

Church History

MEDIEVAL PERIOD—AGE OF PREPARATION *1216-1517AD*

I. THE PAPACY

A. Pope Boniface VII

1. 1294-1303
2. Personal life and beliefs
 - a. A murderer and sex pervert
 - b. Practiced sorcery
 - c. Denied life after death
 - d. Professed to be an atheist
 - e. Called Christ a hypocrite
3. The “Unam Sanctum”
 - a. A papal bull which he issued in 1302
 - b. Said “We therefore assert, define and pronounce that it is necessary to salvation to believe that every human being is subject to the pontiff in Rome.”
4. Political life
 - a. Claimed that all clergy should be tax free
 - b. Said that any clergy charged with crime should be tried in clerical court
 - c. Tried to control Philip the Fair, King of France, but was imprisoned by him in 1303 and died shortly after being released.
5. During the reign of Boniface, Dante visited Rome and called the Vatican a “sewer of corruption”. He assigned Boniface a place in one of the lowest circles of hell in his *Inferno*.
6. His reign signaled the beginning of the end of absolute papal power.

B. The Babylonian Captivity of the Papacy

1. A title referring to the period of time from 1309 to 1377, approximately 70 years
2. During this span, the papacy was controlled by the French
3. Began when Pope Clement V, a Frenchman, moved the papacy to Avignon, France in 1309

4. While Rome almost died as a city, Avignon (ä-vē-nyôN') became a center of wealth and corruption. The Catholic Church fell into further depths of immorality and apostasy.
5. Reduced greatly the prestige of the pope
6. Encouraged the rise of nationalism

C. The Great Schism

1. The time from 1378 to 1417
2. In 1378, the reigning pope left Avignon, France and went to Rome
3. The French cardinals elected a second pope who stayed in France
4. Generally speaking, France and Spain supported the Avignon line, while Germany and England supported the Roman line.
5. In 1409, a compromising council met at Pisa and elected a third pope
6. At the Council of Constance in 1414, all three popes were dismissed and were finally replaced by a fourth pope in 1417, ending the Great Schism

NOTE: This political infighting allowed the temporary freedom for revivals under Wycliffe in England and Huss in Bohemia.

D. The Renaissance Popes

1. Paul II
 - a. 1464-1471
 - b. A luxury-loving Venetian
 - c. Deposed George, King of Bohemia, because of his heretical Hussite beliefs.
2. Innocent VIII
 - a. 1484-1492
 - b. Father of 16 children which he openly acknowledged
 - c. Encouraged the Spanish Inquisition
 - d. Issued a bull calling for the extermination of the Waldensians and sponsored a sale of indulgences for the drive.
3. Alexander VI
 - a. 1492-1503
 - b. Bought the papacy
 - c. Excommunicated Savonarola of Florence and had him burned
4. Julius II
 - a. 1503-1513
 - b. Built St. Peter's Cathedral
 - c. Verbally attacked by Erasmus
 - d. Pope when Luther visited Rome in 1510

5. Leo X
 - a. 1513-1521
 - b. Held a council which declared:
 - (1) Heresy should be suppressed
 - (2) Unauthorized preachers must be forbidden to teach
 - (3) Publication of bad books must be stopped

II. MAJOR MONASTIC ORDERS

A. The Dominicans

1. Founded by St. Dominic of Castile in 1215
2. Gave special emphasis to preaching and theological study
3. Also called Black Friars or Order of Preachers
4. Formed a representative form of government
5. The priests belonged to the order only, not to any one house, and could be moved at any time
6. Scholarly members concentrated around the schools in Bologna, Cologne, Oxford and Paris.
7. A very orthodox group
8. Entrusted with the execution of the Inquisition
9. Responsible for making the rosary popular

B. The Franciscans

1. Founded by St. Francis of Assisi in 1223
2. Early known for its great number of street preachers
3. The order has had a long history of division
4. St. Francis supposedly received the stigmata (the wounds of Christ) and lived in great pain for the two years preceding his death in 1226

C. The Augustinians

1. Made up of several groups which were united into one order in 1244
2. Named for St. Augustine of the 5th century
3. Dedicated to foreign missions and scholarly research
4. Famous members
 - a. Martin Luther, the reformer
 - b. Gregor Mendel, the scientist

III. THE INQUISITION

A. Definition

1. Generally, means the act of inquiring
2. Specifically, refers to the Catholic Tribunal established for the discovery and suppression of heresy and the punishment of heretics

B. Causes of the Inquisition

1. Increased power of the pope
2. Increased pressure to maintain uniformity of doctrine
3. Tremendous increase in the number of heretics in many parts of Europe

C. Medieval Inquisition

1. Set up primarily for the extermination of the Albigenses, Cathari, and Waldenses
2. In 1215, bishops were compelled to search out heresy
3. In 1227, the bishops were required to establish a special commission in each parish for searching out and reporting cases of heresy
4. In 1233, the Dominicans were assigned the prosecution of heresy in the Inquisition
 - a. They worked apart from the bishops and directly under the authority of the pope.
 - b. Called “the hounds of the pope.”
 - c. There was no appeal from their decisions

D. Methods of the Inquisition

1. Anyone could be charged with heresy upon the accusation of one informer
2. The accused heretic never saw or even knew who the informer was
3. The property of the heretic was confiscated and was often divided among the authorities and the informer
4. Torture was often used to get a confession and recantation
5. Those who confessed were imprisoned for life
6. Those who would not confess were turned over to the state and often burned at the stake.

E. Spanish Inquisition

1. Established in 1480 in Spain
2. Used to eliminate Jews, Moslims, and Reformers
3. The first grand inquisitor was the Dominican Tomas de Torquemada who was known for his cruelty.

4. By the edict of March 31, 1492, Spanish Jews were given the choice of baptism or exile.
5. In 1502, the Muslims were treated in like manner.
6. The inquisitors even arrested Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the Jesuits, twice upon suspicion of heresy
7. The Spanish Inquisition was finally suppressed in 1834.

F. Roman Inquisition

1. The Holy Office of the Roman Inquisition was established in 1542 by Pope Paul III to combat Protestantism
2. Worked to establish Italian religious unity under Catholic power
3. In 1908, the name was shortened to the Holy Office
4. In 1965, it became known as the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith

G. Results of the Inquisition

1. Hundreds of thousands of Christians were killed as well as thousands of Jews, Muslims, those accused of witchcraft, and Catholics who somehow failed to agree strongly enough with the Roman hierarchy
2. The persecuted Christians spread throughout Europe trying to avoid certain death.
3. The heretical groups worked to perfect the secrecy of their organizations
4. The papacy was brought into general disrepute even in the eyes of loyal Catholics