

### Section 1: Popes and Kings

#### POPES AND KINGS RULE EUROPE

In the early Middle Ages, great nobles and their knights held most of the political power. As time passed this power began to shift to two types of leaders, popes and kings. The pope had great spiritual power. The kings had political power. Together, the pope and the kings controlled most of European society.

The pope was the head of the Christian Church. Since nearly everyone in the Middle Ages belonged to this church, the pope had great power. Christians believed that the pope was God's representative on earth. Because the pope was seen as God's representative, it was his duty to decide what the church would teach. From time to time, a pope would write a letter called a bull to explain a religious teaching or outline a church policy.

It was also the pope's duty to decide when someone was acting against the church. For the most serious offenses, the pope could choose to **excommunicate**, or cast out, an offender from the church. This much power often put the pope in direct conflict with the kings.

In 1000 Europe was divided into many states that were ruled by kings. Many of the kings did not have much power. But the kings of England, France, and the Holy Roman Empire held a lot of power. In France and England, the throne was inherited through family. The Holy Roman Empire got its name because the empire existed with the pope's approval. In the Holy Roman Empire, the nobles elected the emperor. The pope settled any disagreements among the nobles.

#### POPES FIGHT FOR POWER

The popes of Western Europe tried to assert their authority over the bishops of Eastern Europe. The bishops of Eastern Europe did not want to answer to the pope. Pope Leo IX excommunicated the bishop of Constantinople when the bishop would not recognize the pope's authority. This caused a permanent split in the church between the Eastern Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic Church.

#### KINGS AND POPES CLASH

Popes also argued with kings, particularly over the king's right to select bishops. A dispute arose when **Pope Gregory VII** did not like a bishop chosen by Holy Roman Emperor **Henry IV**. Henry tried to remove the pope from office. The pope excommunicated Henry. Henry had to beg for the pope's forgiveness to remain in power. After their deaths, a compromise was ultimately struck. From then on, the pope would select religious officials, but religious officials must obey the emperor.

### Section 2: The Crusades

#### CRUSADERS INVADE THE HOLY LAND

The **Crusades** were a long series of wars between Christians and Muslims in Southwest Asia. The Europeans fought the Muslims to retake Palestine. Christians call the region the **Holy Land** because it was where Jesus had lived, preached, and died.

For many years Palestine had been ruled by Muslims. In general, the Muslims did not bother Christians who visited the region. In the late 1000s, however, a new group of Turkish Muslims captured the city of Jerusalem. Pilgrims returning to Europe said that these Turks had attacked them.

Before long the Turks began to raid the Byzantine Empire. The Byzantine emperor asked **Pope Urban II** of the Roman Catholic Church for help. Although the Byzantines were Eastern Orthodox Christians and not Roman Catholic, the pope agreed to help.

Pope Urban called on Christians to retake the Holy Land from the Muslim Turks. Crusaders from all over Europe flocked to France to prepare to fight. Many peasants set out on the First Crusade. The Crusaders used the holy war as an excuse to kill many Jews along the way to Palestine. Some Christians at the time blamed the Jews for the death of Jesus. The peasant Crusaders were defeated by the professional Turk army. However, the nobles and knights were able to capture Palestine and set up four kingdoms there.

**LATER CRUSADES FAIL** Within 50 years the Muslims had started taking land back from the Christians. The Europeans launched more Crusades, but these invasions ended in defeat and heavy losses for the Christians. The Third Crusade started as a group effort between the German, French, and English kings. But only **King Richard I** of England stayed on to fight. His opponent was the brilliant Turkish leader **Saladin**. Eventually, King Richard left Palestine, which was still under Muslim control. By 1291 Muslims had taken back Palestine. The Crusades were over.

### **CRUSADES CHANGE EUROPE**

The Crusades increased trade between Europe and Asia. In some cases, the Crusades increased the power of the kings. But the main impact of the wars was divisive. The Crusades hurt the trust European Jews had developed with Christians. The Crusades also caused a major split between the Muslim and Christian worlds. Those tensions are still felt today.

## **Section 3: Christianity and Medieval Society**

### **THE CHURCH SHAPES SOCIETY AND POLITICS**

The **clergy** were very influential in medieval European culture and politics. For many people in the European Middle Ages, life revolved around the local church. Religious ceremonies like baptisms and weddings were key events in people's lives. Some people made pilgrimages, or journeys to religious locations.

The church owned a lot of land in Europe because many people left their property to the church when they died. In this way the church became a major feudal lord. Church officials often became political advisors to local rulers.

### **MONKS AND FRIARS**

Some people thought that the church was becoming too involved with politics. The monks of Cluny, France, established a new **religious order**. They dedicated their lives to religion with common rules. Other new orders followed. Women created their own religious communities in convents. Most monks lived apart from society, but two new religious orders developed for those who wanted to live and teach among people. These were the Dominicans, started by Dominic de Guzmán, and the Franciscans, started by **Francis of Assisi**. The members of these orders were called **friars**.

### **UNIVERSITIES ARE BUILT**

Europe's first universities were built by the church. Religion, law, medicine, and philosophy were taught. Scholars wanted to establish a connection between religious faith and intellectual reason. The Dominican friar **Thomas Aquinas** wrote a reasoned argument for the existence of God. He also developed a philosophical system called **natural law** to show how God had ordered the world.

## THE CHURCH AND THE ARTS

The great Gothic cathedrals of late medieval Europe are among the most beautiful of all architectural achievements. Their spires and high ceilings and colorful stained glass windows are all designed to bring people closer to God. Everything inside the church, from the walls to the clergy's robes to the books used, were also works of art.

## Section 4: Political and Social Change

### MAGNA CARTA CAUSES CHANGE IN ENGLAND

In 1215 a group of English nobles decided to force the king to respect their rights. They made King John approve a document listing rights the king could not ignore. This document was called the **Magna Carta**, or "Great Charter." Among these rights was that no one could be kept in jail without reason, and even the king must obey the law. This charter became a key principle of English government and an important step in the development of democracy.

The Magna Carta led to more changes. Faced with war and financial troubles, the kings turned to a council of nobles for advice and money. Before long, the council developed into **Parliament**, the lawmaking body that still governs England today.

### THE HUNDRED YEARS' WAR

In Europe, kings were not giving up their power easily, but other events forced political change. A major event was the **Hundred Years' War**, a long conflict between England and France. The war started when the English king tried to take control of France's throne. England invaded France and won many key battles until a teenage peasant girl, **Joan of Arc**, rallied the French troops. The English caught and killed Joan, but the French eventually won the war. In England, the war helped increase the power of Parliament because the king needed Parliament's approval to raise money to pay for the war. In France, the king's power grew after the war.

### THE BLACK DEATH

During the Hundred Years' War an even greater crisis arose. This crisis was the **Black Death**, a deadly plague that swept through Europe between 1347 and 1351. The plague originally came from central and eastern Asia. Traders unknowingly brought rats carrying the disease to Mediterranean ports. From there it quickly swept throughout much of Europe. Fleas that fed on infected rats passed on the plague to people.

Some historians think the Black Death killed a third of Europe's population-perhaps 25 million people. This caused sweeping changes all over Europe. The old manor system, already weakened by the growth of cities, collapsed. Plague survivors found their skills in demand and charged more for their labor. Instead of working for the rich, peasants now had other job opportunities.

## Section 5: Challenges to Church Authority

### THE CHURCH REACTS TO CHALLENGERS

By around 1100, some Christians in Europe felt that the clergy were more concerned with money and land than with God. Others did not agree with the church's ideas. They began to preach their own ideas about religion.

Religious ideas that oppose church teachings are called **heresy**. Church officials sent priests and friars throughout Europe to find people who might be heretics. Most of these priests and friars tried to be fair, but some were not. Some tortured people until they confessed, even if they were innocent. Most people found guilty in these trials were fined or put in prison. Some, however, were put to death.

In the early 1200s, Pope Innocent III called for a crusade against heretics in southern France. He encouraged the king and his knights to rid their country of heretics. The result was a bloody struggle that lasted about 20 years, destroying towns and cities and costing thousands of lives.

### **CHRISTIANS FIGHT THE MOORS**

In Spain, the reign of the Muslim Moors collapsed in the 1000s. Christian kingdoms in Spain started a war to drive out the Muslims. They called their war **Reconquista** (reh-kahn-KEES-tuh), or reconquest. The kingdom of Castile was the first to free itself of Muslim rule. Portugal and Aragon soon followed. Castile and Aragon became united by the marriage of two royals, **King Ferdinand** of Aragon and **Queen Isabella** of Castile. Their union created the modern country of Spain. Portugal remained independent. In addition to banning Islam, Spain required all Jews to convert to Christianity or leave.

Ferdinand and Isabella created the **Spanish Inquisition**, an organization of priests that looked for and punished non-Christians. The inquisition executed about 2,000 people in Spain and almost 1,400 more in Portugal.

### **JEWS FACE DISCRIMINATION**

Spain's treatment of Jews spurred a more wide-scale attack on Jews. It had become common among many Christians to blame all Jews for the persecution and death of Jesus. Some people even blamed the Jews for the Black Death. In many kingdoms, Jews were driven out by angry mobs, and sometimes by the kings themselves. They had to flee from their homes or die.