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Church Reform and the Crusades

TERMS & NAMES

- simony
- St. Francis of Assisi
- Gothic
- Urban II
- Crusade
- Saladin
- Richard the Lion-Hearted
- Reconquista
- Inquisition

MAIN IDEA

The Catholic Church underwent reform and launched Crusades (religious wars) against Muslims and others.

WHY IT MATTERS NOW

The Crusades resulted in trade and exploration between Christians and Muslims but left a legacy of distrust.

SETTING THE STAGE Between A.D. 500 and A.D. 1000, Vikings attacked and looted Church monasteries. They destroyed many of these centers of learning. At that time, the Church suffered severe problems. Some priests could barely read their prayers. Some popes were men of questionable morals. Many bishops and abbots cared more about their positions as feudal lords than about their duties as spiritual leaders. However, over the next 300 years the Church and medieval life changed dramatically.

Monastic Revival and Church Reform

Beginning in the 1000s, a spiritual revival spread across Europe. This revival was led by the monasteries. The reformers wanted to return to the basic principles of the Christian religion. New religious orders were founded. Influenced by the piety of the new monasteries, the popes began to reform the Church. They restored and expanded its power and authority. A new age of religious feeling was born—the Age of Faith.

Vocabulary

piety: religious devotion and reverence for God.

Problems in the Church Many problems troubled the Church at that time, but reformers were most distressed by three. First, many village priests married and had families. Such marriages were against Church rulings. Second, positions in the Church were sold by bishops, a practice called **simony** (SY-muh-nee). Third, the practice of lay investiture put kings in control of church bishops. Church reformers believed bishops should be appointed by the Church alone.

Reform Begins at Cluny Reforms began quietly in 910 with the founding of a Benedictine monastery at Cluny (KLOO-nee) in France. The monks there strictly followed the Benedictine rule. Soon Cluny's reputation for virtue inspired the founding of similar monasteries throughout western Europe. By the year 1000, there were 300 houses under Cluny's leadership. In 1098, another order was founded, the Cistercian (sih-STUR-shuhn) monks. The Cistercian life of hardship won many followers, helping to bring about further reforms.

Vocabulary

papacy: the position or office of the pope.

The reform movement, begun at Cluny, influenced the papacy. Pope Leo IX, who took office in 1049, enforced Church laws against simony and the marriage of priests. Pope Gregory VII was elected pope in 1073. He had spent time at Cluny and was determined to purify the Church. Gregory extended the reforms begun by Leo.

Reform and Church Organization The popes who followed Leo and Gregory reorganized the Church to continue the policy of reform. In the 1100s and 1200s the Church was restructured to resemble a kingdom, with the pope at its head. The pope's group of advisers was called the papal Curia. The Curia also acted as a court. It developed canon law (the law of the Church) on matters such as marriage, divorce, and inheritance. The Curia also decided cases based on these laws. Diplomats for the pope traveled through Europe dealing with bishops and kings. This extended the power of the pope.



This scene of monastic life comes from a *Book of Hours*, a book of prayers for private use that followed the hours of the day.



The Church collected taxes in the form of tithes. These consumed one-tenth the yearly income from every Christian family. The Church performed social services such as caring for the sick and the poor. Most hospitals in medieval Europe were operated by the Church. By the early 1200s, popes had achieved remarkable success in their reforms. The practice of simony and the marriage of clergy both declined dramatically. The popes established their authority throughout Europe.

Preaching Friars In the early 1200s, wandering friars traveled from place to place preaching and spreading the Church's ideas. Like monks, friars took vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience. Unlike monks, friars did not live apart from the world in monasteries. Instead, they preached to the poor throughout Europe's towns and cities. Friars owned nothing and lived by begging.

The Dominicans, one of the earliest orders of friars, were founded by Dominic, a Spanish priest. Because Dominic emphasized the importance of study, many Dominicans were scholars. Another order of friars, the Franciscans, was founded by the Italian **St. Francis of Assisi** (uh-SEE-zee). The son of a rich merchant, Francis gave up his wealth and turned to preaching when he was about 20 years old. He placed much less importance on scholarship than did Dominic. Francis treated all creatures as if they were his spiritual brothers and sisters.

Religious Orders for Women Women as well as men participated in the spiritual revival. Women joined the Dominicans. In 1212, the Franciscan order for women, known as the Poor Clares, was founded by Clare and her friend Francis of Assisi. In Germany, Hildegard of Bingen, a mystic and musician, founded a Benedictine convent in 1147. Unlike the men, women were not allowed to travel from place to place as preachers. However, they too lived in poverty and worked to help the poor and sick.

Cathedrals—Cities of God

Although the friars chose to live in poverty, evidence of the Church's wealth could be seen everywhere in the Middle Ages. This was especially true in the cathedrals that were built in Europe around this time.

A New Style of Church Architecture Between about 800 and 1100, churches were built in the Romanesque (ROH-muh-NEHSK) style. The churches had round arches and a heavy roof held up by thick walls and pillars. The thick walls had tiny windows that let in little light.

In the early 1100s, a new style of architecture, known as **Gothic**, evolved. The term *Gothic* comes from a Germanic tribe named the Goths. It describes the particular church architecture that spread throughout medieval Europe. Unlike the heavy, gloomy Romanesque buildings, Gothic cathedrals thrust upward as if reaching toward heaven. Light streamed in through huge stained-glass windows. Soon Gothic cathedrals

were built in many towns of France. In Paris, the vaulted ceiling of the Cathedral of Notre Dame (NOH-truh DAHM) eventually rose to over 100 feet. Then Chartres, Reims, Amiens, and Beauvais built even higher cathedrals.

In all, nearly 500 Gothic churches were built between 1170 and 1270. Other arts of the medieval world clustered around the Gothic cathedral—sculpture, woodcarvings, and the stained-glass windows. The cathedral represented the City of God. As such, it was decorated with all the richness that people on earth could offer.

Background

Because of his love of nature, St. Francis was named the patron saint of ecology in 1979 by Pope John Paul II.

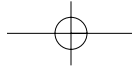
THINK THROUGH HISTORY

A. Making Inferences

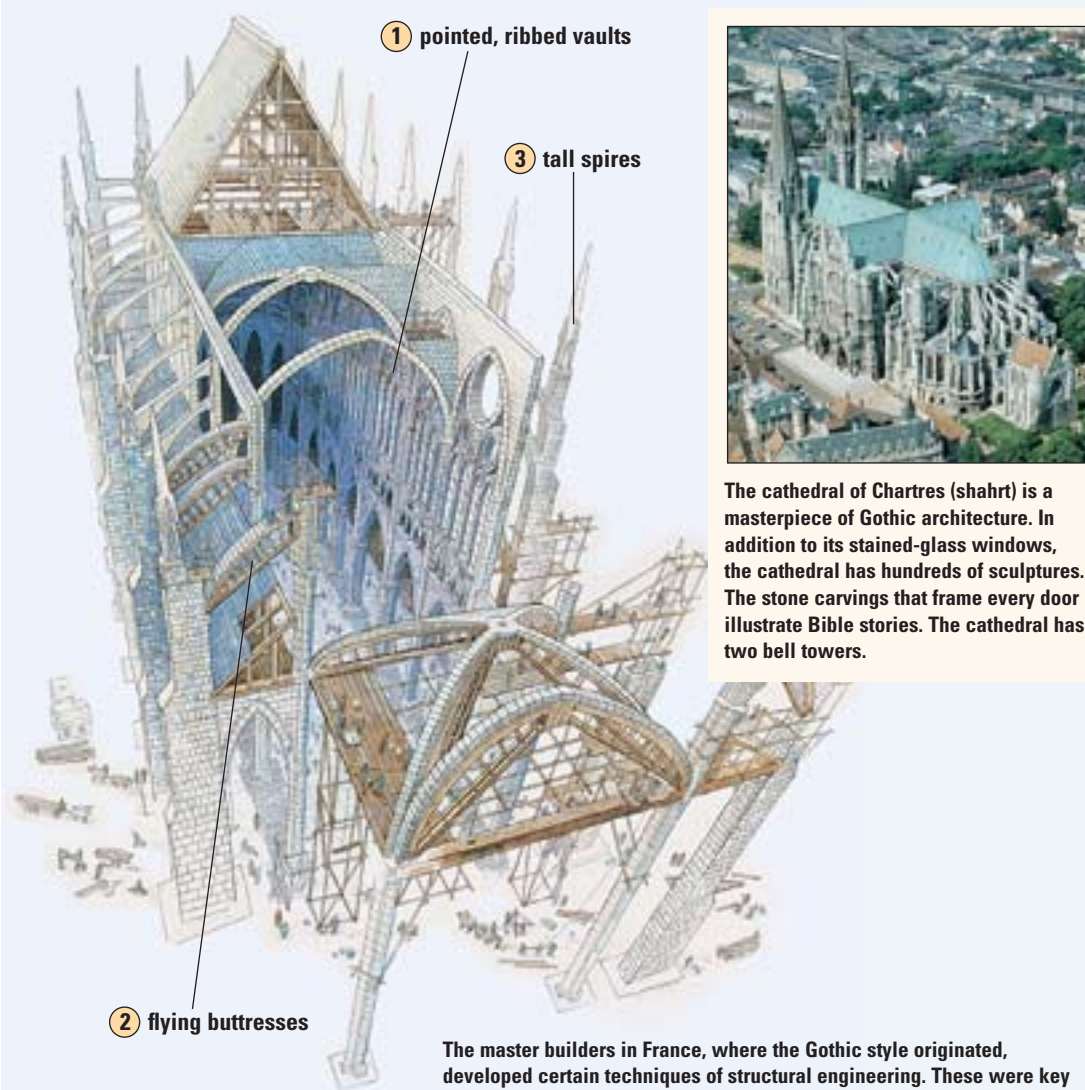
Why might women have preferred life in a religious order to secular life in the Middle Ages?



In this 13th-century painting, St. Clare (kneeling) is received by St. Francis (standing, with halo).



HISTORY THROUGH ART: Church Architecture



The cathedral of Chartres (shahrt) is a masterpiece of Gothic architecture. In addition to its stained-glass windows, the cathedral has hundreds of sculptures. The stone carvings that frame every door illustrate Bible stories. The cathedral has two bell towers.



Chartres Cathedral has some of the most beautiful stained-glass windows of any Gothic cathedral in Europe. The windows illustrate stories from the Bible. As illiterate peasants walked past the 176 windows, they could view those stories. This window depicts the parable of the Good Samaritan.

Connect to History

Drawing Conclusions Have students work in small groups to pose and answer three questions about what elements in the style of Gothic architecture might affect the sense of height and light inside.

 [SEE SKILLBUILDER HANDBOOK, PAGE R17](#)

Connect to Today

Taking a Tour Take a walk past the churches in your neighborhood. Notice the stained-glass windows. Do they tell a story? What figures or events do they illustrate?

The master builders in France, where the Gothic style originated, developed certain techniques of structural engineering. These were key to Gothic architecture: ① pointed, ribbed vaults that supported the roof's weight and framed huge stained-glass windows, ② flying buttresses that both supported the walls from the outside and acted as wind braces, and ③ pointed arches and tall spires that seemed to be pointing to heaven.

The Crusades

The Age of Faith also inspired wars of conquest. In 1093, the Byzantine emperor Alexius Comnenus sent an appeal to Robert, Count of Flanders. That letter was also read by Pope **Urban II**. The emperor asked for help against the Muslim Turks. They were threatening to conquer his capital, Constantinople:

A VOICE FROM THE PAST

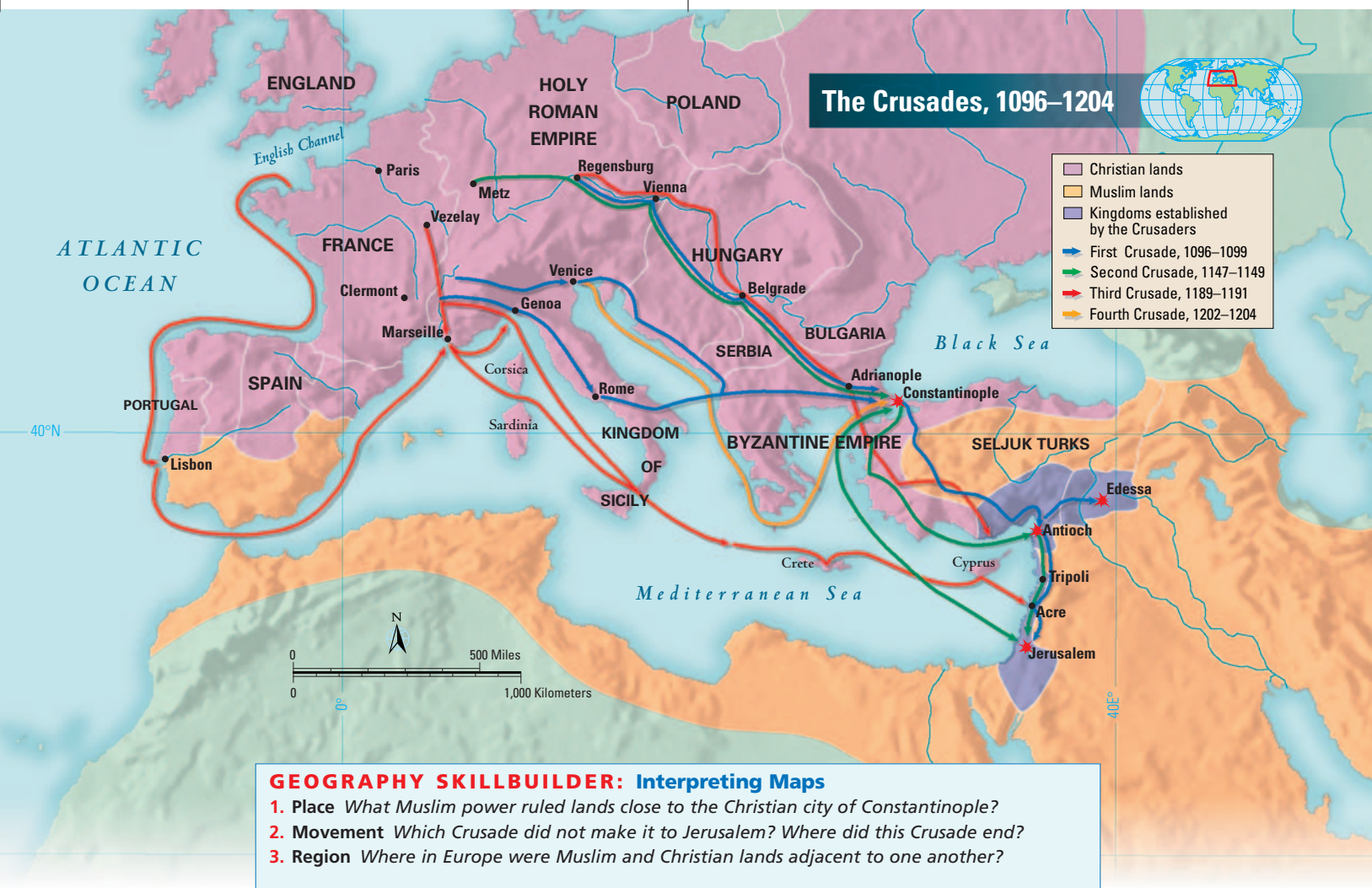
Come then, with all your people and give battle with all your strength, so that all this treasure shall not fall into the hands of the Turks. . . . Therefore act while there is still time lest the kingdom of the Christians shall vanish from your sight and, what is more important, the Holy Sepulchre [the tomb where Jesus was buried] shall vanish. And in your coming you will find your reward in heaven, and if you do not come, God will condemn you.

EMPEROR ALEXIUS COMNENUS, quoted in *The Dream and the Tomb*

Shortly after this appeal, Pope Urban II issued a call for what he termed a “holy war,” a **Crusade**, to gain control of the Holy Land. Over the next 200 years a number of such

Vocabulary

Holy Land: Palestine; the area where Jesus had lived and preached.



Crusades were launched. The goal of these military expeditions was to recover Jerusalem and the Holy Land from the Muslim Turks.

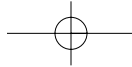
Causes of the Crusading Spirit The Crusades had both economic goals and religious motives. Pope Urban's call brought a tremendous outpouring of religious feeling and support for the Crusade. This support came from great lords and humble peasants alike. In 1096, between 50,000 and 60,000 knights became Crusaders. With red crosses sewn on tunics worn over their armor and the battle cry of "God wills it!" on their lips, the Crusaders marched eastward. Few would return from the journey.

Kings and the Church saw the Crusades as an opportunity to get rid of quarrelsome knights who fought each other. These knights threatened the peace of the kingdoms, as well as Church property. Others who participated were younger sons who, unlike their oldest brother, did not stand to inherit their father's property. They were looking for land and a position in society. Knights and commoners alike were fired by religious zeal. According to Pope Urban II, if the knights died on Crusade, they were assured of a place in heaven.

In later Crusades, merchants profited by making cash loans to finance the Crusade. They also leased their ships for a hefty fee to transport armies over the Mediterranean Sea. In addition, the merchants of Pisa, Genoa, and Venice hoped to win control of key trade routes to India, Southeast Asia, and China from Muslim traders.

The First and Second Crusades By early 1097, three armies of knights and people of all classes had gathered outside Constantinople. Most of the Crusaders were French. But Germans, Englishmen, Scots, Italians, and Spaniards came as well.

The Crusaders were ill-prepared for their holy war in this First Crusade. They knew nothing of the geography, climate, or culture of the Holy Land. They had no grand strategy to capture Jerusalem. The nobles argued among themselves and couldn't agree



on a leader. Also, they had not set up adequate supply lines. Finally, however, an army of 12,000 (less than one-fourth the original army) approached Jerusalem. The Crusaders besieged the city for a month. On July 15, 1099, they captured the city.

All in all, the Crusaders had won a narrow strip of land. It stretched about 400 miles from Edessa in the north to Jerusalem in the south. Four feudal Crusader states were carved out of this territory, each ruled by a European noble.

The Crusaders' states were extremely vulnerable to Muslim counterattack. In 1144, Edessa was reconquered by the Turks. The Second Crusade was organized to recapture the city. But its armies straggled home in defeat. In 1187, Europeans were shocked to learn Jerusalem itself had fallen to the Muslim leader **Saladin** (SAL-uh-dihn).

THINK THROUGH HISTORY

B. Summarizing

What, if anything, had the Crusaders gained by the end of the Second Crusade?

The Third and Fourth Crusades

The Third Crusade to recapture Jerusalem was led by three of Europe's most powerful monarchs. These were the French king Philip Augustus, the German emperor Frederick I (Barbarossa), and the English king **Richard the Lion-Hearted**. Barbarossa drowned on the journey, and Philip Augustus argued with Richard and went home. Richard was left to regain the Holy Land from Saladin.

Both Richard and Saladin were ruthless fighters who respected each other. After many battles, the two agreed to a truce in 1192. Jerusalem remained under Muslim control. In return, Saladin promised that unarmed Christian pilgrims could freely visit the city's holy places.

In 1198, the powerful Pope Innocent III appealed for still another Crusade to capture Jerusalem. The knights who took part in this Fourth Crusade became entangled in Italian and Byzantine politics. They ended up looting the city of Constantinople in 1204, ending the Fourth Crusade. There was a breach (a split) between the Church in the east, whose capital was Constantinople, and the Church in the west, whose capital was Rome. This breach, caused in part by the Crusaders' actions, became permanent.

Background

In the looting of Constantinople, Crusaders stole the relics from the great cathedral. They loaded the jewel-studded communion table onto a Venetian ship. The ship sank, and its priceless cargo was never recovered.

HISTORY MAKERS



Saladin
1138–1193

Saladin was the most famous Muslim leader of the 1100s. His own people considered him a most devout man. Even the Christians regarded him as honest and brave.

He wished to chase the Crusaders back into their own territories. He said:

I think that when God grants me victory over the rest of Palestine, I shall divide my territories, make a will stating my wishes, then set sail on this sea for their far-off lands and pursue the Franks there, so as to free the earth from anyone who does not believe in Allah, or die in the attempt.



Richard the Lion-Hearted
1157–1199

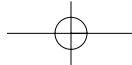
Richard was noted for his good looks, charm, courage, grace—and ruthlessness. When he heard that Jerusalem had fallen to the Muslims, he was inspired with religious zeal. He joined the Crusade, leaving others to rule England in his place.

Richard mounted a siege on the city of Acre. Saladin's army was in the hills overlooking the city, but it was not strong enough to defeat the Crusaders. When finally the city fell, Richard had the Muslim survivors—some 3,000 men, women, and children—slaughtered. The Muslim army watched helplessly from the hills.

The Crusading Spirit Dwindles

In the 1200s, Crusades became increasingly common and unsuccessful. The religious spirit of the First Crusade faded, replaced by a search for personal gain.

The Later Crusades In several later Crusades, armies marched not to the Holy Land but to North Africa. The French king who led the last two Crusades, Louis IX, won wide respect in Europe. He was later declared a saint. None of these attempts conquered much land, however.



The Children's Crusade took place in 1212. Thousands of children set out for the Holy Land. They were armed only with the belief that God would give them Jerusalem. On their march south to the Mediterranean, many died from cold and starvation. One group even turned back. The rest drowned at sea or were sold into slavery.

The Crusades

Causes

- Muslims control Palestine (the Holy Land) and threaten Constantinople.
- Byzantine emperor calls for help.
- Pope wants to reclaim Palestine and reunite Christendom.
- Pope appeals to Christian knights.
- Knights feel religious zeal and want land, riches, and adventure.
- Italian cities desire commercial power.

Effects

- Byzantine Empire is weakened.
- Pope's power declines.
- Power of feudal nobles weakens.
- Kings become stronger.
- Religious intolerance grows.
- Italian cities expand trade and grow rich.
- Muslims increasingly distrust Christians.
- Trade grows between Europe and the Middle East.
- European technology improves as Crusaders learn from Muslims.

A Spanish Crusade In Spain, Muslims (called Moors) had controlled most of the country until the 1100s. The **Reconquista** (ray-kawn-KEES-tuh) was a long effort to drive the Muslims out of Spain. By the late 1400s, the Muslims held only the tiny kingdom of Granada. In 1492, Granada fell to the Christian army of Ferdinand and Isabella, the Spanish monarchs.

Spain had a large Jewish population. Many achieved high positions in finance, government, and medicine. Many Jews (and Muslims) converted to Christianity during the late 1400s. To unify their country under Christianity and to consolidate their power, Isabella and Ferdinand made use of the **Inquisition**. This was a tribunal held by the Church to suppress heresy. Heretics were people whose religious beliefs differed from the teachings of the Church. The inquisitors suspected Jewish and Muslim converts of heresy. A person who was suspected of heresy might be questioned for weeks and even tortured. Once suspects confessed, they were often burned at the stake. Eventually, in 1492, the monarchs expelled all practicing Jews and Muslims from Spain.

The Effects of the Crusades The failure of later Crusades lessened the power of the pope. The Crusades weakened the feudal nobility. Thousands of knights lost their lives and fortunes.

On the positive side, the Crusades played a part in stimulating trade between Europe and Southwest Asia. The goods imported from Southwest Asia included spices, fruits, and cloth.

For Muslims, the Crusades also had both good and bad effects. The intolerance and prejudice displayed by Christians in the Holy Land left behind a legacy of bitterness and hatred. This legacy continues to the present. For Christians and Jews who remained in the region after the fall of the Crusader states, relations with

their Muslim masters worsened. However, European merchants who lived and traded in the Crusader states were encouraged to continue their trading after the collapse of the states. This trade with the West benefited both Christians and Muslims.

The Crusades grew from the forces of religious fervor, feudalism, and chivalry as they came together with explosive energy. This same energy could be seen in the growth of trade, towns, and universities in medieval Europe.

THINK THROUGH HISTORY
C. Recognizing Effects What were the effects of the Reconquista?

Section 1 Assessment

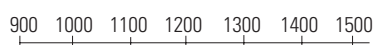
1. TERMS & NAMES

Identify

- simony
- St. Francis of Assisi
- Gothic
- Urban II
- Crusade
- Saladin
- Richard the Lion-Hearted
- Reconquista
- Inquisition

2. TAKING NOTES

Using a time line like the one below, show four or five key events that summarize the Age of Faith.



Write a paragraph describing one event in detail.

3. FORMING AND SUPPORTING OPINIONS

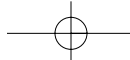
Which of the Church's problems—marriage of priests, simony, lay investiture—do you think was most harmful to the Church? Why?

THINK ABOUT

- the effects of each problem
- the reforms that corrected each problem

4. THEME ACTIVITY

Cultural Interaction With a partner, develop a scene from a play in which Richard the Lion-Hearted, in 1192, meets Saladin for the first time and the two warriors work out a truce. Include stage directions, but focus mainly on what the men say to each other. Be prepared to present the scene as a dialogue.



different PERSPECTIVES

The Crusades

In the Crusades, both Christians and Muslims believed that God was on their side. They both felt justified in using violence to win or to keep the Holy Land. The following excerpts show their belief in God's approval for their deeds. The quotation from Norman Cantor explains where this attitude has led.

SPEECH

Pope Urban II



In 1095, Pope Urban II gave one of the most influential speeches of history when he issued a plea that resulted in the First Crusade. The pope assured his listeners that God was on their side.

Let the holy sepulcher of our Lord and Saviour, which is possessed by the unclean nations, especially arouse you. . . . This royal city [Jerusalem], situated at the center of the earth, is now held captive by the enemies of Christ and is subjected, by those who do not know God, to the worship of the heathen. Accordingly, undertake this journey eagerly for the remission of your sins, with the assurance of the reward of imperishable glory in the kingdom of heaven.

LETTER

Saladin

The German emperor Frederick I (Barbarossa) wrote the Muslim leader Saladin a letter threatening him if Saladin should attack Jerusalem. The following is an excerpt of Saladin's reply, written after he had recaptured Jerusalem.

Whenever your armies are assembled . . . we will meet you in the power of God. We will not be satisfied with the land on the seacoast, but we will cross over with God's good pleasure and take from you all your lands in the strength of the Lord. . . . And when the Lord, by His power, shall have given us victory over you, nothing will remain for us to do but freely to take your lands by His power and with His good pleasure. . . . By the virtue and power of God we have taken possession of Jerusalem and its territories; and of the three cities that still remain in the hands of the Christians . . . we shall occupy them also.

HISTORICAL ACCOUNT

William of Tyre



William of Tyre was a Christian bishop who drew upon eyewitness accounts of the capture of Jerusalem by the Crusaders in writing his account.

It was impossible to look upon the vast numbers of the slain without horror; everywhere lay fragments of human bodies, and the very ground was covered with the blood of the slain. It was not alone the spectacle of headless bodies and mutilated limbs strewn in all directions that roused horror in all who looked upon them. Still more dreadful was it to gaze upon the victors themselves, dripping with blood from head to foot, an ominous sight which brought terror to all who met them.

It is reported that within the Temple enclosure alone about ten thousand infidels perished, in addition to those who lay slain everywhere throughout the city in the streets and squares, the number of whom was estimated as no less.

HISTORIAN'S COMMENTARY

Norman Cantor



Historian Norman Cantor explains the lasting legacy of the Crusades—even today when nation fights nation, each sincerely believes that God is on its side.

The most important legacy of the crusading movement was the sanctification [making holy] of violence in pursuit of [ideas]. This was not a new concept, but it took on new force when the pope and the flower of Christian chivalry acted it out in holy wars. The underlying concept outlived its religious origin, . . . and the state gradually replaced the Church as a holy cause.

Connect to History

Comparing Use specific phrases or passages from Urban's speech and from Saladin's letter to show how their attitudes are similar.

 SEE SKILLBUILDER HANDBOOK, PAGE R7

Connect to Today

Researching Find accounts in newspapers or magazines of how some groups today feel morally justified in using violence. Share your accounts with the class.

 **CD-ROM** For another perspective on the Crusades, see World History: Electronic Library of Primary Sources.