The Roman Catholic Church in Medieval Europe

How influential was the Roman Catholic Church in medieval Europe?

Social Studies Vocabulary
As you complete the Reading Notes, use these terms in your answers.

religion  Roman Catholic Church  sacrament  natural law
persecute  clergy  pilgrimage  religious order

Section 1

1. Which Roman Emperor issued a decree allowing Christians to practice their religion freely? How had Christians been treated by Romans before that time?

The Roman emperor Constantine issued a decree in 313 C.E. allowing Christians to practice their religion freely. Prior to that, Christians had been persecuted by the Romans.

2. Describe two types of power that the Roman Catholic Church acquired in society after the fall of Rome.

The Church acquired economic power, becoming the largest landholder in Europe by 1050. It also acquired substantial political power, in part because few people besides the clergy could read.
3. List the different ranks of clergy associated with the Roman Catholic Church. Then explain which members of the Church hierarchy a peasant would be most likely to come into contact with.

Ranks of clergy: pope, cardinal, archbishop, bishop, priest.

Because peasants would likely be in the fields or workshops, not in the important places and large areas with cathedrals (where bishops and archbishops are to be found) or Rome (where the pope and cardinals are), they are most likely to come into contact with priests.

4. In your own words, summarize the conflict between Pope Gregory VII and the Holy Roman emperor, Henry IV. Use the words appoint, duty, excommunicate, beg, and authority in your summary.

Pope Gregory VII banned the practice whereby kings (instead of the pope) could appoint members of the clergy. Henry IV considered it his duty and privilege to appoint Church officials. He declared that Gregory was no longer pope, so Gregory excommunicated Henry. Henry had to beg forgiveness, and in doing so, he showed that he acknowledged the pope’s authority, even over an emperor.
Section 2

1. According to the teachings of the Catholic Church, what was the purpose of sacraments? Receiving the sacraments was essential to gaining salvation.

2. Draw a simple symbol that illustrates the meaning of each of the seven sacraments. Then write one sentence explaining it. Drawings will vary. One sentence explanations should resemble the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>One-Sentence Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baptism</td>
<td>Baptism is when a person is cleansed of sin and admitted to the Church.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confirmation</td>
<td>Confirmation is when a person declares his or her belief in God and the Church.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eucharist</td>
<td>The Eucharist is part of the Mass in which the bread and wine are consecrated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matrimony</td>
<td>Matrimony is the formal union of a couple blessed by the Church.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holy Orders</td>
<td>Holy Orders is the ritual during which a man becomes a priest.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penance</td>
<td>Penance is when sins are confessed to a priest to receive God’s forgiveness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extreme Unction</td>
<td>Extreme Unction is the anointing of a person near death with holy oil by a priest.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section 3

1. Why did people undertake pilgrimages during the Middle Ages? What were some of the popular destinations of pilgrims?
   People went on pilgrimages to show their devotion to God, as an act of penance for their sins, or in hope of being cured of an illness. Some popular pilgrimage destinations were Jerusalem, Rome, and Canterbury.

2. What were some of the challenges pilgrims faced on their journeys?
   Travel was difficult and sometimes dangerous. Pilgrims often traveled on foot. Robbery was a constant threat.

3. How were Crusades different from pilgrimages?
   The Crusades were military expeditions, while pilgrimages were visits to holy sites for penance or to seek a cure.

Section 4

1. In what ways did the art of medieval Europe reflect the influence of the Roman Catholic Church?
   Most art was made for religious purposes. Paintings and sculptures in churches helped people to worship. Since most people couldn’t read, art helped to tell the story of Jesus’s life or Bible stories in a way everyone could understand.

2. Draw a simple sketch of each of the following key architectural features of cathedrals and define each one.
   Sketches will vary. Definitions should be similar to the following:

   - nave and transept
     - nave: the long central section of a cathedral
     - transept: the shorter side sections of a cathedral that work with the nave to form a tee shape

   - gargoyle
     - a decorative stone sculpture in the form of a mythical beast

   - stained-glass window
     - a large window made from pieces of colored glass arranged in a design to form a picture (usually about the Bible)

   - flying buttress
     - an exterior stone arch that helped spread the weight of the roof and walls
Section 5

1. Explain two advances in education during the Middle Ages.

   A new form of writing with both upper- and lowercase letters made reading easier. Also, universities were created for advanced study.

2. Who was Thomas Aquinas? How did he bring together ancient philosophy and Christian theology?

   Thomas Aquinas was an Italian scholar of philosophy and theology. He tried to bridge the gap between reason and faith by writing logical arguments to show how reason and religious belief worked together.

3. Label the appropriate parts of the image at the right to help yourself remember the phrase, “bridging the gap between faith and reason.” Use the terms faith, reason, and Thomas Aquinas in your labels.

   Students should label the figure as “Thomas Aquinas” and label the land on each side of the bridge “faith” and “reason,” respectively.

Section 6

1. The word holiday comes from __________ holy day __________.

   What types of things did Christian holidays celebrate?

   Christian holidays celebrated Christian saints, events in the life of Jesus, and important religious ideas.

2. What were some of the ways in which people celebrated religious holidays?

   They attended Church services, and then celebrated with feasts and entertainments, including bonfires, acrobats and jugglers, dancing bears, and plays.
Section 7

Complete the matrix below to explain the similarities and differences between Benedictine monks and Franciscan friars.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Where did they live?</th>
<th>Benedictine Monks (communities devoted to prayer and service to fellow Christians)</th>
<th>Franciscan Friars (they traveled among ordinary people to preach and to care for the poor and sick)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What promises or sacrifices did they make to join the order?</td>
<td>They followed Benedict’s Rule, which required poverty, chastity, and obedience.</td>
<td>They had to live in complete poverty and work or beg for food for themselves and the poor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How did they spend their time?</td>
<td>They prayed, studied, and worked; attended Church services, cared for poor and sick, taught, and farmed.</td>
<td>They cared for the poor and sick, traveled, and prayed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Processing

Use this rubric to evaluate the Processing assignment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Poem includes nine short stanzas or lines, each one beginning with the appropriate letter, and including at least five Social Studies Vocabulary terms from the lesson. It is free from errors and written neatly in ink.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Poem meets most, but not all of the requirements, either because it has fewer than nine lines, not all the lines begin with the appropriate letter, there are fewer than five Social Studies Vocabulary terms, there are some grammar or spelling errors, or it is not written neatly in ink.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Poem fails to meet some of the key requirements entirely or meets most of the requirements but has numerous errors.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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