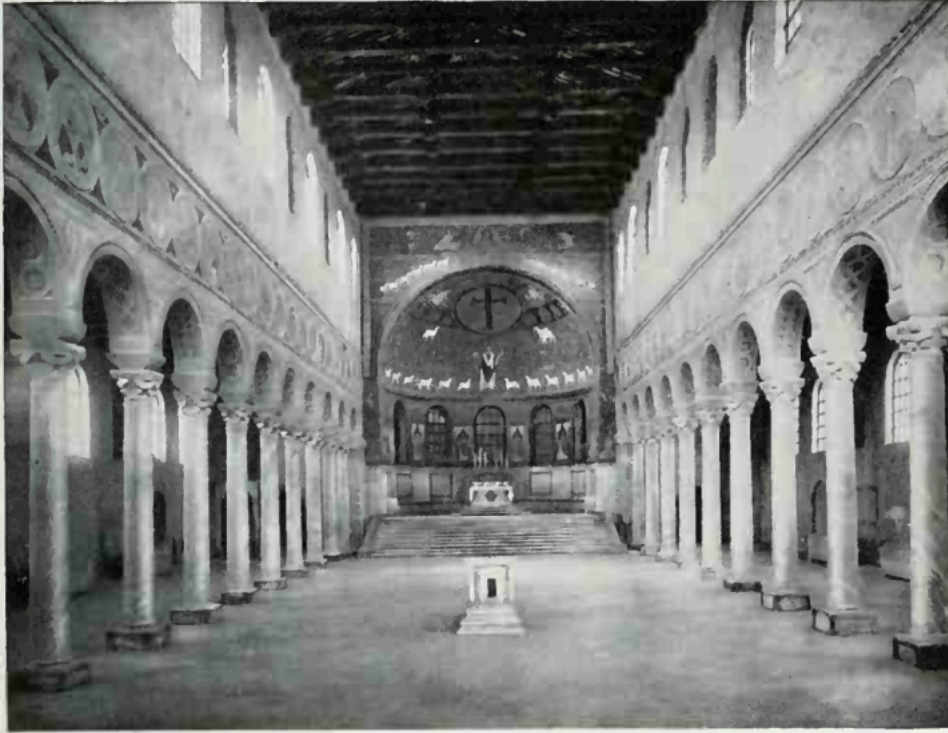


CHAPTER 6 · A PARTING OF WAYS

Rome and Byzantium, Fifth to Thirteenth Century A.D.



84. *An early Christian Basilica: S. Apollinare in Classe, Ravenna, built about A.D. 530*

WHEN, in the year A.D. 311, the Emperor Constantine established the Christian Church as a power in the State, the problems with which it saw itself confronted were enormous. During the periods of persecution there had been no need, and indeed no possibility, of building public places of worship. The churches and assembly halls that did exist were small and inconspicuous. But once the Church had become the greatest power in the realm, its whole relationship to art had to be reconsidered. The places of worship could not be modelled on the ancient temples, for their function was entirely different. The interior of the temple was usually only a small shrine for the statue of the god. Processions and sacrifices took place outside. The church, on the other hand, had to find room for the whole congregation that assembled for service when the priest read Mass at the high altar, or delivered his sermon. Thus it came about that churches were not modelled on pagan temples, but on the type of large assembly