

The Medieval Church

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Lesson Plan Summary:

After completing this lesson plan, students will learn about the High Middle Ages, and be able to describe the popular Gothic architectural style, identify important cathedrals, and describe the role of the Church during this time. This lesson will take one, 50-minute class period to complete.

Objectives:

History. The student understands traditional historical points of reference in world history. The student is expected to identify the major eras in world history and describe their defining characteristics. **§113.33. World History Studies (c)(1)(A)**

History. The student understands how, as a result of the collapse of the Western Roman Empire, new political, economic, and social systems evolved, creating a new civilization in Western Europe. The student is expected to compare medieval Europe with previous civilizations. **§113.33. World History Studies (c)(3)(A)**

Culture. The student understands the history and relevance of major religious and philosophical traditions. The student is expected to:

- compare the historical origins, central ideas, and the spread of major religious and philosophical traditions including Buddhism, Christianity, Confucianism, Hinduism, Islam, and Judaism;
- identify examples of religious influence in historic and contemporary world events.

§113.33. World History Studies (c)(19)(A,B)

Culture. The student understands the relationship between the arts and the times during which they were created. The student is expected to:

- identify significant examples of art and architecture that demonstrate an artistic ideal or visual principle from selected cultures;
- analyze examples of how art, architecture, literature, music, and drama reflect the history of cultures in which they are produced.

§113.33. World History Studies (c)(20)(A,B)

Procedure:

1. Ensure that students first have basic background knowledge of the Middle Ages and Feudalism.
2. Present information regarding Christianity and the Church during the Middle Ages, in either discussion or lecture format, making sure to emphasize its critical role as an institution that united classes, served as the center of manor life, and was influential in political and moral life. Class notes are attached if needed.
3. One of the defining characteristics of the church at this time was the development of Gothic Architecture which boasted both the extravagance and wealth of the Church.

After discussing the basic information about the Church, introduce students to the characteristics of Gothic architecture. Information can be found in many places on the web including:

<http://www.historyforkids.org/learn/medieval/architecture/gothic.htm>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gothic_architecture

http://history-world.org/gothic_art_and_architecture.htm

4. Project as many pictures as possible showing the gothic style. One of the most famous examples of Gothic style can be seen at the Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris. On the [TIDES](http://tides.sfasu.edu) website (<http://tides.sfasu.edu>) there are many pictures of the exterior as well as the interior of the building. These may be found by using “[Notre Dame](#)” in the search bar.
5. One of the main features of Gothic architecture is the use of stained glass. As the final portion of this lesson, have students create their own piece of “stained glass,” using a project such as the one seen on this website:

http://www.ehow.com/how_2226_create-stained-glass.html

or by printing designs like those seen on this site:

<http://www.papermandalas.com/sg.htm>

and having students color them in.

Bray's Notes

The Medieval Church

Early in 500, Pope Gelasius I had begun to anticipate the struggles that could occur between the Pope and a political ruler. He felt that the Pope should bow to the emperor in political matters, and vice versa, so that they could rule in harmony – but neither side could agree on boundaries, so church and political leaders continued to compete for power.

The Church was organized so that status determined power – religious officials, or clergy, had different ranks: Pope in Rome at the top, then Bishops, then priests. During the Middle Ages, a lack of centralized government made the church the only stable thing, unifying the culture regardless of class. Locally, the village church was very important. Rites called the sacraments were administered by priests, and ensured salvation.

The Church not only defined spiritual beliefs, but all Christians had to follow laws set forth by the church to guide daily conduct, called Canon Law. Clergy used power of excommunication or expulsion from the church to control rulers. If a ruler were excommunicated, their vassals would be freed from any duties. If a ruler continued to defy the Pope, the Pope could forbid any sacraments from being performed in their lands, which would make their subjects very unhappy

In 936, Otto I was crowned king, and he became a very effective ruler

- Worked closely with Church
- Crowned emperor in 962
- Strengthened power over Pope by declaring that the emperor had to approve the appointment of any new church officials
- Otto's empire eventually became known as the Holy Roman Empire

The Church was upset with the power of the kings in Europe – especially the issue of lay investiture, which gave the kings power to solely appoint church officials, in effect, making them subject to the king.

Pope Gregory VII in 1075, took steps to stop this.

- Implemented laws that encouraged clergy to leave their families, and never Marry.
- Continued to gain power.

Eventually, in 1122, Church representatives and the Emperor met in Worms and compromised in the Concordat of Worms, which said that only church officials could officially name bishops, but emperors had to approve them.

By 1152, it was evident a very strong German king was needed, and Frederick I was elected by the German princes.

- Held a great amount of power
- Invaded Italy's wealthy cities

- Angry Italian merchants joined together in the Lombard League, and with the help of the Pope, defeated Frederick's Army at the battle of Legnano

After Frederick died in 1177, the German states fell apart, conflicts continued, and there was little centralized authority.

Beginning in the 900s, the Church began going through a series of reforms

- Problems with corruption, etc. –

Pope Leo IX, 1049, began to enforce laws against selling church positions and marriage of priests, later priests wanted to purify the church.

1100-1200 – a Curia, or the pope's advisors was established

- Further developed Canon Law
- Enforced 10% tithe collection
- Established hospitals, cared for the sick and poor
- Friars began to spread Christianity
- The Dominican order of Monks was founded by Dominic; as were the Franciscans by St. Francis of Assisi
- Women's religious orders also founded

Church wealth became apparent in their architecture

800-1100 – Romanesque style used to build cathedrals – big bulky walls, no windows....

1100s – Gothic Architecture used – Very tall, huge stained glass windows used, arches....

Crusades

1093 – Pope Urban II became aware of the threat the Muslim Turks were to Constantinople
Pope issued a call for a holy war, or Crusade to regain Jerusalem, and protect Constantinople

There were both economic and religious goals here

1096 50,000-60,000 Knights became Crusaders

Church leaders and kings saw the Crusades as a way to rid themselves of many outlaw type knights that were always causing trouble

Christians captured Jerusalem in 1099, including some of the lands to the north

But, in 1144, the Turks re-conquered Edessa

The Second Crusade was unsuccessful; then in 1187, Saladin conquered Jerusalem

3 very important European leaders led the Third Crusade - Phillip Augustus from France (who eventually went home), Frederick I from Germany (who drowned along the way), and Richard the Lionhearted from England who made it. In 1192, Richard and Saladin agreed to a truce in which the Muslims would retain control over Jerusalem, but that Christians could worship and pilgrimage there with no strife

A Fourth Crusade was called in 1198, but it was doomed from the beginning, and it eventually helped push the east and west further apart

By the 1200s, most crusades were unsuccessful, such as the Children's Crusade in 1212.

There was a Spanish Crusade in the 1400s, in which they purged all non-Christians from Spain.

Outcomes:

Overall, the power of the Pope was weakened, many new trade possibilities opened up, and new technology was spread from east to west.