

## LESSON 3

# ROMAN CATHOLIC MISSIONS

## A.D. 1300-1787

### An Overview of the Period

The mission endeavour recorded here was almost entirely outside of Europe and spanned the period from the close of the thirteenth century to about 1787, when the last of the European missionaries had been exterminated or banned from China.

Roman Catholic missionaries came largely from the missionary orders of the Church which were rooted in its monastic sects. Chief among the missionary orders were:

The *Benedictines*, founded in 529 by Benedict of Nursia (480-543), whose missionaries worked in Italy, Spain, France and other European countries.

The *Franciscans*, founded by *Francis of Assisi* (1182-1226). We have noted the work of St. Francis and of some of his order among the Muslims. The Franciscans were co-workers of the conquistadores in Latin America, and worked in the Far East.

The *Dominicans* were founded in 1218 by a Spanish priest named *Dominic* (1170-1221). They were made agents of the Inquisition in 1232 and liquidated thousands of heretics in southern France and Spain, but also planted missions from Russia to India.

The *Jesuits* are the most renowned of the missionary orders. Known as the Society of Jesus, this order was founded in 1540 by *Ignatius Loyola* (1491-1556) with the approval of Pope Paul III. Its initial purpose was to convert the Saracens in the Holy Land, but extended the activities to India, China, Japan, the Philippines, Africa, South America, Mexico, California and Canada. Strong arm methods used by the Jesuits brought them opposition, persecution, and often expulsion. In addition to the orders there arose various missionary societies. Outstanding among these was the Paris Foreign Mission Society, founded in 1658.

Catholic expansion accompanied Portuguese and Spanish exploration and colonization in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Christopher Columbus had plied the waters of the Mediterranean Sea, the Azores, Cape Verde, and Madeira islands before persuading Ferdinand and Isabella to finance a voyage westward in search of a new route to India. In 1492 he touched San Salvador in the Bahamas and called that group of islands the West Indies because he believed he had reached the coast of India. Vasco da Gama, sailing for

Catholic orders first engaged in mission work were:

the B \_\_\_\_\_

the F \_\_\_\_\_

the D \_\_\_\_\_

the J \_\_\_\_\_

(*Benedictines, Franciscans, Dominicans, Jesuits*)

Circle the true statements.

Catholic expansion accompanied Portuguese and Spanish exploration and colonization in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

Continued on the next page.

Portugal in 1497, rounded the Cape of Good Hope and sailed eastward touching India at Calicut. True to its commission the expedition carried a number of missionary priests. In 1456 Pope Calixtus III affirmed the right of Portugal to occupy lands of unbelievers which it discovered and made it responsible for the spiritual oversight of the same. Since the voyages of Columbus were sponsored by Spain, Pope Alexander VI issued a Demarcation Bull which divided the world into two spheres of influence. Portugal would continue to enjoy patronage privileges in Africa and the East Indies. Spain would enjoy the same privileges in the New World, from a north-south line west of the Azores. The next year the line was moved 370 leagues westward, and thus Brazil, discovered by Pedro Alvares Cabral, was included in the Portuguese zone. Of course it was not foreseen that within a few years English, French, Dutch, and Danish explorers would dispute the monopolies the pope had bestowed upon Portugal and Spain. As a condition of the preferred privilege accorded Portugal and Spain they were enjoined to bring the people who inhabited the new lands to Christian faith and to instruct them. The expense of this missionary endeavour was to be born by the state. On the facade of an ancient church in Lima, Peru there is a statue of a conquistador with drawn sword on one side of the principal door, and that of a friar with Bible in hand on the other. Often the choice of the natives lay between submission to the Church and subjugation by the sword.

In order to correct weaknesses of the patronage system, Pope Gregory XV in 1622 founded the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, through which the papacy would exercise more direct control over its work abroad. Six years later the College of Propaganda was founded in Rome to train native clergy from all parts of the world. Papal orders dispatched through this society came to be called "the propaganda." It also became necessary for the papacy to regulate the geographical occupation by orders and societies in order to avoid duplication and competition.

### China

Marco Polo, the great Venitian traveller, was in China from 1275 until 1291. Having won favour with Kubla Khan he was asked to relay an invitation to the pope to send 100 learned men who would be able to prove "to the learned of his dominions that the faith professed by Christians is superior to and founded on more evident truth than any other." In 1289 Pope Nicolas IV sent one man, *John of Monte Corvino* (1246-1328), a Franciscan. En route to China he spent a year in India where he found Nestorian Christians in several places. John of Monte Corvino reached Khanbalik (Peking), probably in 1293, and was received warmly by the aged Kubla Khan. He was unable to convert the Khan, but made other converts, built a church, and trained about 150 young seminarians to carry on the church after the

Pope Calixtus III affirmed the right of Portugal to occupy lands it discovered and to minister spiritual oversight to the same.

Pope Alexander VI issued a Demarcation Bull that affected Portugal's and Spain's interest in newly discovered lands.

Spain and Portugal were required to instruct the inhabitants of these new lands in the Christian faith.

*(Compare your answers with the text.)*

Identify the following:  
Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith

College of Propaganda

*(Compare your answers with the text.)*

M \_\_\_\_\_ P \_\_\_\_\_, Italian merchant traveller, secured an invitation from K \_\_\_\_\_ K \_\_\_\_\_ to send missionaries to C \_\_\_\_\_.

*(Marco, Polo, Kubla, Khan, China)*

State the accomplishment of John of Monte Corvino in China.

*(Compare your answers with the text.)*

western tradition. In 1308 he was made Archbishop of the Church in the Far East. When he died there were about 100,000 reported Christians in all of China.

In 1335 *John of Marignolli* left Avignon for China with fifty friars, of which thirty-two arrived in Peking three years later. Marignolli and his group were welcomed by the Mongolian Khan, Timur. Marignolli and his group returned to Avignon in 1346, spending a year in India. The Chinese wrested the rule from the Mongolians in 1362 and the Latins were expelled from Peking in 1369. More than two centuries passed before another missionary entered Peking.

In 1579 *Alessandro Valignano*, Jesuit Visitor or Supervisor, stopped in Macao. The Portuguese colonists, true to their compact with Rome, had established churches and monasteries. It is said that Valignano looked towards the mainland of China and exclaimed: "Rock, rock, oh when wilt thou open, rock?" He remembered *Mateo Ricci* (1552-1610), an Italian Jesuit who was teaching in Goa, and brought him to Macao in 1582. Ricci mastered the Chinese language and culture. In fact, he so identified himself with the Chinese scholars in dress, style of living, and method of writing and teaching, that he was received by the cultured Chinese and was able to make his way northward to Peking. At last, in 1600 he was granted permission to enter the capital city. His knowledge of astronomy, his ability to make maps, and the gift of a European clock to the emperor, gained the imperial favour and Ricci was able to remain ten years. Many scholars became Christians. Jesuit missionaries were permitted to travel and live in various parts of China. At the death of Ricci in 1610 it was estimated the Church at Peking had about 2,000 members. By 1650 the number of converts was placed at about 250,000 in China. During a little more than a century approximately 500 missionaries served in China. Much after the death of Ricci, Franciscan and Dominican missionaries quarrelled with Jesuit missionaries accusing Ricci of having made concessions of Confucianism which had compromised Christianity. A test point was the Chinese word Ricci had used to translate God. The word *T'ien* which Ricci used was the one used by Confucius for Heaven, or Providence. When the matter was referred to the pope he decided on *T'ien Chu*, Heavenly Lord. The Chinese emperor took offense and ordered missionaries to follow the line of Ricci or leave the country. Many were expelled, and in succeeding years, in 1724, 1736, and 1742 edicts of persecution of Christians were issued. The doors of China were closed to all foreigners. The last European priests were ferreted out by 1787, but Catholic Christianity continued in China under native leadership with clandestine foreign supervision.

The Chinese wrested the rule from the Mongolians in \_\_\_\_\_ . The Latins were expelled from Peking in \_\_\_\_\_. Another missionary did not enter Peking for \_\_\_\_\_.  
(1362, 1369, two, centuries)

M \_\_\_\_\_ R \_\_\_\_\_, a  
J \_\_\_\_\_, was granted permission to enter the  
capitol of C \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_.

(Mateo, Ricci, Jesuit, China, 1600)

Is the following statement true or false?  
The dispute over the word used to translate the idea of God led to the closing of China's doors to all foreigners.

(true)

## India

Franciscan priests who accompanied Vasco da Gama to India in 1498 immediately planted missions. Portuguese explorers followed, establishing colonies at Goa and at other points on the west coast. Profligate living by Portuguese traders gave Christianity a bad name. Furthermore, missionaries found it difficult to penetrate the caste system which separated the stratas of society in India.

In 1526 Bakur, descendent of the Mongol Genghis Khan, captured Delhi and established a Muslim empire which endured until the nineteenth century. Under this Muslim domination in northwest India, Islam won more converts than did Christianity.

*Francis Xavier* (1506-52), disciple and associate of Loyola, was the first Jesuit missionary sent to India. He went in 1542, not only as a Jesuit, but as representative of the King of Portugal, and as Papal Nuncio. In Goa he found churches and monasteries, but moral conditions were deplorable. He spent a few months attempting reform and then moved southward to the Coromandel Coast where some 10,000 Paravas, fleeing from Muslim raiders, had sought protection by the Portuguese. Protection was given on condition that they be baptized, but these illiterate fishermen had no idea what Christianity meant. Xavier tried to instruct them. With slight knowledge of Tamil, he made a rough translation of the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments. He taught these to a group of boys verbatim, and these in turn taught them to the adults. Jesuits who followed Xavier gathered the fishermen into sixteen villages, each with its priest and church. Xavier moved on to Travancore where he baptized thousands. He had a passion for making Christians in a hurry. He loved to preach near a stream where he would consecrate the water, take a branch from a tree, and baptize the people wholesale.

Xavier wrote to Loyola that the natives "can never be expected to embrace Christianity" freely. He urged the Portuguese viceroy to destroy idols, favour the Christians, and coerce the Syrian Christians to enter the Roman Church. The latter recommendation was actually carried out in 1599. After three years in India, Xavier's restless spirit impelled him to move on to the Malay Peninsula and adjoining islands, where he spent another three years.

The most tolerant of the Mogul Muslim rulers was Akbar the Great, who reigned at Agra from 1556-1605. He became disenchanted with Islam and toyed with the idea of starting another religion incorporating the best from other religions. In 1579 he invited missionaries from Goa to come to his court to expound on Christianity. Father *Rudolf Acquaviva* (1550-83) was chosen to head a mission of Jesuits. When Akbar did not embrace Christianity the Jesuits were recalled to Goa. Shortly thereafter Acquaviva was murdered by fanatical Hindus. Akbar mourned his death and favoured a second group

F \_\_\_\_\_ priests accompanied  
V \_\_\_\_\_ da G \_\_\_\_\_ to  
I \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_.

(Franciscan, Vasco, Gama, India, 1498)

Fill in the missing information about Francis Xavier by consulting the text.

He was the \_\_\_\_\_ missionary sent to I \_\_\_\_\_. He represented the K \_\_\_\_\_ of P \_\_\_\_\_ and the P \_\_\_\_\_. Using a b \_\_\_\_\_ from a tree, he b \_\_\_\_\_ people wholesale. His restless spirit led him to visit the M \_\_\_\_\_ P \_\_\_\_\_ and nearby i \_\_\_\_\_.

(Compare your answers with the text.)

of missionaries sent in 1591 and a third in 1605. Akbar never became a Christian, but he built a chapel for one of his wives who became a Christian. Although their fruits were meagre, Jesuits remained at the court of the Moguls until the Society of Jesus was dissolved by the pope in 1773, at which time 3,000 missionaries were withdrawn from their fields.

Xavier had appealed to the masses of the lower castes and Acquaviva had tried to persuade ruling Muslims. A bit later *Robert de Nobili* (1577-1656), another Italian Jesuit, undertook to win India from the top. Nobili was sent to Madurai where he laboured fifty years. There was already a Portuguese Jesuit mission in Madurai. Father Fernández was working with the poor and trying to turn his converts into Portuguese. Nobili recognized that cultural differences between East and West was a formidable barrier to gospel penetration. Also, it was impossible to work effectively with higher and lower caste Indians simultaneously. He determined to become an Indian. He abstained from meats, wine, and all that would offend. He became a guru, a teacher, wearing the robe of a holy man. He mastered Tamil, Telugu, and Sanscrit. He held public discussions, drawing on Indian classics for illustrations. Within two years he had baptized ten young men of high caste, and by 1609 sixty-three including a few Brahmans. A Parava Christian spread the charge that Nobili was really a Parangi, of low caste, pretending to be high caste. Reports were sent to Rome that he tolerated Hindu superstition. Nobili was exonerated both in Madurai and in Rome. He was, however, withdrawn from the Madurai Mission in 1645 and spent his last years in poverty and almost total blindness at Mylapore, near Madras. He and his colleagues who carried on in his tradition made thousands of converts. Numerically, the work of Jesuits among the lower castes was more fruitful. By the close of the seventeenth century the Madurai Mission reported approximately 150,000 Christians. *Abbé J.A. Dubois* (1765-1849), one of the French missionaries sent to replace the Jesuits who were withdrawn, reported that he saw only decay and poverty on the Madurai Field.

### Japan

In 1548 Francisco Xavier was back in Goa where he met a Japanese man named Yajiro. In August, 1549 Xavier, with two other Jesuits and Yajiro as interpreter, went to Japan. Yajiro's translations were defective, but the energetic Xavier, during twenty-seven months travelled extensively, preached often, baptized, and administered other sacraments. Other Jesuits followed Xavier and reinforced this work.

Conditions in Japan were favourable for receiving Christianity. Portuguese traders had already established themselves in Nagasaki. Japan was politically fragmented, the land divided up between some 250 local rulers called *daimyos*. Some of them, happy with their fruitful

Xavier tried to win the l \_\_\_\_\_  
c \_\_\_\_\_ of India; Robert de Nobili tried to win  
I \_\_\_\_\_ from the t \_\_\_\_\_.

(lower, castes, India, top)

By the end of the seventeenth century there were about  
\_\_\_\_\_ Christians in the M \_\_\_\_\_  
M \_\_\_\_\_.

(150,000, Madurai, Mission)

F \_\_\_\_\_ X \_\_\_\_\_ entered  
J \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_ . Other  
J \_\_\_\_\_ followed him there.

(Francis, Xavier, Japan, 1549, Jesuits)

Name two conditions that made missionary work favourable  
in Japan.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

dealings with the Portuguese, embraced the faith preached by missionaries and induced their subjects to do likewise. Oda Nobunaga, the Mikado who was trying to unite the feudal states, was being opposed by powerful Buddhist monasteries, and showed favour to the missionaries hoping to enlist them as allies. The Japanese had learned much from the Chinese and now hoped to learn from these foreigners.

In 1579 *Alessandri Valignano* visited Japan. He was the Visitor, or Supervisor of Jesuit work in the East, who three years later introduced Matteo Ricci to China. Valignano recognized the abilities of the Japanese and accordingly made three recommendations: (1) Missionaries should adapt themselves to local customs; (2) Japanese young men of noble birth should travel in Christian lands; and (3) Japanese should be educated for the priesthood. A seminary was founded, Japanese were ordained, and a few admitted to the Society of Jesus. In 1588 Rome made Japan a bishopric.

Nobunaga was assassinated, and the new emperor Toyotomi Hideyoshi was less friendly to the Christians. In fact he issued an edict against Christianity in 1587 and began persecuting them in 1596. Although Rome had reserved Japan for the Jesuits, Franciscans, Dominicans, and Augustinians were pouring into Japan. There was friction especially between the Spanish Franciscans and the Italian Jesuits, causing the position of the latter to weaken. Likewise Dutch and English traders had arrived and were in competition with the Portuguese. It is probable that Hideyoshi feared this might cause further division in the land. After Hideyoshi died there was a brief respite for Christians. Tokygawa Ieyasu eliminated Hideyoshi's son and placed his Tokygawa family firmly in control of Japan. At first he was friendly to missionaries, but concluded that Christianity was a threat to Japanese unity and proceeded with anti-Christian edicts. Hideyoshi had ordered expulsion of foreigners in 1587; Ieyasu began persecuting them in earnest in 1614. His successors carried the extermination forward by anti-Christian edicts in 1637 and 1638. Multiplied thousands of Japanese Christians were crucified, driven over cliffs, or put to death by other cruel means if they refused to recant.

The growth of Christianity in Japan was phenomenal. Latourette says: "In 1582 churches were said to number about two hundred and Christians about 150,000." He added that after 1600 the estimated number of Christians was between 200,000 and 750,000. Carver says that Catholic sources claimed that they had won as many as 2,000,000 converts between 1549 and 1627.<sup>2</sup> Many Japanese Christians went underground or pretended to be Buddhists while teaching

<sup>1</sup> Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of Christianity* (New York: Harper and Row, 1975), pp. 937-38.

<sup>2</sup> William Owen Carver, *The Course of Christian Missions* (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1939), p. 104.

(Compare your answers with the text.)

What were three recommendations made by Alessandri Valignano concerning mission work in Japan?

(Compare your answers with the text.)

Expulsion of \_\_\_\_\_ began in 1587. Persecution of C \_\_\_\_\_ began in 1614.

(foreigners, Christians)

Catholic sources claim that two million converts were won in Japan between \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

(1549, 1637)

Christian doctrine to their children. When Japan opened its doors to foreigners some two centuries later, Christians came into the open. In Nagasaki native Christians began an enormous church building in 1873.

### Philippines

Magellan, sailing under a commission from Charles V, discovered these islands in 1521. Friendly relations were established with the king of Cebu. Magellan invited the king and his wife to accept his religion. An accompanying priest baptized them and their people, and Magellan planned on his return to bring priests and teachers to instruct them. Some five hundred *Filipinos* received baptism. In this quick and dramatic fashion the first mission to the Philippines was accomplished. Magellan was killed before he left the islands and a second mission did not come until 1564 when Philip II of Spain dispatched *Father Legaspi*, six Augustinians and 400 soldiers from Mexico. These were followed by Franciscan missionaries in 1577, Dominicans in 1587, and Jesuits in 1591. There was friction between the missionary orders, and between the orders and the civil government. Civil orders then forbade more than one missionary order to work in any province.

Roman Catholicism really met no opposition in the Philippines. This was due to the fact that the people were animists and there was no established religion on the islands except Islam among the Moros on the southern isle of Mindanao. The people were docile, simple, and disunited. As in Mexico, Filipinos were not required to give up all their old beliefs.

Methods used by all the orders were alike. They created strong Christian villages with a church, school and orphanage. Jesuits led the way in establishing a strong education system. They founded a Jesuit College at Manila in 1601; the Dominicans ten years later founded Santo Tomás College which became the pontifical university. Spaniards intermarried with the *Filipinos* and by the end of the sixteenth century political control was in their hands. Within a century it is estimated that a million people had been baptized, an indigenous clergy trained, and raised to the episcopate.

No attempt was made to convert the Muslim Moros, but the saturation of the Philippines by Roman Catholicism cut off the northward march of Islam which had crossed to Mindanao from Indonesia.

### South-east Asia

Francis Xavier spent some two years travelling in Burma and southward as far as Java. The Portuguese had colonies with churches and priests in Java and Malacca from 1511 to 1641 when the Dutch drove them out. Church buildings were then used for Dutch Reformed churches or for secular purposes. In Siam (now Thailand) Jesuits had little success in wooing the Buddhists from their religion. The greatest Christian success in

Answer these statements true or false.

When Magellan discovered the Philippines in 1521 a priest baptized the king of Cebu and 500 subjects. \_\_\_\_\_

Augustinian, Franciscan, Dominican and Jesuit missionaries were sent to the Philippines. \_\_\_\_\_

These missionary orders worked in harmony. \_\_\_\_\_

(Compare your answers with the text.)

State three reasons Roman Catholicism met no opposition in the Philippines.

---

---

---

(Compare your answers with the text.)

List methods used by Catholic missionary orders in the Philippines.

---

---

---

---

---

---

(Compare your answers with the text.)

The success of Roman Catholicism cut off the northward advance of \_\_\_\_\_.

(Islam)

After the Dutch drove the Portuguese out of Java in 1641, the church buildings were then used for \_\_\_\_\_ churches.

(Dutch, Reformed)

South-east Asia was in Vietnam.

The missionary who most influenced the work in South-east Asia was a French Jesuit priest, *Alexander de Rhodes* (1591-1660). Arriving in Macao in 1623, he found the doors of Japan closed and turned to South Vietnam where Jesuits had been at work eight years. The missionaries were expelled in 1625 so he went to North Vietnam where he baptized 6,700 converts. He was ejected from North Vietnam in 1630 and went to Macao where he spent ten years. He returned to South Vietnam in 1640. During the five years he was in the capital city Hué there was almost constant opposition. In 1645 he was banned in perpetuity. Rhodes made three contributions to South-east Asia. (1) His precarious position in Vietnam led him to form groups of catechists to whom he taught doctrine and care of the sick. These were effective teachers and their medical training gave them entrance into the homes. By 1658 there were about 300,000 Christians in the two parts of Vietnam. (2) Rhodes mastered the Annamese language and reduced their writing to the Latin alphabet. He developed a simplified written style designed to reach the average reader. (3) After expulsion from Vietnam in 1645 he returned to Europe where in 1658 he organized the Paris Society of Foreign Missions. In 1663, after his death, a seminary was established under the tutelage of this Society for training missionaries. Much of the mission work thereafter in South-east Asia was under the auspices of this Society. "Later on, when France annexed Indochina, the colonial administrators found it advantageous to have French priests and the Catholic Church on hand to help them. . . . After the Philippines, Vietnam is the most Christian country in Asia."<sup>3</sup>

### Africa

Henry the Navigator (1394-1460) was son of John I, King of Portugal, and was made patron of exploration. Henry was also grand master of the wealthy Order of Christ, successor in Portugal to the Knights Templars. His chronicler, Azurara, says that one motive behind Henry's explorations "was the great desire to make increase in the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ and to bring to him all souls that should be saved."<sup>4</sup> Beginning in 1416 his navigators explored much of the west coast of Africa. Under his patronage the Canary, Madeira, and Cape Verde Islands were colonized and missions established. In 1454 Pope Nicolas introduced the patronage system which laid responsibility on Portugal for Christianizing Africa. John II sent an expedition to the Gold Coast (Ghana) in 1482, building a fort and a church. Two years later, an expedition led by Diego Cam entered the

A \_\_\_\_\_ de R \_\_\_\_\_, between 1625 and 1630, baptized \_\_\_\_\_ converts in North Vietnam.

*(Alexander, Rhodes, 6,700)*

Give three contributions Rhodes made to Mission work in South-east Asia and one contribution to Catholic work in general.

---

---

---

---

---

*(Compare your answers with the text.)*

In 1416 P \_\_\_\_\_ n \_\_\_\_\_ began exploring the west coast of A \_\_\_\_\_.

*(Portuguese, navigators, Africa)*

In 1454 Pope Nicolas made P \_\_\_\_\_ responsible for making A \_\_\_\_\_ C \_\_\_\_\_.

*(Portugal, Africa, Christian)*

<sup>3</sup> J. Herbert Kane, *A Global View of Christian Missions* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1975), p. 63.

<sup>4</sup> Carver, *The Course of Christian Missions*, p. 82.

Congo and took hostages back to Portugal where they were baptized.

*Congo.*-In the area just south of the mouth of the Congo River a local chief, his wife and a son were baptized when five missionaries came in 1491. The chief returned to his superstitions, but the son supported the mission, influenced many to become Christians, and asked for more missionaries. Reinforcements began arriving in 1509. A group of local princes was sent to Lisbon to be trained for the priesthood. One of these, Prince Henry, was consecrated the first Bishop of São Salvador. Jesuit missionaries began arriving in 1548, followed by Capuchines and Carmelites.

*Angola.*-In 1520 the Portuguese offered to open up trade in Angola on the condition that the king and his people become Christians. The king agreed, but soon returned to paganism. The King of Portugal sent missionaries from the Isle of São Tomé, but their mission was not successful. Later a king was converted and a thousand of his subjects. The fortune of mission work rose and fell with the attitude of the rulers. A notable conversion in 1655 was that of Jinga, princess of Matamba. She had been baptized in 1622, but relapsed and joined a cannibal sect. When she experienced a genuine conversion her desire was to see all of her people converted. She wrote to the pope urging that more missionaries be sent, but she died without seeing her request fulfilled. However, between her conversion and her death eight years later, some 8,000 professed Christianity in Matanga.<sup>5</sup>

*Mozambique.*-The first missionaries to Mozambique were sent from Goa, headed by Father Gonçalo. They travelled up the Zambesi River baptizing chiefs and many of their people. When success seemed assured, a Muslim plot brought death to Goncalo; Christians were persecuted and the mission dissolved. In 1577 Dominicans penetrated inland burning Muslim mosques. Earlier converts witnessing this renounced their faith. In 1607 Jesuits returned and in 1612 Mozambique was constituted a Vicariate. In 1624 the Jesuits had about twenty missionaries in eight stations. The Dominicans, working along the coast, reported thirteen stations and twenty-five missionaries. The Augustines worked the north coast at Mombasa, which is now Kenya.

*Madagascar.*-This was perhaps the most difficult field encountered in Africa. In 1642 the French Campaign of the East Indies attempted to plant a colony on the island. Discalced (barefoot) Carmelites and Lazarists were sent to do mission work. Climate and health conditions took their toll among these missionaries and among reinforcements which followed. In 1674 natives murdered seventy-five colonists and the rest withdrew.

How was Catholic mission work begun in the area of the Congo River?

---

---

---

(Compare your answer with the text.)

What condition did the Portuguese lay down for opening trade in Angola?

---

---

(Compare your answer with the text.)

The first missionaries to Mozambique were sent from

---

(Goa)

Perhaps the most difficult mission field encountered by the Catholics in Africa was \_\_\_\_\_.

(Madagascar)

<sup>5</sup> Stephen Neill, *A History of Christian Missions* (Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Books, 1964), p. 197.

After only twenty-five years the Madagascar mission was terminated.

Why the discouraging results in Africa during the first century? These factors are obvious: (1) terrible climate and high mortality among the missionaries; (2) the message was often compromised to accommodate a people not prepared to receive the gospel. "In 1650, a missive was sent to Rome asking whether very ignorant and stupid people might be baptized simply on the profession of their willingness to believe all the Church believes. The answer of the Propaganda was that the people might be baptized *in fide ecclesiae*, like small children and those not in their right mind;"<sup>6</sup> (3) too often slave trading and mission work were twin activities of the same colony. Henry the Navigator permitted his captains to buy slaves, but not to capture them. It was reported that between 1575 and 1591, 52,000 slaves were taken from Angola alone; (4) instable political conditions hindered the work. The land was fragmented by a multitude of tribal kingdoms led by a chief or a king. These were often engaged in inter-tribal warfare. The fate of the mission rested largely on the attitude of the ruler towards Christianity; (5) no serious attempt was made to really understand the cultures nor to give the people a written language.

The work was not, however, entirely in vain. When Livingstone journeyed from Zambesi to Loanda in 1854 he found some believers. The gospel had been transmitted from father to son for more than a century.

### The New World

Christopher Columbus sailed in search of new lands not only for Spain, but also for the Church. His name Christopher means Christ bearer; he commanded the Santa María; the first land he touched he named San Salvador which means holy Saviour. His discoveries sparked the advance of Roman Catholicism into Latin America. Providence reserved North America as the future bastion of evangelical Christianity and modern missions. Columbus sailed due west from the Canary Islands. Had he continued on this course he would have landed approximately at Jacksonville, Florida. On October 7, 1492 Martín Pinzón urged Columbus to turn southward. A flock of geese had been seen flying south. The course was changed and Columbus discovered the Bahamas instead of North America.

After Columbus' discovery, other expeditions followed all after the same pattern: discovery, conquest, colonization, and Christianization, in this order of priority. Cruelty and exploitation by colonists, together with the white man's disease, decimated the Indians of the West Indies. Black men were brought from Africa to replace or supplement them in the mines and on the plantations.

Give four reasons for the poor success of early Catholic missionary endeavours in Africa.

---

---

---

---

(Compare your answers with the text.)

The work was not entirely in \_\_\_\_\_.

(vain)

After Spanish discovery the pattern of development was:

C \_\_\_\_\_, C \_\_\_\_\_,

(conquest, colonization, Christianization)

<sup>6</sup> Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, p. 198.

Missionaries accompanied the explorers and conquistadores. Franciscans accompanied Cabral to Brazil in 1500. Succeeding expeditions carried Jesuit priests to establish missions along the Brazilian coast. Franciscans and Dominicans were in Haiti in 1502. Franciscans accompanied Cortés to Mexico in 1523. Cortés issued his famous *requirimiento* (demand) to the Indians to respect and obey the Holy Faith: "I urge and require that you seek to understand and obey what has been told you. . . . If you do this you will do well and fulfill your obligation. . . . But if you do not do this and put impediments in the way, I swear by God's help I will come among you powerfully and make war upon you ... and I will subject you to the yoke of obedience to the Church and their majesties."<sup>7</sup>

Both the Spanish and the Indians found it expedient to make some compromises and accommodations regarding religion. There were many similarities between Indian and Catholic customs and ceremonies. The child-naming ceremony of the Indians was similar to Catholic christening. The Indians had a baptismal ceremony in which they sprinkled with water. They believed in a blood atonement for sin, in an intermediate state for the dead, etc. The Indians, bowing before new images, did not cease to worship their old gods. Their pantheon was only enlarged. On the other hand, the Church, in accommodation, introduced elements of paganism into its religion which still exist in some areas. All Saints Day in Mexico is the continuation of the ancient worship of Teoyaomiqui, or Teomique, goddess of death. Ceremonial dancing, a principal element in Indian worship was carried over into the Church's feast days or festivals. With superficial knowledge of Christianity, Indians were baptized *en masse*. Pedro de Gante (Peter de Ghent, relative of Charles V) wrote in 1527 that he and a Franciscan companion sometimes baptized 14,000 in a day, and had baptized a total of 200,000. Allotments (*Repartimientos* or *encomiendas*) of Indians were made to grantees (*encomenderos*) to use them in mines or on plantations. Queen Isabella commanded the governor of the West Indies to see that Indians were paid, their health protected, and that they were given Christian instruction. Too often the *encomenderos* completely disregarded these conditions. Some of the priests stood between the Spanish and the Indians when they were abused. Outstanding among these was the Dominican Father Bartolomé de las Casas (1474-1566). On behalf of the Indians he went to Spain, won the support of Cardinal Ximenez, was appointed Protector-General of the Indians and returned to the New World in 1516. He was opposed on every hand, but laboured throughout his life on behalf of the Indians in Mexico, Central America and in Peru.

The first missionaries to accompany explorers to the New World were F\_\_\_\_\_ and D\_\_\_\_\_.

(Franciscans, Dominicans)

Both the S\_\_\_\_\_ and the I\_\_\_\_\_ found it expedient to make c\_\_\_\_\_ regarding r\_\_\_\_\_.

(Spaniards, Indians, compromises, religion)

One outstanding protector of Indians from the colonists was: B\_\_\_\_\_ de las C\_\_\_\_\_.

(Bartolomé, Casas).

<sup>7</sup> Charles S. Braden, *Religious Aspects of the Conquest of Mexico* (Durham, N.C.: Duke Univ. Press, 1930), p. 28. Quoted from González Dávila, *Teatro Eclesiástico*, 17th century.

One measure taken by the priests to protect the Indians was to gather them into villages where they were considered wards of the crown. These villages were called reductions (*reducciones*). The word means, among other things, to persuade or subject to obedience. The Indians were thus protected from the colonists and at the same time persuaded to submit to the authority of the Church.

There were also missionaries who championed the cause of black slaves who were being brought from Africa to Cartagena at the rate of a thousand a month for distribution to the colonies. A Jesuit priest, *Pedro Claver* (1531-1654) spent forty years ministering to the survivors who arrived at Cartagena. He fed them, treated their infirmities, and evangelized them. It is estimated that he baptized some 300,000 black people.

The printing press was introduced into mission work at Mexico City about 1535 through efforts of Fray Juan de Zumárraga. The first book was published in 1535. Most titles were of religious nature; some in Indian dialects; but others were prepared as texts for the University of Mexico which was founded in 1551.

Dr. J. Herbert Kane summarizes Roman Catholic Hispanic missions in colonial times as divided into eight principal regions:<sup>8</sup> (1) The Cumaná district of northeast Venezuela. Dominican and Franciscan priests arrived in 1514, established cacao, coffee and sugar plantations and trained Indians in stock raising. (2) Between 1658 and 1758 a hundred reductions (mission villages) were established by the Jesuits in the llanos (plains) south and southwest of Caracas. (3) The Jesuits in 1670 began establishing missions along the Orinoco River through Venezuela into northern Brazil. Capuchins and Franciscans joined the Jesuits on the upper Orinoco in 1734. (4) The Jesuits pioneered the eastern part of Columbia establishing reductions as early as 1629. (5) Capuchins and Franciscans established a mission in Guiana in 1724. (6) The Maynas mission in Ecuador, Peru, and western Brazil began with the arrival of a Jesuit in 1560. Jesuits are said to have baptized half a million Indians there. Jesuit Father *Samuel Fritz* (1654-1724), called the Apostle to the Amazon, spent forty years working with the Indians along that river. (7) Jesuits and Franciscans established missions on the Chaco frontier. The Gran Chaco, a jungle area as large as Spain, between Bolivia and Paraguay, was inhabited by Indians who resisted overtures of early missionaries and murdered some of them. (8) The Jesuits established reductions in Paraguay, the Republic of the Guaraní Indians.

From the first reduction in Paraguay established in 1610, the number grew to about one hundred. The reduction design was that of a church in the middle of the settlement, surrounded by rows of houses. A priest or

Priests gathered Indians into mission villages called \_\_\_\_\_ . Here they were \_\_\_\_\_ .

(reductions, protected)

An outstanding champion of black slaves brought to Cartagena was a Jesuit priest named \_\_\_\_\_ .

(Pedro, Claver)

The printing press was introduced into mission work in Mexico City around \_\_\_\_\_ .

(1535)

List the eight principal regions of colonial Hispanic work given by Kane.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

(Compare your answers with the text.)

<sup>8</sup> Kane, *A Global View of Christian Missions*, pp. 65,66.

priests administered the reduction. Indians were required to tend cattle or cultivate land belonging to the Church, but they could also have their own gardens. The children were given an elementary education and taught arts and crafts. Some literature was produced in the Guaraní language. The greatest weakness of the system was that the Jesuits retained all authority; they did not develop leadership among the Indians, not even a priest. In 1767 the colonies were closed to the Jesuits. In 1773 Pope Clement XIV dissolved the Order of the Jesuits. The work of more than a hundred years crumbled in Paraguay. The same devastating effects of Jesuit removal were felt in all other Hispanic and Brazilian fields where they had worked.

A second blow to Roman Catholicism in Latin America was the independence movement which swept from one colony to another in the 1810s and 1820s. Most new governments were anti-clerical. Many missionaries and church officers abandoned these fields. The Vatican attempted, wherever possible, to salvage its holdings country by country through agreements with the governments, known as concordats.

Roman Catholicism penetrated North America from three sources: Mexico, Spain, and France. In Florida, work was done by the Dominicans, Jesuits, and Franciscans from the founding of St. Augustine in 1565. The number of Christians had grown to 30,000 before the city passed to the English in 1773. Franciscan missionaries from Mexico started work among the Indians in New Mexico in 1542, and in Texas in 1544. Franciscans built missions in California before the arrival of Spanish colonists. *Lord Calvert* (Lord Baltimore) came to Maryland in 1632, accompanied by *Father Andrew White* (1579-1656) and two other Jesuits in search of land and religious liberty. Lord Calvert died before he could establish his colony. The Jesuits carried on a mission some ten years before Father White was arrested and taken to England in chains.

French Jesuits promoted mission work in New France (Canada) along the St. Lawrence River, the Great Lakes, and regions beyond. The French explorer Jacques Cartier took priests with him to New France in 1535, but it was eighty years before organized work was established. Champlain took some Franciscans to Quebec in 1611. In 1635 the Jesuits opened a college at Quebec which sent missionaries abroad, even along the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers. *Jacques Marquette* (1637-75) was sent as a Jesuit missionary to Canada in 1666. After studying Indian dialects he worked with the Illinois until practically all the tribe was Christianized. Later, tribal wars practically exterminated the Illinois. The French explorers Joliet and LaSalle explored the Mississippi basin. France annexed it, named it Louisiana, and it was later purchased by the United States. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries many unnamed missionaries faced winter deprivation, disease, Indian

**Describe the reduction system used by the missionary orders in Latin America.**

---



---



---



---



---



---

*(Compare your answers with the text.)*

**Roman Catholicism penetrated North America from three sources: M \_\_\_\_\_, S \_\_\_\_\_, and F \_\_\_\_\_.**

*(Mexico, Spain, France)*

**French Jesuits promoted mission work in C \_\_\_\_\_.**

*(Canada)*

**List efforts by the French to plant Catholic Christianity in North America.**

---



---



---



---



---

*(Compare your answers with the text.)*

wars and even death to plant the banner of their Church among the Hurons, Iroquois, Mohawks, and other Indians of Canada.

### Home Study Exercise

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

1. Give the names of three early missionary orders and name their founders.

---

---

2. What responsibility did the papacy put on the kings of Portugal and Spain?

---

---

---

3. Why did the pope found (1) the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith and (2) the College of Propaganda?

---

---

4. Name the Venitian merchant traveller who opened China to Catholicism.

---

5. Tell what John of Monte Corvino accomplished in Khanbalik (Peking).

---

---

---

6. Tell of the work of Mateo Ricci in China.

---

---

---

---

7. What led to the expulsion of Catholic missionaries from China?

---

---

---

8. What is your opinion of Francis Xavier's work in India?

---

---

---

---

9. Who introduced Christianity to the court of the Moguls in India and how long did Jesuit missionaries remain?

---

---

---

10. Describe the work of Robert de Nobili in India.

---

---

---

11. Give two reasons why conditions were favourable for Xavier and the Jesuits to enter Japan.

---

---

---

12. List three recommendations of Alessandri Valignano concerning mission work in Japan.

---

---

---

13. How many converts do the Catholics claim were won between 1549 and 1637 in Japan?

---

---

---

14. Name three factors which contributed to the phenomenal growth of Catholicism in the Philippines.

---

---

---

15. Mention two contributions of Alexander de Rhodes to the Catholic work in Vietnam and one contribution to Catholic work in general.

---

---

---

16. List at least four reasons why early Catholic mission work in Africa had little success.

---

---

---

17. Why did the inhabitants of Latin America need protection from Spanish explorers and colonists?

---

---

---

18. Describe the rise and fall of Catholic work by the Jesuits in Paraguay.

---

---

---

**Supplementary activity** (*Levels 2 and 3*). Read pages 57 to 71 in *A Global View of Christian Missions* by Kane and answer the following questions.

1. Name four missionary orders of the Catholic Church which were active before 1600 and six others founded after 1700.
2. With so many mission orders at work, sometimes in the same country, how was competition and duplication avoided?
3. Show how a quarrel between the Franciscans and Dominicans with the Jesuits about 1700 led to the expulsion of some missionaries from China and the persecution of Christians.
4. Describe the growth of Catholicism in the Philippines in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.
5. Describe the treatment given original inhabitants of the West Indies by the Spaniards, and tell what measures were taken to replace these labourers.

**Advanced activity** (*Level 3*).

1. Locate and summarize Catholic missions of colonial times in 8 regions of South America, according to Kane. Use the map on page 427.
2. What two events adversely affected Catholic mission work in Latin America? How?

### **Seminar Discussion**

1. How did maritime exploration in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries stimulate missionary expansion, and to what extent?
2. What did the papacy gain and what did it lose by requiring colonizing countries to be responsible for Christianizing the lands they developed?
3. When did the pope dissolve the Jesuit order and why did he find it necessary to do so?
4. Discuss and evaluate the missionary methods of Francis Xavier.
5. Discuss and evaluate the missionary methods of Robert de Nobili.
6. Was the decision of early Catholic missionaries in some regions to compromise with certain pagan beliefs and practices a wise one? What effect has it had on Catholicism in these regions?