

# STUDY MATERIALS: The Counter-Reformation

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## Texts

### **Mark Greengrass, The European Reformation, etc.**

The following is offered as a help and a guide to the student beginning the study of the Reformation Era. Certain parts of Greengrass are more helpful to one studying the Counter-Reformation.

They are:

- Section One -- The fabric of the Church
- Section Two -- Debate and dissension within the Church on the eve of the Protestant Reformation

- Section Eight -- Reformation from within
- Section Nine -- Confessional identities
- Section Ten -- Background contexts
- Section Eleven -- Biographies
- Section Twelve -- Glossary
- Genealogical Table
- Maps

**Texts:**

R. Po-Chia Hsia, *The World of Catholic Renewal, 1540-1770*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998. This is the text for the course. Notice the opening date: it starts 23 years after Martin Luther nailed his theses to the church door in Wittenberg. The beginnings of Catholic Reform we will take from Olin.

John C. Olin, *The Catholic Reformation: Savonarola to Ignatius Loyola, Reform in the Church 1495-1540*. New York: Fordham University Press, 1992. There is an earlier edition from 1969. Two things to notice: (1) The dates. This covers the period before Hsia's beginning. (2) It is a book of documents.

Used in tandem both books will serve to introduce the student to the Counter-Reformation.

Mark Greengrass, *The Longman Companion to the European Reformation c. 1500-1618*. London and New York: Longman, 1998. This book focuses on the Reformation in Continental Europe. It can function as a desktop reference work. It is a mine of information and facts and should be the student's first source for information on dates, persons, places and events.

**Supplements to the Texts:**

R. R. Palmer and Joel Colton, *A History of the Modern World*, any edition. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. It is highly recommended that the student read chapters 2, 3, and 4 of this excellent college textbook.

**Reference Works:**

If the student has access to a good library, the following books will be helpful.

*Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent*, H. J. Schroeder, O.P., trans. Rockford, Illinois: Tan Books, 1978.

*The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation*, 4 vols., Hans J. Hillerbrand, ed. in chief, New York: Oxford University Press, 1996. Some of the articles on Catholic subjects are not as full as they could be.

*New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 16 vols. and three supplements, New York: McGraw Hill, 1967-1996. This is the standard reference work for Catholic subjects.

Hans J. Hillerbrand, *Historical Dictionary of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation*, (Religions, Philosophies, and Movements Series, No. 27), Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 1999. Hillerbrand is the general editor of the *Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation*. In addition to the dictionary entries, it has a chronology and a bibliography.

### **Reading the Text:**

1. J. C. Olin, pp. XI-XXIV, 1-15, 40-53, 118-27, and 182-97.

All of these should be read in the first two weeks of the course.

2. R. Po-chia Hsia -- the Introduction should be read in the first week of the course. The remaining 12 chapters should be read in succession during the remainder of the course.

3. In the fifth and sixth week, the student should read Olin, pp. 149-81 and 198-211.

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## **Lesson 1: Introductory Information**

### **Questions and Assignments**

1. What is the best name to describe the movement by which the Catholic Church put its house in order after the start of the Reformation? Give reasons for your answer.
2. What are the best dates for the movement by which the Catholic Church put its house in order after the start of the Reformation? Give reasons for your answer.
3. Recommend five books to someone who wants to study the Counter-Reformation. Give reasons for your choice.
4. Recommend one or two books to someone who merely wants to read about the Counter-Reformation. Give reasons for your choice.
5. Marvin R. O'Connell, *The Counter-Reformation 1559-1610*. New York, Harper, 1974. A volume in the Langer series. Critically comment on this book on the basis of the information just provided.

## Lesson 2: Prelude

### Questions and Assignments

Causes of the Reformation:

1. Did the Avignon Papacy and the Great Western Schism set the stage for the Reformation?
2. Describe the effect of the Black Death on Christian life and religious life.
3. How did conciliarism contribute to the Reformation?
4. How did the Renaissance popes weaken the Church?
5. Describe conditions in Christendom at the beginning of the sixteenth century.

Attempts at Reform

1. Were Wyclif and Hus "Morning Stars" of the Reformation? What about Savonarola?
2. Assess Erasmus as a reformer and his effect on Christian society and scholarship.
3. Why was the Fifth Council of the Lateran a dismal failure?
4. Describe and assess the Consilium de Emendanda Ecclesia.
5. Why did sixteenth century attempts at reform before Trent sputter?

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## Lesson 3: The Council of Trent

### Questions and Assignments

1. Why did it take the Church so long to convoke the Council of Trent?
2. Why did the Council drag out over 18 years and meet in different places?

3. Why is Trent, one of the smallest of the Church Councils, one of the most important?
4. What do we mean when we say something is Tridentine or speak of a Tridentine mentality?
5. Discuss the decree on justification.
6. Discuss the decree on residence (of bishops and pastors).
7. How did Trent deal with the recommendations of the *Consilium de Emendanda Ecclesia*?
8. Critically evaluate the achievements of Paul III, Paul IV, and Pius IV.
9. Why did it take so long for the decrees of the Council to take effect?
10. What is meant by the phrase "Tridentine bishop?" Why is Carlo Borromeo considered to be the ideal Tridentine bishop?
11. Critically assess the achievements of Trent. What did it do right? What could it have done better?

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## Lesson 4: Counter Reformation Popes and New Religious Orders

### Questions and Assignments

#### Counter-Reformation Popes

1. Assess the achievements of Pope Pius V.
2. Assess the achievements of Pope Gregory XIII.
3. Assess the achievements of Pope Sixtus V. Should he be called Sixtus the Great?
4. Critically evaluate this statement: "The Counter-Reformation popes successfully eliminated nepotism from papal practice."

5. What was the attitude of the Counter-Reformation Popes toward the Bible and vernacular translations of the Bible?

### New Religious Orders

1. Discuss the life and work of Ignatius of Loyola.
2. Discuss the Capuchin Reform from 1525 to 1574.
3. Discuss two other new religious orders of the 16th century.
4. Discuss the life and work of Angela Merici and Mary Ward.
5. What was the role of the religious orders in the Counter-Reformation?

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## Lesson 5: Saints and Foundresses and France: The Field of Battle

### Questions and Assignments

#### Saints and Foundresses

1. Is there anything distinctive about Counter-Reformation saints?
2. What came to be considered the distinctive characteristics of a Counter-Reformation bishop or priest?
3. Our text speaks of the Church Triumphant, the church Militant, and the Martyred Church. What is meant by each of these terms?
4. Choose one of these terms and describe it during the Counter-Reformation.
5. How are Teresa of Avila and Philip Neri typical or not typical of Counter-Reformation saints and sanctity?

#### France: The Field of Battle

1. How close did France come to turning Protestant between 1560 and 1595?

2. Who were the Guises, the Bourbons, the politiques, and what was the massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day?
  3. Why did Henri IV issue the Edict of Nantes?
  4. From 1555 to 1598 Philip II was the Catholic champion, yet he often disagreed with the Pope. Describe the crusade of Catholic Spain, especially in England and the Netherlands, and explain why Philip disagreed with the Pope.
  5. Who played major roles in turning back the Muslim attacks in the Mediterranean at Lepanto in 1571 and at Vienna in 1683?
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## **Lesson 6: The Thirty Years War and The Peace of Westphalia**

### **Questions and Assignments**

#### The Thirty Years War

1. Describe the "Huguenot" policy of Cardinal Richelieu and Louis XIV to 1685.
2. Trace the course of Catholic / Protestant relations in the Holy Roman Empire from 1555 to 1618.
3. Explain the nature of the Thirty Years War and the role played in it by France and Cardinal Richelieu.
4. Describe the four phases of the War, mentioning Tilly, Wallenstein, Gustavus Adolphus, and Richelieu.
5. How and why did the War end in 1648? What did it do to Germany and the Germans?

#### The Peace of Westphalia

1. Evaluate the Peace of Westphalia and explain why 1648 is a key date in European and Church History.
2. Why do many historians today think that the Counter-Reformation did not end in 1648 but must be extended to 1700, even to 1770, as Hsia does?

3. The best way to see and to understand what Counter-Reformation Catholicism thought of itself is to visit Rome. Explain.
4. Jansenism plagued 17th century France. What was Jansenism and what role did Blaise Pascal play in the Jansenists' quarrel with the Jesuits?
5. As we study the Counter-Reformation and the Reformation we can clearly see that political power and war contributed more than truth or the rightness of one's cause to the success of one or the other side. Explain and comment.