LESSON 9

MONASTICISM AND THE MISSIONARY ENTERPRISE

Introduction

Most of the missionary work after the fifth century was an outgrowth of monasticism. Monasteries also served as educational institutions and provided leaders for various positions in the episcopate. This lesson will survey the origin and regulation of monastic life and then examine missionary expansion which resulted from monasticism.

The Origin of Monasticism

Monasticism may be defined as a system of renunciation of life in the world and withdrawal from the world for the purpose of promoting the interests of the soul. This mode of life is not peculiar to Christianity but is inherent in almost any system of religion. Two beliefs which are the roots of monasticism are that the world is incurably evil and that the holiest men are those who suffer most and make the greatest sacrifices for conscience's sake. Early Christian monasticism grew out of these beliefs and majored on voluntary poverty.

Four stages in the development of monasticism were: (1) ascetic tendencies within organized congregations; (2) anchoretic life (hermit) which involved separation from society for the purpose of living an ascetical and secluded life for contemplation; (3) cloistered life which involved a rather informal association of hermits in the same locality; and, (4) monastic orders where several hermit associations organized under the same rule and name.

Monasticism began in Egypt with Antony (251–356) who became impressed with Christ's words to the rich young ruler to give up his possessions. Antony took up the ascetic life in his native village in about 270. After fifteen years, he went into solitude, becoming a hermit. He first lived in a sepulchre, then for twenty years in the ruins of a castle near the Red Sea. The rigour of his ascetic practices was increased, and he believed he was tormented by demons. The devil appeared to him by visions and dreams in the forms of a fascinating woman and a dragon which tempted him by reminding him of his former wealth. He was promised wealth and honour for the display of his virtue. His diet consisted of water, bread, salt, and sometimes dates which friends brought to him. Soon Antony had many followers.

During the fifth century a new way was initiated by Simeon the Stylites (pillar saint) who spent long years in prayer and penitence, day and night, summer and winter, rain and sunshine, frost and heat, on a high and unsheltered pillar. As a shepherd in Syria at the age of thirteen, he sought admission to a cloister after hearing the Beatitudes. He conditioned himself to eating only once a week, and he went through the forty days of Lent without food. His extreme asceticism caused him to be dismissed from the cloister. In 423, he took up his abode on a pillar about forty miles east of Antioch and lived there for thirty-six years until his death. He could not lie down nor sit, only stand or lean upon a post. His clothes were of the skins of beasts, and he wore a chain about his neck in his efforts to attain a superhuman holiness.

Coenobitic (cloister) monasticism was begun by Pachomius. In 325, he established a society of monks on an island in the Nile

What was an outgrowth of monasticism?

_____

(missionary work)

Monasticism is based on two beliefs:

1. The world is incurably _____.
2. The holiest men are those who _____ most.

(1. evil, 2. suffer)

Fill in the missing words in the four stages of the development of monasticism.

1. _____ tendencies
2. _____ life
3. _____ life
4. _____ orders

(Compare your answers with the text.)

The first anchorite (hermit) was A_____ of Egypt.

(Antony)

Who was the former shepherd in Syria who became known as the "pillar saint"?

_____

(Simeon the Stylites)

in Upper Egypt. In twenty–five years, his movement numbered eight or nine cloisters with 3, 000 monks. He required his disciples to live under one rule and the threefold vow of poverty, chastity, and obedience. He stressed work, Bible reading, and prayer. Monks were required to aid those outside the monastery by caring for orphans and doing other similar good deeds.

In the beginning, monasticism was radical and took the form of extreme castigation of the flesh intended to reduce the body to total submission in order that sexual temptation would not arise. There was also the spirit of competition among the participants which caused unusual and spectacular asceticism. Some of the early Eastern monks competed with each other to see who could stand the longest on one leg without food or sleep or who could remain the longest time on the highest pillar. These extreme practices, however, should not obscure the genuine holiness of many.

The Spread of Monasticism

Eastern monasticism was transplanted to the West with very little modification. It offered the pious Christians a refuge from the invading barbaric hordes. With the adoption of Christianity as the state religion, the purity of the Church was threatened and many sought seclusion with like–minded men in desert places. The collapse of the Western Empire in 476 gave many the impression that the world was falling to pieces; therefore, they sought to escape this evil world by retreating to cloisters. Jerome (340–420) was a zealous promoter of the monastic life and was the connecting link between Eastern and Western learning. Ambrose of Milan (340–397) established one of the first monasteries in Italy. After returning to Africa from Milan, Augustine established a monastery in his father's house at Tagaste (388–391). When he became bishop of Hippo, he and his clergy led monk–like lives of poverty and charity. Martin of Tours (316–397) planted monasticism in Gaul. He lived as a hermit in Italy and later built a monastery near Poitiers in 360. Other monasteries were founded at Lerins, Marseille, and Tours. Although the first monks were laymen, before 371 a bishop of Vercelli in Italy began the practice of requiring the clergy of his diocese to live the monastic life.

Monasticism continued to spread with the collapse of the _____ _____ in 476.

(Western Empire)

Mission Work in Britain

St. Patrick was the agent of the conversion of the Irish. He was born somewhere in Britain or Gaul towards the close of the fourth century. Raiders seized him at the age of sixteen and sold him as a slave in Ireland. Sixteen years later he escaped and returned home, probably to Gaul. He was commissioned as a bishop to preach the faith and returned to Ireland in 432. He made many converts; however, conversion did not change the Celtic temperament of tribal customs. More intensive Christian training was needed; therefore, Patrick organized monasteries. By the sixth century Irish Christianity had become predominantly monastic, and abbots enjoyed greater authority than bishops.

Irish monasteries were centres of learning with the Scriptures being the chief subject of study. Irish monasticism laid great emphasis on distant journeys as penance; therefore, Irish monks became famous as missionaries.

Irish monasteries were organized by _____.

(Patrick)

Mission Work by Irish Monks

The missionary work of the Irish monks in Britain began in 563 when Columba (about 521–597) set up a missionary base on

the island of Iona. During the next thirty-four years, he evangelized the mainland and established monasteries on the neighbouring islands. Almost sixty churches and monasteries have been attributed to him. No distinct rule was formulated; however, life was regulated in the monasteries by the ideals of chastity, humility, and abandonment of all possessions by the monks.

The evangelists who Christianized most of England went forth from Iona. Columbanus (about 543–615) was one of the first and ablest of the Irish missionaries who worked on the Continent. When he was about forty years of age, he travelled through France and received the ruined castle of Anegray as a gift from the king of Burgundy. There he established a monastery. Later he established monasteries at Fontanes, where he laboured for twenty-four years, and at Bobbio among the Lombards. He established a monastic rule which encouraged the monks to be fervent in the pursuit of perfection. His example encouraged numerous Irish and Scottish monks to become missionaries to the Continent.

Match the name of the Irish monk with the place of his missionary work.

____1. Columba (521–597) a. the Continent

____2. Columbanus (543–615) b. the island of Iona

(b–1, a–2)

Benedictine Monasticism

Benedict of Nursia added to the monastic life rules for communal behaviour and inspired men to desire to live by them. He gave to Western monasticism a fixed and permanent form which made it superior to the Eastern movement which lacked adequate organization. In 529, Benedict organized the mother monastery of the Benedictine Order on the hill of Monte Cassino, about halfway between Rome and Naples. He established a monastic rule which revealed his knowledge of human nature and his Roman genius for organization. he conceived of monasteries as permanent, self-contained, self-supported garrisons of Christian soldiers.

Benedict's order of Black Monks was controlled by a rule which affected every aspect of life and created a way of living which would ultimately create a certain type of monk. The law, not the abbot head of the monastery, was supreme. It emphasized self-denial, unselfish devotion to God, and the needs of others. The rule established the following schedule for monks:

1. The recitation of the canonical offices or services (four and a half hours);
2. Manual work in the cloister and the field, including copying Scripture, weaving rushes into mats and baskets for sale, and raising food for the monastery (six to seven hours);
3. Reading and studying with an emphasis on the Scriptures and the Church Fathers (three to five hours);
4. Sleeping (8 hours).

Underline which was supreme in Benedict's Order of Black Monks:

the abbot
the law

(Compare your answer with the text.)

The rule prescribed a black garment for dress and the threefold vow of poverty, chastity, and obedience. Silence was encouraged, and joking and laughing were frowned upon. The extremes of both asceticism and laxity were avoided. The abbot was elected for life by his fellow-monks.

The Benedictine rule established the schedule of:

1. _____ of the canonical services

2. _____ work

3. _____ and studying

4. _____

(Compare your answers with the text.)

The copying of Scriptures and manuscripts caused the libraries of the monasteries to expand. There developed a deep appreciation for ancient literature, and the work of the monks transmitted manuscripts and preserved books. Some of the monasteries became centres of learning, and the monastic schools were teaching institutions of primary importance. Posterity is indebted to them for preserving ancient manuscripts and for recording accounts of the events of their own times from which we gain a knowledge of the early medieval period of history. Since their work was in Latin and they influenced all other

The threefold vow of Benedictine monks included–

p_____, c_____, and

o_____.

(Compare your answers with the text.)

monastic orders, they helped establish Latin as the medium of expression of the Roman Church.

The Benedictine Rule was carried by missionaries to England and Germany, and it eventually penetrated France in the seventh century. The services of the monks as missionaries and pioneers were of inestimable value to the Church. In times of trouble, the monasteries afforded the only refuge for peace-loving souls. Some of the best men were to be found in them.

Some of the negative influences of monasticism included its emphasis on a distinction between higher and lower morality and its discrediting of Christian family life. Monasticism could not avoid the dangers of making Christianity ascetic, external, and legalistic. Monastic reforms were required from time to time. Monasteries tended to withdraw some of the most capable leaders of the Church from society where their influence was needed.

Eighth Century Eastern Monasticism

Although monasticism had begun in the East, it was hindered from lack of adequate monastic rules and organization. It failed to become as closely related to the Church and as involved in missionary outreach as its counterpart in the West. Monasteries sought to be independent of the bishops of the dioceses in which they were located and claimed to answer only to the patriarch. An exaggerated mysticism which stressed the adoration of saints, the veneration of icons, the worship of Mary as the mother of God, and contemplation, instead of activism, characterized Eastern monasticism. Pillar saints were prominent in the East.

Most of the bishops were drawn from the monasteries; however, many of the patriarchs of Constantinople were men who had risen through the civil bureaucracy and had gone through only the form of monastic vows. Monks were popular with the people and had great influence over them, especially concerning image worship and the miraculous icons they claimed to possess. The popularity of monastic life caused many soldiers and officials to withdraw from public service and husbandmen to leave agriculture. Immunity from taxation of church lands, much of which was controlled by the monasteries, cut down on the receipts of the treasury.

During the Iconoclastic controversy, the monks who supported the worship of images were treated with extreme violence: arrests, imprisonments, exile, blows, tearing out of eyes, branding of faces with hot irons, and cutting off of noses and tongues. Constantine V (740–775) attempted to compel the religious orders to lay aside their habits and to enter civil life again.

One of the most famous monks of the period was Theodore (759–826), abbot of Studium, which is near Mount Olympia in Bithynia. He denounced the divorce and second marriage of Constantine VI and demanded that he be excluded from the communion of the faithful. Theodore was banished to Thessalonica and was scourged, tortured, and imprisoned. Irene restored him from exile and raised him to honour. Nicephorus found Thedore to be an implacable foe who led in withdrawing from communion with the patriarch when a synod of 809 pronounced the emperor above the laws of the Church. Theodore was again banished but was recalled by the next emperor. A third banishment came under Leo V (813–820).

Theodore contended that monastic institutions belonged as much to the holy mysteries of Christianity as baptism, the Eucharist, and ordination. They are sacramental like prayer, preaching, and the understanding of the Word of God. The

Two valuable aspects of monasticism were its provision of _____ and places of _____.

(missionaries, refuge)

Underline the correct word.

Emphasis on a distinction between higher and lower morality and discrediting of Christian family life were two (negative, positive) influences of monasticism.

(Compare your answer with the text.)

Is this statement true or false?

Eastern monasticism was characterized by exaggerated mysticism.

_____

(true)

Theodore, a famous monk, believed that monastic institutions were as much a part of Christianity as

_____,

the _____,

and _____.

(Compare your answers with the text.)

monastic life fulfils itself in self-denying love and absolute renunciation, while the church is the concern of priests and doctors and the administration of secular things belongs to the emperor.

The Missionary Work of Eastern Christianity

The war-like barbarian tribes which moved into the area north and west of the Black Sea were assimilated by the native population and came to be called Slavs. Although some missionary influence had been exerted previously, it was not until the eighth and ninth centuries that Christianity made headway among these people in central Europe. In this area, there was often bitter rivalry between Latin Christianity and Greek orthodoxy and between German and Byzantine imperialism.

Even though the Greek Church had been torn by doctrinal controversy and losses to Islam, its vitality during the eighth and ninth centuries became evident by its evangelistic work and expansion into new territories through missions. After the Iconoclastic controversy, the Byzantine Empire and the Greek Church had experienced a revival. Patriarch Photius contributed greatly to this missionary expansion.

Moravia

Moravia (now Czechoslovakia) was ruled by King Ratislav who petitioned Emperor Michael III (842–867) to send Christian missionaries to instruct his people. Apparently a large number had already been baptized. Methodius (825–885) and Constantine (827–869), sons of a military official in Thessalonica, were summoned to Constantinople, given their assignment, and sent to Moravia to fill the request. Constantine (Cyril) was known as a philosopher and Methodius as an artist, but both knew the Slavonic tongue. They invented the Slavonic alphabet and translated the Bible and liturgy into that language. They established a school to train the native sons for the priesthood; however, they were opposed by German priests because of their use of Slavonic in the mass. Political changes caused the tie with Constantinople to be altered and closer connexions to be established with the West. They were summoned to Rome to give account for using the Slavonic language in the mass. However, the death of Pope Nicholas I resulted in his successor's being impressed by their success and consecrating them to the episcopate. Methodius was appointed metropolitan of Moravia and Pannonia. Some controversy continued over his use of Slavonic in the mass.

Bohemia

Bohemia was located north and west of Moravia but later was united with it. Christianity entered Bohemia from Moravia when fourteen chiefs and their retinues were baptized at Ratisbon in 845. The conversion and baptism of the king came in 871 when he inquired of Methodius about how to become a Christian. Eventually Bohemia recognized the overlordship of Germany which meant that it came under the domination of Latin Christianity.

Bulgaria

In the second half of the seventh century, some people called Bulgars were successful in defeating the Byzantine forces and acquiring territory south of the Danube. They gradually became identified with the Slavs and were converted to Christianity.

The Bulgarians had taken many Christians captive in battles with the imperial forces, and the captives won a number of converts among their captors before being martyred. Some time

In which centuries did Christianity make much progress among the Slavs in central Europe?

_____

(eight, ninth)

The artist and philosopher credited with inventing the Slavonic alphabet and translating the Bible and liturgy into the language of the Slavs were M_____ and C_____ (Cyril).

(Methodius, Constantine)

An objection by German priests and from Rome to the work of Methodius and Constantine was the use of Slavonic in the

_____

(mass)

later, a captive monk was exchanged by the Bulgarian king Boris for his sister who had been a hostage in Constantinople. She returned as a Christian and persuaded Boris to seek help from the Christian God in time of severe famine. She further prevailed on him to request missionaries. One story relates that a painter by the name of Methodius was employed to paint some violent hunting scenes in the palace of Boris. However, he painted instead an interpretation of the last judgement. It was so realistic that Boris was frightened into requesting baptism. His requested baptism may have been the result of the Byzantine troops' invasion while his own troops were out of the country. He was required to concede territory, to break the Frankish alliance, accept baptism, and acknowledge the overlordship of the emperor. Boris used force to convert his people. This action led to a pagan reaction which Boris suppressed by massacring the offenders. When the patriarch refused to consecrate a bishop for the Bulgarian Church, Boris requested clergy from Pope Nicholas I. After Nicholas refused to appoint an archbishop at Boris' request, the Bulgarians realigned themselves with the Greek Church and received a Greek archbishop and Greek bishops.

King Boris resigned his throne in favour of his son Vladimir in 889 and entered a monastery. When Vladimir apostatized, Boris defeated, blinded, and imprisoned him before returning to his monastery. The next king was the younger son of Boris who had been trained as a monk. He, through the assembled bishops, declared the Bulgarian Church to be self-governing with a patriarch at its head. The patriarch of Constantinople denounced this act, but the pope acknowledged it.

Describe a palace painting done by Methodius and the reaction to it by King Boris of Bulgaria.

_____

_____

_____

(Compare your answer with the text.)

Papal Authority and Missions

By the end of the fifth century, the Western emperor had been deposed by German kings who ruled with the approval of the Eastern emperor. Clovis, king of the Franks, was baptized in 496. This event was a landmark in the conversion of the Germanic invaders and the beginning of a new era in which German rulers were to become champions of the Catholic faith in the West. By the end of the fifth century, Germanic peoples and their kingdoms in the West included the Visigoths in Spain, the Ostrogoths in Italy, the Burgundians in southern Gaul, the Franks in northern Gaul, the Angles and Saxons in Britain, and the Vandals in North Africa. Most of these Germanic tribes considered themselves within the Roman Empire and accepted titles from the Roman government.

With the emperor's move to Constantinople and the Western Empire's fall to the Germanic tribes which came into the orthodox faith, the pope gained both political and ecclesiastical power in the West. As previously noted, the patriarch of Constantinople and the pope of Rome vied for ecclesiastical power among the bishops and for political power by gaining the favour of the emperor. On occasions, Constantinople acknowledged the primacy of the bishop of Rome. The German kings became powerful enough to rule independently of the approval of the Eastern emperor. Since he did not have military strength to re-establish his authority in the West, the pope began to look to the German kings for military protection. Eventually, the ruling Frankish king was crowned as emperor by the pope, and the Eastern emperor did not have the power to prevent it.

About the middle of the sixth century, Justinian's generals overthrew the Ostrogoths in Italy. They were replaced in power by the Lombards who founded a kingdom which survived until 774. However, the Franks proved to be the major power. The ruling line of whom Clovis was a representative was called Mero-

Papal authority in the Western Empire resulted from the fall of the West to

_____ tribes and their acceptance of

_____ faith.

(Compare your answer with the text.)

The major power in the West came to be the

_____.

(Franks)

vingians. Clovis had conquered the Alamanni in 496 and was baptized on Christmas Day of that year along with 3, 000 of his warriors. He was the first Teutonic king to adopt the faith of his Roman subjects and to be served by them and the clergy. His entering orthodox Christianity caused the clergy to be disposed to cooperate with him and to welcome him as a liberator and protector of the faith in the countries he invaded. In 500, he advanced on the Burgundians and brought part of their territory under his control. In 507, he defeated the Visigoths who held Aquitaine and later drove them out of Toulouse and Provence into Spain. The sons of Clovis were able to bring all Gaul, with the exception of Septimania and Brittany, under Merovingian rule.

The government of the Frankish kingdom was composed of the royal household and the provincial officials. The chief officer of the royal household was the mayor of the palace who was the general overseer of all that went on in the king's house. The provincial officers were the counts, who were appointed to each of the old tribal districts to take care of all government business, and the dukes, who were appointed over several countships. During the period from 561 to 656, Merovingian power declined because of turmoil and civil strife among the heirs to the throne. The influence and governing authority of the mayor of the palace increased as the effectiveness of the Merovingian kings collapsed. The kings during the period of 656–720 are known as the "do-nothing kings," a time when children occupied the throne. Several died during their mid-twenties, worn out by debauchery. They were fathers at fifteen and sixteen, even fourteen, and their children were weaklings. They remained shut up in their palaces, surrounded by great luxury, while the affairs of the State were handled by the mayors of the palace. Towards the end of the seventh century, a mayor of the palace engaged in battle with the king, defeated him, and established a new dynasty known as the Carolingians.

The two main dynasties of the Frankish government were the M_____ and C_____.

(Merovingians, Carolingians)

Pope Gregory the Great (590–604)

Gregory grew up during the period when Justinian's armies were vying with the Goths for control of all Italy (about 540). He was well educated in Latin literature, logic or dialectic, and rhetoric. He attained the highest office of prefect in the civil government of Rome by 573. His responsibilities included presiding over the senate, providing for defence of Rome, supervising food supply, overseeing finances, and policing the city. Gregory turned to religious orders after the death of his father in 575 and founded six monasteries in Sicily and one in Rome. His own home was converted into the monastery of St. Andrew. His extreme asceticism affected his health for life. He was recalled from his monastery in 578, ordained a deacon by Pope Benedict I, and sent as a political representative to Constantinople to persuade the emperor to provide soldiers for the defence of Italy against the Lombards. This experience provided valuable training in the art of diplomacy and in the proper procedures in court. Although the emperor did not provide military aid, Gregory formulated a policy of playing the Lombards against Constantinople in order to bring peace and security to Italy.

When a plague swept through Rome as the result of a flood of the Tiber in 590, Pope Pelagius II was among the first to die. The clergy and populace of Rome unanimously elected Gregory as bishop even though he asked to be rejected. In the meantime, he led the city in worship and repentance, seeking an end to the plague. Although he preferred the monastic life to papal responsibilities, he was duly confirmed by the emperor and served capably for fourteen years. His administration included episcopal jurisdiction over the diocese of Rome and metropolitan juris-

Underline the correct words.

Gregory served first in (a monastery, government responsibilities).

(government responsibilities)

Although Gregory preferred the monastic life to papal responsibilities, he served as bishop of Rome for _____ years.

(fourteen)

diction over seven other bishops in Roman territories. As the only patriarch in the West, he exerted authority over a large part of the Western Empire, including northern Italy, North Africa, Illyricum, and Gaul. In addition, he received appeals of decisions in the East. His previous brief experience in civil administration prepared him for the responsibility of seeing to the temporal needs of the population.

The Church had become heir of vast lands in Corsica, Sardinia, Africa, Gaul, Italy, and especially Sicily. Each area was called a patrimony, and a rector was appointed to serve as papal agent over each patrimony. The pope established the *defenesores* to protect the poor and the *conductors* to oversee the leasing of the farms and the collecting of rent. Slaves were owned by the Church. The revenue from the lands was divided among the bishop of Rome, the clergy, and the poor, and a fourth part was used to maintain the buildings and services of the Church. Refugees from territories controlled by the Lombards swelled the charity list of the Roman Church.

In 597, Gregory sent Augustine as a missionary to England. Within a year Augustine baptized King Ethelbert and 10, 000 of his subjects. Gregory made efforts to extend the Church among the Lombards, but the complete conversion of the Arian and pagan invaders was not achieved. Jews throughout Gregory's sphere of influence were victims of discrimination since his allegorical interpretation of the Old Testament led to the conclusion that Judaism was a regression from the faith. Jews were not permitted to own slaves who were Christians nor to establish new synagogues. He enticed Jews to conversion by offering them reduced work loads and taxes.

When the Lombard Ariulf of Spoleto threatened Rome and Ravenna in 591, Gregory prepared the city by posting sentries, raising and paying troops, and dispatching generals to the endangered cities. He encouraged other bishops to look to the political safety of their towns; however, he refused to use his diplomatic skills to destroy the Lombards as a people. He came to terms with Ariulf, possibly by payment in gold. The Lombards returned in 593 and laid siege to Rome. Apparently Gregory again paid a large sum of money and agreed to a yearly tribute. Since neither the emperor nor the political leader in Italy intervened against the Lombards, the people of Italy afterwards looked to the pope as their true protector, recognizing that Italy would have perished without his help. Gregory actually had become the civil ruler in Italy.

Gregory's theory of the relation of Church and State followed that of his predecessors. The authority of the pope was supreme in spiritual affairs and set the limits of imperial power; however, in the temporal realm the political ruler was to be obeyed. He consistently asserted both the primacy of the Church of Rome and its authority in ecclesiastical affairs over the whole Church. He objected to "ecumenical patriarch" as the title for the bishop of Constantinople and to "universal pope" as the title for himself, contending that they detracted from the position of the other bishops. He called himself "servant of the servants of God," and limited his authority over the universal Church to confirming bishops instead of appointing them. He conceived of his role as preserving the purity of the Catholic faith.

Gregory's skill was as an organizer and administrator rather than as a theologian. He wrote four practical books on the office of bishop. They dealt with the type of person and proper motive for the office, the virtues of a pastor, preaching to all different kinds of people, and the importance of self-examination. He was the first to teach categorically the possibility of immediate entrance of the soul to heaven. He strengthened the hierarchical ministry of the Church and the papal position as head of it. He

Gregory the Great established an organization to oversee the vast lands belonging to the _____.

(Church)

Another of Gregory's accomplishments was the sending of missionaries to E_____ and to the L_____.

(England, Lombards)

Gegory actually became the civil ruler in Italy after he led in protecting _____ against Lombard attacks.

(Rome)

brought the writings of Augustine into popular use in the Church and developed the sacrament of penance. During his fourteen years as pope, he brought the Petrine supremacy from the realm of theory to that of actuality.

The missionary work of Willibrord (658–739)

Augustine, who was sent to England by Gregory, and his successors achieved success in getting Anglo–Saxon Britain to adopt Roman practices. Even the churches of Celtic persuasion began to move towards Rome. From Northumbria, an Anglo–Saxon named Willibrord went to the northern part of the Continent to convert the pagans of Friesland. He and eleven companions landed at the mouth of the Rhine and went first to Utrecht. He was opposed by King Radbod; therefore, he sought protection from Pepin, the Frankish ruler to the south. He also secured papal ordination and cooperation. He returned from Rome with relics for the churches he founded, organized an ecclesiastical system, built churches, and educated the ministers.

When Radbod's opposition increased, Willibrord went to the Danes, but they also resisted Christianity. However, his zeal was rewarded with some success. He returned to Friesland and continued his work there, but the Frisians identified Christianity with Frankish dominion and resisted the missionary's work.

Upon the death of the Frankish king Pepin, Radbod won back part of the territory lost to the Franks, destroyed Christian shrines, and restored paganism. Willibrord's success had been largely external and material. The majority of the Frisians remained pagan and bitterly antagonistic to Frankish rule and political Christianity. When they joined hands with the enemies of the Frankish king Charles Martel, the Frisian church organization fell to pieces, Willibrord fled the country, priests were hunted down, church buildings were destroyed, and the people relapsed into paganism. Upon Martel's success, Willibrord returned to destroy pagan sanctuaries and to force Christianity upon the subjugated independent Frisians.

Willibrord made a significant contribution to the spread of Roman Christianity. To him more than to anyone else was due the credit for the establishment of the Church among the Frisians.

The missionary work of Winfrid (about 680–755)

Winfrid was a second missionary who went from southern England to Utrecht to work among the Frisians. He arrived after Pepin's death and before Charles Martel had re–established control. Winfrid approached King Radbod for permission to preach, but he was refused. He went to Rome for a papal commission and Roman relics and was given the name Boniface (doer of good). He worked for some time with Willibrord and shared in the destroying of pagan temples and building churches. Later he went to Hesse of Germany where Christianity was nominal but pagan cults were strong. There he did the greatest work of life. He baptized large numbers. His greatest success came when he began cutting down an oak tree which was held sacred to the god Thor. He was helped by a great gust of wind, and the pagan bystanders were convinced of the power of the new faith. Out of the timber of the tree, he constructed an oratory to St. Peter. The pope made him archbishop with power to appoint bishops in Germany.

Later Winfrid went south to Bavaria to lead in the purification and reorganization of the churches under Rome. He replaced the abbot–bishop rule with an episcopal constitution and enforced the celibacy of priests. In 741, he was invited by Carloman, son of Charles Martel, to reform the Frankish churches.

Through military power Christianity was forced upon subjugated Frisians by missionary _____.

(Willibrord)

What was the name given Winfrid and what did it mean?

_____ – _____

(Boniface–doer of good)

Carloman returned the properties which were withdrawn from the Church, and the clergy were forbidden to bear arms in military service and in hunting. The priests were required to give an annual report to the bishops, foreign and unknown clerics were deposed, and the harbouring of women by the clergy was forbidden. His work next carried him to Neustria where he led in reforms also.

Boniface effectively applied on the Continent methods familiar to missionaries in England. When the upper classes were won, the masses followed. The missionaries lived off the land, worked with their hands, and generally fitted into the life and customs of the Germans. Monasteries were established which contributed to deepening the religious life of the superficial converts and taught the baptized masses. Although Boniface reaped the fruits of French and Scotch–Irish missionaries, he was intolerant of them and destroyed their further usefulness. To him, true Christianity was identical with Romanism. Those not under papal authority were false prophets, adulterers (because they married), thieves, and robbers.

The Formation of the Holy Roman Empire

After the fall of Rome in 476, Italy was ruled by the Ostrogoths and then became a province of the Eastern Empire in 553. The exarch of Ravenna was the imperial representative in the West. A duke of Rome in charge of military affairs served under the exarch. The pope was the emperor's representative in many respects in civil as well as ecclesiastical concerns. It has been pointed out previously how Gregory I gained secular as well as ecclesiastical authority during the invasion of Italy by the Lombards. Rome and several other cities were protected by papal troops.

The Roman Church became wealthy and the possessor of landed property in every province of the Empire by the time of Gregory the Great. These lands were spoken of as the patrimonies of St. Peter. Since the wealth of the land was under the control of the pope, he gained the power which wealth brings. He used this wealth to maintain the Roman churches and shrines and to promote the social welfare of the Roman people. Gregory used some of the wealth in reaching an agreement with the Lombards who had laid siege to Rome. The civil and ecclesiastical leadership of Gregory established the pope as the most important person in the West.

The Lombards which invaded Italy in 568 established a kingdom which survived until 774. The Arian Lombards turned gradually to the Catholic faith; therefore, they respected the papacy. Gregory the Great contributed significantly to their conversion. After 653, all the rulers and all the bishops were of the orthodox faith, and Milan was the ecclesiastical centre of the realm.

While the Lombards were controlling most of Italy during the latter part of the seventh century, a transition was taking place among the Franks. The mayors of the palace were gaining in power and eventually came to replace the Merovingian dynasty. Pepin II, a mayor of the palace, won the battle of Tetry in 687 which marked the transfer of Frankish authority to him as "duke of the Franks." The Merovingian kings continued in name, but Pepin and his sons actually ruled. After his death in 714, his illegitimate son Charles Martel (715–741) exercised all the powers of a king. Charles stopped the Mohammedan advance in western Europe in the great battle between Tours and Poitiers

READ ALL OF THE TOPIC *THE MISSIONARY WORK OF WINFRID* BEFORE DOING THE FOLLOWING EXERCISE.

Rearrange the letters in the following words to list three peoples or fields where Winfrid did missionary work.

among the _____
(siraFins)

_____ of Germany
(seseH

_____
(avariBa

(Compare your answers with the text.)

Boniface was intolerant of missionaries not under papal authority because he believed that true Christianity was identical with

_____.

(Romanism)

Since the pope controlled the wealth of the land of the Roman Church, he also gained _____.

(power)

In what year and by whom was the Mohammedan advance in western Europe stopped?

In _____ by _____

(732, Charles Martel)

in 732. He supported missionary efforts in western Germany and the Netherlands where he wanted to extend his political control. However, he exploited the Church for political reasons, confiscated its lands, and did little to check its disorders. A great missionary and reformation work was initiated under Charles, and it affected large sections of western Germany. Upon his death in 741, his authority was divided between his sons Carloman (741--747) and Pepin the Short (741–768). Through the work of Willibrord and Boniface, the German and Frankish people had been brought more completely under the Church of Rome.

The Iconoclastic controversy in the East reached a climax under Emperor Leo III whom Pope Gregory III (731–741) excommunicated. The emperor responded by removing southern Italy and Sicily from papal jurisdiction and by placing them under the patriarch of Constantinople. Imperial power was too feeble to control papal action in Rome and northern Italy. The imperial representative was the exarch of Ravenna to whom the duke of Rome was accountable for military affairs. The action of the papacy towards Leo III had excluded military aid to Rome from Constantinople when the Lombards threatened to capture the city. The Roman pontiff turned to the Frankish Charles Martel and his sons for protection. Gregory III offered to Charles the titles of patrician and the consul of Rome. This act was a virtual papal declaration of independence from Constantinople. However, Martel replied only with a courteous letter and some presents but no aid against the Lombards. When the Lombards threatened Rome again, Gregory promised Pepin the Short the throne of France in return for aid against them. The puppet Merovingian king and his son were retired to a monastery, and Pepin was crowned king in 752. He immediately received papal approval. This event had far-reaching consequences. It suggested that the pope had the power to give and to withhold kingdoms. "All unseen in it, were wrapped up re-establishment of the empire in the West, the Holy Roman Empire, and that interplay of papacy and empire which forms so large a part of the history of the Middle Ages."[1]

The Lombards defeated the imperial forces at Ravenna in 751 and pressed Rome again. Pope Stephen II (752–757) called upon the new king for aid. Pepin responded after receiving promises that his dynasty would be protected by the pope forever. He was given the indefinite title of "Patrician of the Romans," a title which had been borne by the imperial exarch in Ravenna. In 754, Pepin defeated the Lombards and returned again the next year to put down further trouble. He bestowed all the conquered territory, including Ravenna, on the papacy. This donation of Pepin enabled the Roman spiritual leader to become a temporal ruler. These "States of the Church" (the Exarchate of Ravenna and the Duchy of Rome) remained under the control of the papacy until 1870. Pepin had established an alliance between the Carolingian house and the papacy that would lead to the work of Charlemagne (Charles the Great) and the founding of the Holy Roman Empire.

The pope became a temporal ruler when the L_____ pressed R_____ and S_____ appealed to King P_____ for assistance and entered into an agreement that Pepin's dynasty would be protected by the pope forever in exchange for the territory of the Lombards.

(Lombards, Rome, Stephen II, Pepin)

[1] Williston Walker, *A History of the Christian Church*, rev. by Robert Handy (3rd ed.; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1970), p. 186.

The Donation of Constantine

For two centuries a legend had been growing that when Constantine (311–337) moved his thone to Constantinople, he had granted to Pope Sylvester supremacy over the whole Christian Church along with the imperial palace in Rome. A document came to light about 755 which confirmed this legend. The document was considered to be authentic for 700 years but was proved to be false by Nicholas of Cues in 1433 and Lorenzo Valla in 1440. Whether Pope Stephen (752–757) was author, accomplice, or a victim of the document is not known.

Charles the Great (768–814)

After Carloman II died in 771, Charles became sole ruler of France. He brought the Lombard kingdom to an end in 774 and renewed the donations of his father to the papacy; actually he increased them by adding other Italian territories. After defeating the Lombards, he became an Italian power and called himself their king as well as that of the Franks. By 780, he had become master of all Italy. The Eastern emperors attempted to re-establish their control over Italy but were not successful.

Pepin had inferred the duty of the king was to protect the Church. Charlemagne treated the pope as the chief prelate in his realm but not as an independent power. He had the pope to understand that he recognized the papal states, but they were part of the Frankish royal system. Meanwhile, Pope Leo III realized that he was no longer subject to the Eastern emperors, and Charlemagne was the only power in the West; therefore, he determined to return the empire to Rome. Pope Leo III crowned Charlemagne as "Emperor of the Romans" on December 25, 800. For the first time, a German was crowned as Roman emperor. Charlemagne had the power to declare himself emperor, but it seemed more legitimate if the pope did it. This action would gain the backing of the people who were loyal to the Catholic Church. The Church gave the Empire into his hands, and Charles became its appointed temporal representative and defender. The Eastern emperor could do nothing more than refuse to acknowledge Charles. In 812, however, the two Empires concluded a peace agreement and the Eastern emperor acknowledged Charles in return for the surrender of southern Italy and Venice.

The crowning of Charles by Leo III was interpreted by him and his successors as a commission to secure the good behaviour of all the clergy. They felt responsible for all religious education, the proper organization of the Church, and the propagation of the faith, even by the use of violent means. The Church became more involved in political affairs, and the papacy and imperial power stood side by side, each claiming supreme authority over all human affairs. The union of Church and State with political and military power to enforce righteousness appeared to establish the conditions which would bring about the fulfilment of the dream of Augustine's *City of God.*

Is this statement true or false?

A legend had grown that when Constantine moved his throne to Constantinople, he had granted to Pope Sylvester supremacy over the whole Christian Church and the imperial palace in Rome.

_____

(true)

What two facts were especially significant in Charlemagne's being crowned emperor of the Romans?

_____

_____

(He was a German; Pope Leo III crowned him.)

The joining together of the papacy and imperial power was really union of _____ and _____.

(Church, State)

Home Study Exercise

Basic activity (Levels 1, 2, and 3). After reading the study guide text, answer the following questions.

1. What two beliefs are the roots of monasticism? _____

2. Give four stages in the development of monasticism and name two anchorites. _____

3. Name the father of Irish monasticism and two persons produced by the monasteries for mission work. _____

4. What did the Benedictine rule stipulate concerning discipline and vows for monks? _____

5. Name two positive and two negative values of monasticism. _____

6. What was Theodore's view of monastic institutions? _____

7. Who took the gospel to the Slavs and Bulgarians and what was the special contribution of each? _____

8. How did the invading Germanic tribes add to papal authority? _____

9. Which particular German kingdom predominated and what two dynasties were important? _____

10. Name three accomplishments of Gregory the Great which added to papal power. _____

11. What was Willibrord's method and significance in his mission work among the Frisians? _____

12. What were Winfrid's missionary fields of work? _____

13. How did the pope become a temporal ruler? _____

14. What was the "Donation of Constantine"? _____

15. Why did Leo III crown Charlemagne as emperor of the Romans? _____

Supplementary activity (Levels 2 and 3). Read pages 82–98 in *A Summary of Christian History* by Baker and answer the following questions.

1. Name five benefits of the invading tribes to the Roman Catholic Church.
2. Briefly describe how missions and political aid from the Frankish rulers strengthened the Catholic Church.
3. How did the forged "Donation of Constantine" and the "Pseudo-Isidorian Decretals" benefit the papacy?
4. What strong popes added to papal authority during the period 451 to 1050?

Advanced activity (Level 3). Read pages 135–140 and 161–179 in *Documents of the Christian Church* by Bettenson and answer the following questions.

1. To whom was the "Donation of Constantine" addressed, and what were the benefits of and reason for his donation?
2. According to the Rule of St. Benedict, how was the monastic order to be governed and what daily schedule were the monks to follow?
3. What were the modes of punishment for members who were guilty of faults, and what was the prescribed food for the healthy?

Seminar Discussion

1. Give the purpose and four stages of the development of monasticism.
2. How did monasticism contribute to missionary work?
3. What was the contribution of Benedict to monasticism?
4. Who were the important missionaries of the Eastern Church during this period?
5. Why was Pope Gregory the Great important?

6. Who were the important missionaries of the Western Church of this period?

7. What events led to the establishment of the Holy Roman Empire?

8. Was monasticism beneficial or detrimental to the Church?