

AN OUTLINE HISTORY OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

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600s

1. cultural background and Church-state relations

- 1) Muhammad (c 570-632)
- 2) Islam invades north Africa: African Christianity is destroyed

2. heresies and councils

- a. 680-81: Council of Constantinople III: monotheletism (Son's will replaces Jesus' human will)
- b. 692: the west-east split is furthered by the Synod in Trullo (called by the east the Quinisext Council), which meets in Constantinople to establish disciplinary canons (215 bishops attend, all eastern)
 - 1) its 102 canons condemn several western practices
 - a) fasting on certain Saturdays during the year
 - b) celebrating Mass on weekdays in Lent
 - c) omitting "alleluia" in Lent
 - d) depicting Christ as a lamb
 - e) having five minor orders instead of two (the synod recognizes lectors and cantors but says porters, exorcists, and acolytes are included in the subdiaconate)
 - f) saying marriage with a heretic is unlawful but not invalid (the synod says it is invalid)
 - g) insisting on celibacy by priests and deacons
 1. the synod insists that priests and deacons (though not bishops) may continue in marriage
 2. the synod says that priests and deacons who leave their wives because of ordination, or those who try to separate priests and deacons from their wives, are excommunicate
 - 2) Pope Sergius I refuses to sign the canons
 - 3) today the Orthodox accept the synod as an ecumenical council ("Quinisext Council")

3. religious orders

- a. "second wave of missionary activity": missionaries from Ireland, Scotland, and England (which are non-Arian) work throughout northern Europe
- b. c. 600-750 (later Merovingian Dynasty [c. 410-751], France): monasticism in France woefully declines
 - 1) increased wealth makes lords seize abbeys
 - 2) Charles Martel (c. 688-741) confers monasteries on lay-abbots at will
- c. 600-1000: exemptions
 - 1) 451: Chalcedon had put each monastery is under the jurisdiction of the local bishop

- 2) 600s: popes exempt certain monasteries from jurisdiction by a bishop and make them subject immediately to the papacy (an annual tax to Rome was usually paid for the privilege)
 - 3) 628: the first known instance of exemption is Bobbio (Upper Italy)
 - 4) 751: at Boniface's request, Pope Zachary grants an exemption to Fulda
4. **sacraments: reconciliation**
- a. c. 600: theologians distinguish three essential parts: contrition, confession, and satisfaction
5. **feasts**
- a. c. 610: Pope Boniface dedicates the Pantheon at Rome to Mary and all martyrs, leading soon to All Saints (November 1)
 - b. generally observed throughout the west are
 - 1) Holy Innocents (December 28)
 - 2) St Martin of Tours (November 11)
 - c. observed at some localities are
 - 1) the Finding of the Cross (May 3)
 - 2) St Lawrence (August 10)
 - 3) St Michael (September 29)
 - d. Lent
 - 1) previously 36 days, Lent is now 40 days, thus starting the Wednesday before Easter
 - 2) preparation for Lent (the three weeks before Lent)
 - a) the third-from-last Sunday before Lent is Septuagesima ("seventieth," actually 63 days before Easter)
 - b) the second-from-last Sunday before Lent is Sexagesima ("sixtieth," actually 56 days before Easter)
 - c) the last Sunday before Lent is Quinquagesima ("fiftieth," actually 49 days before Easter)
 - d) the 17 days from Septuagesima Sunday to Lent are preparation for Lent, but in many countries Septuagesima Sunday begins carnival season, ending on Shrove Tuesday (Mardi Gras)
 - e) 1963: Vatican II returns these Sundays to ordinary time (in effect in 1970)
 - 3) 1000s: a veil before the altar signifies separation from God by sin
 - 4) restrictions
 - a) hunting, weddings, intercourse, amusements, and holding court are forbidden
 - b) abstinence: on all days of Lent, meat, eggs, and milk are forbidden
 - c) fast: only one meal is eaten, and only after 3 P.M.
 - 5) Ash Wednesday
 - a) 500s: Rome begins the use of ashes on Ash Wednesday
 - b) 1091: Urban II prescribes the use of ashes on Ash Wednesday everywhere

700s

- 1. **cultural background and Church-state relations**
 - a. 754: Lombards near; the pope takes title *Patricius Romanorum* (Protector of Rome) from the Eastern Emperor and gives it to Pippin the Younger
 - b. 700s: *ecclesiae propriae* become common among the Franks and Slavs

- 1) *ecclesiae propriae*: “a wealthy person built a church or chapel on his estate, ... claimed it as his personal property and at the same time claimed the right to appoint to it a priest ... nothing so contravened episcopal authority” (Bihlmeyer)
2. **heresies and councils**
 - a. 730-87: iconoclastic controversy (iconoclasm said the use of images in worship is wrong)
 - b. 787: Council of Nicea II: use of images in worship is acceptable
 - c. excommunication
 - 1) excommunication excludes from Church membership, services, and sacraments
 - 2) 1 Cor 5:1-13, “It is actually reported that . . . a man is living with his father’s wife. . . . ⁴When you are assembled, and my spirit is present with the power of our Lord Jesus, ⁵you are to hand this man over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord. . . . Do you not know that a little yeast leavens the whole batch of dough? . . . ¹¹[Do not] associate with anyone who bears the name of brother or sister who is sexually immoral or greedy, or is an idolater, reviler, drunkard, or robber.”
 - 3) Gal 1:8, “even if we or an angel from heaven should proclaim to you a gospel contrary to what we proclaimed to you, let that one be accursed!”
 - 4) 755: a Frankish synod under King Pepin decrees that anyone who refuses excommunication is banished; anyone who associates with an excommunicated person is excommunicate
 - 5) as the severity of penance declined, ecclesiastical punishments (excommunication and interdiction) grew
 - d. interdiction
 - 1) interdiction prohibits all services in a district (though usually baptism, extreme unction, and unseen private services are allowed)
 - 2) 700s: traces of the interdict are found
 - 3) 800s: interdiction usually accompanies the excommunication of a person who unlawfully seize a church or a diocese
 - 4) 1100s on: whole countries are interdicted to ensure obedience to ecclesiastical law
3. **religious orders**
 - a. 600s-700s: the rule of St Augustine begins to be regarded as a religious rule
 - b. 718-54: Boniface (680-754, English monk, martyr) is “the apostle of Germany”
 - c. c. 750 on: canons regular (clergy in cathedrals or large parishes living in semi-monastic community) become common in France
 - d. c. 750 on: canonesses arise in France; they live in community but do not renounce private property
 - e. reform synods under Charlemagne greatly improve monasteries
 - f. 814-40: Benedict of Aniane (abbot of Aniane, 779) reforms monasteries
 - 1) Louis the Pious († 840) makes him supervisor of all monasteries in the Empire; he restores uniform discipline
 - 2) 816-17: a reform synod of abbots at Aachen, under Benedict, imposes on all monasteries a revised Rule of St Benedict, stressing complete seclusion and the duty of manual labor
 - 3) Benedict gives canons regular and canonesses a modified Benedictine rule
4. **sacraments: Eucharist**
 - a. frequency of communion
 - 1) 30-c. 600: the laity received communion frequently
 - 2) 700s on: reception three times a year is common: Christmas, Easter, Pentecost

- 3) “Eventually it became difficult to insist on this minimum, for even pious persons had little devotion to the Blessed Eucharist” (Bihlmeyer)
 - 4) since confession was made before communion, frequency of confession also dwindled
 - b. reception of communion
 - 1) c. 700s?: out of respect, hosts or particles replace breaking a consecrated loaf, and hosts are put on the tongue, not the hand
 - 2) intinction
 - a) the east
 1. bread was dipped in wine, consecrated or unconsecrated (many thought non-consecrated wine became consecrated when touched by the host)
 2. the host is given to communicants on a small spoon (this is still the Orthodox practice)
 - b) the west
 1. 1300s: intinction continues to be used for viaticum, until the 1300s
5. **sacraments: 700s-1000s: spread of the Roman rite**
 - a. 747: *England*: the Synod of Cloveshove (canon 13) requires all English churches to use the Roman rite
 - b. c. 785: *France*: Pope Adrian sends Charlemagne the *Sacramentarium Gregorianum*, and Alcuin adds parts of the Gelasian-Old Gallican sacramentary
 - 1) 900s: Rome adopts this Roman-Frankish liturgy: it becomes the Roman rite
 - c. 800s-900s: the Roman rite rapidly spreads in the west
 - d. 863-85: *Moravia*: in their mission to the Slavs, Cyril and Methodius use the Roman rite but in Old Slavic
 - e. 1061-85: *Spain* switches from the Spanish-Visigothic or Mozarabic rite to the Roman rite
 - 1) 1500: Cardinal Ximenes revives the Mozarabic rite in a few chapels in Toledo, where it is still used
 - f. 1069-93: *Scotland*: Queen Margaret of Scotland (1069-93) introduces the Roman rite in her realm
 - g. 1134-48: *Ireland*: Archbishop Malachy of Armagh requires the Roman rite in Ireland
 - h. *Milan*: though Charlemagne and several popes strove to have Milan adopt the Roman rite, the people refuse to abandon the Ambrosian rite
 6. **sacraments: spread of the liturgy of Constantinople**: like the Roman rite, the liturgy of Constantinople spreads through the older Orthodox and the Bulgarians, Serbs, and Russians
 7. **feast days**
 - a. by 760: each apostle and evangelist has a feast day
 - b. each church celebrates its consecration and (most solemnly of all) its patron
 8. **devotions: saints**
 - a. hagiography (lives of saints); many contain fantasized miracles
 9. **arts: music**
 - a. 757: the eastern emperor gives an organ (recently invented) to Pepin the Short (in 812, he gives another to Charlemagne)
 - b. c. 775-800: Charlemagne (king of Franks, 768-814; emperor, 800-14) brings Roman singers to schools of chant he founds at Metz and Soissons
 10. **arts: vestments**
 - a. pre-700s: all vestments are white

b. 700s on: various colors are used (but they are not yet symbolic)

11. 750-1000: morals of the clergy

- a. Italy and France: the morals of the clergy are deplorable
- b. Germany: Boniface and Charlemagne keep the clergy's morals somewhat higher
- c. 700-10: Spain: the Visigoth king abolishes clerical celibacy

800s

1. cultural background and Church-state relations

a. Christmas 800: pope crowns Charlemagne "Holy Roman Emperor"

2. heresies and councils

a. Eucharistic controversy

- 1) 831: Paschasius Radbertus (later abbot of Corbie), in *De Corpore et Sanguine Domini*, says that at consecration the bread becomes the body that was born of Mary and crucified, and that is now in heaven
 - a) this numerical identity is not quite right, since "a true, though accidental, distinction between the sacramental and the natural condition of Christ's Body must be rigorously maintained" (Pohle)
 - b) but Radbertus is trying to argue for real presence
- 2) 831: Ratramnus (monk of Corbie) denies real presence (and transubstantiation, though the word is not used till c. 1079): Christ's body is present only in a spiritual way (the symbolic interpretation)
- 3) c. 847: John Scotus Eriugena (Irish, probably priest and perhaps monk, † c. 884) becomes master of the palace school in Paris; he says the bread is a figure of Christ's body, a memorial of his true body

b. predestination controversy

- 1) 830s: Gottschalk (monk of Orbais, c. 800-c. 868) spreads the heresy of double predestination in upper Italy (from before creation God wills some to heaven and some to hell)
- 2) c. 840: Rabanus Maurus writes a treatise against Gottschalk
- 3) c. 848: a council of Mainz under Rabanus Maurus condemns Gottschalk
- 4) 849: a synod of Quiercy condemns Gottschalk
- 5) c. 850: in *De Praedestinatione*, John Scotus Eriugena (master of the palace school in Paris) says there is no predestination to sin and punishment but only to grace and eternal happiness
- 6) 855: the Council of Valencia condemns Eriugena
- 7) 859: the Council of Langres condemns Eriugena
- 8) c. 868: after twenty years imprisoned in a monastery, Gottschalk dies, unrepentant and insane

c. 858: tension between Rome and patriarch of Constantinople, Photius

d. 869-70: Council of Constantinople IV

- 1) Greek schism ended
- 2) Photius (patriarch of Constantinople) deposed

3. religious orders

- a. 860-85: mission to the Slavs by Cyril (827-69) and Methodius (826-85)
- b. choir-monks (priests) and lay-monks

- 1) 30-800: most monks are laymen
 - 2) 800s-900s: by 900 priests outnumber laymen
 - 3) 1100s: the classes are markedly distinct
 - a) priests do sacraments and teach in monastery schools
 - b) lay monks do manual labor
 - 4) 1200s: the marked distinction spreads throughout the west
4. **sacraments: Eucharist**
- a. c. 800: west starts using unleavened bread; the Greeks to declare such consecrations invalid
 - b. sermons
 - 1) most parish priests preached on Sundays and feast days
 - 2) many used the homilies of Venerable Bede
 - 3) Charlemagne ordered Paul the Deacon to compose a book of sermons (the *Homiliarium*) on important passages of the Fathers; synods at Reims and Mainz in 813 require of Bede or the *Homiliarium*
5. **sacraments: reconciliation**
- a. 700s: numerous penitential books with wide discrepancies and their too rigid application create confusion and lead to penitential laxity
 - b. 800s: return to severity
 - 1) c. 800: the penitential books begin to be abolished
 - 2) synods and popes revert to “ancient severity,” the discipline of the early Church; penitents are divided into classes, as in the east
 - c. 868: nevertheless, a synod of Worms (canon 30) permits marriage while performing public penance
 - d. redemption
 - 1) definition: a commutation of rigorous penances, especially long and strict fasts, “into other penances considered of equal value but more easily performed, such as prayers and almsgiving” (Bihlmeyer)
 - 2) 650-700: redemptions appear in Ireland and England and spread to France
 - a) old Germanic law prescribed payment of *wergild* (lit. “man gold”) to a slain or injured person’s kin to avoid a blood feud
 - b) similarly, the wealthy hired others to perform part of their penance
 - c) then the wealthy paid money for a pious cause to ransom themselves from part or all of a penance; the penitential books specified the amounts
 - 3) 895: the Synod of Tribur (canon 56) first recognizes “redemption by payment of money as a substitute for public penance. It was restricted to certain well defined cases and at first did not work to the serious detriment of the older discipline” (Bihlmeyer)
 - 4) but soon confessors gave penitents the choice of performing the penance or paying the redemption
6. **devotions: saints**
- a. 800s: Charlemagne decrees that, to venerate a saint, a bishop’s permission is needed; also, a provincial synod can approve the cult of a saint for a province, and a Roman synod can approve the cult for a nation

1. **cultural background and Church-state relations**
 - a. 900s: invasions by Normans, Muslims, and Hungarians cause great societal upheaval
 - b. the Church escapes the Roman nobility by electing 6 German popes
 - c. 919-1024: Saxons rule; the “Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation”
2. **heresies and councils**
 - a. early 900s: several works of canon law forbid worship of evil spirits and witchcraft (pagan holdovers in Germanic tribes)
3. **religious orders**
 - a. causes of decline
 - 1) 900s: Norman, Muslim, and Hungarian invasions destroy many monasteries
 - 2) 900s: monks freely leave their monasteries and become completely worldly
 - 3) 900s: in France, some monasteries only admit the sons of noblemen, who become lay-abbots and live with wives, children, vassals, and hunting dogs
 - b. 900s: in Germany, Otto the Great and other Saxon rulers reform monasteries and improve their economies
 - c. exemption
 - 1) 900s: the pope grants Cluny and its daughter houses exemption (rule directly by the pope, bypassing the local bishop)
 - 2) 900s-1100s: monasteries, exempt or not, are put under the pope’s protection, to save them from secular lords
 - 3) 1100s: almost all monasteries and religious orders are exempted from episcopal jurisdiction; exemption improves most monasteries
 - 4) 1100-1500: exemption is sorely abused and hinders reform
 - d. 900s: Cluny and monastic reform
 - 1) 909: Cluny (in Burgundy) founded, the center of a powerful reform movement
 - a) 909-1109: a succession of long-lived abbots stress complete obedience to the abbot, dignified liturgy of the hours and exact observance of Masses, severe asceticism, silence, and seclusion from the world
 - b) Cluny does not promote secular learning
 - c) 1000: 200 monks
 - d) 1000s: Cluny founds or reforms monasteries and creates a “congregation” (union of monasteries), with Cluny’s abbot in charge
 - e) 1000s: having thousands of priests pray for one’s dearly departed brought many benefactions, and soon the Cluny system was very wealthy
 - f) 1100: the “Cluny empire” has c. 2000 monasteries; it expands into Italy, Germany, Spain, and England
 - g) c. 1150: worldliness infiltrates Cluny; leadership of monastic reform transfers to the Cistercian and Premonstratensian orders
 - h) “Cluny played an important part in the Gregorian reforms ... Gregory VII and Urban II had been Cluniac monks ... Thus out of what had at first been a purely monastic reform, there developed an ecclesiastical-political program: the liberation of the Church from the power of the laity” (Bihlmeyer)
 - 2) 933: Gorze near Metz becomes a center of reform, eventually subsuming 160 German monasteries under its influence

- 3) c. 1010: St Victor in Marseille becomes the center of a union of reformed monasteries in southern France and Spain
- 4. **devotions: saints**
 - a. 993: first canonization by a pope (John XV canonizes Bishop Ulrich of Augsburg)
- 5. **arts: music**
 - a. c. 900: the monastery of St Gall begins to sing in two voices and to harmonize
- 6. **morals of the clergy**
 - a. c. 900: the *vita canonica* (secular clergy living a semi-monastic life with their bishops) has all but disappeared
 - b. 960-88: Dunstan, archbishop of Canterbury, requires celibacy, revives the *vita canonica*, and reforms monasteries; but the Danes invade, and clerical morals decline
 - c. 1046 on: from Clement II (1046-47), the papacy is dedicated to enforcing canon law
- 7. **morals of the laity**
 - a. “The numerous wars and political disturbances fostered robbery, blood revenge, cruelty, gross sensuality, and intemperance” (Bihlmeyer); churches and cemeteries were by law places of sanctuary
 - b. the Peace of God
 - 1) 1040: Abbot Odilo of Cluny persuades synods in southern France to declare the Peace of God: no armed combat from Wednesday evening until Monday morning, and during Advent, Lent, Easter, and Pentecost (violators are excommunicate); this spreads through France, England, Spain, and Germany
 - 2) 1095: for the first crusade, Urban II decrees a three-year Peace of God
 - 3) 1123, 1139, 1179: the first three Lateran Councils prescribe observance of the Peace of God for all Christendom
 - c. slavery: prisoners of war are made slaves; but many become serfs under the Church’s protection
 - d. the ordeal
 - 1) 300s-700s: German tribes had practiced the ordeal, believing that a deity would reveal the guilt or innocence of a person under duress; forms included fire, water, hot iron, drawing lots, and (freemen only) duels
 - 2) 800s: Mass is said beforehand and implements are blessed
 - 3) 867: Nicholas I declares the ordeal blasphemous; Stephen V declares the same in 887; but these pronouncements have no effect
 - 4) 1215: Innocent III at Lateran Council IV (canon 18) outlaws ordeals, and they begin to disappear
 - e. marriage
 - 1) 500-1000: infidelity is frequent, especially by kings and noblemen
 - 2) 500-1000: the Church forbids marriage with Jews and heathens
 - f. magic: German converts highly value blessings, saints, and relics
 - g. interest: charging interest is prohibited laity as well as clergy