

# THE CATHOLIC CHURCH BEFORE THE REFORM: POWER, INFLUENCE, & CORRUPTION!

Key concepts you will learn about at this station:

**Leadership/ Government – How a civilization creates an organized way of leadership.**

**Social Classes – How a civilization is divided into classes that have different roles, responsibilities, and privileges.**

As with most major changes in history, the Protestant Reformation started as an outcry against something that was considered wrong. The Catholic Church has gained wealth and influence from the feudal system of the previous era. Kings of various European countries often quarreled with the Pope in matters of state, such as appointing religious clergy and the use of church property. Political scandals further tarnished the Roman Catholic church in the eyes of the common folk. In 1309, French Pope Clement V moved **Papacy** (position of pope) headquarters to Avignon, France. Sixty-eight years and 22 popes later, the papacy was moved back to Rome against the demands of French clergy. Some of this clergy moved back to France and elected a rival pope. At the same time, a third pope was elected by a church council. That meant that there were three popes dividing the church up.

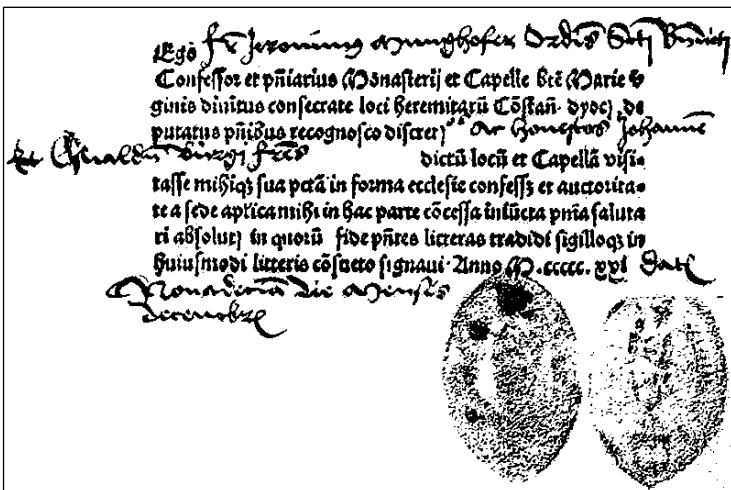
Eventually things were resolved and a single pope was placed as head of the church, but the damage was done. The involvement of the Pope in political affairs made the position a target for criticism, and Reformists claimed that if the Pope was busy with such things, it couldn't **properly perform its religious**



*Peasant girl paying for an indulgence.*

**duties** to the people.

In addition to its lack of commitment to spiritual things, the Catholic Church also began to sell **indulgences** to anyone with the right amount of money. Roman Catholics believed that only through confession and the blessing of the clergy could they reduce punishment in **purgatory**, or the holding place before heaven. If they did wrong, but still paid the Catholic priests, the indulgences guaranteed that they would still be saved after death.



*Indulgence certificate, 1521.*

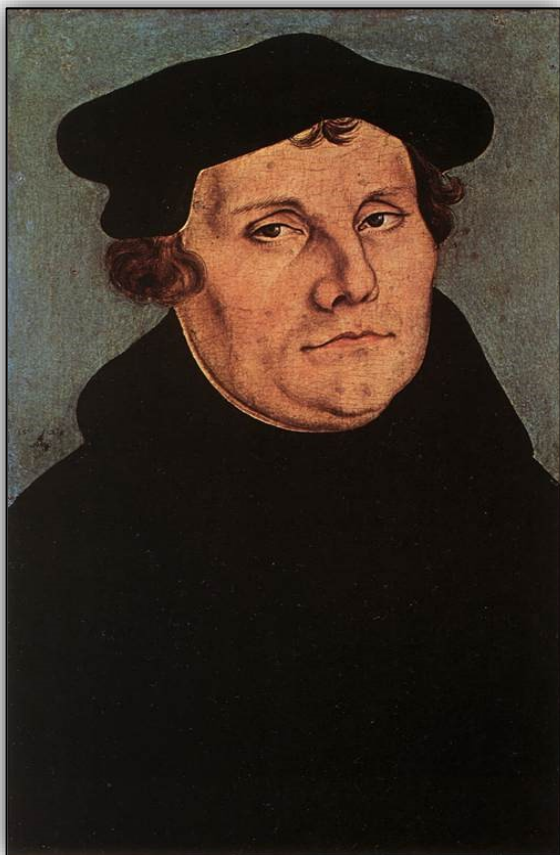
## MARTIN LUTHER: **A CATALYST FOR CHANGE!**

Key concepts you will learn about at this station:

**Leadership/ Government – How a civilization creates an organized way of leadership.**  
**Religion-A belief system that influences the development of a civilization.**

### **A SINGLE PRIEST MAKES A DIFFERENCE**

Despite early calls for change in the church, the papacy **hierarchy** (or structure of people within a system) continued their political influence and wealthy lifestyles. Pope Leo X encouraged bishops all over Europe to sell **indulgences**, or pardons for sins, in order to collect funds to build a Roman cathedral. A German priest by the name of Martin Luther saw this first hand and became angry. He



**Martin Luther .**

became determined to give the uneducated people the truth within the Bible. He'd studied it for years and felt that many of the sacraments and traditions of the Roman Catholic church weren't biblical. He especially felt that people should read the Bible and live by its messages for themselves, rather than do as the Pope and Catholic church clergy told them to.

Such arguments and more were a part of the **95 theses** document he nailed to the door of a church in Wittenberg, in Saxony of Germany. He also used the recently developed printing press to make copies of his arguments and send them to church leaders. The Pope was outraged, and insisted that Luther appear before a **diet**, or council of leaders, in the city of Worms. The diet demanded that he denounce his arguments, but he wouldn't. So the emperor

**excommunicated**, or kicked Luther out of the church, and made reading his teachings and pamphlets illegal. Luther went into hiding but continued to teach and develop his own denomination (type of Christianity), **Lutheranism**. Luther's influence completely divided the church, with some church leaders that agreed with Luther becoming known as **Protestants**. Not all the protestants followed Lutheranism, but they disagreed with the way the Catholic Church was running things.

## JOHN CALVIN: **LIFE IS PREDETERMINED**

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**Leadership/Government - How a civilization creates an organized way of leadership.**

**Religion - A belief system that influences the development of a civilization.**

### **A NEW TAKE ON OLD BELIEFS**

As Protestants broke away from the church, certain leaders began to create **denominations**, or branch of a Christian church, of Protestant beliefs based on how they interpreted the Bible's teachings. One such leader was **John Calvin**. Calvin was a French Humanist living in Switzerland who especially believed in **predestination**, or the belief that God already knew which people would be saved before they were born. This meant that nothing people did, not good works or buying of the Catholic indulgences, could change God's plan for their lives.

John Calvin wrote a book entitled **Institutes of the Christian Religion**, and in it he emphasized the need for people to live upright lives according to God's laws. This included successful and honest business, hard work, and sacrificing worldly things to focus on religion. He was one of the few people that insisted that successful business and its affiliated wealth was a blessing from God. In fact, many scholars believe it was Calvinism that jumpstarted **capitalism**, or a country's economic system that's controlled by private owners rather than by the state!



John Calvin, a French Humanist

Eventually, Calvinism became a major sect of the Christian church, and followers flocked to Geneva, Switzerland. Calvin and his followers created a community that took religion seriously. **They banned various forms of entertainment such as playing cards and gambling, dancing, singing, and even owning fancy clothing or fancy possessions!** They reasoned that all of these things distracted them from living holy lives.

Modern depictions of the first Europeans that arrived in the U.S. on the Mayflower are called Puritans, but in truth, the **Pilgrims** were **Calvinists**. They came to the new world in the hopes of being free to focus on God rather than on worldly things. Many scholars believe that Protestants (Puritans/Calvinists) belief in hard work in business laid the foundation for American success!

# KING HENRY VIII'S WIVES: INVESTIGATING DIVORCE, BE-HEADINGS, & DEATH

Key concepts you will learn about at this station:

**Leadership/Government - How a civilization creates an organized way of leadership.**

**Religion - A belief system that influences the development of a civilization.**

**Achievements - The lasting contributions of a civilization.**

## **A POLITICAL GAME UNDERMINES THE CATHOLIC CHURCH**

While most of the other reformists called for change for spiritual reasons, one did not. **King Henry VIII** is perhaps one of England's most famous Kings due to the scandal he caused when he created the **Church of England**, or the Anglican Church, in 1534. Before that time, he was a devote Catholic. His first wife **Katherine of Aragon** only gave him a daughter, Mary I, so he asked the Pope to grant him a divorce in the hopes of marrying **Anne Boleyn** and producing a male heir. When the Pope refused, King Henry VIII declared himself the leader of the church of England. By this time, Protestant teachings were trickling through England via Tyndale's English Bible translations. The Anglican church combined Catholic and Protestant beliefs. Anglicans believed that people should be free to worship and study the bible according to their own conscious. Heresy became non-existent in England, but it was unlawful to be disloyal to the King and Queen, the heads of the church respectively.



## **DIVORCE, SCANDAL AND BEHEADINGS!**

Unfortunately, King Henry's control of the church meant that he could divorce and remarry as he liked. This bit of power led to a total of six wives for the king. **Anne Boleyn** was beheaded for treason after giving him a daughter, Elizabeth I. He then married **Jane Seymour**, who died giving birth to his only son Edward VI. Next, Henry married a German Princess **Anne of Cleves**, but her betrothal to Francis I, the Duke of Lorraine was reason for Henry to **annul**, or cancel, the marriage after only four months of marriage. **Catherine Howard** became his fifth bride, but she was executed for having a secret relationship with one of King Henry's friends Thomas Culpepper. Lastly, King Henry married his final wife **Catherine Parr**, who managed to return Henry's family back together and **re-legitimize**, or make lawful again, his daughters to the royal line. She outlived King Henry and married again after his death.



# JESUITS AND MISSIONARIES SPREAD RELIGION THROUGHOUT EUROPE, ASIA, AND THE AMERICAS

## CHANGE IN THE FORM OF TRAVEL

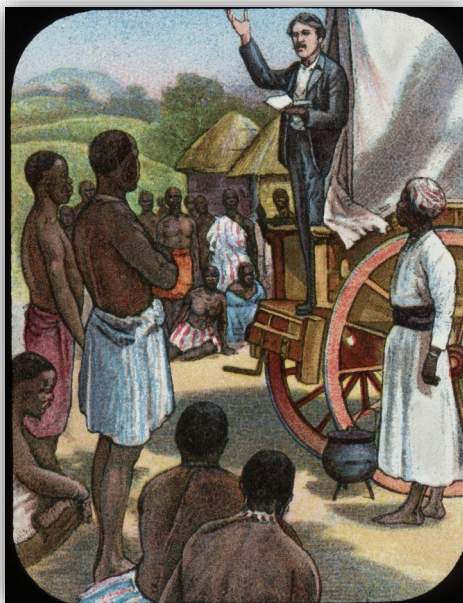
Even as Catholic leadership battled physically and mentally with the force of Protestantism taking hold in Europe, some of them felt the best way to do so was to spread its influence and convert as many people as possible back to their belief system. **Missionaries**, or traveling bishops and priests, went out in large groups to all parts of the known world to convert other cultures and win back Protestants for the Roman Catholic



church. Most of these missionaries were **Jesuits**, members of a religious order funded by the Catholic Church. Some went back along the silk road to India and Asia, while others traveled sea voyages down the African coasts and across to the New World (Americas) with explorers from the biggest and boldest countries in Europe. **Saint Francis Xavier** was one of the former, being known in Japan and India as the bringer of truth. The Jesuits also funded colleges and churches across Europe. This attempt to counteract the effects of the Protestant Reformation helped to bring nearly one million people to the religion between 1550 and 1630!

Protestants also sent out missionaries at this time, but their numbers were overwhelmed by their Catholic counterparts.

**Right:** Scottish protestant missionary preaches from a wagon to African natives.



**Below:** Pere Marquette interacts with Native Americans of the Illinois tribe.



## THE COUNTER REFORMATION: THE CATHOLIC CHURCH MAKES CHANGES

### THE CATHOLIC FIGHTS BACK LITERALLY AND FIGURATIVELY

As Protestant reform gained a foothold in Europe, the Catholic Church began counter measures. Several religious orders were created by committed Catholics. Spanish lord **Ignacius de Loyola** created the **Order of Jesus**, or the Jesuits, in 1534 and framed the organization similarly to a military, a nod to his past life as a soldier. The Jesuits built colleges and churches throughout Europe in the hopes of teaching proper catholic and biblical teachings and turning Protestants back to their Catholic roots. The order also sent **missionaries**, traveling priests or Jesuits, throughout the world in an effort to convert as many people as possible to their religion. In under 100 years, over one million people were baptized as Catholic believers.

In addition to the Jesuits, another order was created around the same time. Italian **Angela Merici** created the **Ursuline Order**, a sect committed to teaching young girls Catholic discipline in the hope of restricting the influence of Protestantism later in their life.

Catholic leadership further combated the spread of Protestantism by taking steps to make changes within their own system. A council of leadership from all over Europe gathered in Trent, Italy. The **Council of Trent** met three times in twenty years time to reform their system. They decided to stop the selling of indulgences! Other reforms included rules for bishops such as the requirement to live near the people they ministered to. They insisted on better education and training of clergy, and reinforced the need for the Bible to be the center of their preaching. Lastly, it reinforced the distinct differences between Catholic and Protestant teachings, such as the seven sacraments and official Latin bible being the only holy text.

Lastly, the Catholic church clamped down on **heresy**, or contrary beliefs to Catholic ones. They made harsher punishment for Protestants, made lists of books and pamphlets printed by Protestant leaders that could excommunicate members of the church, and set up specific religious courts to put heretics on trial.

The tension between Catholics and Protestants worsened, creating civil war and deaths on both sides of the lines.



**Above:** Logo of the Order of Jesus.

**Below:** Jesuits in China.



# THE SPANISH INQUISITION: A STORY OF INTOLERANCE AND CRUELTY

## A MIGHTY COURT FOR A RUTHLESS CAUSE



*Seal of the original Spanish Inquisition.*

Up until the beginning of the fourteenth century, Spain housed a trinity, or set of three, religions. Jews, Muslims, and Catholic Christians lived in harmony and made Spain a strong and wealthy country. During the Golden Age, major achievements in the arts and sciences happened due to this collaboration. However, during the Middle Ages, the *Spanish Inquisition*, a legion of Catholic bishops and priests called **inquisitors**, was established by King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella in Spain to root out and punish **heretics**, or those who followed a religion other than Catholicism. In the beginning stages of the Inquisition, Jews and Muslims were arrested, fined, or kicked out of Spain if they didn't convert to Catholicism. As time wore on, suspected heretics became targets for torture or horrific death penalties such as having limbs torn off and being burned at the stake.

During the Protestant Reformation, Spain became the Pope's greatest ally. The Spanish Inquisition turned their ruthless attention on Protestants within their borders, and even tested and suspected Catholics with even a fraction of difference in belief from the Catholic Church's inner reformation efforts and standards.

The Spanish Inquisition was very effective in their work, and by the 1400s and 1500s most of its population was Catholic. For this reason, Protestantism had little conversion success in Spain. The Pope in Rome noted this and started his own **Inquisition court in Italy** in the mid 1600s around the time that the Council of Trent began to counter-reform the Catholic Church from the inside. This new Inquisition's purpose was to viciously get rid of any **clergy**, or men of the church, who were harboring Protestant ideas or sympathy.

*Below: Protestants being burned at the stake for heresy in Spain.*

