

THE POWER OF THE CHURCH IN THE MIDDLE AGES

THE POLITICS OF CONVERSION

1. The Franks and the Church
 - a. Frankish rulers viewed themselves as protectors of the papacy
 - b. Charlemagne also worked to spread Christianity in northern lands
2. The spread of Christianity
 - a. Charlemagne's military campaigns, forced the Saxons to accept Christianity
 - b. Pagan ways did not disappear immediately
 - c. By 1000 C.E., all western Europe had adopted Roman Christianity

THE PAPACY

1. Pope Gregory I (590-604 C.E.)
 - a. Organized defense of Rome against the Lombard menace
 - b. Reasserted papal primacy over other bishops
 - c. Strongly emphasized the sacrament of penance
2. The conversion of England
 - a. Gregory's missionary campaigns in western Europe
 - b. First converted English kings
 - c. By 800 C.E., England was securely in the fold of the Roman church

MONASTICISM

1. Origin
 - a. Devout Christians practiced asceticism in deserts of Egypt, 2nd and 3rd century
 - b. Monastic lifestyle became popular when Christianity became legal, 4th century
2. Monastic rules
 - a. St. Benedict (480-547 C.E.) provided a set of regulations
 - b. Virtues of Benedictine monks: poverty, chastity, and obedience
3. St. Scholastica (482-543 C.E.)
 - a. St. Benedict's sister, a nun
 - b. Adapted the Rule, and provided guidance for religious life of women
4. The roles of monasteries
 - a. Became dominant feature in social and cultural life of western Europe
 - b. Accumulated large landholdings
 - c. Organized much of the rural labor force for agricultural production
 - d. Provided a variety of social services
 1. Inns and shelters for travelers and refugees
 2. Orphanages, medical centers
 3. Schools
 4. Libraries and scriptoria
 - e. Monks patiently and persistently served the needs of the rural population