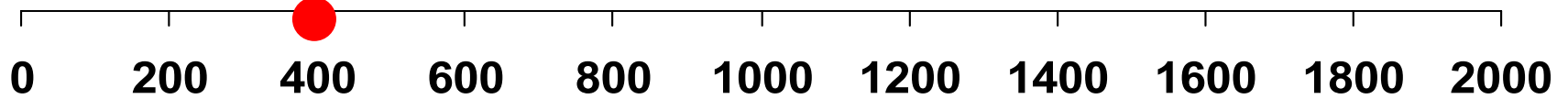
- Baptism has added elements
 - Exorcism
 - Anointing
 - Laying on of hands
- Latter two performed by the Bishop



Fifth Century



- Larger Dioceses
- Bishop could no longer be present at all baptisms
- Augustine believed children needed to receive communion
 - Doctrine of “original sin” encouraged baptism early in life to secure place in heaven



Fifth Century Practice



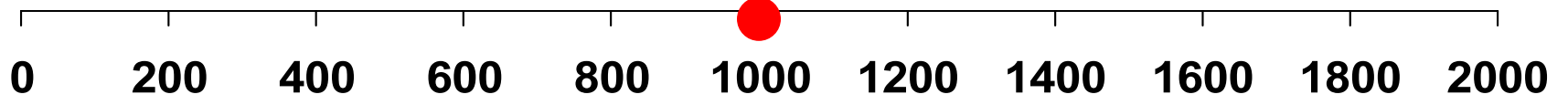
In the East

- Priest performed full rite, including infant Communion

(Oils blessed by Bishop)

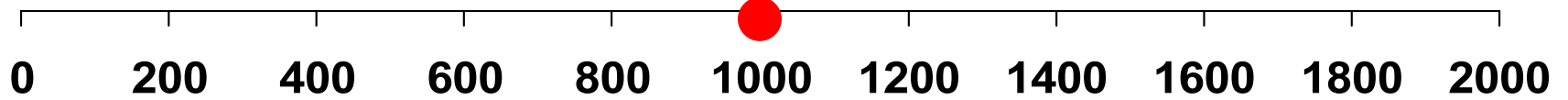
In the West

- Anointing and imposition of hands (Confirmation) delayed until a visit from the Bishop

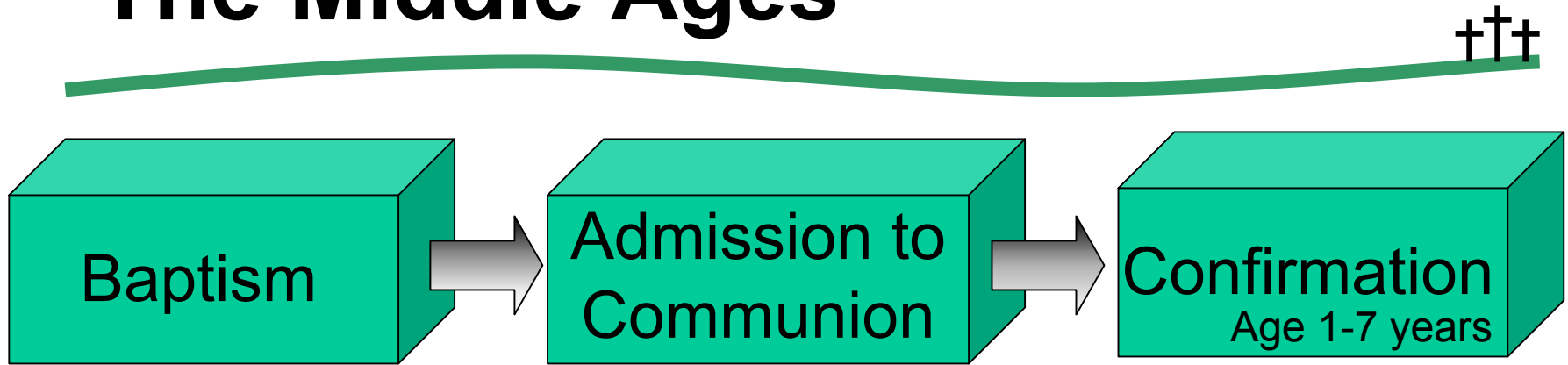


The Middle Ages

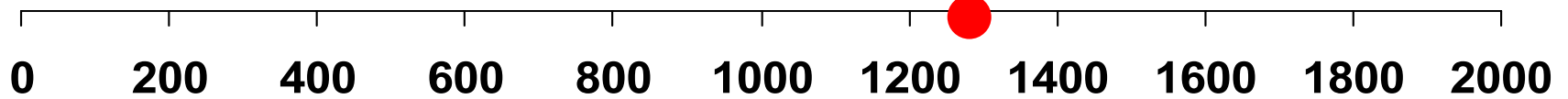




The Middle Ages



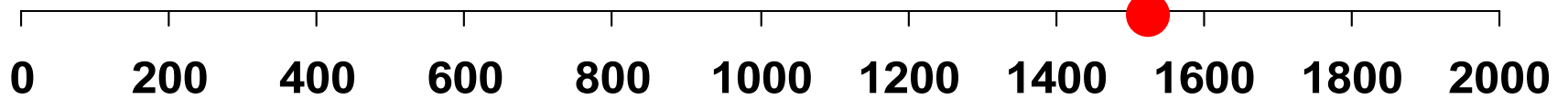
- Confirmation was often delayed indefinitely



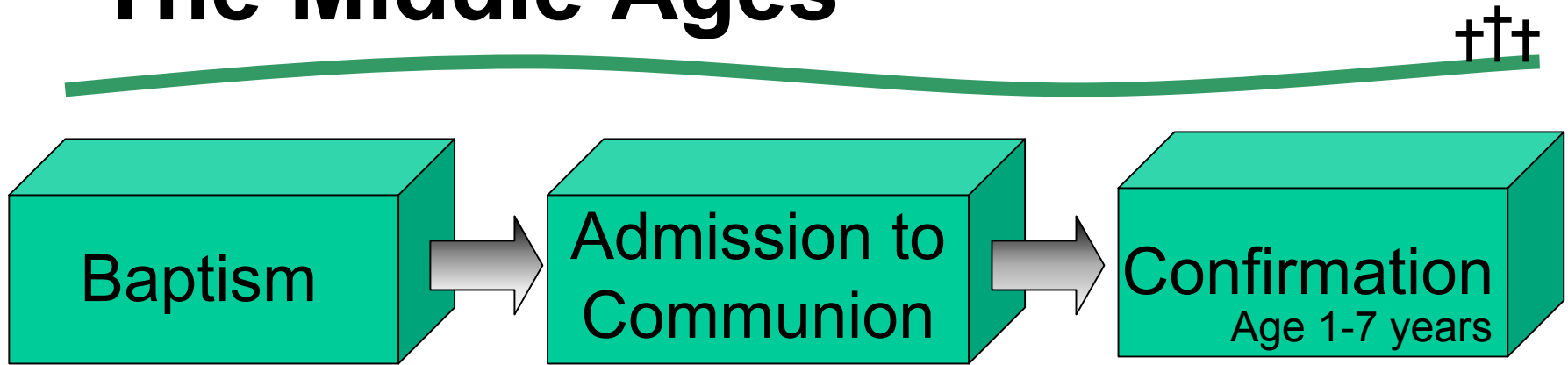
The Middle Ages



- 1281 Archbishop Peckham issues a regulation
 - “those not confirmed without good reason should be barred from Holy Communion”*
 - An attempt to get parents to bring their children to Confirmation



The Middle Ages



- Admission to Communion before Confirmation abolished in 16th Century

0 200 400 600 800 1000 1200 1400 1600 1800 2000

The Reformation - Tension

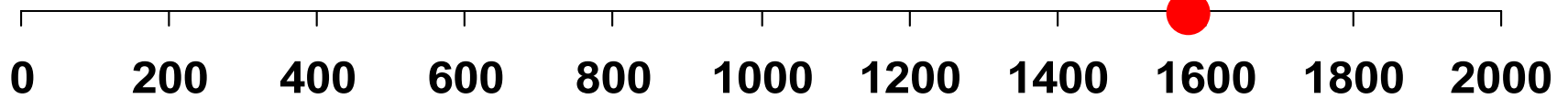


Protestant View

- An emphasis on a person's response
- The individual makes a personal response of faith

Catholic View

- An emphasis on what God does
- He imparts the Holy Spirit



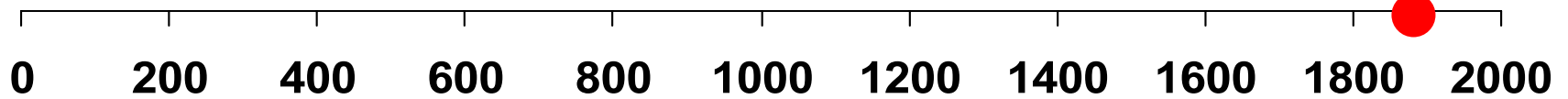
The Reformation



- Education defines who should receive communion
- Prayer book 1549 states

“there shall none be admitted to Holy Communion, until such time as he can say the catechism and be confirmed”

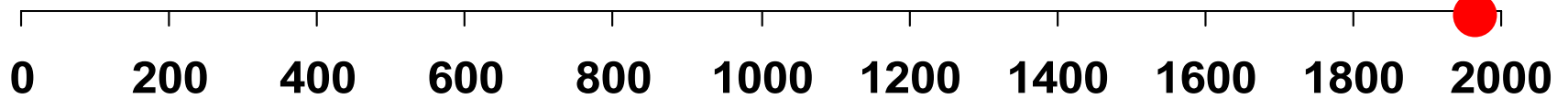




Late 19th Century



- Confirmation as Completion of Baptism developed
- Anglicans generally came to believe that Confirmation had always been a precondition
- In reality only for the previous 300 years



Late 20th Century



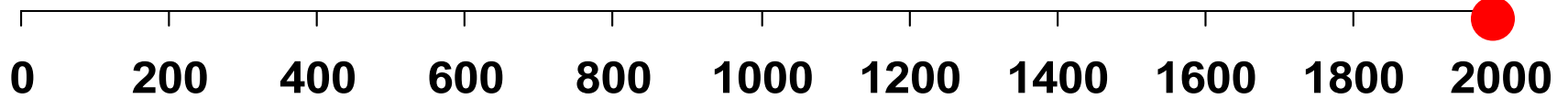
- 1971 – The Ely Report concluded *“Baptism is complete sacramental initiation and children should be admitted to Holy Communion on that basis”*
 - *Synod decided 60:40 not to change*

0 200 400 600 800 1000 1200 1400 1600 1800 2000



Late 20th Century

- 1985 – The Knaresborough Report recommended that *“regulations for the admission of baptised people to Holy Communion should be drawn up and approved”*
 - Synod “took note” but no further action was taken



Late 20th Century



- 1996 – Guidelines from House of Bishops on admission of children to communion published
- Welcomed by Synod
- Interpreted for Norwich Diocese in 1997
- H of B guidelines state decision rests with each Diocesan Bishop

Other Denominations



- Methodists and URC
 - Encouraged to welcome children to the Lord's Table
- Anglican Church in Canada, NZ, Australia, South Africa
 - Possible for Communion to follow baptism, before confirmation
- Roman Catholic
 - Common for “first communion” around age of 7

