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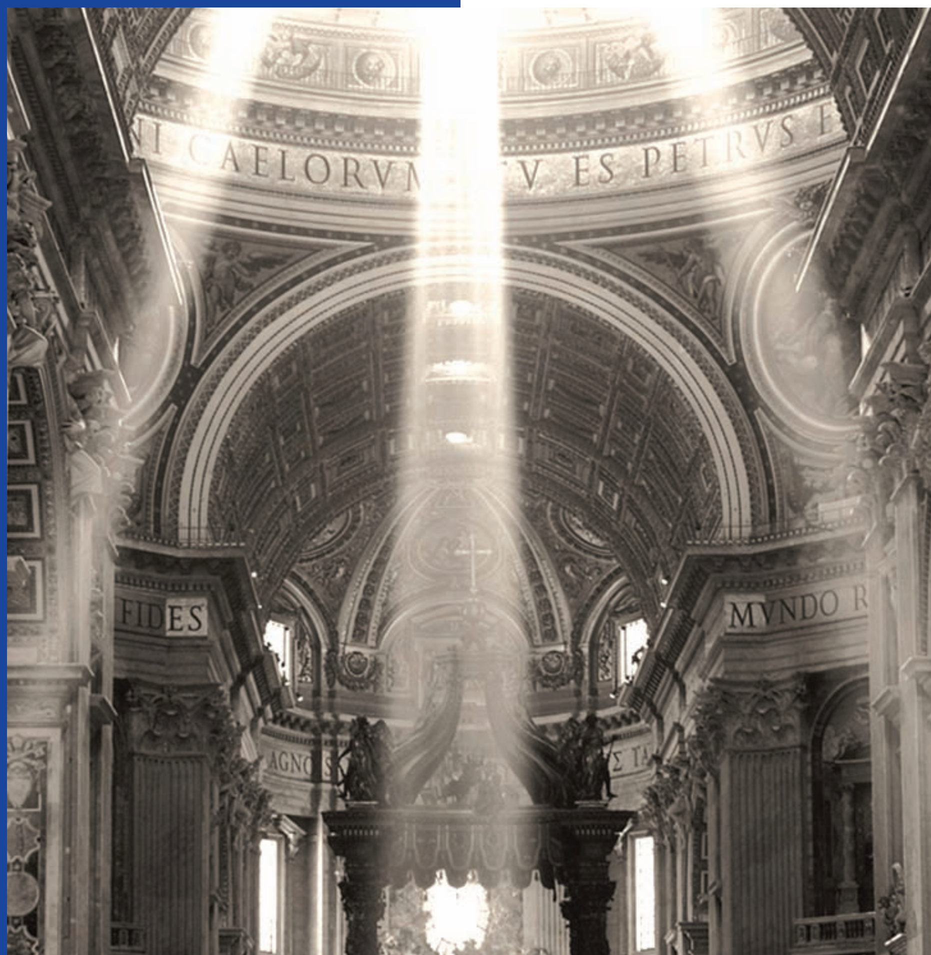
The Catholic Church in the Modern Age

COURSE GUIDE



Professor Thomas F. Madden

SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY

The Catholic Church in the Modern Age

Professor Thomas F. Madden
Saint Louis University

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The Catholic Church in the Modern Age

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Photo courtesy of Thomas F. Madden

About Your Professor

Thomas F. Madden

Thomas F. Madden is a professor of history and chair of the Department of History at Saint Louis University. His numerous scholarly publications include *The New Concise History of the Crusades* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2005), *Enrico Dandolo and the Rise of Venice* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), and *The Fourth Crusade: The Conquest of Constantinople* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997), coauthored with Donald E. Queller. He is a recognized expert on pre-modern European history, frequently appearing in such venues as the *New York Times, Washington Post, USA Today*, National Public Radio, the Discovery Channel, and the History Channel.

The following books provide an excellent supplement to the lectures found in this course:

Eberhardt, Newman C. *A Summary of Catholic History: Volume 2: Modern History*. St. Louis, MO: Herder Publishing, 1962.

Hales, E.E.Y. *The Catholic Church in the Modern World*. New York: Doubleday & Company, 1960.

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The interior of St. Peter’s Basilica, Vatican City

Introduction

As the world entered the modern age, the Catholic Church faced new challenges to its authority, both from without and within. As one of the planet’s oldest institutions, the Church had already survived sixteen centuries, but as winds of change altered the global landscape, the Church’s very existence would be called into question.

Professor Thomas F. Madden leads these compelling lectures, focusing on a Church both adapting to a world in flux and striving to exert its influence and power. Throughout modernity, the Church responded to—and weathered—a host of major world events: the Enlightenment, the French Revolution, colonization of the New World, and of course the World Wars that in large part defined the twentieth century.

As the face of the Church, the popes affected Catholicism in ways that can only be truly understood from a careful examination of the past. And so the lives of the popes, along with major Church proceedings, wars, and other significant world events, are brought to bear in a comprehensive look at the Church in the modern age.

Lecture 1:
At the Dawn of a New World

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is R. Po-chia Hsia's *The World of Catholic Renewal, 1540–1770.*

At the age of sixteen centuries, the Catholic Church was already one of the oldest institutions in human history at the dawn of the modern age. It had weathered the storms of Roman persecutions, barbarian invasions, pagan attacks, Muslim jihad, and grasping kings. In the process it had helped to fashion a new culture in western Europe—one that would produce an expansion of wealth and power that was unprecedented. After centuries of struggles, Europeans were entering a new world in the seventeenth century. And many of them wondered what the old world, the medieval world, the world of the Catholic Church, still held for them. Indeed, for many the Catholic Church became a symbol of the "Dark Ages," a time when superstition and ignorance was thought to flourish. The history of the Catholic Church in this new, modern world is one of constant challenge.

In 1500, there was only one Christian denomination in the West—Catholicism. That changed when the ideas of some Catholic reformers led them to question the authority and legitimacy of the Church itself. Martin Luther, an Augustinian friar and professor of theology at Wittenberg University, developed the belief that humans are saved by "faith alone." There was no need for penance, indulgences, relic veneration, or the like. Indeed, he argued that there was no need for the Catholic Church at all. Rather than the pope as successor of St. Peter, Luther claimed that true authority lay only with the Bible. His theology became extremely popular in Germany, particularly with the poor, who saw Luther as one of them, and the wealthy lords, who saw this as an opportunity to seize Church property.

Luther's ideas spread rapidly across Europe, thanks to the printing press. The concept of *sola scriptura* led others to look to the Bible as the authority and, invariably, what they found there did not agree with Luther. Reformers like Zwingli and Calvin rejected Luther's interpretations and created their own congregations. This began the splintering of Christianity into an ever-increasing number of denominations. The Catholic Church responded with new religious orders like the Capuchin Franciscans and the Jesuits, dialogue with "Protestant" leaders, and the calling of the Council of Trent, to discuss the claims of the reformers. The "Catholic Reformation" revitalized the Church, although at the expense of much of northern Europe. No longer the sole church of Europe, the Catholic Church found itself in an increasingly weak position in its relationship with Catholic powers.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. By the dawn of the modern age, what attacks had the Catholic Church weathered?
2. Where did Martin Luther say that true authority in religious matters lay?

Suggested Reading

Hsia, R. Po-chia. *The World of Catholic Renewal, 1540–1770*. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

Other Books of Interest

Bireley, Robert. *The Refashioning of Catholicism, 1450–1700*. New ed. Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1999.

Mullett, Michael A. *The Catholic Reformation*. New York: Routledge, 1999.

Lecture 2:
To the Corners of the Earth:
Overseas Missions

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is Anthony D. Wright's *The Counter Reformation: Catholic Europe and the Non-Christian World.*

Although struggling at home, the Catholic Church was expanding at an unprecedented level overseas. It did so by working with the Catholic states, particularly the Spanish and Portuguese, who were actively colonizing the New World and Far East. Those states saw the winning of souls for Christ as an important element in their program. Conversely, Protestant powers like the British and Dutch approached their colonies as purely commercial ventures. They had no interest in spreading their faith to the outside world.

The success of the Catholic missions was also due to the persistence and dedication of the religious orders—particularly the Jesuits, but also the Franciscans and Dominicans. One of the earliest Jesuits, St. Francis Xavier, was sent to India at the invitation of King John III of Portugal. In 1542 he established a base at Goa and then preached in India and the islands. After establishing a Jesuit house on Goa, he was able to bring Indians into the order and send them on missions into India. In 1549 Xavier landed in Japan and, after learning the language, began preaching to great effect. Two years later he returned to Goa and prepared for a mission to China. He died in 1552 on his journey to China. During the ten years of his mission he was responsible for the conversion of millions in India, south Asia, and Japan.

After Xavier's death, the missions in India stumbled. In order to make Christianity more amenable to Indian culture, the Jesuit Robert de' Nobili made allowances for the Hindu caste system, even incorporating it into Catholic rituals. The so-called "Malabar Rites" became a fierce bone of contention between the Jesuits in India and the Franciscans. They survived, however, until 1744 when Pope Benedict XIV condemned them. The subsequent suppression of the Jesuits and the invasion of Holland saw the rapid decline in Catholicism in India.

In China, a Catholic mission was brought by the well-educated scientist and mathematician, the Jesuit Matteo Ricci. Because of his erudition Ricci made a good impression on the upper classes. Like de' Nobili, Ricci allowed Chinese converts to keep some of their local customs—a decision that was later sharply criticized by the Franciscans and Dominicans. In 1742 Pope Benedict XIV condemned the "Chinese Rites." This led to the expulsion of missionaries in China and the persecution of the faith.

Catholic missionaries had much greater success in the New World. Jesuits, Franciscans, and Dominicans accompanied the conquistadors, bringing the Catholic faith and attempting to dissuade the Indians from human sacrifice. Spanish victories and the ravages of disease helped to convince many Indians that Christianity was the true faith. By 1600 about two-thirds of the Indians in South and Central America were converted. Additional Spanish

missionaries went to Florida and California, where they were particularly successful. In the north, Jesuit missionaries in Quebec worked among the Indians, particularly the Hurons and Algonquins. The Iroquois strongly opposed the “Blackrobes,” capturing and brutally killing many of them. These missions were extended even down the Mississippi valley to New Orleans. Overall, they were very successful, although the later secession of New France to England greatly hampered it.

Questions

1. To what parts of the world did St. Francis Xavier extend his missions?
2. How did Robert de' Nobili attempt to make Christianity more amenable to Indian culture?

Suggested Reading

Wright, Anthony D. *The Counter Reformation: Catholic Europe and the Non-Christian World*. 2nd rev. ed. London: Ashgate Publishing, 2005.

Other Books of Interest

Parkman, Francis. *The Jesuits in North America in the Seventeenth Century*. Plano, TX: Bridegroom Press, 2007.

Lecture 3:
The Catholic Church in the Age of Absolutism

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is Gerald R. Cragg's *The Church in the Age of Reason: 1648–1789.*

Absolutist monarchs were something very different than their medieval counterparts. A king in the Middle Ages was at most a first among equals—the equals being his nobility. Absolutist monarchs in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries believed that all power in their kingdom belonged to them. They were divinely appointed, chosen by God to rule for the benefit of their subjects. It was the absolutist monarch who was answerable to God for the well-being, both spiritual and temporal, of his people. Naturally, absolutism in Catholic countries looked with suspicion on the traditional authority of the pope. They sought control of the church as well as the state.

French absolutism came about as a response to the anarchy and bloodshed caused by the religious wars between Catholics and Calvinists, known as Huguenots in France. The architect of French absolutism was Cardinal Richelieu, who served as the power behind the throne of King Louis XIII. Although a cardinal, Richelieu did not allow his Catholicism to sway his policies. He believed that only an absolute monarch could maintain the peace in France. Systematically he worked to erode the traditional privileges of the French nobility. He was also skeptical of the Edict of Nantes, which had guaranteed the Huguenots a state-within-a-state and religious freedom in 1598. After a Huguenot rebellion in 1627, Richelieu revoked the autonomous privileges, forcing the Huguenots into the unified French state. However, he did allow the religious freedom to stand.

Under the influence of absolutism, the church in France had a strong element of Gallicanism. This was the view that the monarch was the one who was in the best position to defend the Church in France. It was he who should see to clerical appointments and other matters because it was he who was the divinely appointed ruler of all of the French. Although most of the upper nobility and clergy agreed with this view, many did not. The Huguenots obviously found it objectionable. Ultramontane Catholics, who insisted on the traditional rights of the pope, also resisted Gallicanism. Naturally, the popes were not fond of it.

Louis XIV, the greatest of the French absolutist monarchs, came of age in 1659. At once he made clear that he viewed the Church as almost a department of state. He took Avignon, a conduit of ultramontanism, from the pope. He demanded that the pope appoint more French cardinals. In 1682 the Declaration of the Clergy of France defined Gallicanism, demoting the pope to little more than a distant figurehead of the Church. Pope Innocent XI refused to accept the Declaration, refusing to confirm French bishops or to recognize a French ambassador until they were withdrawn. After considering schism, Louis finally withdrew it in 1693. Although a victory for the Church, it

was a rare one. The French Church was especially troubled by Jansenism, a popular belief that blended Catholicism with elements of Calvinism.

Absolutism was equally troublesome for the Church in other Catholic countries. The eighteenth-century popes tried to manage the situation by signing concordats, which acquired funds for the Church at the expense of giving away traditional powers. By the mid-eighteenth century there was a strong strain of anti-clericalism and localism that made it increasingly difficult for Rome to govern the Church outside of its domain. Indeed, any attempt to exert influence was deeply resented. The Jesuits, who were the pope's men, came under fire. After great pressure, Pope Clement XIV suppressed the order in 1773. In Hapsburg Austria, Joseph II took strong control over the national Church in what came to be called "Josephism."

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. How were absolutist monarchs different from medieval monarchs?
2. What is Gallicanism?

Suggested Reading

Cragg, Gerald R. *The Church in the Age of Reason: 1648–1789*. Rev. ed. New York: Penguin, 1990.

Other Books of Interest

Bergin, Joseph. *Crown, Church, and Episcopate under Louis XIV*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004.

Sedgwick, Alexander. *Jansenism in Seventeenth-century France: Voices from the Wilderness*. Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 1977.

Lecture 4:
The Catholic Church and the Enlightenment

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is Gerald R. Cragg's *The Church in the Age of Reason: 1648–1789.*

The Enlightenment had its origins as a reaction against the religious wars of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Its earliest manifestations were seen in the developing concept of religious toleration, a strategy suggested by the French politiques to stop the bloodshed. Jacobus Acontius's treatise *Satan's Stratagems*, first published in 1565, saw widespread readership by the mid-seventeenth century. It argued that persecution of all kinds was the work of the Devil, for it caused otherwise good men to kill their brothers in the mistaken belief that they were killing a belief. Absolutist monarchs had no use for this kind of thinking. Heresy was akin to treason. One crown, one country, one faith: that was the accepted belief. Louis XIV revoked the Edict of Nantes in 1685. But after 1688 England made toleration for all religions except Catholicism the law of the land. And it survived.

The Enlightenment was born in France, itself a victim of brutal religious wars. The philosophes did not reject God, but they believed that He had created a rational universe and He expected humans to use their reason. Reason itself was elevated to the highest level of importance. By the use of reason humans could come to understand and control the universe and thereby find happy and fulfilling lives. Religious toleration only made sense, since the truth of a religious doctrine could not be demonstrated through reason. It was better then to allow people to believe what they wished and focus on perfecting this world. Philosophes like Voltaire had nothing but scorn for the Catholic Church and its Inquisition. They were equally unhappy with the absolutist monarchy, itself based on medieval privilege rather than reason. They longed for a new world in which privilege and the old order was washed away.

Although there were many members of the nobility taken by Enlightenment ideas, it was largely a product of the growing and affluent middle class. These were people who had wealth but were excluded from the power, prestige, and opulence of the nobility and the Church. They naturally sought other avenues to advance their interests. One of these that saw particular success was the birth of Freemasonry. Beginning in England in the early eighteenth century, the Freemason movement spread through "lodges" across Europe and into North America. Most of its members were upper middle class. Philosophically it promoted a universal brotherhood of man who could better the world through reason. In practice it was a mutual help society with a strong dose of secret ritual. Overall, it was hostile to established church authority and particularly to the Catholic Church. In 1738 Pope Clement XII condemned it and forbid Catholics to join under pain of excommunication.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. What were the philosophes' views on God and reason?
2. How did Voltaire feel about the Inquisition?

Suggested Reading

Cragg, Gerald R. *The Church in the Age of Reason: 1648–1789*. Rev. ed. New York: Penguin, 1990.

Other Books of Interest

Gross, Hanns. *Rome in the Age of Enlightenment: The Post-Tridentine Syndrome and the Ancien Régime*. New ed. Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Kamen, Henry A.F. *The Rise of Toleration*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1972.

Lecture 5:
The French Revolution

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is Owen Chadwick's *The Popes and European Revolution.*

France was long known as the "eldest daughter" of the Catholic Church. The kings had long carried the title "Most Christian" and had been among the most ardent defenders of the faith. From the outside, the Catholic Church seemed strong in eighteenth-century France. The bishops were wealthy, the monasteries were well endowed, the prelates were closely connected to avenues of power. But in reality it was in very poor shape. The monasteries were sparsely populated; the bishops had Deist tendencies; the middle class was torn between Jansenism, Gallicanism, and Ultramontanism; the parish clergy were poor. And it was part of the old order, which the Enlightenment thinkers had targeted.

The French Revolution began with the meeting of the Estates General at Versailles. The clergy were the First Estate with a disproportionate power in the body. But 208 of the 296 deputies to the First Estate were parish priests who resented the wealth of the bishops. They joined the Third Estate in the Tennis Court and thus paved the way for the creation of the Constituent Assembly. That allowed the middle class, whose delegates outnumbered the First and Second Estate combined, to dictate the terms of the Revolution. Their first business was paying off the country's debt. To do so they confiscated all of the property of the Catholic Church in France. Monasteries were dissolved, religious orders expelled, vows outlawed. Centuries of artistic treasures were destroyed and the whole structure of the French Church was dismantled.

In its place the Assembly created the Civil Constitution of the Clergy in 1790. It abolished the old dioceses, replacing them with the fifty-seven departments of the new "rational" government. The bishops would be elected locally and salaried by the government. The government also took over marriage and legalized divorce. Pope Pius VI condemned the Constitution in 1792, only a short time after King Louis XVI had accepted it. The result was schism with half of the French clergy and most bishops forming an underground Church (called Refractory) and the other half taking the required oaths to the Constitution and being assigned their duties by the government (called Constitutional).

As France went to war with all of its neighbors, the Refractory clergy and those who went to them looked increasingly like traitors. The government put more pressure on. Constitutional clergy were forced to accept civil marriage and divorce and even enjoined to marry themselves. Later in 1792 the radicals took over the Revolution. They abolished the Church altogether. Many of the clergy, both Constitutional and Refractory, were rounded up and sent to the guillotine. After executing the king, the revolutionaries went on to

abolish Christianity altogether. In its stead they created the Cult of the Supreme Being and declared the cathedral of Notre Dame to be henceforth the Temple of Reason.

The end of the Terror in 1795 brought tolerance for the “Christian cult,” but nothing more. The churches that survived the destruction were now state property and could be used only for the civic “Tenth Day” ceremonies. But clergy were allowed to say Mass provided they did so quietly in private homes or buildings. Subsequent attempts to replace Catholicism in France failed. By 1798 Catholic priests were allowed to book time slots in the cathedrals for Mass. It was plain that the Revolution, despite its successes, was unable to expel Catholicism from the hearts of the French.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. What problems beset the Catholic Church in eighteenth-century France?
2. What was stipulated by the Civil Constitution of the Clergy in 1790?

Suggested Reading

Chadwick, Owen. *The Popes and European Revolution*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1981.

Other Books of Interest

Hales, E.E.Y. *Revolution and Papacy: The Papacy and the Revolutionary Movement in Europe, 1769–1846*. New York: Doubleday & Co., 1960.

Lecture 6:
Napoleon and the Church

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is Margaret M. O'Dwyer's *The Papacy in the Age of Napoleon and the Restoration.*

Napoleon had early on appreciated the fact that the Revolution was hamstrung by its war with the Catholic Church. Nevertheless, he was not eager to help the Directory that he hoped to replace. As their general he led French forces into Italy against Austria. While there he invaded the Papal States, capturing the "Legations" of Ravenna, Ferrara, and Bologna. In 1797 Pope Pius VI was forced to accept the Peace of Tolentino, a particularly humiliating defeat for the Church. When a liberal revolt broke out in Rome, the French forces there arrested the eighty-year-old pope, moving him from place to place. He finally died in Valence in 1799. Bereft of Rome, lands, and supporters, it seemed to some that the papacy may have reached the end of its long history.

But it had not. Francis II, the Hapsburg Emperor of Austria (the Holy Roman Empire), agreed to let the Conclave meet in Venice. Francis had recently taken northern Italy from the French and he wanted the new pope to accept his ownership of Milan, Venice, and the Legations. He paid the Conclave's expenses and promised a grand coronation in San Marco. But the cardinals elected Chiaramonti, the bishop of Imola, a tough-minded young man of fifty-eight. He took the name Pius VII. The new pope refused to confirm Francis's conquests, so the emperor refused to allow him to use San Marco.

By 1800 Napoleon, who was now First Consul, had decided to make peace with the Catholic Church. The result was the Concordat of 1801, a painstakingly negotiated agreement between Rome and Paris. Although no property was returned, the state accepted the responsibility of paying the clergy and providing the churches for their use. Most importantly, the French bishops would again be under the control of the pope, with the right to confirm or remove. Subsequently Napoleon hemmed in the Concordat with the Organic Articles, but the fundamental peace between the state and the Catholic Church was achieved.

In 1804 Napoleon invited Pius VII to come to Paris to crown him emperor. This was clearly meant to evoke the memory of Pepin and Charlemagne and to make clear to all French that their faith and patriotism were no longer at odds. Pius was hesitant, particularly since it would be taken as a rejection by the exiled Louis XVIII, French bishops, and the Austrian emperor. In the end he agreed. He made his way across France, where he was mobbed by enormous crowds of the faithful. The coronation helped Napoleon, but it also helped the Church. It made clear that it was not bound at the hip to a particular feudal order and that it would live in peace with those who did not persecute it or its flock.

Relations between Rome and Paris foundered on the question of the Continental System. By conquering or bullying all of continental Europe, Napoleon had closed all ports to the British. This, he hoped, would weaken the "nation of shopkeepers," who alone remained defiant. But Roman ports were not closed. Pius refused to take part in the struggle, arguing that he must remain neutral. In 1808 French forces again invaded Rome. Pius was arrested and taken to Savona, where Napoleon expected him to change his mind. He did not. For several years he lived there like a monk. Finally he was brought to Paris, where he met with Napoleon. Despite bullying, he held firm. And soon Napoleon was defeated and exiled. Pius emerged as a hero.

The carnage of the French Revolution and Napoleon's wars led the countries in Europe to the conclusion that liberal revolution was too dangerous. The Catholic Church as the symbol of the old ways of stability grew in people's estimation. Ultramontanism expanded in France. The Congress of Vienna in 1815 restored all of the former Papal States. A new alliance was forged between the monarchs of Europe and the papacy to suppress liberalism and nationalism as disturbers of the peace.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. What was the result of Napoleon's decision to make peace with the Catholic Church?
2. How did the coronation of Napoleon by Pius VII help both Napoleon and the Church?

Suggested Reading

O'Dwyer, Margaret M. *The Papacy in the Age of Napoleon and the Restoration*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1986.

Other Books of Interest

Hales, E.E.Y. *The Emperor and the Pope: The Story of Napoleon and Pius VII*. New York: Doubleday & Co., 1961.

Lecture 7:
The Challenge of Liberalism

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is Alec R. Vidler's *The Church in an Age of Revolution.*

Liberalism was a child of the Enlightenment. It embraced the idea of reason and the rejection of the medieval world, but it also brought into the mix a variety of political and economic approaches. Liberals rejected privilege of any kind. They believed that all men were created equally and should have equal rights under the law. John Locke, the father of liberalism, had argued that states are not created by divine will but by a social compact, and when a state trampled on the "inalienable rights" of men, it broke that compact. Liberalism was favored among the wealthy middle class because it envisioned a world in which power was apportioned not by tradition or family but through merit. Liberals were not necessarily opposed to religion. Many were very devout. But they were opposed to religious intolerance or the institutional church's meddling in what they believed belonged to the public sphere. There was nothing inherently anti-Catholic about liberalism. But the experience of the Catholic Church during the French Revolution was that liberals made the Church their first target. And the effects were devastating.

The Congress System as it was envisioned after Vienna was supposed to stop liberal or nationalist revolutions from erupting in Europe lest they follow the example of Napoleon's France. Pope Pius VII agreed wholeheartedly. So although the Spanish and Portuguese monarchs were hardly model sons of the Church, when a liberal revolution erupted in 1820, the revolutionaries immediately attacked both the Church and the nobility that they equated with each other. The pope supported the subsequent French invasion to put down the revolution.

In other parts of the world, however, the Church was willing to work with liberal governments. Revolutions in South America that separated the countries from Spain and Portugal were accepted in Rome with little problem. The curia also had no objections to the system in the United States. Yet these were all mission areas. The British, which had a liberal monarchy, had warmed to the Catholic Church after the pope's courageous resistance to Napoleon. In 1829 the last of the disabilities for Catholics in Britain were removed.

In the France of the Restoration these questions were of great importance. Many French prelates and thinkers had become Ultramontanes—yet that in itself did not mean that there was no avenue toward liberalism. Félicité Lamennais, a priest, was one of a number of young thinkers who believed that the pope must be supreme when it came to spiritual matters or the institutional Church. He and his associates published a newspaper in Paris called *L'Avenir* (the Future) in which they opposed the system of concordats by which the Church bought peace from the governments. They insisted on a marrying of the interests of the pope and the people in liberal revolutions. The pope condemned the ideas, which led Lamennais to leave the Church altogether.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. What was the experience of the Catholic Church during the French Revolution in regard to liberals?
2. Why did the British warm to the Catholic Church?

Suggested Reading

Vidler, Alec R. *The Church in an Age of Revolution*. Rev. ed. New York: Penguin, 1962.

Other Books of Interest

Stearns, Peter N. *Priest and Revolutionary: Lamennais and the Dilemma of French Catholicism*. New York: Harper & Row, 1967.

Lecture 8:
Struggles with Nationalism

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is Frank J. Coppa's *Pius IX: Crusader in a Secular Age.*

Nationalism would prove to be one of the most powerful and resilient ideologies of the modern world. As with the other new "isms," the Catholic Church had great difficulty adapting to it. Nationalism arose as a result of the technological developments that allowed rapid communication, transportation, and a print culture. By its nature it replaced the old concept of "Christendom" with a new understanding of people as members of distinct nation states. For a nationalist, the boundaries of states should coincide with those of national groups. In an empire like that of Austria, nationalists sought to break it up, creating distinct nation states. In Italy, which was divided into various kingdoms (including the Papal States), nationalists wanted to "reunite," forming one nation state of Italy. Since the last time Italy was so united was under the Romans, it was natural for the Italian nationalists to imagine the pope's city as the capital of Italy.

Cardinal Giovanni Maria Mastai-Ferretti was elected as pope in 1846. Only fifty-four years old, the new pope was known to be friendly toward liberalism and nationalism. And there was no mistaking his modern take on things. Among his first actions were the creation of a railroad in the Papal States and the installation of gas street lights in Rome. The Italian nationalist leader Mazzini extolled "Pio Nono" as the hope for a united Italy. But Pius was unleashing forces he could not control. Socialists were part of the movement in Rome and they began agitating for a new Roman republic, separate from papal control. To appease them Pius created a municipal government.

In 1848, revolutions occurred across Europe. While Austria was weakened with nationalist revolutions, the Italian nationalists urged Pius to lead the combined Italian armies against the Austrians in the north. He refused. Rome erupted. The prime minister was assassinated and the pope was a virtual prisoner. Only by disguising himself and leaving the city was he able to escape. Mazzini and Garibaldi took over the city and declared a Roman republic. In July 1849, French troops marched into Rome and restored the pope.

The course of nationalism in the next decade in Italy was the movement of Piedmont in the north and Garibaldi in the south. Piedmont had already captured the Legations and eventually took the rest of the Papal States except for Rome and some coastline. Desperate, Pius appointed a minister of war who was charged with recruiting brigades among Catholics across Europe. This was and would remain controversial. Although devotion among Catholics was on the rise, the state of the Church in Rome was increasingly untenable. It was only the French troops that kept the Italian nationalists out of Rome. At this point, when the Church seemed persecuted by a world that it no longer understood, Pius issued the *Syllabus of Errors* in 1864. It was a rejection of the ideologies that had preyed upon the Church and led souls astray.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. What factors gave rise to nationalism?
2. How did Pius try to appease socialists in Rome?

Suggested Reading

Coppa, Frank J. *Pius IX: Crusader in a Secular Age*. Independence, KY: Twayne Publishers, 1979.

Other Books of Interest

Hales, E.E.Y. *Pio Nono: A Study in European Politics and Religion in the Nineteenth Century*. 2nd ed. London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1956.

Lecture 9: Vatican I and the Fall of Papal Rome

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is Margaret O'Gara's *Triumph in Defeat: Infallibility, Vatican I, and the French Minority Bishops.*

At a time of great peril the pope did an unexpected thing: he called an ecumenical council. It was the first such council in three centuries. Its purpose was to address the issues raised by the modern world and to discern the response of the Catholic Church and the faithful. But as the seven hundred bishops from around the world came to Rome, they entered into a city that was already passing away. Garibaldi's troops were just beyond the horizon.

The Council convened in late 1869. To judge from press reports, the only issue to be discussed was papal infallibility. Following so quickly on the heels of the *Syllabus of Errors*, the Council was thought by many to be a means of enforcing its authority with the seal of infallibility doctrine. But the first issue discussed was a response to the various philosophical schools that had arisen. There was little disagreement among the attendees and so a constitution was approved unanimously in April 1870. It rejected the new philosophies and reasserted the unique, exclusive, and supernatural character of Christian revelation.

When the Council turned its attention to matters of Church authority and the relationship to the state, it found itself drawn inexorably to the question of papal primacy and infallibility. The problem that had bedeviled the Council of Trent arose again regarding the relationship of papal and episcopal authority. The Ultramontane majority prevailed and the pope confirmed the decision that the fullness of power resided in the Holy See. The Council also decreed that the pope had "immediate and ordinary jurisdiction" over every Catholic. These decisions, so long put off, would allow much greater centralization in the institution of the Church worldwide. The matter of infallibility was particularly vexed. Catholics had always believed that the pope was infallible when pronouncing on matters of faith or morals. But it had never been precisely defined. The liberals at Vatican I opposed its definition because they feared that it would harm the infallibility and the Church's image in the world. Many of them were from countries in which Catholics were a minority. On the other hand, radical Ultramontanes argued that every teaching of the Holy See was infallible. The final decision, that the pope was infallible only in *ex cathedra* teachings on faith and morals, was accepted by the pope.

The Franco-Prussian War broke out in July 1870. The Council was suspended when the French troops prepared to withdraw from Rome. It would not reconvene. Within a few months Rome would fall to the Italian nationalists. Pius was a prisoner of the Vatican and Rome became the new capital of a united Italy. The pope condemned the Italian state. It was an inherently anticlerical government, but the leaders wanted some sort of peace with the pope lest they anger Catholics worldwide. The pope continued to insist that the nationalists should return his lands and leave his city.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. What was included in the constitution approved by the Council in 1870?
2. Why was the matter of infallibility so vexed?

Suggested Reading

O'Gara, Margaret. *Triumph in Defeat: Infallibility, Vatican I, and the French Minority Bishops*. Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1988.

Other Books of Interest

De Cesare, Raffaele. *The Last Days of Papal Rome, 1850–1870*. London: A. Constable and Company, Ltd., 1909.

Helmreich, Ernst Christian. *A Free Church in a Free State? The Catholic Church, Italy, Germany, France, 1864–1914*. Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath and Company, 1968.

Lecture 10:
The Catholic Church in North America

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is James T. Fisher's *Catholics in America.*

As we have seen in this course thus far, the focus of the institutional Church was hardly on North America. This was largely due to the relatively small number of Catholics left in that part of the world. It was considered a missionary church, under the government of the Congregation for Propagation of the Faith. In the early nineteenth century, the largest concentration of North American Catholics was still in Canada. Although Quebec had become part of the British Empire, it remained Catholic. Far to the West there were sizeable Catholic populations in California, where Franciscan missionaries in Mexico had planted missions along the coast. In the thirteen American colonies, there were only about twenty thousand Catholics on the eve of the Revolution. And most of those were in Maryland. The only American bishopric was Baltimore. In general, Americans saw Catholicism as a vestige of the old world. They had little patience or sympathy for it. That was a major reason why Quebec refused to join the colonies in the rebellion against England.

What changed the minds of American leaders was the response of Catholic countries to the Revolution. The strongest supporters were France and Spain. The French clergy alone contributed large amounts of money to the American cause. Benjamin Franklin in Quebec and then Paris won Catholic support and affirmed that the new country would allow complete religious liberty. After the revolution, many of the states continued to have anti-Catholic laws on the books, but by 1800 most of those had been removed. Catholics remained a tiny minority, largely dependent on priests and religious leaders from France.

Everything changed with the massive immigration of the 1830s to the 1860s. During those years around five million people came to America—half of them Irish Catholics. Many of the rest were German or Polish Catholics. By 1860 there were some four million Catholics in the United States and forty-one bishoprics—mostly staffed by Irish priests. This led to strong nativist movements such as the Order of United Americans, or the Know Nothings. These organizations even moved into government. They believed that the Catholics were an invasion led by the pope to take over the United States. Violent anti-Catholicism ended with the Civil War, but it continued to be a strong force in American culture and politics. In 1928 a Catholic, Al Smith, was nominated for the presidency. He lost. The opposition assured the electorate that a vote for Smith was a vote for "a private telephone line between the White House and the Vatican." Even in 1960, the same worries were expressed when John F. Kennedy was nominated. He insisted that the pope would not control his actions, but, he said, "if this election is decided on the basis that forty million Americans lost their chance of being President on the day they were baptized, then it is the whole nation that will be the loser." He won narrowly.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. In general, how did colonial America view Catholicism?
2. What led to movements such as the Order of United Americans?

Suggested Reading

Fisher, James T. *Catholics in America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.

Other Books of Interest

Gillis, Chester. *Roman Catholicism in America*. New ed. New York: Columbia University Press, 2000.

Lecture 11:
Labor and War

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is Lillian Parker Wallace's *Leo XIII and the Rise of Socialism.*

The end of the nineteenth century brought only more trials for the Catholic Church—particularly in Europe. Nationalism and liberalism had already taken their toll on the old order, preying upon Church property, Catholics, and clergy. Those would continue, but the even more dangerous ideologies of Marxism, Anarchism, and Communism were now moving into the mainstream. All of them were deeply hostile to religion of any sort, but particularly organized religion like the Catholic Church, which was said to have been guilty of abetting the subjugation of the working classes. Revolutionaries wanted to overturn not just the old nobility and the Catholic Church, but also the middle class liberal or nationalist governments and build a new workers' paradise without religion.

Although still a prisoner of the Vatican, Pope Leo XIII spoke out against all such attacks on the Church. In *Inscrutabili Dei* he reminded Europeans that it was the Catholic Church that had led them out of barbarism, abolished slavery, and invented universities. They should not treat the Church as an enemy, but should restore what they had stolen, including Rome and the Papal States. Leo expressed an openness to what was good in the modern world, insisting that no one government was necessarily better than another provided they respected the liberty of Catholics to worship and the rights of the Church. Like his predecessors, Leo strongly condemned socialism, which included Communism and Anarchism. In 1891 he wrote an important encyclical, *Rerum Novarum*, which laid out the Church's teaching on labor and socialism. It stressed the dignity of labor and the need to protect the working classes, but it rejected the ideologies of the radicals, claiming that they were antithetical to the ways of God or the benefit of the workers.

Pope Pius X continued in the footsteps of Leo in 1903. He reformed Church practices, including early First Communion, and continued to reach out to non-Catholics. But matters continued to become worse in Europe. By the summer of 1914 it seemed that war was certain. On August 2, Pius issued a bold call for peace, but it was ignored. World War I began and the pope died brokenhearted. His successor, Benedict XV, condemned the war and worked hard to end it. His attempts to stop the killing earned him accusations from both sides that he favored the other. He emptied the Church's treasury into relief efforts. After the war he urged a peace without victors, but that too was ignored.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. Why were ideologies such as Marxism, Anarchism, and Communism so deeply hostile to organized religion?
2. What did Pope Leo XIII maintain in *Inscrutabili Dei*?

Suggested Reading

Wallace, Lillian Parker. *Leo XIII and the Rise of Socialism*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1966.

Other Books of Interest

Giordini, Igino. *Pius X: A Country Priest*. Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Company, 1954.

Rope, H.E.G. *Benedict XV: The Pope of Peace*. London: J. Gifford Ltd., 1941.

Lecture 12:
In an Age of Dictators

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is Anthony R.E. Rhodes's *The Vatican in the Age of the Dictators, 1922–1945.*

It seemed for a moment after World War I that the plight of the Catholic Church might finally be improved. The tension between nationalism and Catholicism dissolved as people saw the myth of "dual loyalties" shattered in the trenches. Catholics died by the millions on both sides of the struggle. Peace was the greatest desire of Pope Pius XI and he set about obtaining it for the Church and the world. He urged world leaders to return to the "Peace of Christ in the reign of Christ." He blamed the materialism and secularism of modern ideologies for the carnage of the war. He promoted Catholic Action, a lay apostolate that promoted Christian values in modern society. And for the first time in fifty-two years he opened the balcony door of the Vatican and delivered an Urbi et Orbi ("to the City [of Rome] and to the World") blessing.

Pius wasted no time in concluding concordats with the new or restored countries of Europe. He was most interested in securing the rights of Catholics to worship freely and the Church to function without restraint. In 1929 he finally settled the "Roman Question," concluding an agreement with the Italian government under Mussolini. The Concordat created the Vatican City as a separate state under Italian protection and restored Catholicism as the official religion of Italy. But Mussolini was no friend of the Church. A proud atheist, il Duce recognized (like Napoleon long before) that his efforts to control the country were hamstrung by the tension with the Church. His ideology, Fascism, remained antithetical to Catholicism. In June 1931 the pope issued *Non Abbiamo Bisogno*, which condemned it as the worship of the State.

But for all of its problems, for the Church, Fascism was better than the alternative. In the Soviet Union religion had been abolished. Moscow was actively promoting similar Communist revolution in countries around the world, including Italy, which had a strong Communist party. Mussolini's Fascists opposed the Communists. And although they hemmed the Church in, they did not abolish it. The pope needed only to look to Spain to see what would come of a Communist revolution. In 1936 Spanish Communists and Anarchists took control, sparking a violent civil war in which the Church was the first victim. Almost every church in Spain was seized or destroyed. Thousands of priests and religious were arrested and executed.

Although it shared much with Italian Fascism, Nazism in Germany added to it a pseudo-scientific approach to racial purity. The bishops in Germany spoke out against the idea and the pope did as well. In March 1937 Pius issued two encyclicals. *Divini redemptoris* condemned Communism. *Mit brennender Sorge*, which was written in German and smuggled into Germany, condemned Nazism as a "myth of race and blood." When the Second World

War broke out Pope Pius XII followed the example of Benedict XV, working to relieve suffering, calling for peace, and seeking to save lives. However, in this case, the earlier encyclicals had made plain that the Church opposed Nazism and Fascism (which were the Axis) and Communism (which was among the Allies). Pius instead focused on rescuing Jews, something that won him their very great thanks. Indeed, the chief Rabbi of Rome later converted to Catholicism, taking the name Eugenio. Although it later became fashionable to claim that Pius did not do enough or was even complicit in the Holocaust, this has never been the consensus of historians.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. Why did it seem as though the plight of the Catholic Church would improve following World War I?
2. What was the consensus of historians on Pius's complicity with the Holocaust?

Suggested Reading

Rhodes, Anthony R.E. *The Vatican in the Age of the Dictators, 1922–1945*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1974.

Other Books of Interest

Chadwick, Owen. *Britain and the Vatican During the Second World War*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.

Sanchez, José M. *Pius XII and the Holocaust: Understanding the Controversy*. Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2002.

Lecture 13: Vatican II

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is Giuseppe Alberigo's *A Brief History of Vatican II.*

The end of World War II was quickly followed by a Cold War in which the United States and the Soviet Union faced each other across the world, but especially in Europe. Europe itself was prostrate. Sapped of its blood and treasure, it became a pawn in the struggles of outsiders. But that also brought peace to Europe, something that had not existed for a very long time. For the first time since the days of the Roman Empire, the Church was in a position of relative security. It could at last shed the responsibilities of government and focus solely on the care of souls.

Pope John XXIII was elected in 1958. He approached his pontificate with a desire to reform the Church for its new role. The ancient faith of the Church, he maintained, could never change. But the Church itself should modify its approach when the world itself had changed. He was optimistic about the future. Although advised against it, he called a new ecumenical council—Vatican II. For the first time an ecumenical council was called not in response to a challenge or threat. Instead, John simply believed that God was calling the Church to reform in order to improve. The tone was to be celebratory. But when it met in 1962 the Council was sharply divided between conservatives who had opposed it and liberals who saw it as the beginning of a new Church. John took no active role in the Council, preferring to watch it on closed circuit television. He died after the first year.

The new pope, Paul VI, had been active in the Council since its beginning. He worked hard to break the logjams between liberals and conservatives. He also gave the Council the additional task of considering collegiality and ecumenicism. The Council also made a number of other highly visible reforms. It is best remembered for the reform of the liturgy of the Mass, which was to be available in vernacular languages and should be said so as to include the congregation as active participants. The role of the laity was discussed at length, emphasizing that the Church was not simply the clergy or the hierarchy. But several issues were not given to the Council for discussion. These included the highly controversial matters of clerical celibacy and contraception. When the Council closed in 1965 there was great celebration but also anger and confusion as well.

Changes began occurring in parishes around the world as a result of Vatican II. Yet, especially in industrialized countries, those changes frequently went far beyond the Council. Such innovations were excused as being in the "spirit of Vatican II." This led to a drop off in Mass attendance and vocations as well as a large-scale departure from religious life. Confusion reigned as priests and laity were told that almost everything had "gone out with Vatican II." To dispel the confusion, Paul issued a series of encyclicals in 1965, 1967, and

1968 affirming traditional Catholic teachings. The last encyclical, *Humana vitae*, was the most controversial because it strongly rejected the idea that the Church would change its belief on contraception. There was a great outcry, from the pews and the press. Although he remained active the rest of his pontificate, Paul never issued another encyclical.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. Why was Vatican II sharply divided when it first met in 1962?
2. What prominent issues were not discussed at Vatican II?

Suggested Reading

Alberigo, Giuseppe. *A Brief History of Vatican II*. Trans. Matthew Sherry. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2006.

Other Books of Interest

Hebblethwaite, Peter. *Paul VI: The First Modern Pope*. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1993.

Schrek, Alan. *Vatican II: The Crisis and the Promise*. Cincinnati, OH: Servant Publications, 2005.

Lecture 14:
Pope John Paul II and Beyond

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is George Wiegel's *Witness to Hope: The Biography of Pope John Paul II.*

The 1970s saw a Catholic Church that was no longer threatened by Western governments, but was itself torn by internal divisions in the wake of Vatican II. Separatist movements proliferated both on the left and the right. In the middle, the Church at the parish and diocese level continued to grapple with the "openness" of Vatican II. In developing countries, particularly in South and Central America, a modified Marxism came into the Church through Liberation Theology. In Rome, where the curia was now internationalized, the agendas of the world met and there was more than a little discord. The Conclave of 1978 sought an outsider, someone with no connection to the curia. They chose the Patriarch of Venice, Albino Luciani, who took the name John Paul I. Called "the smiling pope," John Paul I inspired hope that he could bring reconciliation. He died one month later of a heart attack.

When the Conclave again met they chose the archbishop of Krakow, Karol Wojtyła. It was the first time a non-Italian had been elected since 1522. Wojtyła was a well-respected churchman who had taken a leading role in Vatican II. He was also a playwright, poet, and scholar. Having lived through Nazism and Communism in Poland, he knew the face of those evils well. His twenty-seven-year reign—the second longest in the history of the pontificate—would see extraordinary changes in the world and the Church's role in it.

One of those changes was the fall of Communism, which began in earnest with the visit of John Paul II to Poland shortly after his coronation. A third or more of the country came to see him. He made Solidarity a favored cause in the West and brought the plight of those behind the Iron Curtain to a world audience. John Paul's efforts, combined with pressures by U.S. President Ronald Reagan and British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher (all three of whom were in power by 1980), brought Soviet control of Eastern Europe to its knees. Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev is reported to have said that without John Paul II Communism might not have fallen.

John Paul began his pontificate with the words of Christ, "Be not afraid." He embodied those in his approach to the world. Behind it was his firm conviction, expressed in *Veritatis Splendor* in 1993, that moral truth was not relative. This led him to speak out against a "culture of death" rampant in the world. As a guiding light of Vatican II he believed that the implementation of the Council had derailed. He reaffirmed *Humanae vitae*, declaring abortion and contraception to be grave matter that was "intrinsically evil." *Ordinatio Sacerdotalis* in 1995 made plain that not only would the Church not consider the ordination of women, but that it lacked the authority to do so. Although liberals accused him of quashing the progressive spirit of Vatican II, he was careful to base his actions on the Council itself.

Traveling more than any pope before him, John Paul reached out to other faiths. He was the first pope to enter a synagogue, to enter a mosque, and to visit the Western Wall. Wherever he went millions flocked for giant outdoor masses. No pope before him had his level of popularity. And it was not just among Catholics. John Paul became the first pope who could speak to Catholics and non-Catholics. Even Evangelical Protestants found much to praise with the pope. He became a world leader in a way that no pope had done since the Middle Ages.

At his death, the world mourned. He was succeeded by Benedict XVI, himself also a noted scholar and theologian. His election signaled a continuation of the philosophy and teachings of John Paul II.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. What role did John Paul II play in the fall of Communism?
2. What conviction did John Paul II express in *Veritatis Splendor*?

Suggested Reading

Wiegel, George. *Witness to Hope: The Biography of Pope John Paul II*. New York: Harper Perennial, 2001.

Other Books of Interest

Hebblethwaite, Peter. *The Year of Three Popes*. New York: HarperCollins, 1978.

Wiegel, George. *God's Choice: Pope Benedict XVI and the Future of the Catholic Church*. New York: Harper Perennial, 2006.

COURSE MATERIALS

Suggested Readings for This Course:

Eberhardt, Newman C. *A Summary of Catholic History: Volume 2: Modern History*. St. Louis, MO: Herder Publishing, 1962.

Hales, E.E.Y. *The Catholic Church in the Modern World*. New York: Doubleday & Company, 1960.

Suggested Readings for Individual Lectures:

Alberigo, Giuseppe. *A Brief History of Vatican II*. Trans. Matthew Sherry. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2006.

Chadwick, Owen. *The Popes and European Revolution*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1981.

Coppa, Frank J. *Pius IX: Crusader in a Secular Age*. Independence, KY: Twayne Publishers, 1979.

Cragg, Gerald R. *The Church in the Age of Reason: 1648–1789*. Rev. ed. New York: Penguin, 1990.

Fisher, James T. *Catholics in America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.

Hsia, R. Po-chia. *The World of Catholic Renewal, 1540–1770*. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

O'Dwyer, Margaret M. *The Papacy in the Age of Napoleon and the Restoration*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1986.

O'Gara, Margaret. *Triumph in Defeat: Infallibility, Vatican I, and the French Minority Bishops*. Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1988.

Rhodes, Anthony R.E. *The Vatican in the Age of the Dictators, 1922–1945*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1974.

Vidler, Alec R. *The Church in an Age of Revolution*. Rev. ed. New York: Penguin, 1962.

Wallace, Lillian Parker. *Leo XIII and the Rise of Socialism*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1966.

Wiegel, George. *Witness to Hope: The Biography of Pope John Paul II*. New York: Harper Perennial, 2001.

Wright, Anthony D. *The Counter Reformation: Catholic Europe and the Non-Christian World*. 2nd rev. ed. London: Ashgate Publishing, 2005.

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