

**Gifts of Finest Wheat**  
**Year 2, Session 2, Week 5:**  
**Church History Through the Mid 13<sup>th</sup> Century**

**Wrapping up Some Earlier Events**

Vikings

- Raided Constantinople and Baghdad, made way there through Russian rivers<sup>1</sup>
- Excavations in 1960-1961 proved Vikings settled in Newfoundland<sup>2</sup>
- Late 700s-1100s violent raids, attacks, some permanent settlements and expansion  
Dublin 840-841, Paris 845, London 851<sup>3</sup>
- Monasteries frequent targets of these raids  
Religious/liturgical items made from materials worth stealing
- Not deliberate attack on Christianity, just going after convenient targets  
Not equivalent to Muslim expansion  
Not trying to conquer Europe for the greater glory of Thor
- Pagan Vikings gradually won over to Christianity  
Settlers in raided lands assimilated  
Missionaries sent to Scandinavian lands  
Paganism dominant as late as 12<sup>th</sup> century in Sweden, but by the end of the Viking era most Scandinavians were Christian<sup>4</sup>  
Vikings began as outside threat to Christianity, eventually one more group involved in internal Christian European conflicts

Sts. Cyril (827-869) and Methodius (826-885)

- Brothers born in Thessalonica, Greece
- Created alphabet for Slavonic language in order to evangelize people of east central Europe<sup>5</sup>
- Mission to areas such as lands that make up modern Czech Republic
- Supported by both Pope and Patriarch of Constantinople<sup>6</sup>
- Methodius able to translate nearly all of bible into Slavonic<sup>7</sup>  
Show importance of use of native languages

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<sup>1</sup> [http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2004/02/0217\\_040217\\_vikings.html](http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2004/02/0217_040217_vikings.html)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/vikings/diaspora.html>

<sup>3</sup> [http://web.cn.edu/kwheeler/viking\\_attacklist.html](http://web.cn.edu/kwheeler/viking_attacklist.html)

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ancient/vikings/religion\\_01.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ancient/vikings/religion_01.shtml)

<sup>5</sup> George Weigel, *Witness to Hope: The Biography of Pope John Paul II*. (New York: HarperCollins, 1999), 408.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid*, 500-501.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid*, 408.

## Cadaver Synod and it's Aftermath (891-911)<sup>8</sup>

So crazy you can't make it up, seems worthwhile to go over in detail

- Pope Formosus (815-896), Pope 891-896
  - Interesting career
  - Successful work as missionary in Bulgaria
  - Played role in Roman synod that excommunicated Photius in 869
  - Excommunicated by Pope John VIII in 876, for political reasons
  - John VIII's successor, Marinus I, welcomed him back into communion with Rome
  - As Pope strengthened church in England and Northern Germany, maintained good relationship with Constantinople
  - Every reason to consider him holy and successful Pope
  
- Boniface VI, Pope April 896
  - Succeeded Formosus
  - Died after approximately fifteen days as Pope
  - Had twice been removed from priesthood by Pope John VIII
  
- Stephen VI (VII), May 896-August 897
  - Number of Popes named Stephen uncertain because in 752 elderly priest named Stephen was elected as Pope
    - Died three days later before being consecrated
    - Listed in official registry of Popes until 1961<sup>9</sup>
  - Under pressure from emperor Lambert had Formosus's body dug up and placed on trial
    - Formosus had favored a political rival of Lambert's
  - In what became known as the Cadaver Synod corpse was unsuccessfully defended by deacon
  - One of charges was that he had already been bishop of another diocese when elected as Pope
    - At time this was forbidden by canon law
    - But obviously those who conducted this trial not actually motivated by deep regard for proper order and procedure within the church
  - Formosus, found guilty, body mutilated and thrown into Tiber River
  - A few months later outraged Romans rebelled, deposed Stephen, imprisoned him, and strangled him to death

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<sup>8</sup> Unless otherwise noted all the information concerning the Cadaver Synod is taken from Richard McBrien, *Lives of the Popes*. (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1997), 144-151.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*, 121, 146.

- Romanus, August-November 897
  - Ally of Formosus
  - Probably deposed (but not imprisoned or killed) by others of Formosan party who wanted a more able representative of their views to be Bishop of Rome
- Theodore II, November/December 897
  - Had Formosus's trial declared invalid
  - Body of Formosus had been recovered from Tiber
    - Theodore II had it buried with full honors at St. Peter's
  - May have been murdered by opponents for these acts of decency and bravery
- John IX, January 898-January 900
  - Also rejected legacy of so called Cadaver Synod
  - Able administrator of church
- Benedict IV, February 900-July 903
  - Good man, remembered as being generous to the poor
  - Murdered by agents of political rivals
- Leo V, July/August 903-September 903
  - Overthrown by anti-Pope named Christopher
  - Christopher overthrown by Sergius
  - Both Leo and Christopher murdered while imprisoned
- Sergius III, January 904-April 911
  - Murdered his predecessor and his predecessor's rival
  - Illegitimate son become Pope John XI (March 931-December 935 or January 936)<sup>10</sup>
    - Believed to be the only time this has happened
    - Hopefully things will stay that way
    - Mother was fifteen year old daughter of prominent Roman family
  - Bitter enemy of Formosus and his supporters
  - Had been elected Pope in early 897
    - Never installed
    - Expelled with help of Emperor Lambert
    - Same Emperor who had encouraged trial of Formosus's corpse!
  - Reaffirmed condemnation of Formosus

### **St. Peter Damien (1007-1072)**

- Worked for reform within Church, someone like Peter Damien truly needed
  - Things not as bad at this time as they had been during time of cadaver synod and it's aftermath, but they weren't that great either

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid, 150, 154.

- Attacked sexual sin and greed among clergy, including bishops<sup>11</sup>
- Men would pay to be ordained, pay to be named to certain parishes, dioceses, etc., investment in financial benefit they would receive from this<sup>12</sup>
- Most clergy had concubines, homosexual affairs not unknown, sexual abuse of minors as well
  - Buying of dispensations allowing priests to have mistresses<sup>13</sup>
  - You could pay your bishop to let you have a girlfriend
- Problem of this being covered up, Peter Damien said:

Indeed, in our day the genuine custom of the Roman Church seems to be observed in this way, that regarding other practices of ecclesiastical discipline, a proper investigation held; but a prudent silence is maintained concerning clerical sexuality for fear of insults from the laity. But this is something that badly needs correction, so that precisely what all the people are complaining about should not be hushed up in council by the leaders of the church.... Therefore, because of the ignominy involved, I do not see how something that is everywhere publicly discussed can be suppressed at the synod, so that not only the offenders by properly branded with infamy, but also those whose duty it is to punish them be found guilty.<sup>14</sup>

Those among clergy who committed sexual sin needed to be held accountable

So did bishops who covered it up

Saying that those, who for the sake of the church, wished to hide the failures/abuses that were occurring within the church were in fact serving as enemies of God and the Church

- Problem of rank in church determining level of accountability, Peter Damien said:

For we indeed punish the acts of impurity performed by priests in the minor ranks, but with the bishops, we pay our reverence with silent tolerance, which is totally absurd.<sup>15</sup>

When there was accountability only little guy got punished, big fish too important to be punished

- Under Pope Leo IX (1049-1054) Peter Damien able to play leading role in attempting to reform clergy in Western Europe<sup>16</sup>
- Strong advocate of Papal authority in face of secular power:

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<sup>11</sup> C. Colt Anderson, *The Great Catholic Reformers: From Gregory the Great to Dorothy Day*. (New York: Paulist Press, 2007), 30.

<sup>12</sup> C. Colt Anderson, *Christian Eloquence: Contemporary Doctrinal Preaching*. (Chicago, IL: Hillenbrand Books, 2005), 104.

<sup>13</sup> C. Colt Anderson, *The Great Catholic Reformers*, 31-32.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, 32.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid, 34.

But only he who granted the blessed custodian of the keys to eternal life the powers of earthly and heavenly dominion founded the Roman Church and built it on the rock of faith that would soon emerge. It was no ordinary earthly utterance, but the Word by whom heaven and earth were made, and through whom the elements of all things were structured, who founded the Catholic Church. Clearly, it enjoys his privilege and is supported by his authority.<sup>17</sup>

Did not mean he denied the right of laity to confront corrupt/abusive clergy, or of secular rulers to correct them<sup>18</sup>

### **Pope Gregory VII (1020-1085, Pope 1073-1085) and Emperor Henry IV**

- Gregory VII desired to see reform carried out within church  
Extended Papal power and influence in order to bring this about<sup>19</sup>
- Prohibited lay investiture  
Interference of lay leaders in naming of bishops and abbots
- 1075 Holy Roman Emperor Henry IV named number of bishop and abbots throughout Germany and Italy
- Pope Gregory rebuked Henry  
Henry called meeting of bishops in his territory  
They refused to acknowledge Gregory VII as Pope  
Gregory responded by excommunicating Henry  
Same consequences for bishops in Henry's territory
- Dramatic events at Canossa in 1077  
Henry donned penitential pilgrim's garments, knelt in snow outside of Papal residence begging for forgiveness
- Show of repentance at Canossa doesn't last, 1080 Henry names anti-pope  
Installs this man, so called Clement III, in 1084  
1085 Norman forces depose Clement III on Gregory's behalf  
Unpopularity of Norman soldiers forces Gregory to flee Rome, dies in Salerno 1085<sup>20</sup>
- Events show messiness of medieval politics, involvement of Popes in secular affairs, limits on power/influence/control exercised by Popes

### **St. Anselm of Canterbury (1033-1109)**

- Italian born, became monk in France at age 27, 1093 named Archbishop of Canterbury
- Involved with controversy with English kings  
King William did not want to recognize Urban II as Pope

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid, 35.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid, 35-38.

<sup>19</sup> McBrien, 186.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid, 187-188.

When Anselm able to go to Rome in 1098 he stayed there until William's death in 1100

Left England for Rome again because William's successor Henry I argued with church concerning role of secular rulers in appointing bishops<sup>21</sup>

- Numerous spiritual writings and formal prayers
  - Not just for monastic office, but also for educated laity, particularly wealthy, educated women who had ability to work some aspects of monastic discipline into their lives<sup>22</sup>
- *Monologion*
  - Meditation on the Trinity
  - Aiming for deeper understanding while avoiding error on one hand of sounding like there are three Gods, as well as opposite error of having three persons of the Trinity lose their distinction
  - Philosophical as well as theological work
    - Idea that God has given us ability to use rational mind to understand his nature<sup>23</sup>
- *Proslogion*
  - Follow up to *Monologion*, Anselm felt some dissatisfaction with that earlier work
  - Simultaneously philosophical/intellectual text and spiritual work
    - Sections of argument interspersed with prayer
  - Ontological argument
    - God is that which nothing greater than can be conceived
  - Idea that human mind could not think of eternal, all powerful, all good God if he did not in fact exist<sup>24</sup>
  - My personal impression - Possible weaknesses as philosophical argument, great strength as idea/image of God that aids prayer/understanding of those who already believe
- *Cur Deus Homo* (Why God Became Man)
  - Used reason to argue for necessity of Christ's incarnation
  - Sin as insult to God's honor
  - Necessity of something being done to restore humanity to union with God
  - Human failure had to be made up for by human act
  - Sinful humanity not capable of act that would set things right
  - Order had to be set right by act of sinless human person

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<sup>21</sup> Brian Davies and G.R. Evans, eds., *Anselm of Canterbury: The Major Works*. (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1998), vii-x.

<sup>22</sup> Benedicta Ward, ed., *The Prayers and Meditations of St. Anselm*. (London, England: Penguin Books, 1973), 9-10.

<sup>23</sup> Davies and Evans, x-xi.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid*, xii-xiv.

God becoming man only way this could occur<sup>25</sup>

- My personal impression – explanation of salvation which takes human sin seriously enough, is consistent with biblical revelation concerning incarnation and death of Christ  
Incredibly significant and valuable work

- Recognized that truth of God's goodness, being, etc. is greater than our ability to explain/understand these things:

What you are asking me is above me, and I am afraid of treating 'higher things.' My fear is that someone thinking, or even seeing, that I am not giving him a satisfactory reply, may think that this is due to lack of truth where the actuality is concerned, rather the insufficiency of my intellect to grasp it.<sup>26</sup>

Didn't want people to lose faith in truth about God because of inevitable limits on his abilities to explain these truths

Admirable humility

Necessary characteristic of anyone who wishes to be effective teacher within the Church

## Catharism

- Heresy present in Southern France 11<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> centuries
- Also known as Albigensians after French city of Albi
- Renewed Gnosticism, revival of that school of thought's distaste for the body  
Vilified marriage  
Suicide as ideal path to salvation<sup>27</sup>
- Cathars aided by weakness of clergy in the region  
Poorly educated, couldn't defend/explain faith  
Corruption gave bad example
- Pope Innocent III  
Had St. Dominic publicly preach against/debate with Cathars  
When Papal representative was murdered in 1208 ordered military crusade to be launched against Cathars<sup>28</sup>  
Resulted in bloody French civil war fought over religious issues
- Desire to respond to Cathars had much to do with Gregory IX (Pope who excommunicated Frederick II) founding the Inquisition  
Dominican order heavily involved in this work<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid, xvii-xviii.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid, 266.

<sup>27</sup> Karl Keating, *Catholicism and Fundamentalism*. (San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 1988), 298-299.

<sup>28</sup> McBrien, 210-211.

<sup>29</sup> Henry Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition: An Historical Revision*. (London, England: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1997), 42-43, and McBrien, 212-213.

## St. Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153)

- Member of Cistercian Order
- Preached in support of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Crusade
  - Didn't have enough crosses to hand out to all of knights who responded when he preached to French court
- Wrote scriptural commentaries, hymns
- Strong devotion to the Virgin Mary
- Followed Peter Damien in desiring to pursue reform, even if this proved painful:

My fear is only lest I offend anyone by speaking openly of what is disturbing me, for the truth can sometimes breed hatred. But I hear the Truth that breeds this sort of hatred, comforting me with the words, "It is necessary that scandals come," and I do not consider that what follows applied to me at all: "But woe to the person through whom it comes." When scandal comes through vices being denounced, it comes through those who are blameworthy and not through those who blame it. And I do not set myself up as being more circumspect or more discreet than he (Gregory the Great) who said: "It is better that there should be a scandal than that the truth should be compromised."<sup>30</sup>

Led him to say things like "Today a foul corruption permeates the whole body of the church, all the more incurable the more widespread it becomes, all the more dangerous the more it penetrates inwardly", and "Called to be ministers of Christ, they are servants to the Antichrist."<sup>31</sup>

- Thought corruption of church nullified hope of success in trying to persuade people to abandon Catharism
  - Bernard even suspected some French bishops had taken bribes to ignore Cathars active in their diocese<sup>32</sup>

## St. Thomas Beckett (1118-1170)

- Served as chancellor under King Henry II
- 1161 Henry decided it would be politically convenient to name his friend as Archbishop of Canterbury
  - Began to resist Henry's attempts to control church
  - Forced into exile
  - Returns to England 1170
    - Tension between him and Henry leads to group of Henry's knights killing Thomas
- 1174 Henry II did public penance for his role in Thomas's death<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Anderson, *The Great Catholic Reformers*, 56.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, 58.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid, 63.

<sup>33</sup> <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/14676a.htm>

## St. Clare (1194-1253) and Francis of Assisi (1181 or 1182-1226)

- Both from wealthy families who opposed their embracing of life of poverty
  - Clare, partially as result of preaching of already converted Francis, seems to have sought life of radical service from young age
  - Francis wealthy soldier as young man, only later pulled away from life expected of prominent merchant's son
- Francis quickly gathered many followers through his holiness and preaching
- Early Franciscans were controversial, challenge to comfort and wealth of prominent leaders within church and society
- Unusual story of St. Francis at siege of Damietta in Egypt in 1219
  - Traveled to site of Crusaders' battle in attempt to convert Muslims
  - Safely crossed Islamic lines
  - Spoke to Sultan, received promise that Christian prisoners would be better treated
    - Allowed to safely return to Christian camp
    - No discernible effect in bringing about conversion of Muslims<sup>34</sup>
- Clare first woman to write the rules of her own community<sup>35</sup>
  - St. Scholastica deserves to be named alongside her brother Benedict in terms of importance, but her community followed basic pattern of life laid out in her brother's *Rule*
- Francis and Clare united in renouncing wealth, possessions so they and their followers would have complete freedom to serve God<sup>36</sup>
- Pattern of life for religious sisters who followed Clare less withdrawn than typical monastic approach or standard convent life
  - Focus on freedom of movement to teach, care for the poor and sick<sup>37</sup>
- Pope Innocent III saw holiness of Clare's followers as way of winning over adherents of Catharism<sup>38</sup>

### Possible Paper Assignments for Certificate Program

I've decided that it is probably best to suggest a wide range of possible paper topics. I had initially intended to offer one suggestion a week, but as I've made my way through this course the number of important topics and individuals we've covered means that this initial approach now seems inadequate to me.

There are certain important historic theological texts that I think would make for excellent paper topics. Some of these are:

St. Anselm of Canterbury, various works of his included in the two volumes cited in packet of class notes would provide suitable paper topics

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<sup>34</sup> <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/06221a.htm>

<sup>35</sup> Anderson, *The Great Catholic Reformers*, 81.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid*, 89-91.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid*, 95-96.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid*, 97.

*Summa Theologica* by St. Thomas Aquinas, the length of this work means that any manageable paper topic would have to focus on particular portions of this text

*The Dialogue* of St. Catherine of Sienna

*The Imitation of Christ* by St. Thomas A' Kempis

*The Praise of Folly* by Erasmus

*The Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius Loyola

*The Dark Night of the Soul* by St. John of the Cross

*The Interior Castle* by St. Teresa of Avila, or her autobiography

*The Story of a Soul* by St. Therese of Lisieux

*An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine, On Consulting the Faithful in Matters of Doctrine, and Apologia Pro Vita Sua* all by Cardinal John Henry Newman

Certain figures would lend themselves well to biographical papers. I would suggest that St. Clare and St. Francis of Assisi would fit best into this category because their surviving writings are so minimal. Some of the major figures of the Reformation era, such as Martin Luther, John Calvin, St. Thomas More, and Erasmus could also be good subjects for biographical papers.

This list of suggested topics is by no means meant to be exhaustive. Those who have other ideas are welcome to check with me so we can discuss whether or not they would be suitable.