The historical context

Until the Reformation began in the sixteenth century, the Roman Catholic Church had united the Christians of Western Europe. The Catholic Church, with the pope at its head, appeared to bind all believers to a single faith. The Catholic Church was more than just a religion; it was a cornerstone of the medieval social and political system.

The Renaissance, that great flowering of culture that occurred at the end of the Middle Ages, began to loosen the grip of the Church on society. Scholars of the Renaissance were influenced by the ideas of Humanism, an essential component of which was the questioning of accepted beliefs. Humanists placed less emphasis on the spiritual aspect of humankind and stressed a more secular and individualist philosophy.

The Renaissance set the stage for the Reformation in another important way, too. In the mid-fifteenth century, a German named Johannes Gutenberg had invented a kind of printing that used movable metal type. This was a vast improvement on previous methods of printing used in Europe. Before Guttenberg, most books were written by hand and could take months to produce. Now, hundreds of pages could be turned out in a day for a fraction of the cost. Cheap books, or pamphlets, would come to play an important role in the spread of ideas during the Reformation.

The rise of national monarchies weakened the power of the Church. Disputes over the authority of the pope and the control of Church property festered throughout the Middle Ages. When the pope threatened to excommunicate King Philip IV in a conflict over taxes, the French monarch had the pope kidnapped. He was released shortly after but died a few days later. Then, in 1309, the new pope moved the seat of the papacy from Rome to Avignon, a town in France, where it remained for the next seventy years. Efforts to move the center of the Church back to Rome caused a schism in the Church, resulting in two, and then three, men claiming to be the rightful pope.

The Church was also raising money in some less than respectable ways. One practice, that came to symbolize the need for reform, was the selling of indulgences. An indulgence was the remission of the temporal penalty due to forgiven sin, in virtue of the merits of Christ and the saints. It exempted either the bearer, or a dead friend or relative of the bearer, from the punishment associated with the sin. In other words, people could buy forgiveness and a ticket to heaven by handing over money to the Church. Another way of making money was the practice of selling positions of authority in the Church. This widespread practice was known as simony. Some people bought multiple Church offices, and used these positions as a source of income.

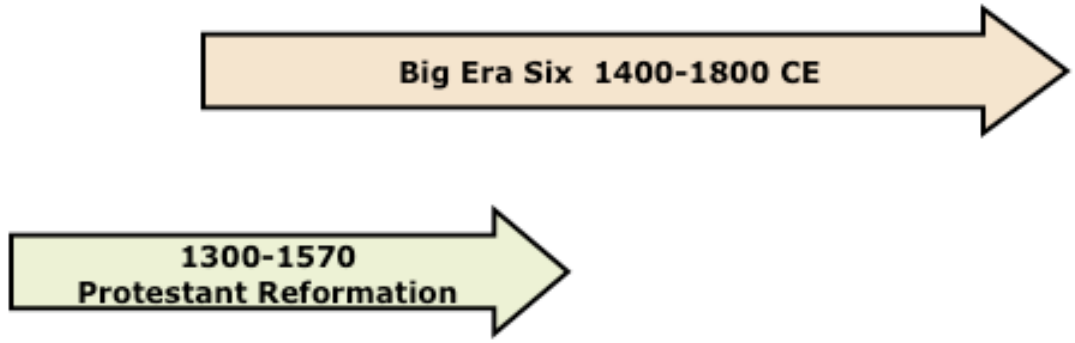
The Church was also open to criticism further down the pecking order. Many priests led debauched lives, cohabiting openly with their mistresses and making a mockery of any vows of chastity. Many priests did not even live in the parishes they represented. This kind of corruption was the fuel that fed the fire of the Reformation, but it was the monk, Martin Luther, who in 1519 lit the first match.

The movement began in Wittenberg, a city in the German-speaking region known as Saxony. There, Martin Luther nailed his *Ninety-Five Theses* to the cathedral door. He was protesting against corruption in the Church, but more than that, Luther objected to some of the teachings at the heart of Church theology. For the Church, the way to salvation was by following the practices and rituals of Catholicism. For Luther, salvation came through faith in Christ and a belief in the truth of the Bible. Luther's argument became known as "justification by faith."

The movement soon spread throughout much of Europe. When the pope, Leo X, issued a directive condemning Luther's ideas, Luther publicly set fire to the document. Charles V, the Holy Roman Emperor and a loyal Catholic, ordered Luther to recant. Luther refused, and the fire continued to spread. Luther's opposition to the Church became a focus for others throughout Europe. Those who were unhappy with the Church for their own reasons rallied behind Luther. For many, Luther's revolt provided an opportunity to break with the Church and reject the authority of Rome. Within a short time religious uprisings and wars erupted across the continent.

In Germany, Luther looked to sympathetic German princes for support, and some came to his defense, sheltering him from Charles V. Lutheranism continued to grow, often in the face of fierce opposition from the Catholic clergy. Fighting between Catholics and Protestants continued during the rest of Luther's lifetime. Nine years after his death, Charles V agreed to the Peace of Augsburg, recognizing the practices of Luther's new Church, even though religious wars continued in Europe for more than a century. One change was permanent: even though the Roman Catholic Church continued to thrive in much of the subcontinent, it never again spoke for all Western European Christians

This unit in the Big Era Timeline



Lesson 1

Student Handout 1.2—Martin Luther and the Reformation

At the end of the fifteenth century, the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches were the two main institutions representing Christianity. But in the sixteenth century, a wave of European reformers ushered in a series of events that would radically challenge Christian theology and practice. A Catholic monk and professor of theology named Martin Luther became convinced that the Bible was the only true authority in spiritual matters and that the Bible taught that salvation was granted only by God's grace and by faith. With these new insights, Luther sought to reform the Church and to expose its errant teachings.

Luther, who was born in Eisleben in1483, first studied law, but in 1505 he studied theology with the Augustinian Hermits in Erfurt. Ordained in 1507, he became the professor of biblical studies at the University of Wittenberg in 1512.

After studying the Scriptures for many years, Luther came to reject the theology based heavily on Church traditions and rulings. He affirmed instead a personal relationship with Jesus Christ through faith. He believed that God chose to forgive the sinner by His sovereign grace. As Luther said, "We are justified not by our deeds, but by faith alone." In 1520 Luther wrote a letter (treatise) to Pope Leo X in which he stated: "The word of God cannot be received and cherished by any works whatever, but only by faith."

Luther strongly opposed the sale of indulgences. People bought special indulgences that they believed could shorten the time of their departed relatives and friends in Purgatory, a place where the soul was purged so it could enter Heaven. Luther found no foundation in Scripture, reason, or tradition for the sale of indulgences. Instead, it caused people to look to man (priests) instead of to God for forgiveness and the absolution of sins.

In October 1517, this earnest university professor posted ninety-five theses on a church door in Wittenberg stating that salvation is achieved through faith alone. Expecting only to initiate a discussion about the theology of indulgences, Luther was emboldened after his allegations spread throughout Europe.

Confronted with opposition from the archbishop of Mainz, who complained to Rome, Luther refused to honor a summons to Rome and fled town. In 1519, he denied the supremacy of the Pope and the infallibility of Church councils. In 1520, the Pope proclaimed his excommunication, and in 1521 the German Emperor Charles V outlawed him. In this dangerous atmosphere, Frederick of Saxony, a German Prince, took him to Wartburg Castle and protected him from arrest. While there, he translated the New Testament into German so that everyone might have access to the Bible.

Eight months later, in 1522, Luther returned to Wittenberg and introduced his reforms and a new form of worship. Over the next twenty-five years, he published many books in German, written

for the common people so that they could judge for themselves his teachings and disputes with Rome. After this time, many princes, sensing the opportunity to break from the emperor's power and attracted by Luther's theology, became his followers.

In 1529, Charles V tried forcefully to smother Luther's movement, but some of the self-governing German princes fought back. Because of their protest, his followers became known as "Protestants." What had started as an internal reform of Catholicism became a full-scale Protestant reformation, leading to the founding of a number of new Christian sects. In spite of his peace-seeking, non-controversial attempt to explain his views in 1530, the division between the Catholics and Protestants became more distinct.

Adapted and simplified from Dale A. Robbins, "What is the difference between a Protestant church and a Catholic church?" *What People Ask about the Church*, http://www.victorious.org/churchbook/chur40.htm. Introduction from http://www.answers.com/topic/martin-luther.

Martin Luther
1483-1546
Library of Congress
Prints and Photographs Division
Engraved by Theodor Knesing, from the picture by Lucas Cranach.
LC-USZ62-106322

Lesson 2
The Counter Reformation and the Religious Struggle in Europe

Preparation

This lesson follows directly from Lesson 1 on the Trial of Luther. Students should be assigned relevant sections on the Counter Reformation from their textbook.

Introduction

Initially Luther and all the other reformers believed that they were trying to return Christianity to its original roots. However, leaders in the Roman Catholic Church quickly realized that Luther's protests were not just a disagreement within the Church over organization, but were fundamental attacks on Church doctrine and were spreading across Europe. Alarmed at the growing support his ideas were generating and the increasing number of Protestants, the Church responded by calling for a Council to meet and discuss the issues.

Protestant historians have given the name "Counter Reformation" to the actions that culminated in the Council of Trent (1545–1563). Catholic historians see this movement as a continuation of on-going Church reform. Pope Paul III (1534-1549) had clearly seen the need for radical reform in the Church. He worked to revitalize the College of Cardinals, supported the Jesuits, established the Holy Office as the supreme court of appeal for matters of faith and heresy, and convened the Council of Trent.

The Council of Trent that met in three sessions attempted to check and destroy the progress of the Protestant Reformation. In addressing the attacks of Luther, Calvin, and the other Protestant leaders, the Council reaffirmed most of the traditional Catholic practices and beliefs, as the first part of this lesson illustrates.

For lay Catholics, the decisions of the Council meant that all members of the Church were subject to powerful Church enforcement directed by the Church hierarchy. Parishioners were required to confess regularly and to participate in pilgrimages, ceremonies, and processions. Architecture, music, and art all combined to socialize the new orthodoxy in Catholic countries.

In hindsight, the early Reformation had been remarkably free from bloodshed. The Reformation and the Catholic reactions, however, spawned religious wars that swept through Europe from the mid-sixteenth to the seventeenth centuries and involved almost every fledgling state in the continent.

Support for the new orthodoxy was strongest in Italy and Spain, where inquisitions were held to purify the faith. The Spanish Netherlands was a hotbed of competition between Catholics and Protestants, as was Switzerland. France was less affected by the Counter Reformation, and its leaders, hostile to the Habsburg Dynasties, struggled to remain aloof from the more drastic implications of the Council of Trent. However, the Guises, an ultra-loyal Catholic Orthodox

party that strongly supported the Council of Trent's decisions, fomented large-scale attacks on the French Calvinists and sponsored the massacre that occurred on St. Bartholomew's Eve, August 23, 1572, when 2,000 Protestants were murdered in Paris. The wars against the French Protestants, known as Huguenots, were spectacularly un-Christian.

These struggles would eventually shatter the European monarchical traditions. Protestants, unhappy with the rule of Catholic kings, challenged the monarchy, which had always seemed an impregnable political institution. Kings of the new states wanted domestic peace and settling on either Catholicism or Protestantism seemed to be an important prerequisite for maintaining an orderly society. Those areas that emerged from these horrendous religious wars with large groups of both Catholic and Protestant subjects found it difficult to establish powerful new nation states. Those like Spain and France (predominantly Catholic) and like England, Sweden, and the Netherlands (predominantly Protestant) were the most successful of the new states. Germany, riveted with religious conflict, would take much longer to forge a viable German state. The final result of these struggles would be the overthrow and execution of Charles I in England in the middle of the seventeenth century, a historical earthquake that permanently changed the face of Europe. The map at the end of this lesson is intended to illustrate these changes.

Another legacy of the religious wars was to demonstrate that the enormous blood-letting in the name of religion was abhorrent to the growing number of humanists throughout Europe. This disgust with the violence that the religious wars unleashed was a strong factor in the rise of reason and science in the subsequent generations in Europe.

Adapted from Richard Hooker, World Civilizations, Washington State University, http://www.wsu.edu/~dee/REFORM/WARS.HTM.

Activities

1. The Catholic Church has just convicted Luther of heresy, but even so, a growing number of people (Protestants) agree with Luther and other Protestant leaders such as John Calvin. Ask the students to place themselves in the position of Catholic leaders in 1530 and brainstorm what the Church should do about the spread of Luther's ideas. Encourage a wide spectrum of suggestions, from executing all heretics to letting the Protestants alone.

2. Divide the class into small groups (2 or 3 persons each) and give each group Student Handouts 2.1 (Protestant Views) and 2.2. Using the information in Student Handout 2.2, and any other research or sources available, have the class fill in the information for the Catholic (right- hand) side of Student Handout 2.1. The key to Student Handout 2.1 for teachers appears in Lesson 1 (Student Handout 1.4) and also following Student Handout 2.1.

3. An alternate approach: Divide the class into small groups (2 or 3 persons each) and give each group Student Handouts 2.2 (A Summary of Some of the Declarations of the Council of Trent) and 2.4 (Differences between Catholics and Protestants). Using the information in Student Handout 2.2, and any other research or sources available, have them identify the

Lesson 2

Student Handout 2.3A—France's Religious Wars

The Wars of Religion

The latter half of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth century brought about one of the most passionate and calamitous series of wars that Europe had ever experienced. The early Reformation had been, in hindsight, remarkably free from bloodshed; the honeymoon, however, lasted only a short while. It was inevitable that the growing division between Christian churches in Europe would lead to a series of armed conflicts for over a century. Protestants and Catholics would shed each other's blood in prodigious amounts in national wars and in civil wars. These struggles would eventually shatter the European monarchical traditions themselves. The monarchy, which had always seemed an impregnable political institution, was challenged by Protestants unhappy with the rule of Catholic kings. The final result of these struggles would be the overthrow and execution of Charles I in England in the middle of the seventeenth century, a historical earthquake that permanently changed the face of Europe.

The French Wars of Religion: 1562-1598

The first major set of wars fought over the new churches was a series of civil wars fought in France. In 1559, Francis II became king of France at the ripe old age of fifteen. Understanding that the monarch was weak, three major noble families began to struggle for control of France: the Guises (pronounced, geez) in eastern France, the Bourbons in southern France, and the Montmorency-Chatillons in central France. Of the three, the Guises were both the most powerful and the most fanatical about Catholicism; they would eventually gain control of the young monarch and, for all practical purposes, rule the state of France. The Bourbons and the Montmorency-Chatillons were mostly Catholics who—for political reasons—supported the Protestant cause.

The French Protestants were called Huguenots (pronounced, hoo-guh-no), and members of both the Bourbon and Montmorency-Chatillon families were major leaders in the Huguenot movement. The Huguenots represented only a very small part of the French population; in 1560, only seven or eight percent of the French people were Huguenots. They were, however, concentrated in politically-important geographical regions; as a result, they were disproportionately powerful in the affairs of France. It is important to understand that the rivalry between the Guises and the other two families was primarily a political rivalry; this political rivalry, however, would be swept up in the spiritual conflict between the Catholic Church and the new reformed churches.

Francis II died in 1560 after only one year as king. At his death, his younger brother, Charles IX (ruled 1560-1574) assumed the throne. Because he was too young to serve as king, his mother, Catherine de Medici, became regent (a regent is the ruler of a kingdom when the king is incapable of exercising that rule). Catherine was a brilliant and powerful political thinker; she understood right off that the Guises were a threat to her and to her son. In order to tilt the political balance away from the powerful Guise family, she cultivated the Bourbons and the Montmorency-Chatillons. In the process, however, she also had to cultivate the support of the

Huguenots who were closely allied to those two families. Until this time, it was illegal for Huguenots to worship publicly (although there were over 2000 Huguenot churches in 1561). In 1562, Catherine took a great leap forward in religious toleration by allowing Huguenots to hold public worship *outside* the boundaries of towns. They were also allowed to hold Church assemblies. Catherine was a Catholic and wanted France to remain Catholic; she did not, however, want the Guises to be calling all the shots. The only way to chip away at the political power of the Guises was to increase the political power of the other major families and their Protestant allies.

The Guises, for their part, understood what this religious tolerance was all about and quickly clamped down on it. In March 1562, an army led by the Duke of Guise attacked a Protestant church service at Vassy in the province of Champagne and slaughtered everybody they could get their hands on: men, women, and children—all of whom were unarmed. Thus began the French wars of religion, which were to last for almost forty years and destroy thousands of innocent lives.

For all her brilliance, Catherine was placed in an impossible position. She did not want any noble family to exercise control over France; she simply wanted power to be more balanced. She also did not want a Protestant France. So the only strategy open to her was to play both sides, which she did with enormous shrewdness.

This balancing game came to an end, however, when Catherine helped the Guise family plot the assassination of Gaspard de Coligny, a Montmorency-Chatillon family member who was one of the major leaders of the French Huguenots. The assassination failed; Coligny was shot but not killed. The balancing game was over; the Huguenots and Coligny were furious at both Catherine and the Guises. Fearing a Huguenot uprising, Catherine convinced Charles IX that the Huguenots were plotting his overthrow under the leadership of Coligny. On August 24, 1572, the day before St. Bartholomew's Day, royal forces hunted down and executed over three thousand Huguenots, including Coligny, in Paris. Within three days, royal and Guise armies had hunted down and executed over twenty thousand Huguenots in the single most bloody and systematic extermination of non-combatants in European history until World War II.

The St. Bartholomew Massacre was a turning point in both French history and the history of the European Christian Church. Protestants no longer viewed Catholicism as a misguided Church, but as the force of the devil itself. No longer were Protestants fighting for a reformed Church, but they suddenly saw themselves fighting for survival against a Catholic Church whose cruelty and violence seemed to know no bounds. Throughout Europe, Protestant movements slowly transformed into militant movements.

In 1576, Henry III ascended to the throne; he was the youngest brother of Francis II and Charles IX. By this point, France had become a basket case. On the one hand, the Guises had formed a Catholic League, which was violent and fanatical. On the other hand, the Huguenots were filled with a passion for vengeance. Like his mother, Henry tried to stay in the middle of the conflict. Unlike his mother, he had immense popular support for this middle course; the St. Bartholomew

Massacre had deeply troubled moderate Catholics and the growing conflict upset moderate Huguenots. These moderates were called *politiques* ("politicians"), since their central interest was the political and social stability of France rather than their religious beliefs.

The Catholic League was aided by Philip II of Spain who dedicated his monarchy to overthrowing the Protestant churches of other countries. By the mid-1580s, the Catholic League was in control of France and, after Henry III attempted to attack the League in 1588, the League drove him from Paris and embarked on a systematic massacre of non-combatants that rivaled the earlier St. Bartholomew's Massacre.

In exile, Henry III struck up an alliance with his Huguenot cousin, Henry of Navarre. Henry of Navarre was a *politique*; he believed that the peace and security of France were far more important than imposing his religious views. Before the two Henrys could attack Paris, however, Henry III was stabbed to death by a fanatical, fury-driven Dominican friar in 1589. Since Henry III had no children, Henry of Navarre, as next in line to the throne, became King of France as Henry IV (ruled 1589-1610).

Henry understood that the only way that France would find peace was if it were ruled by a tolerant *Catholic* king, so on July 25, 1593, he rejected his Protestant faith and officially became Catholic. On April 13, 1598, Henry IV ended the long and tiring religious wars in France by proclaiming the Edict of Nantes. This Edict granted to Huguenots the right to worship publicly, to occupy public office, to assemble, to gain admission to schools and universities, and to administer their own towns.

Source: Richard Hooker, World Civilizations, Washington State University, http://www.wsu.edu/~dee/REFORM/WARS.HTM. Thanks to Richard Law, Director of General Education, Washington State University, for permission to quote this website.

Lesson 2

Student Handout 2.3B—Religious Wars in Spain

The year 1556 saw the accession of perhaps the most important monarch of the sixteenth century: Philip II of Spain (ruled 1556-1598). Of all the monarchs of Europe, Philip was the most zealous defender of his religious faith, and his energies in pursuit of this defense greatly changed the face of Europe.

In the first half of his reign, he was instrumental in stopping the Turkish incursions into Europe. Philip's military power lay in his navy, which was the most powerful and imposing navy of the sixteenth century. Allied with Venice, his navy defeated the Turkish navy in the Gulf of Corinth near Greece and effectively halted the Turkish invasions of Europe. After this spectacular triumph, Philip then turned his efforts from routing the Muslims to routing the Protestants in Europe.

He first turned his sights to the Netherlands, a rich and prosperous merchant country that was ruled over by Spain. The Netherlands, however, had strong pockets of Calvinist resistance and the country slowly turned on its Spanish rulers. Philip responded by sending the Duke of Alba with an army to quell the revolt in 1567. Alba imposed a tribunal, the Council of Troubles, to question and sentence heretics (Protestants). The Dutch called this council the "Council of Blood," for it managed publicly to execute thousands of people before Alba was forced from the Netherlands.

Alba and his reign of terror did not quell the Protestant revolt in the Netherlands, but rather strengthened it. The central oppositional leader, William, the Prince of Orange (ruled 1533-1584), became a hero for the whole of the Netherlands, and in 1576 the Catholic provinces in the south allied themselves with the Protestant provinces in the north to revolt against Spain. The purpose of this alliance, called the Pacification of Ghent, was to enforce Netherlandish autonomy. The southern provinces, however, did not remain long in this alliance. In 1579, they made a separate peace with Spain (these southern provinces eventually became the country of Belgium) and the northern provinces formed a new alliance, the Union of Utrecht. Because Spain was overextended all over Europe, the northern provinces gradually drove the Spanish out until 1593, when the last Spanish soldier left Dutch soil. Still, the northern provinces were not recognized by Spain as an autonomous country until 1648 in the articles of the Peace of Westphalia.

Philip did not, however, want to interfere with the English, for England always seemed poised for a return to Catholicism. Elizabeth I of England also wanted to avoid any confrontation with Spain, so the war between the Spanish and the English was one of those unfortunate accidents of history—unfortunate, that is, for Spain.

In spite of Philip's reluctance to engage militarily with England, Elizabeth slowly ate away at Philip's patience. She had signed a mutual defense treaty with France after Spain had defeated

the Turks. Fearful of the Spanish navy, she recognized that only an alliance with another country could protect England from Spain's powerful navy. In the late 1570s, Elizabeth allowed English ships to pirate and ransack Spanish ships sailing to and from the New World. In 1585, just as the Protestant provinces of the Netherlands were beginning to drive the Spanish from their country, Elizabeth sent English soldiers to the Netherlands to aid in the revolt.

Philip finally decided to invade England after the execution of the Catholic Mary, Queen of Scots. He was in part encouraged in this move by the Pope's excommunication of Elizabeth several years earlier; the excommunication of a monarch made it incumbent on all practicing Catholics to use any opportunity they could to assassinate or overthrow the monarch. Philip gathered his navy and on May 30, 1588, he sent a mighty armada of over 130 ships to invade England. The Armada contained over 25,000 soldiers and the ships gathered for the invasion in the English Channel south of England. The English, however, were ready. Because of their treaty with the French, the invasion barges, which were meant to transport soldiers from the Spanish galleons to the English coastline, were not allowed to leave the coast of France. When fierce channel winds scattered the Spanish fleet to the east, English and Dutch warships were able to destroy the fleet ship by ship. What few ships remained struggled around the north of England and down along the western coast, where several ships foundered.

In practical terms, the defeat of the Armada was a temporary setback for Spain. The 1590s saw impressive military victories for the Spanish. However, the defeat of the Armada was a tremendous psychological victory for European Protestants. Spain represented the only powerful military force that threatened the spread of Protestantism; when even the mighty Spanish navy could be defeated by an outnumbered English and Dutch fleet, Protestants everywhere were reinvigorated in their struggles against Spain and the Roman Catholic Church. By the end of the seventeenth century, Spain was no longer a major player in the power politics of Europe.

Source: Richard Hooker, World Civilizations, Washington State University, http://www.wsu.edu/~dee/REFORM/WARS.HTM. Thanks to Richard Law, Director of General Education, Washington State University, for permission to quote this website.

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Lesson 3
Student Handout 3.2

Martin Luther: Excerpts from a Letter to the Archbishop of Mainz, 1517.

To the Most Reverend Father in Christ and Most Illustrious Lord, Albrecht of Magdeburg and Mainz.

The grace of God be with you in all its fullness and power! Spare me, Most Reverend Father in Christ and Most Illustrious Prince, that I, the dregs of humanity, have so much boldness that I have dared to think of a letter to the height of your **Sublimity**. The Lord Jesus is my witness that, conscious of my smallness and baseness, I have long deferred what I am now shameless enough to do, moved thereto most of all by the duty of fidelity which I acknowledge that I owe to your most Reverend Fatherhood in Christ. Meanwhile, therefore, may your Highness deign to cast an eye upon one speck of dust, and for the sake of your **pontifical** clemency to heed my prayer. Papal indulgences for the building of St Peter's are circulating under your most distinguished name, and as regards them, I do not bring accusation against the outcries of the preachers, which I have not heard, so much as I grieve over the wholly false impressions which the people have conceived from them; to wit, the unhappy souls believe that if they have purchased letters of **indulgence** they are sure of their salvation; again, that so soon as they cast their contributions into the money-box, souls fly out of purgatory; furthermore, that these graces [i.e., the graces conferred in the indulgences] are so great that there is no sin too great to be absolved, even, as they say–though the thing is impossible–if one had violated the Mother of God; again, that a man is free, through these indulgences, from all penalty and guilt. …

Works of **piety** and love are infinitely better than indulgences, and yet these are not preached with such ceremony or zeal; nay, for the sake of preaching the indulgences they are kept quiet, though it is the first and the sole duty of all bishops that the people should learn the Gospel and the love of Christ, for Christ never taught that indulgences should be preached. How great then is the horror, how great the peril of a bishop, if he permits the Gospel to be kept quiet, and nothing but the noise of indulgences to be spread among his people! …

These faithful offices of my insignificance I beg that your Most Illustrious Grace may **deign** to accept in the spirit of a Prince and a Bishop, i.e., with the greatest clemency, as I offer them out of a faithful heart, altogether devoted to you, Most Reverend Father, since I too am a part of your flock.

May the Lord Jesus have your Most Reverend Fatherhood eternally in His keeping. Amen.

From Wittenberg on the Vigil of All Saints, MDXVII.

Source: "Letter to Archbishop of Manz, 1517," Internet Modern History Sourcebook, Paul Halsall, ed., http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/modsbook1.html.

Lesson 3

Student Handout 3.3—Exsurge Domine

Excerpt of Pope Leo X's Bull, issued on June 15, 1520.

Arise, O Lord, and judge your own cause. Remember your reproaches to those who are filled with foolishness all through the day. Listen to our prayers, for foxes have arisen seeking to destroy the vineyard whose winepress you alone have trod …

For we can scarcely express, from distress and grief of mind, what has reached our ears for some time by the report of reliable men and general rumor; alas, we have even seen with our eyes and read the many diverse errors. Some of these have already been condemned by councils and the constitutions of our predecessors, and expressly contain even the heresy of the Greeks and Bohemians. Other errors are either **heretical**, false, scandalous, or offensive to pious ears, as seductive of simple minds, originating with false exponents of the faith who in their proud curiosity yearn for the world's glory, and contrary to the Apostle's teaching, wish to be wiser than they should be.

With the advice and consent of these our venerable brothers, with mature deliberation on each and every one of the above theses, and by the authority of almighty God, the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, and our own authority, we condemn, **reprobate**, and reject completely each of these theses or errors as either heretical, scandalous, false, offensive to pious ears or seductive of simple minds, and against Catholic truth. By listing them, we decree and declare that all the faithful of both sexes must regard them as condemned, reprobated, and rejected … We restrain all in the virtue of holy obedience and under the penalty of an automatic major **excommunication** …

Moreover, because the preceding errors and many others are contained in the books or writings of Martin Luther, we likewise condemn, reprobate, and reject completely the books and all the writings and sermons of the said Martin, whether in Latin or any other language, containing the said errors or any one of them; and we wish them to be regarded as utterly condemned, reprobated, and rejected. We forbid each and every one of the faithful of either sex, in virtue of holy obedience and under the above penalties to be incurred automatically, to read, assert, preach, praise, print, publish, or defend them. They will incur these penalties if they presume to uphold them in any way, personally or through another or others, directly or indirectly, tacitly or explicitly, publicly or **occultly.**

Therefore let Martin himself and all those adhering to him, and those who shelter and support him, through the merciful heart of our God and the sprinkling of the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ by which and through whom the redemption of the human race and the upbuilding of holy mother Church was accomplished, know that from our heart we exhort and beseech that he cease to disturb the peace, unity, and truth of the Church for which the Savior prayed so earnestly to the Father. Let him abstain from his **pernicious** errors that he may come back to us. If they really

will obey, and certify to us by legal documents that they have obeyed, they will find in us the affection of a father's love, the opening of the font of the effects of paternal charity, and opening of the font of mercy and **clemency**.

We enjoin, however, on Martin that in the meantime he cease from all preaching or the office of preacher.

Source: "Pope Leo X: *Exsurge Domine*," 15 June, 1520, Internet Modern History Sourcebook, Paul Halsall, ed., http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/modsbook1.html.