

Chapter 10

The Popes and Franks Join Forces to Create a New Unity: Christendom

In terms of the history of the Roman Empire, we now enter a period which scholars have named Late Antiquity. It spans some four centuries - 300 to 700 AD. These four centuries witnessed enormous changes in the Western Roman Empire and set the stage for the development of the landscape of modern Europe and the establishment of Christianity as the religion of the West.

When Constantine shifted the capital of the Roman world from Rome to Constantinople in 324, the main political and social focus of the Roman Empire shifted from West to East. This shift in imperial focus coupled with the official approval in 313 of Christianity by Constantine in the Edict of Milan and the support of the Christian emperors who succeeded him, gave the Eastern Church power and influence far beyond that of the Western Church and the bishop of Rome. It would not be until the middle of the 5th century, with the pontificate of Leo I (440-61), that Rome and its various bishops would begin to play a central role in the world-wide Christian Church.

In the first five centuries Eastern Christianity was dominant for many reasons. The Roman East was stronger economically and greater in population. In addition, most of the apostolic churches, especially those founded by Paul, were in the East. All the foundational ecumenical councils - Nicaea (325), Constantinople I (381), Ephesus (431), Chalcedon (451), Constantinople II (553), Constantinople III (680-81), Nicaea II (787) - were held in the East and were attended predominantly by Eastern bishops. These seven great councils molded Christian thought and are reflected today in the creeds and beliefs of most Christian denominations.

Furthermore, the great centers of Christian learning - Antioch and Alexandria - were in the East. In addition, most of the early Fathers of the Church lived in the East. The teachings and writings of these early Fathers were, and continue to be, very influential in the formation of orthodox Christian doctrine.

However, when Constantine shifted the focus of the Roman Empire to the East, the stage was set for great changes in the Western Empire and for the rise of what we know now as western Christianity. While Edward Gibbon would later write of the "Fall of the Roman Empire", most historians now speak of a gradual transformation of the Roman West. And rather than speak of the "barbarian invasions" as a sudden cataclysmic event, historians now describe a slow transformation of some 200 to 300 years in which the Roman West slowly became a series of independent Germanic kingdoms. While it is a stretch to say that this transformation was "planned" by the Emperors in Constantinople, there is some truth to the observation that this barbarian transformation was "facilitated" by the political and military policies the Emperors of the East.

In any event, it was in this atmosphere of the transformation of the West from a united Roman Empire, with a singular system of government and laws, into a series of diverse

Germanic kingdoms, that Christendom was born. The term Christendom describes a unity of faith, practice and church governance that encompassed and transcended the diverse kingdoms of the West and directly influenced their history. Put simply, Christendom was established by the Christian faith, headed by the pope in Rome and supported by and sometimes dominated by a Christian ruling class.

In an atmosphere of the disintegration of an ancient culture and civilization, the bishops of Rome were to exploit the power vacuum and thus establish the historical reality known as Christendom. While the Popes played a major visible role in the establishment and maintenance of Christendom, their success would not have been possible without the dramatic changes in the political and social order wrought by the barbarian rulers. Nor would it have been possible without the less visible work of many devoted monks and other missionaries who were successful in converting the “barbarians” to Christianity and thus placing them under the influence of the Pope in Rome. In the face of political and social disintegration, the Church provided a powerful force for integration. It was also able to flex its spiritual power to influence the public policies of its Christian kings and royalty.

The Disintegration of the Western Roman Empire

Since the 2nd century BC, the Roman Empire had expanded to Britain on the North and held fast on the Rhine and Danube Rivers. The eastern border was the Euphrates River and the southern border included Egypt and northern Africa. To the West, the empire included modern France and Spain to the shores of the Atlantic. (see map)

In the year 300 the Western Roman Empire was organized into several dozen provinces. The emperor Diocletian (284-305) had established these provinces and employed some 35,000 imperial administrators to keep them in order. The administrative structures of prefectures and dioceses were governed by Prefects and Masters of the Soldiers. An army of some 450,000 protected the borders.

However, by the year 500 the western provinces had been transformed into a variety of Germanic kingdoms and thus for all practical purposes the Western Roman Empire had vanished. The process of transformation was quite complex and included changes in Roman policies and the needs of the barbarians.

The first phase involved a decision by Roman emperors to pull troops back from the frontiers and initiate a concept of “defense in depth”. Treaties were then made with various barbarian peoples, e.g. the Visigoths, to replace the Roman garrisons and defend the Roman borders - thus the Roman army was no longer strictly Roman. In the next phase entire barbarian tribes crossed the Roman borders and asked for land on which to settle, treaties were made as land was granted in return for promises to defend the Roman borders. Finally, through some direct confrontations and then negotiating from strength, the barbarians were granted vast territories to occupy and govern on their own.

The Goths (Visigoths and Ostrogoths) were an agricultural people whose land had been flooded and thus were in search of new territories to occupy. In the 370's they were

being pressed by the Huns and requested entry into Roman territory. In 376 they crossed the Danube and began to attempt negotiations with Rome. Rome panicked and the Roman emperor Valens attacked them at Adrianople in 378. The Roman army was decisively defeated and Valens was killed.

Theodosius became emperor and brought a temporary peace. However, the western empire was now forever changed. In 406 the Vandals and Suevi crossed the Rhine and in 410 the Goths even sacked Rome. In 418 Rome signed a new treaty with the Goths to allow them to settle in Gaul and protect its borders.

Meanwhile the Vandals had conquered Africa and the Franks, who were invited to join the Romans against the Huns, now forced the Goths (Visigoths) into Spain. The Burgundians and the Alemanni also came into northern Gaul. To add to the confusion, Rome, under its able general Aetius (396-454), enlisted their old enemy the Huns to help defeat the Burgundians. Later, the Huns became such a problem that Aetius now enlisted the help of the Visigoths and Franks to defeat the Huns in 451. It was an interesting time.

The Church and the New Political Order

For the Christian Church all these events were good news and bad news. The good news was that the most powerful barbarians -- the Goths and Vandals -- were Christians, the bad news was that they were Arian Christians. As explained in earlier lectures, Arians were strict monotheists who denied the divinity of Christ that had been defined against Arius at the Council of Nicea in 325.

In their territories the Arian Christian barbarians persecuted the Catholic Christians. In 484 the Vandal ruler of Africa, Huneric, prohibited all assemblies of Catholics and expelled the Catholic bishops. This Visigoths did the same in Spain. (An interesting turn of events, in the 1st century pagans killed Christians, by the 5th century Christians were killing other Christians)

However, the tide turned in favor of the Catholic Christians when Clovis, the ruler of the Salian Franks, established himself as ruler of northern Gaul in 486 and upon marrying a Catholic princess, Clotilda, he became a Catholic in 496 along with three thousand of his soldiers. With the aid of the Catholic bishops, he pushed his frontiers to the Alps, the Pyrenees and the Rhine.

Clovis followed the example of Constantine, that of a ruler controlling the Church. The Council of Orleans met in 511 at the command of Clovis. The agenda of the Council was set by Clovis and the Council decreed that none could become a cleric without royal consent and that all legislation of the Council was to be submitted to the king for his consent.

While Clovis controlled Gaul, Italy and the pope were still under the power of the Arian Ostrogoths and the Vandals still controlled Africa. In response to this situation the new emperor of the East, Justinian (527-565), attempted to regain the West and defeat the

forces of Arianism. Justinian's policies placed the Church and its leadership under the under the direct control of the emperor. This policy was later dubbed "Caesaro-Papism". Nevertheless, Justinian overthrew the Vandals and liberated the Catholics. He also recaptured Rome and over time subdued the Ostrogoths. However, after Justinian's death, in 568 the Lombards, a Germanic tribe who were also Arian Christians, crossed the Alps and seized Milan and forced the catholic archbishop to flee. They unsuccessfully besieged Rome in 579. The Lombards would be conquered by Charlemagne in 722.

Pope St. Gregory the Great (590-604)

In the midst of the intrigue and confusion caused by the barbarians, a very able man became bishop of Rome in the person of Pope Gregory I. He was talented, spiritual and energetic. He was to give the papacy a direction which it would follow throughout the Middle Ages.

Gregory was born in Rome of an old aristocratic family of great wealth. He entered public life and soon held the highest public position - Prefect of Rome. He suddenly abandoned his worldly life, embraced the monastic life, dispersed his great wealth and founded monasteries based on the Benedictine model, even one in his own home. Soon, however, he was called from his monastic seclusion and ordained a deacon to serve eight years as papal envoy to Constantinople. When Pope Pelagius died in a great plague in Rome, Gregory was immediately chosen to succeed him.

Gregory is said to have laid the foundations of Medieval Christendom through four remarkable achievements:

- 1) Established Popes as Civil Rulers of Central Italy -- When the Eastern Roman Emperors were unable to stop the Lombards, Gregory took over the civil duties of feeding Rome, rebuilding its fortifications and even leading its soldiers. By diplomacy he also saved Rome from being sacked by the Lombards and was a principal player in the final peace accords in 599. As the only effective civil ruler in central Italy, he paved the way for the papal control of the Papal States.
- 2) Established Papal Primacy over the Churches of the West -- The pope was Patriarch of Rome which included the entire West. The East was divided into the Patriarchates of Antioch, Constantinople, Jerusalem and Alexandria. Gregory as Bishop of Rome had no actual control over the East, but he defended his notion of the "primacy of Rome" by arguing against the inclination of the bishop of Constantinople to view himself as "universal patriarch". He then set about cementing his influence with the churches of the West. He provided the Catholic churches of the various regions of the West with spiritual advice, administrative direction and helped enforce church discipline. He appointed bishops, readjusted dioceses and disciplined lax clergy. He also influenced church music and developments in the liturgy.
- 3) Sponsored and Supported Efforts to Convert the Barbarians -- He supported St.

Leander in his efforts to convert the Visigoths and urged the Lombards to accept Christianity. Later he sent St. Augustine of Canterbury (a Benedictine) to England to convert the Angles and Saxons and maintained a close spiritual and jurisdictional relationship with the new English churches. Gregory also set up strong ties with the Church in Spain after the Arian Visigoth leader, Recared, accepted Catholic Christianity at a synod in Toledo in 589. These close ties have endured through the centuries.

4) Produced Writings That Shaped Medieval Thought -- He wrote a biography of St. Benedict and helped Benedictine monasticism to expand. He has been called the “fourth father of the Church” by some historians for his writings on morals, the training of clergy and the lives of the saints.

The Monastic Movement

The two most significant monastic movements of the 5th and 6th centuries were Irish monasticism associated with St. Patrick (461) and Benedictine monasticism originated by St. Benedict (520). These movements were different in many ways.

Celtic Monasticism - Some fifty years after the death of Patrick, Celtic monasticism began to flourish. Among the Celts, society was tribal and thus it tended to organize around Irish monasteries, not in cities headed by bishops. Local abbots thus became more important than bishops. When the abbots were not bishops, local bishops did ordain the priests, but the abbots were in charge of all else. In a way, the Irish church became an appendage of the monasteries.

Celtic monasticism had three distinguishing characteristics: intellectual interests; great austerity in monastic life; missionary zeal. The monks were not only interested in the works of theology, scripture and the Fathers, but also classical works of the Greeks and Romans (see the book *How the Irish Saved Civilization*).

Their common life was quite austere. They ate no meat, fasted long and frequently and slept little due to many interruptions for prayer. Their life has been described a “the white martyrdom”. They also practiced an individual form of the Sacrament of Penance which they later introduced throughout European Christendom to replace the obsolete form of public confession.

During the 6th and 7th centuries the Irish monks traveled and worked throughout Europe. They established monasteries from Iceland to Italy and went about the business of Christianizing the peasants.

Benedictine Monasticism - It was St. Benedict (480-547) who initiated the kind of monasticism that was to become the model for European monasticism. His Rule was more moderate than the Celts and based on the theme “ora et labora” - pray and work. He stressed prayer, work, scholarship and missionary work - the Benedictines brought Christianity to England.

The Benedictines were staunch supporters of the Popes and were instrumental in the

reforms of the Church in the 8th century, especially in Germany. The Benedictine St. Boniface was invited by the Frankish king to reform the Frankish church. His success led to an alliance with the pope and the Frankish kings in 754.

The Papacy and the Franks Join Forces

The pope, Stephen II, sought this alliance to prevent the Lombards from establishing control of the whole of Italy. The leader of the Franks, Pepin III “the Short” (714-68), was indebted to the papacy because Pope Zacharias (pope from 741-52) had helped Pepin become king of the Franks. Thus, when Stephen II and Pepin met in 754, the story goes that Pepin prostrated himself before the pope and led the pope on his horse into the conference.

The results of this conference were monumental for European history and the history of the papacy. Pepin gave the pope independent, constitutional civil rule over a large part of Italy - from Rome to Ravenna - and thus inaugurated the Papal States, which would endure until 1870. The Church was to become, at one time, the largest land owner in Italy.

History has termed this agreement “The Donation of Pepin”. In turn, the pope anointed Pepin and his two sons, Charles (later Charlemagne) and Carolman, and granted them the title of “Patricians of the Roman People”. When the Lombards objected, Pepin marched against them, subjugated their king Aistulf and placed the keys of the liberated cities on the tomb of St. Peter in Rome.

Charlemagne (Fr. “Charles the Great” 742-814) - Founder of The Carolingian Dynasty -

Pepin died in 768 and divided the empire between his two sons. When Carloman died in 771, Charles (Charlemagne) became sole ruler. Historians note that with the advent of Charlemagne, Western Christendom was fully born. When the Lombards again threatened Italy and Rome, Charlemagne subdued them and thus had great influence over the popes in Rome, a civil influence that would endure for centuries. In 773 Charlemagne embraced the Pope on the steps of St. Peter's and renewed his father's “Donation”. However, Charlemagne actually became the sovereign of the land of the “Donation” and of the Pope and indeed of the entire Western Church.

Through a series of successful campaigns against the Saxons, the Arabs of Spain, the Avars, the Danes and the Slavs, Charlemagne practically reestablished the political unity of the old Western Roman Empire. His vision was for a prosperous empire, a renewal in learning and a unity of religion. Charlemagne brought in scholars from throughout Europe. There were grammarians from Italy and theologians and liturgists from the Spanish borderlands. Gradually great libraries were built up. Monasteries and cathedrals developed *scriptoria*s where manuscripts were copied. Before the year 800 only 180 manuscripts can be identified, in the 9th century alone some 6,000 were produced. Monasteries and cathedrals also opened schools where lay boys could be educated. Between 768 and 855, 27 cathedrals, 417 monasteries and 100 royal residences were

built.

Charlemagne had become, in fact, if not in name, the head of the Church in his empire. He controlled all appointments of bishops, initiated liturgical and monastic reform, promulgated disciplinary reforms for clerics, and summed and presided at Church Councils, e.g., the Council of Frankfurt (794).

Charlemagne traveled to Rome in 800 to investigate moral accusations against Pope Leo III, while at Mass on Christmas Day, Pope Leo set a crown on his head and, as the story goes, the crowd present cried out “Hail to Charles the Augustus, crowned of God, the great and peace-bringing Emperor of the Romans”. That was a political and spiritual mouthful.

In one stroke it was affirmed that by “the will of God” he was made Emperor of the Roman Empire - a view which was not shared by the Roman Emperor in Constantinople. On the other hand, he was crowned by the pope whose action and power could be seen as coming from God. The actual ceremony of “crowning” and the acceptance by an emperor (on his knees) of his crown from the pope was a powerful public symbol of the power and superiority of the pope. In any event, for better or worse, the alliance of the Franks and the Church was sealed and Western “Christendom” had become a reality. European and Church history would never be the same.

Chapter 11

Hildebrand’s Revolution Makes the Popes Supreme in Christendom

At the beginning of the 9th century, the “emperor” Charlemagne held near complete control over both Church and State. Some three centuries later, by 1215, the situation was nearly reserved - the pope held near complete control over both the Church and those who ruled the State. The history of this relationship is long and very complex. We can only treat it in outline form.

Both popes and emperors had a common dream:

“the concept of Europe as a commonwealth of Christian peoples, a single society embracing a wide variety of peoples, organized in numerous states but bound together in a framework of mutual rights and duties and united in a common faith and a common moral and intellectual culture.

(Brokenkotter p. 99)

The question remained, who was the final authority in such a commonwealth, the pope or the emperor? Each party claimed full authority and from time to time each held that authority. The notion of a separation of Church and State had not yet arrived.

The Rise and Fall of Papal Power in the Ninth Century

Back in the 5th century, Pope Gelasius, the first pope to be titled the “Vicar of Christ”,

had promoted the notion of papal primacy and the theory of the “two powers” or “two swords”, that was to be made famous by pope Boniface VIII in the 14th century. This theory held that the “spiritual sword” was held by the clergy and the “temporal sword” was held by civil authorities, but always with the permission of the clergy. In other words, the clergy and thus finally the pope held final authority in matters of both the Church and State. This theory was in practice reversed by emperors like Charlemagne, but various popes fought to reverse it again and were finally successful, due in large part to the thought and personality of Hildebrand (Pope Gregory VII) in the 11th century as we shall see.

After the death of Charlemagne, the papacy began to establish some of its power when in 816 Pope Stephen crowned Charlemagne’s son, Louis the Pious, and made it clear that the crown came from the successors of Peter. Louis was followed by his son Lothar who came to power with papal support and was also crowned in Rome. Pope Nicholas I (858-67) crowned the emperor and held him to be the protector of the Church. Pope John VIII asserted the right not only to crown the emperor - Charles the Bald in 875 - but also to choose the emperor. This was a situation Charlemagne could never have imagined.

The death of Louis the Pious in 840 marked the beginning of the end of the Carolingian empire and the eventual beginning of feudalism. Louis’s sons - Louis the German, Charles the Bald and Lothar - eventually divided the empire into three parts. With the advent of the Viking, Muslim and Magyar invasions, anarchy prevailed and the great empire of Charlemagne entered into a true dark age.

The papacy too decayed as weak and corrupt popes lost all civil, moral and spiritual authority. Pope John XII, who became pope at the age of eighteen, led a life of moral corruption that historians compared to that of the infamous Nero. Such popes lost all credible claim to a supreme authority over Christendom in either temporal or spiritual matters. Of the forty-four popes between 867 and 1048, nine met violent deaths: two by poison, four by murder or execution in prison, one by strangulation and two under suspicious circumstances.

In one bizarre incident, Pope Stephen VI dug up the nine month old corpse of his predecessor, Pope Formosus (891-896), propped him on a throne with papal vestments, tried him as a false pope, found him guilty, struck his name from the list of popes and put his body in a public grave, his body was subsequently dug up and thrown in the Tiber River by the people of Rome. Ah, the good old days.

The Revival of the Western Christendom - 10th Century Beginnings

Otto the Great -- The beginnings of a revival of the Western Empire began in the Eastern Kingdom of the Franks (Germany). Here lived the Saxons, Bavarians, Swabians and Franconians. It was smaller than Charlemagne’s empire, because it did not include French or Spanish territories. The first major figure on the scene was Otto the Great, son of Henry the duke of Saxony. In imitation of Charlemagne, Otto received his crown in 962, at Rome, from the corrupt pope John XII. While John XII was neither respected nor

powerful, Otto felt that he needed his cooperation because John was still the head of the Church. Therefore, Otto received the crown from John, confirmed the donation of Pepin and Charlemagne and guaranteed the independence of the pope. However, any previous papal claims of authority or supremacy in temporal matters were simply ignored.

In an interesting historical note, Otto made use of the bishops to help him maintain social order. He sought them out because of their education, but most of all because they had no children. Otto could place bishops in power over territories and properties without fear that they would pass these on to their children.

Canon law stated that no ecclesiastical institution could be built unless it was provided with a means of support. This usually meant that some wealthy land owner donated land to provide income. Thus, over time, extensive areas of land became Church property. Under the feudal system those who owned the land also possessed political jurisdiction over it. Therefore, the owner (bishop or abbot) now also became the feudal lord or secular ruler. Married clergy were then often tempted to pass on this land to their children.

In feudal societies family inheritance of land could eventually build up independent domains that could threaten the King. The problem of bishops and priests passing on church and royal lands into the control of their children thus became a major reason for the later strict enforcement of celibacy on all the clergy.

Soon Otto deposed pope John XII on charges of treason and had a layman elected pope. From that time on, no new pope could be consecrated without an oath of allegiance to the Emperor. Now popes were designated by the emperor and bishops, customarily elected by the priests and people, were nominees and “employees” of the local lord.

Emperor Henry III (1039-56) -- From the time of Otto and throughout the 11th century, many of the emperors were truly interested in a renewal of the Church and were, in fact, responsible for many Church reforms. Emperor Henry III (1039-56) saw his role as a divine appointment to rule both the empire and the Church. He appointed popes and bishops whom he felt were qualified for the position and many were well qualified. That these duties kept him busy is illustrated by Bokenkotter on p. 103:

When Benedict IX (1032-45) was chased out of Rome by an anti-Pope who in turn was replaced by the virtuous archpriest, John Gratian, Henry intervened, and in synods held at Sutri and Rome deposed all three men. And characteristically, the Popes he subsequently installed -- Clement II (d.1047), Damasus II (1048), Leo IX (1054), and Victor II (d. 1057) -- were men of the highest caliber.

Throughout Europe during this era, kings and feudal lords also used the Church and its bishops and priests for their own purposes. While canon law still required that bishops be elected by clergy and people, a process called “lay investiture” was, in fact, the rule. In this ceremony the candidate bishop (who typically paid a fee for his promotion) knelt

before the lord, gave him homage and a bond of loyalty and then received from him his staff and ring. Thus consecrated, he was under complete control of his lord. The same was true of priests. The practice of “paying for” the title of bishop came under the label of simony - the purchase of spiritual goods - which would haunt the Church for centuries.

The Revival of Western Christendom - 11th Century Reforms

By the 11th there were stronger stirrings of change and reform. As noted, powerful emperors like Henry III had appointed many good men to the papacy and, as also noted, Henry was genuinely interested in a spiritual revival of the Church and the papacy.

In Chapter 14 we will deal with some monastic reforms with special mention of the monastery of Cluny. For now it is important to note that Cluny was founded in 910 by Duke William of Aquitaine whose charter removed all lay control by the Duke and/or his descendants. Cluny was placed under direct papal jurisdiction. This beginning of freedom of the clergy from lay control would grow and flourish in the 11th century.

The intellectual reforms initiated by Charlemagne in the 9th century began to bear fruit in the monasteries and in such reformed minded clergy as Cardinal Humbert of Silva Candida (1000-1061). Humbert took on the volatile issues of simony and lay investiture. In his writings he defended the long ignored canon law that required that bishops be elected by the clergy and acclaimed by the people -- the lay investiture system should be abolished.

Humbert also revived Gelasius’ concept of the “two swords” that gave clergy authority over laymen not only in Church matters, but in temporal as well. He argued that if Christendom is actually one body formed of Church and State and with one final goal i.e., eternal salvation, then supreme authority in both Church and State rests with those whom Christ left in charge - the successors of the Apostles.

This bold teaching of Humbert, if enacted, would overturn the total feudal socio-political order which had been in place with Charlemagne and since Otto the Great. Could Humbert’s vision become a reality? Only if the office of the pope could be liberated from the control of the Emperor and that opportunity arrived when Emperor Henry III died in 1056.

Henry III died leaving a six year old son to become Henry IV, while Pope Victor died the next year. In this power vacuum, the reform party in Rome took this opportunity to elect two reformed-minded popes. The first was Stephen IX (1057-1058) who was the abbot of the famous Benedictine monastery at Monte Cassino. While his papacy lasted less than a year, he gathered about himself leading reformers and set reform measures in motion.

The next pope elected was Nicholas II (1058-61), bishop of Florence and a leading reformer. He was the first pope to have himself crowned in the manner of kings and

emperors. Under his watch, at a Lateran synod in 1059, simony was prohibited in papal elections, but, more significantly, the election of a pope was restricted to the College of Cardinals, with the clergy and people giving their assent. This synod also legislated against clerical concubinage and produced the first prohibition against lay investiture. This landmark legislation held up when Nicholas died and another reform pope, Alexander II (1061-73) was elected by the cardinals. Alexander was a member of the reforming party of Hildebrand and was elected with his support. Alexander enforced the decrees regarding simony and clerical celibacy and forbade lay investiture. The Emperor Henry IV did not confirm Alexander's election and supported an anti-pope Honorius. The popes were now winning over the Emperor.

Hildebrand, Pope Gregory VII (1073-85) - The Power of the Papacy Restored

While Gregory VII has been labeled as one of the greatest popes in history, he died in exile, seemingly a failure. He struggled mightily against lay investiture and simony as we shall see below. He also fought for a celibate clergy and at one point declared all priestly activities of married priests invalid. He even summoned the laity to revolt against married priests. However, his vision of the Church free from lay control and a clergy free from simony and dedicated to celibacy would be carried on by others, most successfully by Innocent III (1198-1216). Gregory's movement, labeled The Gregorian Reform, was built on the spiritual renewal of the Church begun in the 10th century at such places as Cluny and supported by various reform-minded popes.

Hildebrand adopted the ideas of Humbert based on Gelasius' concept of papal power as encompassing both the spiritual and temporal realm. These were set out in a series of statements entitled *Dictatus pape* (Pronouncement of the Pope) dated 1075. These statements included the claim that the pope alone is universal, the pope had unlimited power of excommunication and absolution, the pope could punish and even depose disobedient rulers, including emperors, and that the pope could be judged by no one.

The most important dispute for Gregory involved himself and Henry IV over the matter of lay investiture. In 1075 Gregory issued a decree forbidding lay investitures. The decree was strongly opposed by Henry who wanted to keep control over the nomination of bishops. In defiance of the decree, Henry invested his own client, Tedald, as archbishop of Milan.

Gregory sent Henry an ultimatum: either comply with the investiture decree or face excommunication and possible deposition. Henry angrily refused and gathering his loyal bishops at a Council at Worms he and the bishops called for Gregory to step down from the papal chair. Gregory quickly responded by excommunicating Henry and declared Henry deposed. The fat was in the fire.

With support fading and the German princes demanding he receive absolution, Henry made a dramatic move. Taking his wife, infant son and a few supporters, he made a wintry journey through the Alps in January of 1077. The Pope had stopped off at the castle of the Countess Mathilda at Canossa on his way to Germany. Entering her

courtyard in penitential rags, Henry stood barefoot in the snow for three days begging absolution from Gregory. Reluctantly he gave Henry absolution. The pope had come a long way from the days of Charlemagne, Otto and Henry III.

As it turned out, the German princes deposed Henry anyway and elected Rudolf, duke of Swabia as Emperor. Both parties appealed to the pope to choose between them. Henry, however, refused to submit to a papal decision and so Gregory again excommunicated and deposed him in 1080.

In a surprise move, Henry retaliated by defeating Rudolf. Again Henry gathered his bishops together and deposed Gregory and installed an anti-Pope in his place. Henry then marched on Rome and besieged Gregory. Public opinion now turned against Gregory, because they felt he had exceeded his power by trying to depose the emperor. Unable to withstand the siege, the people of Rome were bribed into handing over Rome to Henry. The Pope escaped into the castle of Sant' Angelo.

Next, Robert Guiscard, the Norman ruler of southern Italy, came to Gregory's rescue and defeated Henry. In the process he reduced Rome to ashes. The people of Rome blamed the destruction on Gregory and he had to seek refuge with Robert in Salerno. There he died in 1085.

Gregory's work was carried on by Urban II, a monk from Cluny. He too was dedicated to freeing the Church from lay control. The power of Henry IV had now been weakened by his enemies and his defeat by Robert Guiscard. Urban, however, was successfully restoring the papacy to both spiritual health and temporal influence. In 1095, in a council at Clermont, he forbade churchmen from taking an oath of homage to a layman. At the same council he rallied the knights of Christendom to the First Crusade against the Muslims. The enthusiasm generated by this crusade demonstrated the rebirth of moral authority in the papacy both inside and outside the Church. In 1098, at the Council of Bari, Urban tried to heal the breach between Eastern and Western Christianity that had taken place in 1054. However, in this, he was unsuccessful.

Through all of this, the problem of lay investiture had not been laid to rest. After years of negotiations the matter was settled in most areas according to the compromises contained in the Council of Worms in 1122. The Concordat represented a victory of sorts for the papacy, but imperial domination of the Church was not eliminated.

The three main points of the Concordat included: 1) bishops were to be elected by the clergy with some participation of the laity. The emperor could be present as long as no simony or violence was involved; 2) in recognition of their secular duties and to receive control the lands of the bishopric, bishops could swear homage to the emperor and receive the scepter as a symbol of their secular duties and powers; 3) the symbols of spiritual authority - the ring and staff - were no longer to be invested by the secular authority, but by the metropolitan bishop.

A compromise had been reached. The Church had delineated some of its sacred rights,

but in reality the emperor could still exercise a great deal of control over the choice of bishops. However, in many ways the power of the papacy had been restored.