



Teacher's Manual for
Light to the Nations
The History of Christian Civilization

Catholic Schools Textbook Project

April 2010

Dear Catholic Educator,

Thank you for undertaking the education of the next generation of American Catholics in a century filled with both perils and promise. Christ offers our youth a challenge and a hope no other religion or philosophy permits. We, their teachers and parents, cannot allow our children to be ignorant of the origins of the Faith or of the beliefs of other cultures in an increasingly challenging world. We must know our history and teach it to our children. They must know why we are different from our neighbors in the world, and why our neighbors have developed as they have. Teaching history is teaching God's providential care for his people and his promise to the rest of the world. We must teach our children hope!

But as teachers of long experience, our editors have learned that in the matter of teaching history, there is a clear paradox: *Less is more*. Students learn better and learn more when they are taught the facts of history through the stories of the past, the legends of heroes, the tales of noble causes, and the lives of saints and holy men and women. Long lists of facts—names, dates, products, and causes—fade in the memory, but the stories remain and form the character and the understanding of a child. We encourage teachers to tell the stories, to expect the questions, and to offer a skeleton of key dates. What came before what, or after what, is more important to the learning mind than memory of the exact dates involved. All history is really a true and interesting story.

May our books bring both story and facts to life for our students, and for their teachers.

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Introduction

How to Use This Manual

How to Use *Light to the Nations*

In *Light to the Nations*, the authors have adopted a pedagogy different from that assumed by most modern textbooks. The conviction underlying this book is that history is, first and foremost, a story—an enjoyable story, a story filled with drama. We have written this book, therefore, as if we were writing a story—in this case, a story of the origins and development of that unique historical culture that has been called *Christendom*. Our hope is that students, approaching history as a story, will learn to love history and will, thus, retain more historical knowledge than is normally the case with the more customary textbook style.

The difficulty is that the story approach to history often includes more information than a teacher might expect most students to retain. To insist that students retain every detail, every date, would be to undermine a chief purpose of the book—to make the reading history a matter of joy. We want students to approach history in a leisurely fashion, to read it as they would read a story, not a record of dry facts. Of course, one hopes that students will leave each chapter with more than the required knowledge, but this is best left to capabilities of each student. Those historical facts every student should know are listed in the section, “What Students Should Know,” in this teacher’s guide. Beyond these basic facts, teachers should merely see that their students retain the chief outlines of the stories they will study in the book. (A teacher, however, should encourage students to stretch themselves beyond what they assume to be their own capabilities.)

How to Use *Light to the Nations* in the Classroom

We propose that the chief occupation of classroom sessions on the book be spent in having students recite, in their own words, what they remember from their assigned reading in the book. The teacher may call on different students to recount what they have read in the text or to tell what they know about the various characters they have encountered in their reading. This will help students to solidify what they have learned and give them the opportunity to practice their language skills. The teacher may, then, patiently correct any false impressions the students may have or any inaccuracies in their presentations. Such exercises should be seen as merely educational exercises without the threat of grading.

The teacher should help students grasp the major themes of each chapter. To help with this task, we have provided in the teacher’s manual a “Chapter Goals” section that details the major themes of each chapter. Each chapter in the book has, as well, an activities section to help students deepen their knowledge of the time period each chapter covers.

We also recommend that teachers use the timeline provided in the teacher’s manual as a reference to help students make their own timelines for each chapter. After students have completed their own timelines, the teacher may use the timeline we have provided to help students correct and fill out the timelines they have drawn up.

Light to the Nations provides a number of maps and illustrations to enhance a student’s reading of history. A teacher may continue where the book leaves off, bringing into the classroom pictures illustrative of the time period being studied or by showing educational videos. The assignment of fictional works of historical events will also help students get a feel for the time period they are studying. Recordings of period music—such as of the troubadours and minnesingers, Gregorian and Byzantine chant, Spanish and Sephardic music, compositions of the masters of

the 15th–18th centuries—help create for students the “mood” of historical epochs. Learning to sing simple chants or folk songs from these time periods will, perhaps, be even more effective. This teacher’s manual provides a list of suggested works of historical fiction as well as available recordings of period music.

Another Way to Use *Light to the Nations* in the Classroom

Some teachers may find it helpful to supplement the above method of using *Light to the Nations* with readings of the text in the classroom. Hearing the text read aloud can be helpful to students who are more auditory than visual in the way they take in information.

Teachers could assign readings of portions of the text to various students, or read them aloud themselves. After such a reading, the teacher could engage the students in conversation about the information found in the text or discuss with students the meaning of the ideas presented in the text. Such classroom readings should be seen as a reinforcement, not a replacement, of the reading each student does on his or her own. By reading the text aloud, students, too, can learn to pronounce unfamiliar words and, especially, foreign names and words correctly. (This teacher’s manual provides a pronunciation key for foreign names and places.)

Along with the *Light to the Nations* text, we provide an audio recording on compact disc of a reading of the text. A teacher may wish to use the recording in the classroom as a supplement to, or in lieu of, having students read the text aloud in the classroom. A portion of the recording may be played (with students following along in the text), followed by a classroom discussion of the text.

Contents of This Teacher’s Manual

Scope and Sequence

Provides a general outline of the text and the contents of each chapter.

Chapter Goals

Develops the major themes for each chapter.

What Students Should Know

Presents the minimal knowledge of persons, places, events, and dates students should retain. We have provided, for the teacher’s convenience, a brief review for each important fact.

Some Key Terms at a Glance

Puts in one place the various historical terms, persons, events, and vocabulary, with their definitions, highlighted in each chapter.

Chapter Checkpoint

Provides, for the teacher’s convenience, the answers for each question presented in the “Chapter Checkpoint” section at the end of each chapter.

Chapter Activities

Gives suggestions for doing each activity, where necessary, plus explanations and reference material, where applicable.

Chapter Quizzes and Tests

Suggests questions for quizzes for different sections of each chapter, as well as a chapter test. Since our approach in *Light to the Nations* is literary, our quizzes and tests ask mostly short answer or short essay questions. We think it is important that students develop the ability to express their thoughts in complete sentences.

Resources for Further Reading or Investigation

This section gives suggestions for further student reading on each period covered in the text. It provides, as well, sources of recordings of period music.

Timeline

The timeline presents in a linear manner the historical events recounted in this volume. We include some events not mentioned in the book. The timeline is meant to aid teachers in helping students make their own timelines.

Pronunciation Guide

The guide helps teachers to pronounce the foreign words and names found in the text. The teacher should help students pronounce such words correctly.



Scope and Sequence

Introduction: History's Beginnings

What Is History?

The meaning of A.D. and B.C.
Pre-history and history

What Is Civilization?

The Stone Age—Paleolithic and Neolithic
Paleolithic discoveries
The Neolithic Revolution
The meaning of civilization

The First Civilizations

Mesopotamia, Nile River Valley, Indus River, and
Yellow River centers
The contributions of the Mesopotamian,
Egyptian, Greek, and Roman Civilizations
Israel

Chapter 1: A Light to the Nations

Palestine at the Time of Jesus' Birth

Herod the Great
Israelite divisions: Samaritans, Sadducees, and
Pharisees

The Life of Jesus

The Infancy and Hidden Life
Political developments in Palestine
Jesus' public life
John the Baptist
The teachings of Jesus
The Passion
The Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus

Pentecost and the Jerusalem Church

The Twelve Apostles
The first martyr

The Life and Journeys of St. Paul

Saul's conversion
The teachings of St. Paul
The martyrdom of Sts. Peter and Paul

Jesus' Gifts to Civilization

Chapter 2: Emperors and Madmen

Augustus Caesar and the Principate

The principate described
Pax Romana
Augustus, patron of the arts
Despair of the Roman world

The Reign of the Julians

Tiberius
Caligula
Claudius
Nero
The first imperial persecution of the Church
The year of the four emperors

The Flavians

Vespasian
Titus
Domitian

The “Good Emperors”

Nerva
Trajan
Hadrian
Jewish rebellions
Antoninus Pius
Marcus Aurelius
Commodus

The Fifty Years of the Fifty Emperors

The Severii
The Sassanids defeat Emperor Valerian
The division of the empire under Valerian
Gallienus’ Edict of Toleration
Invasion, epidemics, and economic problems

The Reform of Diocletian

Diocletian’s political reforms
Diocletian’s economic reforms
The removal of the Roman capital to the East

Chapter 3: The Blood of the Martyrs

Imperial Persecutions

Why Christians were persecuted
The character of the persecutions
Blood of the martyrs, seed of the Church

The Threat of Heresy

What is *heresy*?
The Gnostics
Marcion
Montanus

Christian Theologians Fight Heresy

Justin
Irenaeus
Athenagoras of Alexandria
Tertullian of Carthage

Founding Christian Schools

Origen, Theologian and Philosopher

The Last Persecutions

The Decian persecution
The “Long Peace”
The Great Persecution

The Triumph of Constantine

Galerius’ Edict of Toleration
The Battle of Milvian Bridge
The Edict of Milan
The founding of New Rome (Constantinople)

Chapter 4: The Christian Empire

Christian Controversies

The Donatist controversy
Arianism
The Council of Nicaea
The trials of Athanasius

The Gothic Threat

Visigoths and Ostrogoths
Wulfilas and Gothic Arianism
The Emperor Valens defeated at Adrianople
Theodosius the Great

The Search for God in the Desert

St. Anthony
Hermits and cenobites
St. Basil of Caesarea

Three Saints Who Moved the Church

St. Ambrose of Milan
St. Jerome
St. Augustine of Hippo
Pelagianism

The German Threat

Stilicho
Alaric and the Visigoths
The sack of Rome
St. Augustine’s *City of God*

The Popes Defend the West

Pope St. Leo the Great

Chapter 5: Germanic Kingdoms in the West

The Germanic World

- Language and social classes
- Germanic law
- Germanic religion

The Visigoths in the Iberian Peninsula

- The Visigoths move into Gaul
- The Visigoths move into the Iberian Peninsula
- The Visigoths and Iberian Roman civilization
- The family of Severianus
- Leovigild, Hermenegild, and Ingunthis
- The Arian Visigoths become Catholic

The Vandals in North Africa

- The Vandals move from Iberia to North Africa
- Genseric
- Vandal cruelty

The First Catholic Germanic Kingdom

- The Franks
- The Merovings
- The conversion of Clovis
- The mayors of the palace
- Pepin the Younger
- Charles Martel

The Kingdom of the Ostrogoths

- The last emperor
- Odoacer
- Theodoric the Ostrogoth
- Amalasantha and Amalric

Chapter 6: Founders of Christendom—A.D. 500–700

Justinian the Great

- Theodora
- The *Nika* Revolt
- Hagia Sophia and Byzantine art
- Justinian's legal reforms
- The reconquest of North Africa
- War in Spain and Mesopotamia
- The Italian wars

Founders of the Christian West

- St. Patrick of Ireland
- Boethius
- St. Benedict of Nursia
- Pope St. Gregory the Great
- St. Augustine of Canterbury
- The conflict between Gaelic and Roman Christians

Chapter 7: The Rise of Islam—A.D. 624–800

Persia Threatens Byzantium

- Dissatisfaction with Byzantine rule in Syria and Egypt
- Chosroes II of Persia conquers Syria and Egypt
- Emperor Heraclius defeats Chosroes
- The True Cross

The Arabians

- Arabian caravan routes
- The Bedouins
- Arabian religion

The Prophet Muhammad

- Muhammad's early life
- The beginnings of Islam
- Flight to Medina
- The Koran
- Jihad*
- Muhammad's teachings
- The character of Islam

The Prophet's Successors

- Abu Bakr, the first caliph
- Mullahs, imams, and caliphs
- Caliph Omar

Islam Expands Beyond Arabia

- The conquest of Syria and Palestine
- The conquest of Persia
- The conquest of Egypt and North Africa

The Struggle for the Caliphate

- Caliph Othman and his assassination
- Caliph Ali
- Ali's struggle with the Umayyad Mu'awiya
- The assassination of Ali
- Shiites and Sunnis

Umayyad Caliphate

- The development of Islamic civilization
- New Islamic conquests
- The development of Islamic sea power
- The conquest of Spain

The Rise of the Abbasids

- The Abbasids overthrow the Umayyads
- The rise of Baghdad

Chapter 8: The Defense and Building of Christendom

Emperor Leo III

- Leo saves Constantinople from Muslim conquest
- The iconoclastic controversy

The Muslim Conquest of Spain

- Emir Tarik
- Don Pelayo, the Battle of Covadonga, and the beginnings of the reconquest

Charles Martel

- Sts. Willibrord and Boniface, and the conversion of Germany
- The Battle of Tours

Muslim Al-Andalus

- The culture of Muslim Spain
- The peoples of Al-Andalus

Springtime of Learning in the British Isles

- Gaelic and Roman monasticism in the British Isles
- St. Bede the Venerable

The Carolingian Empire of the Franks

- Pepin the Short becomes king
- Charles the Great (Charlemagne)

- Charles the Great's wars with the Saxons
- Wars with the Lombards
- The Iberian invasion
- Charles the Great's legal and cultural reforms
- Charles the Great crowned Roman emperor

Chapter 9: The Achievements of Feudalism—A.D. 800–1008

Age of Invasions

- The Vikings
- Saracens and Magyars

Charlemagne's Empire is Divided

- Louis the Pious
- The Partition of Aachen and war
- The roots of feudalism

The Emergence of Feudalism

- Feudal relationships: lord and vassal
- Knighthood
- Chivalry
- The feudal manor

Medieval Farm Life

- Lords, serfs, and freemen
- Farm economy
- Medieval inventions
- The drive to the East

The Growth of Towns

- Town government
- Guilds
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Chapter 10: The Medieval Reformation

Abuses in the Medieval Church

- Bishops and abbots as vassals of secular lords
- Lay investiture
- Simony
- The dark age of the papacy

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- The Truce of God and the Peace of God

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 The Norbertines
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Rebirth of the Empire

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 Defeat of the Magyars at Lech
 Otto bases his power on the Church
 Hroswitha and Hildegard of Bingen
 Otto conquers Italy, reforms the papacy
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 Otto III, emperor and reformer
 Pope Sylvester II

The Investiture Conflict

Emperor Henry III
 The pope's new electors—the College of Cardinals
 Pope St. Gregory VII
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The emperor's struggles with the papacy
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 Alfonso VI and the reconquest of Toledo
 The invasion of the Almoravids
 El Cid Campeador

Growth of the English Monarchy

The Norman Conquest of England
 The reign of William the Conqueror
 King William Rufus
 King Henry I

The reign of Henry II and the beginning of the House of Plantagenet
 Eleanor of Aquitaine
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 St. Thomas Becket
 Richard the Lion-Heart
 King John Lackland
 Simon de Montfort and the *Magna Carta*
 King Henry III and the first parliament
 King Edward I “Longshanks”

The Growth of the French Monarchy

Hugh Capet and the founding of the Capetian Dynasty
 Abbot Suger and the strengthening of the French monarchs
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 Pope Urban II calls a crusade
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 The First Crusade and the conquest of Jerusalem

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The character of the crusader kingdoms
 Templars and Hospitallers

The Second Crusade

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 The Turkish conquest of Edessa
 The failure of the crusade
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The Third Crusade

Richard the Lion-Heart and Philip Augustus take up the cross
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 Richard the Lion-Heart defeats Saladin
 Richard's failure to deliver Jerusalem and his treaty with Saladin

The Failure of the Fourth Crusade

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The Iberian Crusade

The Almohads conquer Muslim Spain and attack
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The Albigensian Crusade

The Albigensian heresy
Count Raymond VI of Toulouse and the murder
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The Last Crusades in Outremer

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The Sixth Crusade and the return of Jerusalem to
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The Eighth Crusade and the death of Louis IX
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St. Dominic and the Order of Preachers

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The election of Pope Urban VI
French cardinals elect an antipope at Avignon
Christendom split between two claimants to the
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Problems in the Church stemming from the
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the weakening of the empire
The weakening of regal authority in France
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The rise of Moscow

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English victories at Crécy and Poitiers
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The revolt of Duke Richard of York against King
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The assassination of Henry VI; Edward VI
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King Richard III
Henry Tudor defeats Richard III at Bosworth
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Centers of the Renaissance

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The siege and fall of Constantinople to Sultan
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The siege of Belgrade

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Columbus and the discovery of America

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The Fifth Lateran Council

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Pope Leo X grants Albert of Brandenburg part of
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The preaching of the indulgence in Germany
Martin Luther and the Ninety-five Theses
Luther’s debate with Eck—Luther rejects the
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Luther’s teachings
Pope Leo X’s excommunication of Luther
Luther condemned by the Diet of Worms
Luther taken to the Wartburg

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Religious radicals in Wittenberg
Ulrich Zwingli
Anabaptists
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Charles the Emperor

Charles V’s wars with King Francis I of France
The conquests of Suleiman the Magnificent
The sack of Rome

Suleiman’s withdrawal after the siege of Vienna
The Diet of Augsburg and the Augsburg
Confession
The formation of the Smalkaldic League
The Peace of Nuremberg
The beginning of Catholic reform—the calling of
the Council of Trent
The death of Martin Luther
The Peace of Augsburg—*cuius regio, eius religio*
The abdication and death of Charles V

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Catherine of Aragon betrothed, then married, to
Henry VIII
Henry seeks an annulment of his marriage to
Catherine
Pope Clement VII delays his decision on the
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Henry’s excommunication and schism
The Oath of Supremacy
The martyrdoms of St. John Fisher, St. Thomas
More, and others
The dissolution of the monasteries
The character of Henry’s schism
The Protestantization of the Church of England
under King Edward VI
The reign of Queen Mary I—the English Church
reunited with Rome
Elizabeth I—the Church of England again
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Pope Pius V excommunicates Elizabeth
Persecution of Catholics in England
The execution of Mary, Queen of Scots
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The sessions of the council
The accomplishments of the council

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- The Holy Office
- The Index of Forbidden Books
- The reform of the liturgy
- St. Charles Borromeo

St. Ignatius de Loyola and the Jesuits

- St. Ignatius’s early life and conversion
- Ignatius’s life from his conversion to his arrival in Paris
- Ignatius gathers his first followers
- The formation and approval of the Society of Jesus
- The work of the Society
- St. Francis Xavier
- St. Peter Canisius

The Turks halted

- The Turkish conquest of Cyprus
- Selim II’s planned invasion of Italy
- Pope Pius V calls for a Holy League against the Turks
- The Battle of Lepanto

Religious War in France

- The Huguenots
- The wars between Catholic and Huguenot forces in France
- St. Bartholomew’s Day Massacre
- The last Valois
- Henry de Bourbon becomes King Henry IV of France
- Henry IV returns to the Catholic Church
- The Edict of Nantes

The Rise of Cardinal Richelieu

- Richelieu’s life before becoming prime minister of France
- Richelieu’s views on kingly authority and the rights of the Church
- War with the Huguenots and the Peace of Alais

The Thirty Years’ War

- The dispute over the crown of Bohemia
- The Defenestration of Prague
- The Bohemian Revolt
- The defeat of the Bohemians; continuing war in northern Germany and the Palatinate
- Christian IV of Denmark’s invasion of Germany
- Wallenstein’s defeat of Mansfeld; Tilly’s defeat of King Christian IV
- The Edict of Restitution
- King Gustavus II Adolphus of Sweden’s invasion of Germany
- Swedish victories
- The death of Gustavus Adolphus at Lützen
- The imperial victory at Nördlingen
- Richelieu and France enter the war on the side of the Protestants
- The French war against Spain
- The Peace of Westphalia
- France’s continuing war against Spain

Chapter 19: Europe Before the Flood**James I and the Divine Right of Kings**

- The king’s conflicts with Parliament
- The Puritans

King Charles I of England

- The king’s conflicts with the Puritans
- The Petition of Right
- Charles dissolves Parliament
- Charles finds sources of revenue outside Parliament
- Charles and Archbishop Laud’s religious reforms
- The revolt of the Scottish Covenanters
- The Short Parliament
- The Long Parliament gains further powers from the king
- The Grand Remonstrance
- The Great Rebellion
- The defeat and surrender of King Charles
- Charles I’s trial and execution

The Protectorate

- Cromwell disbands the Rump and Barebone's Parliaments
- The Cromwell dictatorship
- Puritan laws
- Cromwell's destruction of Ireland
- The death of Cromwell
- The recall of the Long Parliament

The Restoration

- Parliament invites Charles II to return to England
- The coronation of Charles II as king of England and Ireland
- The conversion of James Stuart to the Catholic Church
- Charles II's struggles with Parliament
- The Declaration of Indulgence and the Test Act
- The Exclusion Act and the formation of the Whigs and Tories
- Charles II's conversion and death

The "Glorious Revolution"

- James II becomes king of England
- James II appoints Catholics as commanding military officers and grants religious freedom to Catholics and dissenters
- The birth of James's Catholic son, James Francis Edward Stuart
- The "Glorious Revolution" drives James II from England
- Parliament declares William of Orange and Mary Stuart king and queen
- The Declaration of Rights
- Early Jacobite revolts

The United Kingdom of Great Britain

- Queen Anne and the Articles of Union
- The growth of Parliament's powers under the Hanoverians: George I and George II
- British colonies in North America

The Age of the Sun King

- Louis XIV becomes king of France
- Cardinal Mazarin
- Louis XIV decides to rule France without a prime minister
- Bossuet and the French theory of the Divine Right of Kings
- Louis establishes an autocracy in France
- The arts in the age of Louis XIV; Versailles
- The founding of Louisiana

Louis XIV's Wars

- Louis XIV increases and reorganizes the French army
- The war to gain the Spanish Netherlands
- The war with Holland, the empire, Spain, and several German states
- The war of the League of Augsburg
- The war of the Spanish Succession
- The Peace of Utrecht—the Bourbons established in Spain
- The effects of Louis XIV's reign on French society

Aftermath of Louis XIV's reign

- The reign of Louis XV
- The War of the Polish Succession
- The worsening of social problems in France



Introduction: History's Beginnings

Chapter Overview

- History is the story of God's dealings with humanity. It tells the tale of God's gift giving to fallen mankind and of mankind's response.
- God speaks truth to mankind through the order, beauty, and grandeur of creation, but he also speaks to mankind in extraordinary ways. God gave his word and law through Moses and the prophets, but he spoke in a final and most wonderful way through the coming of Jesus Christ.
- The Incarnation of Jesus Christ was humanity's greatest moment of grace-filled change. It changed history and it changed humanity.
- The Incarnation measures all events that came after it and before it. The years before the birth of Jesus are called *Before Christ*, B.C. The years after the birth of Jesus are called *Anno Domini*, A.D., or "in the Year of the Lord."
- History is concerned with what men and women in different times and places have written about themselves and their societies. Without the written word, there is no history.
- Whatever happened in the years before people wrote about their deeds or the things that happened to them is called prehistory.
- During the Paleolithic (Old Stone Age) period of prehistory, human beings were nomadic hunters and gatherers, but they also began making tools and discovered art. Old Stone Age humans discovered the use of fire, among other discoveries. They worshipped the forces of nature, which they called gods.
- During the Neolithic (New Stone Age) period of prehistory, human beings began to engage in agriculture and domesticated animals. Farming allowed people to settle in villages, some of which eventually became walled cities. Civilization arose from city life.
- The first civilizations grew up along four great rivers: the Tigris and Euphrates (Mesopotamia); the Nile River (Egypt); the Indus River (India); and the Yellow River (northern China).
- The center of civilization along the Mediterranean Sea passed from Egypt to Assyria and Babylon, then to the Persians, then to the Greeks (under Alexander the Great and his successors), and then to Rome.
- The great civilizations gave mankind many benefits, but none of these benefits could finally satisfy the human heart. God did not reveal himself to the great civilizations but to the humble nation of Israel. God made a covenant with the people of Israel, gave them divine laws, and spoke to them through prophets. Finally, God himself became man in Jesus Christ. Jesus' life, sacrifice, and resurrection transformed the story of human life and death.

Chapter Goals

This introductory chapter is merely meant to be that—introductory. In a few pages it covers a vast number of years. It thus does not cover any particular age before the birth of Christ in any complete or detailed way. The purpose of this chapter is as follows:

1. to aid students in orienting the ages of Christendom in the context of broader history;
2. to give them an understanding of key ideas in the discipline of history;
3. to help them understand what *civilization* is and how it differs from other manifestations of human culture;
4. to give them the *feel* for what the history of Christendom is—the culmination of the ages and the unfolding of God's plan for all of human history.

The chapter opens with a discussion of how to reckon time in terms of B.C. and A.D. The teacher should make sure that students know how to count “down” the years before Christ and how to count them “up” from Christ to our own day. It might be helpful for the teacher to explain that designating time as we do is a custom that arose among Christians in medieval Europe and is not the only way to number years. (Muslims, for instance, reckon their years from Muhammad's Hegira—our 622. Thus, the year 2000 in our reckoning is the year 1378 in Muslim reckoning.) Christians so reckoned time in honor of Christ, whom they have seen as the culmination and center of all human existence. The fact that Christ was born a few years “Before Christ” represents a misreckoning on the part of those who determined the B.C./A.D. system.

To help students understand where the Christian ages (and their own time) stand in the long roll of years, it would be helpful to have them draw out a timeline—each section a length proportional to

the time period it represents. Thus, the section of the timeline representing the period from 50,000 B.C. to the birth of Christ would be far longer than the section representing the years from the birth of Christ to, say, A.D. 2010. The timeline could be placed on a wall, and as students progress through *Light to the Nations*, they can add dates and events by writing them on small pieces of paper and affixing them to the timeline.

It is very important that students understand what *history* is—a written account of what human beings have done—and how it differs from pre-history. Pre-history is not, properly speaking, history. An imaginative exercise might help students understand this. For instance, the teacher could ask the students to imagine they are archaeologists of a future time who have discovered the students' classroom or a room in their house. How would the archaeologist determine what was done in such rooms? How would he discover for what purposes the various objects he discovers were used? What could he know about what actually happened in these rooms, what sort of people lived in them, what was happening in the larger community in which they lived? How would written accounts help him in what he seeks to know?

Students should come away from the chapter with a good understanding of what a civilization is and how it differs from other forms of human culture. We sometimes use “culture” to designate the fruits of civilization—as when we speak of fine art and music as “culture” or when we call a refined person “cultured.” But every human society has a culture, consisting of its arts (both practical and otherwise), its customs, its political organization, and, ultimately, its philosophy of life or religion. Uncivilized culture, indeed, is not debased culture. Much beauty and goodness can be found amongst uncivilized peoples. Civilization merely allows for a more developed culture, providing its beneficiaries with more efficient ways of working and greater leisure to pursue the higher arts and delve more deeply into such things as philosophy, science, and religious thought.

Students should become proficient at using maps. It has been said that geography is the handmaid of history—for, after all, historical events happen in *places*. And the character of these places affects the humans who act in them and what they do. A good map book or a set of wall maps should accompany the reading of this text. For instance, *Light to the Nations* provides maps of the first four civilizations but does not show them in the context of the continents in which they lay. Students should be shown where, on a world map, Mesopotamia, the Nile River, Indus River, and Yellow River valleys lay. Students, too, should become familiar with the locations of the lands, bodies of water, and nations discussed throughout the text of *Light to the Nations*.

What Students Should Know

- 1. What B.C. and A.D. are and how we reckon time using these designations.**

B.C. signifies “Before Christ,” while A.D. is taken from the Latin phrase, *Anno Domini*, “in the year of the Lord.” The designation B.C. refers to all the years preceding what was thought to be the date of the birth of Jesus Christ; thus, we count down from the more distant ages to the time of Christ. The year 1500 B.C., for instance, is farther back in time than 150 B.C.—whereas A.D. 1500 is closer to our time than A.D. 150.
- 2. The difference between history and pre-history.**

History is concerned with what humans have written about their times and places. Without the written word, there is no history. Prehistory is an attempt—through archaeology and paleontology—to learn how humans lived and what they did in the ages prior to written accounts or in situations where humans did not write about themselves.
- 3. The meaning of *Paleolithic* and *Neolithic*.**

These designations refer to the divisions of the Stone Age. The Paleolithic (Old Stone Age) period was the time during which human beings lived nomadically, hunting and gathering wild foods. Paleolithic peoples learned to use tools and made art. During the Neolithic (or New Stone Age) human beings formed settled habitations, villages, and cities.
- 4. Paleolithic discoveries and their character**

Neolithic discoveries were not only *technical*, but *spiritual* as well. Old Stone Age people discovered how to use fire and made weapons and tools out of wood and stone. Yet, the fact that they decorated their tools, clothes, weapons, and homes with elaborate carvings and paintings showed that ancient peoples loved beauty. That these designs often expressed religious notions shows that Old Stone Age people had a religious sense.
- 5. What the Neolithic Revolution was and what it allowed for**

The Neolithic Revolution was the discovery of agriculture and animal husbandry. Since these arts provided them a stable source of food, people did not have to live a nomadic life in search of game or wild foods. They could settle down and form villages, some of which would grow into larger towns and, then, cities. The settled life, providing a more certain supply of food, allowed populations to grow and afforded people the leisure to make new discoveries. Ultimately, agriculture allowed for the development of civilization.
- 6. What culture and civilization are**

Culture is the expression of the life of a people or a tribe. It is their “personality,” if you will. Elements of culture include shared customs, a common language, technologies, and a religion.

A civilization is a culture that builds and supports cities.

7. The four earliest civilizations

The four earliest civilizations were in:

- a) Mesopotamia (the valley of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers)
- b) Egypt (the Nile River Valley)
- c) the Indus River Valley
- d) the Shang, on the Yellow River in China

8. What past civilizations contributed to Christian civilization

Mesopotamia and Egypt contributed to civilization such things as mathematics, astronomy, and the technology by which people could raise great buildings and cities. The *Greeks* gave the world philosophy, a rational understanding of the human and natural order. The *Romans* gave the world universal law and justice. From *Israel* civilization received a divinely revealed law and, ultimately, Jesus Christ.

Questions for Review

1. What does A.D. mean?

A.D. means *anno Domini*, “in the year of the Lord.”

What does B.C. mean?

B.C. means “before Christ.”

Do we call the years following the birth of Christ A.D. or B.C.?

The years following the birth of Christ are designated A.D.

Of the two dates 200 B.C. or 25 B.C., which one indicates a year closer to our time? Which date is farther from our time?

Of the two dates, 25 B.C. is closer to our time, while 200 B.C. is farther from our time.

2. What is prehistory?

Prehistory refers to the ages of the human story for which we have no written records. Prehistory differs from history, for the latter is concerned with what we can know from written records of human beings, their deeds and their works.

Why might a historian give us a clearer understanding of the past than either an archaeologist or paleontologist?

An historian can give us a clearer understanding of an historical period because his account is based on written records that describe what happened in that period. Because archaeologists and paleontologists study artifacts, they can only guess what happened during the period they are studying.

Some Key Terms at a Glance

Incarnation: God’s taking on the nature of man in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. From the Latin *in carne*, “in the flesh.”

history: the study of what people did and what happened to them, based on written records of past ages

agriculture: the cultivation of crops and domestication of herd animals for human food and use

civilization: a culture that builds and supports cities

3. What were the important discoveries of the Paleolithic period?

In the Paleolithic (Old Stone Age) period, people discovered how to use fire and made stone and wood weapons and tools. They also engaged in elaborate carving and painting on their tools and weapons.

Of the Neolithic period?

The chief discovery of the Neolithic period was agriculture, which allowed human beings to settle in one place and build permanent villages. With the development of the art of architecture (another Neolithic discovery) and the growth in population, many of these villages grew into towns, some of which developed into cities.

4. How did agriculture make civilization possible?

Agriculture made civilization possible by enabling human beings to settle in permanent habitations, such as villages. Some villages developed into towns, and some towns became cities.

What are the benefits of civilization?

The benefits of civilization are rule of law, the common good, justice, and improvement of life.

5. The first civilizations arose along four great rivers. Please name these rivers and the lands through which they run.

The rivers are:

- a) the Tigris and Euphrates, which formed Mesopotamia
- b) the Nile River, which runs through Egypt
- c) the Indus River, which runs through western India
- d) the Yellow River, which runs through China

6. What human problems did God answer through the gift of Jesus' life and death?

The gift of Jesus' life and death answered the human problems of slavery to sin and how to be free from entrapment by slavery to the laws of nature. That is, Jesus gave mankind a way to become immortal.

Ideas in Action

1. **Imagine yourself as a prehistoric man or woman. You experience various natural forces pleasant things, such as rain, snow, spring breezes, sunlight, and moonlight. You also experience unpleasant and disastrous things, such as hurricanes, earthquakes, tornadoes, bitter cold, sweltering heat, and raging fire. Write an essay or story describing how you, living in prehistoric times, would imagine the gods or spirits, based on your experience of the natural world. What would these gods or spirits look like? How would they act? (Maybe describe certain deeds you imagine them to perform.) Would they be lovable or terrible?**

The teacher may help students to make a list of various natural phenomena, such as those mentioned in the question. Students may then consider the effects of such natural phenomena on the natural world itself or on the human world. For instance, the sun's rays help seeds germinate and bring warmth, which both humans and beasts find pleasant. The sun brings life, because, without the sun, there would be no life but only eternal cold. But the sun's rays can bring discomfort, too—at times, extreme discomfort, as when they cause sunburn; or they can cause destruction, as when they desiccate plants or cause fires. If we were to imagine the sun as a person, what sort of person would it be? Would it be male or female? The ancients often thought of the sun as a "he" because they thought of

“him” as an active principle—a giver rather than a receiver of warmth and life. For this reason, perhaps, in romantic languages, the word for sun is in the masculine gender, while the moon, which passively receives light, is in the feminine gender. Would the sun, if we imagine it as a person, be kindly? If so, how would we explain the fact that, at times, it brings destruction? What kinds of stories could be created to explain these different aspects of the sun’s “character”?

- 2. Imagine you are an archaeologist in the distant future, uncovering the remains of the society of our day. You possess no written records of the time period. Imagine uncovering the remains of the room in which you are sitting—whether it is a classroom or a room in your home. You find remnants of furniture, such as school desks or chairs, couches, and so on. Perhaps you find some religious pictures or a crucifix, and maybe there are disintegrating books. You find cups and saucers and plates; you find televisions and computers, which, of course, no longer work. What could be learned about our society from such an archaeological dig? Would future archaeologists be able to understand the uses of everything they discover? How would they know to what uses the room was given? Would they think us a very religious people? Would they think that we are great lovers of beauty?**

This exercise requires some imagination to help students step back and look at the world in which they live and evaluate it. The teacher could use the exercise as a means of helping students reflect on themselves as part of history. History is not simply what happened in the past; we are living today what will be history to people of tomorrow. How will they evaluate us? If we wish a fair and charitable evaluation of ourselves and our time, what does that teach us about how we should look at other historical periods? There are good and bad aspects to our time—and sometimes we are blind to both the good and the bad. Could this be true, too, for people in other times—did they always understand the moral or practical character of their time? Do we fully understand the moral or practical character of our own?

One of the most important habits of mind we need when studying history is the ability to place ourselves in the time period, and not simply judge it with the benefit of hindsight. Certainly we can evaluate whether what people did in other times was *objectively* good or bad, wise or foolish; but was the character of their actions was always clear to them? Are ours always clear to us? Could they always know what might result from the decisions they made any more than we can know whether what we choose to do will always turn out the way we want it to?

Sample Quiz for Pages 1–4

Please answer the following in complete sentences.

1. What do A.D. and B.C. stand for?
2. Why do we divide history into A.D. and B.C.?
3. Calculate the year for each of the following. (For instance, three years after 6 B.C. was 3 B.C.)
 - a. 2,000 years after 5000 B.C.
 - b. 300 years before 30 B.C.
 - c. 1,900 years after 200 B.C.
 - d. 150 years before A.D. 30
4. What is the name for a scientist who studies evidence of the human past (such as tools and ruins of buildings)?
5. What is prehistory?

Answer key to Sample Quiz I

Students' answers, of course, should only approximate the following.

1. A.D. stand for the Latin words *Anno Domini*, "in the year of the Lord." B.C. stands for "before Christ."
2. We divide history into A.D. and B.C. to indicate that the Incarnation of Christ fundamentally changed history and so is the central event of history.
3. a) 3000 B.C.
b) 330 B.C.
c) A.D. 1700
d) 120 B.C.
4. A *paleontologist* is a scientist who studies evidence of the human past (such as tools and other artifacts.)
5. Prehistory is the period of human life on Earth before the invention of writing.

Sample Quiz for Pages 4–13

Please answer the following in complete sentences.

1. How did human life in the Neolithic period differ from what it was in the Paleolithic period?
2. What was the most important Paleolithic discovery?
3. Mesopotamia is the land between what two rivers?
4. Name one thing our civilization has received from the Egyptian and Mesopotamian civilizations. What was the chief contribution of Greece to our civilization?

Answer key to Sample Quiz I

Students' answers, of course, should only approximate the following.

1. While human beings in the Paleolithic lived nomadically, hunting and gathering wild foods. Neolithic people discovered agriculture and formed settled habitations.
2. How to make fire was perhaps the most important Paleolithic discovery.
3. Mesopotamia was the land between the *Tigris* and *Euphrates* rivers.
4. Mesopotamia and Egypt gave our civilization (possible answers):
 - a) mathematics
 - b) astronomy
 - c) architecture

Greece gave us a rational way of understanding the world, or philosophy.

Sample Test

1. What Latin words does A.D. stand for? What do these Latin words mean? Why do we divide history by A.D. and B.C.?
2. Place the following dates in the order in which they occurred, going from the past to the present: 1935 B.C., A.D. 476, 4 B.C., 3674 B.C., A.D. 1517, A.D. 6.
3. How do both a paleontologist and an archaeologist differ from a historian?
4. Why is prehistory not the same thing as history?
5. Name three of the four earliest civilizations and along what rivers they arose.
6. Name one contribution our Christian civilization received from each of the following civilizations: Mesopotamia and Egypt; Greece; Rome; Israel.

Answer key to Sample Test

Students' answers, of course, should only approximate the following.

1. A.D. stands for *Anno Domini*, a Latin phrase meaning, "In the year of the Lord." We divide history between A.D. and B.C. to indicate *that the Incarnation of Christ fundamentally changed history* and so is *the central event of history*.
2. 3674 B.C.
1935 B.C.
4 B.C.
A.D. 6
A.D. 476
A.D. 1517
3. Paleontologists and archaeologists differ from historians in that *they study such things as artifacts* to obtain evidence of the human past. A historian, however, *concentrates on the written records of the human past*.
4. Since prehistory refers to *the period of human history before the existence of written records*, it differs from history, *which relies on written records*.
5. Possible answers:
 - a) Egypt, along the Nile River
 - b) Mesopotamia, between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers
 - c) Indus civilization, along the Indus River
 - d) The Yellow River civilization, along the Yellow River
6. Possible answers:
 - a) *Egypt and Mesopotamia*: mathematics, astronomy, architecture
 - b) *Greece*: philosophy, the rational understanding of the human and natural order
 - c) *Rome*: universal law and justice
 - d) *Israel*: the Law of God, his commandments



Chapter 1: A Light to the Nations

Chapter Overview

- Christian history begins with the birth of Jesus. His parents, Mary and Joseph, raised him in Nazareth of Galilee. This period of Jesus' life is known as the Infancy and Hidden Life.
- The second period of Jesus' life is known as the Public Life. After being baptized by John, Jesus journeyed through Galilee and Judea teaching, healing the sick, casting out demons, and bringing the message of hope and forgiveness. Jesus taught that love of God and neighbor is our proper response to God's forgiveness and love for us.
- At last, in the Passion and Death, the Jewish leaders plotted against Jesus, paying Judas Iscariot, one of the disciples, to betray him. On the Thursday before the Passover, Jesus instituted the sacrament of the Eucharist in a last supper with his disciples. That night, Jesus was arrested and brought before the Roman authority, Pontius Pilate; the Jewish leaders accused him of blasphemy of God and treason to Rome. Pilate condemned Jesus to death by crucifixion. Jesus endured this terrible torture and died on the cross.
- When the third day had dawned after his death, Jesus rose and was seen by several of his disciples and followers. His followers saw him ascend to Heaven on the fortieth day after his Resurrection.
- Jesus' followers experienced a renewal of their fervor 50 days after his death. On the feast of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit filled them with new life and zeal to carry Jesus' good news of forgiveness to all the world.
- The Twelve Apostles remained in Jerusalem after Pentecost, organizing the first community of believers in Jesus. Peter, the chief of the apostles, convinced his fellow Christians, who had all been Jewish, to admit Gentiles into the Church of the believers.
- Although he at first persecuted Jesus' followers, St. Paul was converted by a miraculous vision of the Lord and became the chief apostle and missionary to the people of the Roman world. His letters (epistles) to the churches he founded are now part of the Christian Scriptures. Paul and Peter together suffered martyrdom in Rome in the reign of the Emperor Nero.

Chapter Goals

Since *Light to the Nations* tells the story of Christian civilization, we begin with the life of Jesus Christ, who is the fount or source of that civilization. The section on the life of Christ, a reprise of the Gospels, should not be approached, at least primarily, as a

devotional exercise or as theology but as an historical account of the life of Jesus. Students, thus, should come away from the study of this chapter able to recount the basic historical events of the life of Jesus. They should come to an understanding, as well, of the wider historical and cultural character of Palestine at the time of Christ. In this connection, the teacher should help students understand the Gospels as historical documents that have related to us whatever we know about the life of Jesus. For, besides being sources of theological reflection and doctrine, the Gospels are as much historical documents as, say, Julius Caesar's *Gallic Wars*.

The same may be said for our retelling of events of the early Church as found in *Acts of the Apostles* and the Epistles of St. Paul.

The teacher should help students to see the life of Jesus and the events surrounding the founding of the Church as a kind of climax or turning point in history. From very humble and unlikely beginnings came this thing we call the Church, the institution that would transform the world. Students should be led to see the wondrous fact that, arising from what the world of the time would have considered very insignificant people, the Jews, came a movement and society on account of which the world would never again be the same. The apostles were indeed unlikely protagonists of what would become a worldwide "revolutionary" movement.

Among the apostles, pride of place should be given to St. Peter, the chief of the Twelve and head of the Church, to whom was given the revelation that Gentiles were to be members of the Church along with Jews. Next and as important is St. Paul, writer of most of the New Testament books, the subject of most of the *Acts of the Apostles*, whose teachings gave Christian doctrine its basic form.

Finally, students should understand that the Christian faith is more than merely personal religion. Its effect has been, certainly, to change the hearts and minds of men and women, but it has also formed and molded whole societies and cultures. It has made our civilization, the society of Christendom.

What Students Should Know

1. The Palestinian world into which Jesus was born

At the time of Jesus' birth, Palestine—Judea, Samaria, and Galilee—were under the rule of the Roman Empire. The Romans had placed these regions under the rule of King Herod. Herod, though a convert to Judaism, was a cruel and tyrannical ruler.

2. The major Jewish religious groups of Jesus' time and their character

The Jewish people were divided into three religious groups—two of which could properly be called "Jewish," but one of which the Jews themselves would have seen as outside Judaism.

- a) *The Sadducees* (meaning "the Righteous"): Drawn from the Jewish aristocracy, the Sadducees were the group from whom the high priest was chosen. The Sadducees were not strict in interpreting the Law and did not believe in an afterlife. They accepted only the Torah, the first five books of the Old Testament, as inspired scripture.
- b) *The Pharisees* (meaning "the Separated"): These worked among the common Jewish people and concerned themselves with questions of practical justice. The study of the Law and the Torah was the center of their lives, though they accepted the other books of scripture as inspired. They believed in an afterlife.
- c) *The Samaritans*: These were descended from Israelites whose kingdom had been destroyed by the Assyrians five centuries before Christ. Because they worshipped God at a holy place on Mount Gerizim and not in Jerusalem, they were not accepted by the Jews. Like the Sadducees, the Samaritans accepted only the Torah as inspired scripture.

3. The four periods of Jesus' life

The four periods of Jesus' life are:

- a) *The Infancy and Hidden Life*: This period extends from Jesus' birth in about 4 B.C. to his entrance into his public life, when he was around 30 years old. Though the Gospels give us some information about this period, little is known about it.
- b) *The Public Life and Ministry*: This period, covering about three years, begins with Jesus' baptism in the River Jordan and extends to his triumphal entry into Jerusalem.
- c) *The Passion*: This period begins with Jesus' entry into Jerusalem and includes the Last Supper, Judas' betrayal, Jesus' trials before the Sanhedrin and Pontius Pilate, and the crucifixion.
- d) *The Resurrection and Ascension*: This period begins with Jesus' rising from the dead on the Sunday after his crucifixion and extends 40 days to his ascension into heaven.

4. Identify the teachings of Jesus

- a) That we are to love God with all our heart and soul, and love our neighbor as ourselves
- b) That we are to love even our enemies
- c) That we are to forgive those who sin against us

5. What special claims Jesus made about himself

- a) Jesus claimed the power to forgive sins.
- b) Jesus said he came to fulfill the Law of Moses—to reveal its true meaning.
- c) Jesus said he was the Messiah whom the Jews had been awaiting.
- d) Jesus called himself the "Son of the Father," the "Son of God"—that is, he claimed to be God.

6. The significance of Pentecost

On Pentecost, a Jewish holy day, the disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit and, speaking in other languages than their own, began preaching of Christ to pilgrims who had come to Jerusalem for the holy day. This was the "birthday" of the Church.

7. Suggested: memorization of the names of the Twelve Apostles

Since it is good to cultivate the faculty of memory, a teacher may decide to have students memorize the names of the apostles. Students should know that the place of Judas Iscariot was filled by St. Matthias.

A teacher may also want students to memorize the names of the women who accompanied Jesus and played a part in the formation of the Church, though not as apostles: Mary, the Mother of God; Mary, the mother of James and John; Mary and Martha of Bethany, the sisters of Lazarus; and Mary of Magdala (Magdalene), the first to whom the risen Jesus appeared.

8. St. Paul and his role in the early Church

Paul was originally called Saul. He was a Pharisee who, in his zeal for the Law of Moses, persecuted the Christians. Saul took part in the stoning of the first martyr, the deacon, St. Stephen, and was sent by the Jewish authorities to Damascus in Syria to punish the Christians living there. En route to Damascus, Jesus appeared to him and Saul, the persecutor, became a Christian.

Paul became a great missionary, preaching the Gospel to Jews and Gentiles throughout the eastern Mediterranean; eventually, he travelled as far as Rome and, possibly, Spain. He called himself the Apostle to the Gentiles because he saw that his main mission was directed to them. Some Christians objected to Paul's preaching, for he taught that Gentiles do not have to become Jews in order to be baptized. Paul taught that salvation was a free gift of God, given by the

grace of faith and transforming the human heart by hope and charity. Faith, hope, and charity, he taught, were necessary for salvation.

Of the 21 epistles in the New Testament, 14 were written by Paul. *Note: a teacher may have students memorize these epistles, or, perhaps, the names of all the books of the New Testament.*

Paul eventually went to Rome, where he was martyred, along with St. Peter, in the persecution of the Emperor Nero. Paul's teaching gave the basic form to Church teaching, especially regarding the workings of God's Grace on the soul.

9. St. Peter and his role in the early Church

St. Simon Peter was one of Jesus' twelve disciples and served as their spokesman. After Pentecost he became the chief of the Twelve Apostles. His name, Peter, means "rock," and Jesus told him, "on this rock I will build my church." To Peter it was first revealed that Gentiles could become Christians without first becoming Jews. Peter eventually went to Rome, where he was martyred in the persecution of the Emperor Nero.

10. What Jesus' gifts to civilization were

Jesus and his teachings allowed the people of the Roman Empire to see God and understand his love for them as their Heavenly Father. People began to see that they were not subject to the fearful old pagan religions and that a civilization could be built upon a new goal—union in love with God. This revelation allowed civilization to follow paths of thought and invention not possible before.

Questions for Review

1. What written evidence do we have for Jesus' life?

The chief written evidence we have for Jesus' life are the four Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

2. What are the four periods of Jesus' life?

The four periods of Jesus' life are:

- The Infancy and Hidden Life
- The Public Ministry
- The Passion
- The Resurrection

Which period or periods do we know most about? Which period do we know least about?

We know most about the Public Ministry, Passion, and Resurrection. We know least about the Infancy and Hidden Life.

Why?

We know least about the Hidden Life because very little is recorded about it in the Gospels, which focus mostly on Christ's public ministry, passion, and resurrection.

3. What does *Eucharist* mean?

Eucharist means "thanksgiving" in Greek.

Why was, and is, weekly celebration of the Eucharist so important to Christians?

The Eucharist was, and is, the common meal of Christians where they give thanks to God for all his gifts to them and where they receive the body and blood of Christ and so achieve union with him.

4. Why do you think the Christian faith spread so quickly?

Possible answers to this question:

- The Christian faith spread so quickly because of the zeal of the apostles and the first Christians in spreading the Faith.
- The Christian Faith gave hope to people. The Faith spread because the religion of the Roman world gave people little hope, sunk as it was in the worship of nature which

Some Key Terms at a Glance

testament: a contract, the covenant between God and Mankind. The covenant of God with Israel recorded in the books of the Hebrew Scriptures is called the Old Testament. The covenant with all mankind made through the sacrifice of Christ on the cross and recorded in the books of the Christian Scriptures is called the New Testament.

Passover: (Hebrew *pesach*) the Jewish ceremonial meal and feast commemorating the escape and deliverance of the Hebrew people from the bondage of Egypt

Eucharist: so named from the Greek word for “thanksgiving.” The central sacrament of the Christian Faith. In the Catholic Mass, the Church gives thanks for Christ’s sacrifice and redemption of sinners by repeating the words of Our Lord and the consecration of the sacred bread and wine.

Messiah: (Hebrew *Mashiach*; Greek *Christos*) the “Anointed One,” a king or royal person

scripture: the sacred writings of a religion. The Hebrew Scripture is what Christians call the Old Testament. It consisted of the first five books, called the Torah, that recounted the origins and Law of the Hebrew people, as well as books of Israel’s history, books of the prophets’ teachings, and literature such as the poetry of the Psalms.

Pentecost: a Jewish holy day of thanksgiving for the wheat harvest. It was held 50 days after Passover (from the Greek word *pentekoste*, meaning “fiftieth.”)

apostle: (from Greek *apostolos*) one sent forth, a messenger

martyr: (from Greek *martyros*, “witness”) a witness, later coming to mean someone who dies rather than deny his faith

could not show them the mercy and love of God.

- c) The Christian faith revealed to people a merciful and loving Father in heaven.

5. What is a martyr?

A martyr is one who is a witness. A Christian martyr is one who dies rather than deny his faith.

Who was the first martyr?

The first martyr was St. Stephen, the deacon.

6. Where were Peter and Paul martyred?

Peter and Paul were martyred in Rome.

Ideas in Action

1. **Attend Mass. Read the accounts of the Last Supper in the Gospels. Then discuss as a class: How is the Mass like the Last Supper? How is it different? What are the major divisions of the Mass? Why do we read Scripture from the Old Testament and the New? What is going on in the consecration? What is said and what is done? How does the Communion of the congregation repeat the early Church’s thanksgiving love-feast meal?**

The Mass is like the Last Supper in that it is a meal with real food and drink. Like Jesus, the priest offers bread and wine, and speaks over them the words that Jesus used: “This is my body,” “this is my blood.” Like Jesus, the priest

then distributes the bread (and sometimes the cup) to all those present. The Mass is different from the Last Supper in that it no longer takes place as part of a larger supper, and it occurs in a church rather than an upper room.

The major divisions of the Mass are the *Liturgy of the Word* and the *Liturgy of the Eucharist*.

In the Mass, we read from the Old and New Testaments as an act of honoring Christ offered in the Eucharist and as instruction for those gathered so they can learn of the saving acts of God both before and after the coming of Christ. The Old Testament points to Christ; the New Testament gives us the full revelation of Christ.

In the consecration, the priest repeats the words of Christ over the bread and wine, turning them into the Body and Blood of Christ. In the Roman Rite of the Mass, after each consecration (first of the bread, then the cup), the priest elevates the species (the bread or the cup) so the congregation can adore it, and then genuflects. In the extraordinary form of the Roman Rite (the “Tridentine” Mass), the priest first genuflects after the consecration, then elevates the species, and then genuflects again. The various Eastern Rites have different customs.

Communion is like the early love feast, for in a spirit of thanksgiving we partake of Christ who unites all believers in himself.

2. **Read from one of St. Paul’s epistles (for instance, Ephesians or Colossians), and discuss what he is saying. Why would he say these things to an audience of the ancient world? What is he saying to people who were pagans? What is he saying to Jewish Christians?**

Suggested passages include: Romans 6; Romans 8: 14-39; Romans 12; Romans 13; I Corinthians 10: 14-33; I Corinthians 13; Galatians 5; Philemon

3. **How does the Church in our day spread the Gospel? Do we have preachers like Sts. Peter and Paul? In what ways can Christians spread the Gospel among their friends and family?**

The Church spreads the Gospel through the preaching of the Word both in and outside of Mass and through religious education. The Church, as always, sends out missionaries to other countries to witness to Christ through preaching and acts of charity. Through the media, priests, bishops, and laymen spread the Gospel. Christians may spread the Gospel by the witness of their lives and through the corporal and spiritual acts of mercy.

Sample Quiz for Pages 17–32

Please answer the following in complete sentences.

1. Which religious group or groups in Palestine at the time of Jesus accepted only the Torah as the inspired word of God?
2. Which religious group or groups in Palestine at the time of Jesus believed in an afterlife? Which group or groups did not?
3. What are the four periods of Jesus' life?
4. Give two key teachings of Jesus.
5. Why did some of the Jewish leaders accuse of Jesus of blasphemy?

Answer key to Sample Quiz I

Students' answers, of course, should only approximate the following.

1. The religious groups that accepted only the Torah were *the Sadducees* and *the Samaritans*.
2. Only *the Pharisees* believed in an afterlife. *The Sadducees* and *the Samaritans* rejected a belief in an afterlife.
3. The four periods of Jesus' life are:
 - a) the Infancy and Hidden Life
 - b) the Public Life and Ministry
 - c) the Passion
 - d) the Resurrection and Ascension
4. *Possible answers:*
 - a) That we are to love God with all our heart and soul, and love our neighbor as ourselves
 - b) That we are to love even our enemies
 - c) That we are to forgive those who sin against us
5. Jewish leaders accused Jesus of blasphemy *because he called himself the Messiah and the Son of God the Father.*

Q.Ed.
“are” s/b
were?

Sample Quiz for Pages 32–42

Please answer the following in complete sentences.

1. What happened on Pentecost? Why is this day so important to the history of the Church?
2. What was St. Paul before his conversion to the Christian faith?
3. What was St. Peter's role in the early Church?
4. Besides St. Peter, give the names of two of the Twelve Apostles.

Answer key to Sample Quiz I

Students' answers, of course, should only approximate the following.

1. On Pentecost, *the disciples were filled with Holy Spirit* and, *speaking in other languages than their own, began preaching of Christ* to pilgrims who had come to Jerusalem for the holy day. Pentecost is important for the history of the Church *because it is her “birthday.”*
2. Before his conversion, St. Paul was *a Pharisee and persecutor of the Christians.*
3. St. Peter was *the spokesman and chief of the Twelve Apostles.*
4. *Possible answers:*
Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholemew, Thomas (Didymus), Matthew (Levi, the tax collector), James the Less (the son of Alphaeus), Jude (Lebbaeus, Thaddaeus), Simon the Canaean (the Zealot), Judas Iscariot, and Matthias.

Sample Test

1. What great power controlled Palestine at the time of Jesus?
2. Why was King Herod called “the Great”? Why was “the Terrible” a better description of him?
3. Who were the Samaritans? What separated them from the Jewish people?
4. Name two ways the Pharisees differed from the Sadducees?
5. Name the four periods of Jesus’ life.
6. From what do we get our chief information about the life of Jesus?
7. Whom did Jesus claim to be?
8. Why was Jesus important to civilization?
9. What is Pentecost? Why was the Pentecost that occurred 10 days after Jesus’ ascension important for Church history?
10. What was St. Paul’s role in the early Church? What was St. Peter’s role?
11. How did Sts. Peter and Paul die?

Answer key to Sample Test

Students’ answers, of course, should only approximate the following.

1. The power that controlled Palestine at the time of Jesus was *the Roman Empire*.
 2. King Herod was the called “the Great” *because he had a long reign and outlived all his rivals*. He was more properly called “the Terrible” *because he was a murderer and a ruler who terrorized his subjects*.
 3. The Samaritans were *descendants of the Israelites whose kingdom had been destroyed by the Assyrians five centuries before Christ*. They were separated from the Jewish people *because they worshipped God at a holy place on Mount Gerizim and not in Jerusalem*.
- Possible answers:*
- a) Unlike the Sadducees, who were drawn from the Jewish aristocracy, the Pharisees worked among the common Jewish people.
 - b) While the Sadducees accepted only the Torah as inspired scripture, the Pharisees accepted other books as well.
 - c) The Pharisees believed in an afterlife, and the Sadducees did not.
 5. The four periods of Jesus’ life were:
 - a) the Infancy and Hidden Life
 - b) the Public Life and Ministry
 - c) the Passion
 - d) the Resurrection and Ascension
 6. We get our chief information about Jesus’ life *from the four Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John*.
 7. Jesus claimed to be *the Messiah and the Son of God*; that is, he claimed to be God.
 8. Jesus was important to civilization *because his teachings allowed the people of the Roman world to see God and understand his love for them as their Heavenly Father*. People began to see that

a civilization could be built upon a new goal—union in love with God.

9. Pentecost was *a Jewish holy day*. The Pentecost that occurred ten days after Jesus ascended into heaven was important for the Church because *it was the Church's birthday*.
10. Paul was a great missionary who taught and defended the idea *that the Gentiles did not have to become Jews in order to become Christians*.

Paul wrote most of the epistles found in the New Testament.

Peter was the spokesman for Jesus' twelve disciples. He became the chief of the Twelve Apostles.

11. *Paul was beheaded during the persecution against the Christians under Emperor Nero. Peter was martyred by being crucified upside down during the same persecution.*



CHAPTER 2: Emperors and Madmen

Chapter Overview

- When Caesar Augustus died in A.D. 14, he left the principate, which survived to rule the empire for five centuries.
- Augustus' successors were both good and bad as rulers of an empire. Four families commanded the empire in the first two centuries after Christ—Augustus' own Julian family, the Flavians, the family of the Good Emperors, and the Severii.
- Tiberius, the second of the Julians, reigned during the last years of Jesus' life. His heir, Caligula, was assassinated by his own guards. Claudius, Tiberius' nephew, proved a wise and successful ruler. But Claudius' adoptive grandson Nero carried the empire to civil war and ordered the first official persecution of Christians in Rome.
- The Flavian emperors Vespasian and Titus worked to restore the glory of Augustus' empire. They besieged and destroyed Jerusalem in A.D. 70–71.
- The so-called Good Emperors were Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, Antoninus Pius, and Marcus Aurelius.
- Pressure from the growing Germanic tribes on the north and the renewed threat of the Persian Empire on the east forced the Roman Empire to increase the size of its armies. Taxation, to pay for the huge armies, began to impoverish the common people who paid these taxes.
- Military commanders declared themselves emperors. Fifty emperors in 50 years brought chaos to the empire.
- In A.D. 260, the emperor Valerian led an army to defend the eastern empire against the kings of Persia. He was captured by the Persians and held for ransom.
- Diocletian, a general of the Danube legions, took command of the empire in 290 and reorganized it under four commanders.
- Diocletian moved his capital to Nicomedia in Asia Minor for the eastern empire, and Maximian moved his capital to Milan in Italy for the western empire. Old Rome became only the symbolic capital.
- Diocletian's attempts at reforming the tax system only made the financial life of the empire worse. Common workers were forbidden to leave their trade or place of birth.

Chapter Goals

The Roman Empire provided a political and legal organization that allowed all the elements that went into the creation of European civilization to survive and develop. Greece could not provide a political

organization that could preserve its civilization and allow it to survive and develop. The Jewish nation was local and parochial; its law and scriptures were considered as the possessions of one people, God's Chosen People—Israel. The Christian Church saw herself as embracing all peoples; but, without the peace and order provided by the Roman Empire, Christian missionaries like St. Paul could not have so easily spread the Christian Faith. The Roman Empire provided the framework within which the Christian Faith could spread and influence (and be influenced by) Mediterranean culture.

In the period of the Roman Empire we find the real beginnings of European civilization. The Romans provided law; the Greeks provided the culture, arts, and philosophy; and the Jews (through the Christian Church) provided what would eventually be the religion of what was then considered “the world.” So important was the Roman Empire that it would continue to inspire the imaginations of both Eastern and Western Europeans for centuries to come. Indeed, the Roman emperor would in centuries to come be seen as the secular leader of Christendom.

Thus, an understanding of the Roman Empire is most important for a proper appraisal of European history. No matter how many nations they were divided into, Europeans for centuries to come would continue to embrace the ideal of that one, international power and authority that was the Roman Empire. That ideal, though greatly changed, is with us to this day.

What Students Should Know

1. Who Augustus Caesar was and what he accomplished

Augustus was the first Roman emperor and the founder of the Roman Empire. His uncle, Gaius Julius Caesar, had been dictator of Rome. After Julius' assassination, Octavian joined with Marc Antony and Marcus Lepidus to form the First Triumvirate to rule the Roman Republic.

This government, however, did not last long. First Octavian and Antony overthrew Lepidus, and then Octavian eliminated Antony. Octavian (named Augustus by the Senate) then set up a new form of government, called the *principate*, over the Roman state

Augustus' rule brought the Mediterranean lands a long period of peace, called the *Pax Romana*. Citizenship in the Roman state gradually extended to all the leading families outside Italy, Roman law brought a uniform legal system to all the imperial lands, and trade and manufacturing united all the corners of the empire.

2. What the principate was

The principate was the remaking of the Roman government by Augustus. Called the *princeps* (“first citizen”) and emperor (“supreme commander”), Augustus ruled the empire with the support and consent of the Senate. In reality, however, Augustus had sole power; the Senate merely did his bidding. Emperor and Senate ruled the empire through officials (a bureaucracy) and the army. The principate remained the basic form of the Roman government for about 270 years.

3. Who the Julians were and what they accomplished

The Julians were the first ruling family of the Roman Empire. They derived their name, the “Julians,” from the fact that they were “descended” from Julius Caesar; that is, Augustus, as the adopted son of Julius Caesar took on the family name, Julius, as well as Caesar. These names were passed on to Tiberius, Augustus' adopted son, and likewise to the remaining emperors of the Julian line.

It was under the Julian emperor, Tiberius, that Jesus preached, was crucified, and rose from the dead, and the Church was founded. The Julian emperor, Claudius, added Britain to the Roman Empire and was a wise ruler. The last Julian,

Nero, however, became a cruel ruler. During his reign a great fire destroyed Rome—an event Nero blamed on the Christians. Nero became the first emperor to persecute the Church. Facing a revolt by his own Praetorian Guards, Nero committed suicide.

4. Who the Flavians were and what they accomplished

The Flavians were the Emperor Flavius Vespasian and his two sons, who themselves became emperors—Titus and Domitian. They reigned from A.D. 70–96. Vespasian worked to restore the old Roman virtues of frugality, self-control, and simplicity and to restore the army. Among the many public works of Vespasian was the Colosseum of Rome. Vespasian and his son, Titus, faced a Jewish rebellion in Palestine, and Titus destroyed Jerusalem and its temple in A.D. 71. Domitian tried to restore the old Roman religion and encouraged the arts and sciences. In the later years of his rule, however, he became a cruel ruler and was assassinated.

5. Who the Good Emperors were and what they accomplished

The Good Emperors were five emperors, reigning from A.D. 96–180, who brought the Roman Empire to its height of power, prosperity, and glory.

The Emperor Trajan restored the morale of the Roman legions and led them in conquests that brought the empire to its greatest territorial extent. Trajan was able to defend the imperial territories from the Persians and the European barbarians.

The Emperor Hadrian was a patron of architecture and the arts and a lawgiver who instituted humane laws. Though he abandoned some of the territories conquered by Trajan, Hadrian strengthened the defenses of the empire, building fortifications and walls, such as the wall separating Britain from the wild lands of what is

now Scotland. Hadrian crushed the last Jewish rebellion in Palestine, led by Judah Bar Kochbar, in A.D. 132–135.

The reign of Emperor Antoninus Pius was a period of prosperity and peace. Antoninus Pius' legions pushed the Roman frontier farther into Germany and Dacia and built a wall to the north of Hadrian's wall in Britain.

The last Good Emperor, Marcus Aurelius, is known as the "Philosopher Emperor," who wrote a famous work of Stoic philosophy, called the *Meditations*. Under Marcus Aurelius, the Roman legions scored victories against the Persians (Parthia).

6. How the empire declined after the death of Marcus Aurelius

After the Good Emperors, the empire suffered under the reigns of generals who sought only power for themselves. Though under Septimius Severus and his sons (who reigned from 211–235), the empire continued to prosper and the legions held the borders against invaders, in the ensuing years, the empire suffered from wars waged between different generals who sought to seize the imperial throne for themselves. Between 218 and 268, fifty different men claimed the title of emperor, either at Rome or in other parts of the empire.

The empire suffered from attacks by German barbarians in the north and the Persians in the East. War and plague reduced the population, and money lost much of its value. The poor suffered from high prices and high taxes.

7. Diocletian and his reform

In 284, the Emperor Diocletian sought to save the empire by political and economic reforms. In this reform of the empire, Diocletian effectively ended Augustus' principate.

Diocletian divided the empire into eastern and western parts, each part ruled by an emperor, called an *Augustus*. Each Augustus had a *Caesar*

as an assistant. Diocletian became Augustus of the East (and the chief Augustus in the empire), and moved his capital from Rome to Nicomedia in Asia Minor.

Diocletian increased the number of provinces in the empire from 50 to 100 so that none of them would be large enough to make serious trouble for the emperor.

Diocletian tried to ease the hardships of the poor by setting a limit above which prices and wages could not rise. But he also forbade people to change their jobs and to move from region to region. Maintaining a large army was very expensive and required high taxes. And Diocletian's taxes angered many people.

Questions for Review

1. What is a “triumvirate”?

A triumvirate is the rule of three men.

Who made up the Second Triumvirate?

Octavian, Marc Antony, and Marcus Lepidus

2. What was the principate?

The principate was the form of government established by Augustus to rule the empire. The two governing authorities in the principate were the *princeps*/emperor and the Senate.

Who was the head of government in the principate?

The head of government in the principate was the emperor.

3. What was the Senate of Rome?

The Senate was the body of elected aristocrats or patricians who governed Rome.

How did its role in governing the Roman state change after Augustus?

Before Augustus, the Senate basically ruled Rome and the empire. Under Augustus, the

Senate was supposed to govern the empire along with the emperor. In reality, the Senate simply did the emperor's bidding.

4. Who were the good emperors and who were the bad?

This question does not require an exhaustive listing. The teacher might be content with only examples of good emperors and bad.

Good emperors: Augustus, Tiberius, Claudius, Vespasian, Titus, Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, Antoninus Pius, Severus, Diocletian

Bad emperors: Caligula, Nero, Domitian, Commodus

Why are they now thought of as “good or bad”?

In evaluating the answers to this question, the teacher should judge whether students have supported their answers with facts from the text.

Possible answers may include:

- Good emperors were those who worked for the good of the empire and not just to gain power, while bad emperors sought only to increase their own power.
- Good emperors brought prosperity to the empire, while bad emperors brought poverty.
- Good emperors extended the boundaries of the empire, while bad emperors weakened the empire's ability to defend itself.

5. What were some of the signs that the Roman Empire was breaking apart?

- civil war between generals
- invasions from barbarians in the north and the Persians in the east
- plague
- imperial money lost its value
- high taxes and prices that hurt the common people

Some Key Terms at a Glance

Senate: the body of elected aristocrats or patricians that governed Rome. After Augustus, the Senate lost its powers to the emperors.

principate: the new organization of government begun by Augustus, giving real power to the emperor or *princeps* (“first citizen”)

emperor: “commander in chief,” “supreme commander”; title of a commander of several legions, given by the Senate first to Augustus and then held by all his successors

Augustus: title given by the Roman Senate to Octavian, nephew of Julius Caesar and founder of the principate

legion: the name of a division of the Roman army, numbering about five thousand soldiers. Several legions would be combined into an army commanded by an *imperator* or “general.”

Caesar: family name of Gaius Julius Caesar. The name was taken as a title by all succeeding emperors.

Pax Romana: the “Roman Peace,” a long period of relative peace in the Mediterranean world, lasting from 27 B.C. to A.D. 180

6. How did Diocletian change the government of the empire?

Diocletian brought an end to the principate. He divided the empire into eastern and western parts, each part ruled by an emperor, called an Augustus. Each Augustus had a “Caesar” as an assistant.

7. Why was Diocletian unsuccessful in reforming the empire?

Diocletian could not ease the hardships suffered by the poor. Though he strengthened the army, life in the empire only became harder because of the taxes and other burdens he placed on the citizens to support the army.

- the territorial extent of the empire and the manpower necessary to keep the peace from Britain to Palestine
- the immense stretch of border on the north requiring defense, as well as the eastern boundary with Persia
- the very diverse ethnic makeup of the empire

2. Research these questions: Why was assassination a fear for emperors after Augustus? Which emperors were in fact assassinated?

This activity will require independent research outside the classroom. The teacher could assign different periods of Roman history to different students or groups of students for investigation.

3. Compile a class timeline display of the emperors and their dates. Find any portraits of the emperors that may exist.

Information for this activity can be found at a library, in encyclopedias, or on the Internet.

Ideas in Action

1. Discuss what might have been some difficulties of ruling an empire like Rome. Why was the job too big for one man?

Some points to consider in relation to this activity:

Sample Quiz for Pages 47–56

Please answer the following in complete sentences.

1. Who was Augustus' (Octavian's) famous uncle? Was this uncle the first Roman emperor? Please explain.
2. What was the name of the government set up by Octavian, Marc Antony, and Marcus Lepidus?
3. What is the name for the government set up by Augustus over the Roman Empire? What were Augustus' titles?
4. What is the name for the long period of peace Augustus brought to the Mediterranean lands?
5. Who was the Julian emperor who added Britain to the empire?
6. Which Julian emperor blamed the burning of Rome on the Christians?
7. Which of the emperors faced the Jewish rebellion and destroyed the temple in Jerusalem in A.D. 71?

Answer key to Sample Quiz I

Students' answers, of course, should only approximate the following.

1. Augustus' famous uncle was *Julius Caesar*. Julius Caesar was *not the first emperor*, but was *dictator of Rome*.
2. The name of the government set up by Octavian, Marc Antony, and Marcus Lepidus was *the Second Triumvirate*.
3. The name of the government set up by Augustus was *the principate*. Augustus' titles were *princeps* ("first citizen") and *emperor* ("supreme commander.")
4. The name for the long period of peace Augustus brought to the Mediterranean world was the *Pax Romana* ("Roman Peace").
5. The emperor who added Britain to the empire was *Claudius*.
6. The emperor who blamed the fire of Rome on the Christians was *Nero*.
7. The emperor who faced the Jewish rebellion was *Vespasian*. (*Students may also mention Titus, who directed the war against Jerusalem but was not yet emperor.*)

Sample Quiz for Pages 57–65

Please answer the following in complete sentences.

1. What is the name given to the emperors who brought the Roman Empire to the height of its prosperity and power?
2. Which emperor built the first wall separating Britain from what is now Scotland?
3. Which emperor is better known for his work, the *Meditations*, than for what he did as emperor?
4. Which emperor brought the Roman Empire to its greatest territorial extent?
5. Name one of the evils that afflicted the empire beginning in the mid-third century.
6. Who was the emperor who ended Augustus' principate, setting up a new form of government to rule the empire?

Answer key to Sample Quiz II

Students' answers, of course, should only approximate the following.

1. The name given to the emperors who brought the Roman Empire to the height of its prosperity and power is *the Good Emperors*.
 2. *Hadrian* was the emperor who built the wall separating Britain from Scotland.
 3. *Marcus Aurelius* is the emperor better known for writing the *Meditations* than for what he did as emperor.
 4. *Trajan* is the emperor who brought the Roman Empire to its greatest territorial extent.
5. *Possible Answers:*
 - a) wars waged between generals seeking to seize the imperial throne for themselves
 - b) attacks by German barbarians in the north
 - c) attacks by the Persians in the East
 - d) war
 - e) plague
 - f) debased currency
 - g) high prices for goods
 - h) high taxes
 6. The emperor who ended the principate was *Diocletian*.

Sample Test

1. What role did the Senate play in Augustus Caesar's principate? Did emperor and Senate actually share power in the Roman government?
2. What role did officials in the bureaucracy play in governing the empire during Augustus' reign?
3. Name two benefits the Roman Empire brought to the Mediterranean world?
4. What was the *Pax Romana*?
5. Under what emperor was Jesus Christ crucified?
6. Why did Emperor Nero persecute the Christians?
7. Why do we call the emperors from Trajan to Marcus Aurelius the "Good Emperors"?
8. List three evils that afflicted the Roman Empire after the time of Septimius Severus and his sons.
9. Describe what Diocletian did to reform the government of the empire.

Answer key to Sample Test

Students' answers, of course, should only approximate the following.

1. In the principate, *the Senate was supposed to advise the emperor and consent to laws. It was supposed to be co-ruler of the empire. In reality, the Senate simply did the emperor's bidding. The emperor was the sole power in the empire.*
2. The role of the bureaucracy was *to carry on the day-to-day governance of the empire's vast territories.*
3. *Possible answers:*
 - a) citizenship in the Roman state
 - b) a uniform legal system for all the imperial lands
 - c) economic prosperity
4. *The Pax Romana was the long period of peace Augustus brought to the Mediterranean world.*
5. *Jesus was crucified under Tiberius.*
6. *Nero persecuted the Christians because he needed to find a scapegoat on which to blame the Great Fire that destroyed Rome.*
7. *We call these emperors the "Good Emperors" because they brought the Roman Empire to its height of power, prosperity, and glory.*
8. *Possible answers:*
 - a) wars waged between generals seeking to seize the imperial throne for themselves
 - b) attacks by German barbarians in the north
 - c) attacks by the Persians in the East
 - d) war
 - e) plague
 - f) debased currency
 - g) high prices for goods
 - h) high taxes
9. *Diocletian divided the empire into eastern and western halves. Each part of the empire had its own emperor, called an "Augustus," who was assisted by a "Caesar." Diocletian increased the number of provinces from 50 to 100 so that no one of them could cause serious trouble for the emperor.*



CHAPTER 3: The Blood of the Martyrs

Chapter Overview

- Roman officials saw the Christians' refusal to acknowledge the emperor as a god and pay him worship as a possible source of revolt and civil disorder.
- Domitian, the first emperor to call himself a god during his own lifetime, ordered the persecution of Christians as atheists because they refused to worship the Roman gods and the emperor.
- Local persecutions of Christians occurred under the "Good Emperors," though the Emperor Trajan issued an edict so that no one could be condemned merely for being a Christian.
- The early Church was threatened not just by persecutions, but by heresy. Early heresies were Gnosticism, Marcionism, and Montanism.
- Christian theologians rose up to defend the Faith against heretics. These theologians included St. Justin Martyr, St. Irenaeus of Lyons, St. Athenagoras of Alexandria, and Tertullian of Carthage.
- Origen of Alexandria was an early Christian who tried to explain divine revelation in light of Greek philosophy. He became one of the most famous writers of his time, read by Christians and pagans alike.
- After a period of some 40 years of peace, the Emperor Diocletian initiated the most brutal persecution of Christians to that time.
- After seeing in a dream a strange sign and hearing the words, "In this, conquer," Constantine defeated his rival in battle and became Augustus of the Western Roman Empire. He and Licinius, the Augustus of the East, issued the Edict of Milan in 313, granting religious freedom to everyone in the empire, including the Christians.
- After becoming sole ruler of the empire, Constantine established his capital at Byzantium, calling it *Nova Roma*, "New Rome."

Chapter Goals

This chapter tells the story of how the Church grew from what appeared to be an insignificant Jewish sect to become a force that shook imperial counsels and, eventually, won the endorsement of one of the greatest of the Roman emperors. It is an amazing story. Persecuted, despised, and rent by divisions within its very ranks, the Church would, in the end, conquer the very social order that had sought to destroy it. And it did not do this by arms or political power, but by the example of brave endurance of suffering and of love.

In presenting this time period to students, the teacher should try to help them to comprehend what

it must have been like to face the threat of torture and death for what one believes. What sort of conviction did this require? What sort of courage? Why was martyrdom so powerful a witness? Would it be an equally powerful witness today?

Yet, the Church was not without its own interior struggles—in fact, it underwent the same interior struggles that it would confront in all subsequent ages of its history. Heresy afflicted the Church almost immediately after Pentecost. And the Church, as in future ages, developed reasoned responses to the challenge of heresy, upholding the importance and centrality of truth.

Among the earliest heresies, Gnosticism would prove to be one of the most persistent. We will find it, in various forms, throughout the history of the Church.

What Students Should Know

1. Why imperial authorities persecuted the Christians

Christians refused to acknowledge the emperor as a god and worship him. Roman officials began to see this refusal as a possible source of revolt and civil disorder. Some Christians refused to serve in the army or kill other men. The Roman authorities, thus, saw Christians as undermining legitimate authority and the social order.

2. The character of early persecutions

Though the emperors Nero and Domitian ordered persecutions against Christians, the early persecutions against them (until about the year 250) were mostly local in character, instigated by local authorities, not ordered by the emperors themselves.

3. What drew pagans to the Church?

Despite the bitter persecutions against the Christians, more and more people converted to

the Church. They were drawn by the example of the courage of the martyrs.

Along with Christian courage, the Christian spirit of mutual love and brotherly charity impressed the pagans.

4. What heresy is. Why it was a danger to the Church. How heresy helped in the development of the Church.

A heresy is a false teaching, one that emphasizes part of the received faith and ignores or denies the rest of the received tradition.

Heresy was a greater threat to the Church than persecution, because, while persecution was directed toward the body, heresy struck at the mind and soul.

Heresies, however, gave the Church the opportunity to define and clarify her teachings. They gave the Church the opportunity to come to a deeper and better understanding of divine revelation.

5. What Gnosticism was

Gnosticism was an early Christian heresy that tried to combine Christian revelation with pagan mythologies. Gnostics thought the material world (including the human body) is evil and a prison for the pure spirit. The spirit must be liberated from the material world by divine power.

6. Who Marcion and Montanus were and what they taught

Marcion was a heretical teacher who lived from the end of the first century to the middle of the second. He held that Jesus taught a God of love who was different from the Old Testament God, who was a false god. Marcion rewrote and edited both the New Testament and the Old, removing most of the Hebrew books from the latter and the harsher moral passages from the former.

Montanus was a Christian teacher and evangelist who rejected the use of Greek philosophy in the task of understanding Christian revelation. He taught that Christians had to follow a severe ascetic life. He eventually claimed that his teachings had the same authority as Scripture and that he was a prophet of the Holy Spirit. His followers, called Montanists, separated from the Church and formed their own sect.

7. Who Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, and Tertullian of Carthage were

These three men were theologians who wrote in defense of the Christian Faith.

Justin Martyr wrote defenses of the Faith against pagans; the Jewish scholar, Trypho; and Marcion. Justin tried to show that the Christian faith is not opposed to Greek philosophy.

Irenaeus was bishop of Lyons in Gaul. His most important work was *Adversus Haereses* (“Against Heresies”), in which he primarily argued against Gnosticism. In this work he witnessed to the unique authority of the bishop of Rome in the Church.

Tertullian defended the Church against the pagans. Educated in philosophy and rhetoric, he at first used philosophy in defense of the Christian Faith. Eventually, he rejected philosophy. Tertullian ended up joining the Montanists, and then splitting from them to found his own sect.

8. The early Christian attitude toward Greek philosophy

Some Christians thought they should avoid Greek philosophy, because it was pagan. Other Christians, however, thought Greek philosophy, if understood properly, could lead to a deeper understanding of Christian revelation. In consequence, bishops founded schools in the empire’s major cities, and Christian writers joined the intellectual life of the empire.

9. Who Origen was and why he was important

Origen was perhaps the greatest Christian philosopher of the first three centuries of the Church’s history. As a young man, he had mastered Platonic philosophy and worked to develop better the connection between Christian revelation and pagan thought. Though he held opinions that later would be declared heretical, Origen’s works have been used by some of the greatest Church Fathers and influence the Church to this day.

10. Why, beginning in the mid-third century, persecutions against Christians became empire-wide instead of just local

By the middle of the third century, the Christian Faith had become intellectually respectable and had made converts not only among the poorer classes but among the highest circles of society. The imperial government could no longer merely ignore the Christian faith.

Because the empire was undergoing hardships by the middle of the third century, the emperors insisted on citizen loyalty to the office of emperor and the religion of the empire. To show their loyalty, citizens had to sacrifice to the emperors and the pagan gods—which the Christians refused to do. Because of this, Emperor Decius ordered an empire-wide persecution of them.

11. What the Edict of Toleration was and how it was broken

The Edict of Toleration was a law issued by Emperor Gallienus in 260 which halted persecutions against Christians. This edict was in place for about 40 years, a period called the “Long Peace.”

The Long Peace ended in 303 when Emperor Diocletian and his “Caesar,” Galerius, commenced a bitter persecution, called the “Great Persecution,” against the Church. This perse-

cution lasted until 311, when Galerius issued his own Edict of Toleration, freeing Christian prisoners, allowing Christian assemblies, and removing penalties for refusing to sacrifice to the gods. This edict marked the end of the last imperial persecution against the Church.

12. Who Constantine was and what he accomplished

Constantine was the son of the Caesar of the West, Constantius. In 306, Roman troops in Britain proclaimed Constantine Caesar. In 312, he marched into Italy to establish himself as Augustus of the West against Maxentius, who was in Rome. Before engaging Maxentius in battle, Constantine saw in a vision or dream a Chi Rho in the sky and Greek words, saying, “In this sign you will conquer.” He ordered the symbol painted on all his troops’ shields. At the Battle of the Milvian Bridge in 312, Constantine defeated Maxentius and became Augustus of the West.

In 313, with Licinius, Constantine issued the Edict of Milan, which granted freedom of religion to all groups in the empire, making special mention of Christians.

In 324, Constantine became sole ruler of the empire. Wishing to move his capital to the East, Constantine chose the city of Byzantium, on the Bosphorus. There he built a new city, calling it Nova Roma. Later generations named it Constantinople.

Though he was not baptized until his death day, Constantine was a Christian catechumen. He was thus the first Christian Roman emperor.

Questions for Review

1. The emperors persecuted the Christians to make sure there would be fewer of them, but Tertullian said, “The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church.” Why did persecution increase the number of Christians?

Persecution increased the number of Christians because people were impressed by the courage shown by the Christians.

2. When and under what emperor did the first imperial persecution occur?

The first empire-wide persecution ordered by an emperor began under the Emperor Decius in 250.

3. What did Gnostics teach?

The Gnostics taught that the material world (including the human body) is evil and a prison for the pure spirit. The spirit must be liberated from the material world by divine power.

4. What did Montanists teach?

Montanists taught that Greek philosophy was useless in understanding Christian revelation. They taught that Christians had to follow a severe ascetic life. Their founder, Montanus, claimed that his teachings had the same authority as Scripture and that he was a prophet of the Holy Spirit.

5. Why did Diocletian persecute the Christians?

The occasion for the persecution under Diocletian was the accusation that Christians had used a magic spell to spoil a sacrifice at which the emperor had been present. Diocletian persecuted Christians because they would not obey him and follow the imperial religion and sacrifice to the gods.

Why is his persecution called the Great Persecution?

The persecution is called “great” it was the most brutal persecution in the history of the Church to that time.

6. What sign did Constantine see before going into battle?

Constantine saw the Chi Rho.

Some Key Terms at a Glance

heresy: a teaching that emphasizes part of the received faith and ignores or denies the rest of the received tradition; a false teaching. (From Greek *hairesis*, a “choice,” a “faction.”)

Marcionism: heretical sect founded by Marcion that rejected the Old Testament and most of the New. Marcion taught that the God of the Old Testament was not the God of Love revealed in the New Testament.

Gnosticism: one of the most powerful heresies in the early Church. Gnostics claimed that there

is a secret knowledge (Greek *gnosis*) necessary for salvation. Most Gnostics held the material world to be evil and a prison for the soul.

Montanism: heretical sect, founded by Montanus, which held that only severe asceticism and strict adherence to the divine law would save a soul

Edict of Milan: edict of toleration of all religions in the Roman Empire promulgated by Constantine and Licinius in 313. The Edict of Milan granted legal status to Christians.

What did it stand for?

The Chi Rho represented the first two letters in the Greek word *Christos* (Xp).

Ideas in Action

1. The 20th century, it has been said, had more Christian martyrs than any other century since the birth of Christ. Do some research to discover in what countries and when in the 20th century persecution of Christians occurred. Why were Christians persecuted in these lands? Does persecution of Christians still occur in our time? If so, where, when, and why does it happen?

The teacher may want to assign to individual students or groups of students the study of particular persecutions according to where they occurred. In the groups, individual students could report on different aspects of the persecution.

2. Prepare presentations or reports on individual martyrs.

Sources for information on martyrs include the *Catholic Encyclopedia* (available on the Internet) and Butler's *Lives of the Saints*.

3. Discuss whether Christians suffer persecution in our own country. If so, describe the persecution Christians suffer in our country; how does it differ from the Roman persecutions? If not, why are Christians in our country not persecuted?

This exercise can help students reflect on the various forms persecution can take. Does it always entail torture, imprisonment, or death? Is persecution always an activity carried out by a government? Or can individuals and families or other small groups persecute?

Sample Quiz for Pages 69–76

Please answer the following in complete sentences.

1. Give one reason why Christians were persecuted in the Roman Empire.
2. What was it about the persecuted Christians that drew more people into the Church?
3. What do we call a teaching that emphasizes part of the received Faith and ignores or denies the rest of the received tradition?
4. What early group taught that the material world is evil and only the spirit is good?
5. What teacher said the God of the Old Testament differed from the God of the New Testament?
6. What early Christian teacher wrote the work *Adversus Haereses* (“Against Heresies”)?
7. What early Christian teacher defended the Church against the pagans and heretics but himself eventually left the Church to join a heretical sect?

Answer key to Sample Quiz I

Students’ answers, of course, should only approximate the following.

1. Possible answers:
 - a) Christians refused to offer sacrifice to the emperor or the pagan gods.
 - b) Some Christians refused to serve in the Roman army.
 - c) Authorities feared the Christian Faith could undermine legitimate authority and the social order.
2. People were drawn by the example of *the martyrs’ courage* in facing torture and death for the sake of Christ.
3. We call such a teaching a *heresy*.
4. The group that taught that the material world is evil and only the spiritual world good was *the Gnostics*.
5. The teacher who taught that the God of the Old Testament differed from the God of the New Testament was *Marcion*.
6. The Christian teacher who wrote the *Adversus Haereses* was *St. Irenaeus of Lyons*.
7. The Christian teacher who eventually joined a heretical sect was *Tertullian*.

Sample Quiz for Pages 76–85

Please answer the following in complete sentences.

1. Who was the early Christian writer who became an authority on the philosophy of Plato and whose works were widely read by Christians and pagans alike?
2. Who was the Roman emperor who ordered an empire-wide persecution of the Christians?
3. What was the “Long Peace”?
4. What emperor brought an end to the Long Peace?
5. What emperor ended the Great Persecution?
6. In what battle did Constantine defeat Maxentius and become Augustus of the West? When was this battle fought?
7. What was the law issued by Constantine granting freedom of worship to the Christians? When was it proclaimed?
8. What was the name Constantine gave to his new capital city in the East? What did later generations call it?

Answer key to Sample Quiz II

Students' answers, of course, should only approximate the following.

1. The Christian writer who was widely read by Christians and pagans alike was *Origen*.
2. The emperor who ordered an empire-wide persecution of the Christians was *Decius*.
3. The Long Peace was a period of about 40 years after the *Edict of Toleration* in which Christians were not persecuted.
4. *Emperor Diocletian* brought an end to the Long Peace.
5. *Emperor Galerius* ended the Great Persecution.
6. Constantine defeated Maxentius in *the Battle of the Milvian Bridge* in 312.
7. The law that granted freedom of religion to the Christians was *the Edict of Milan*. It was proclaimed in 313.
8. Constantine called his new capital *Nova Roma*. Later generations called it *Constantinople*.