

Chapter 12

The Papal Monarchy at Its Zenith

In the last two chapters we witnessed the struggles of the popes to assert their authority over the Emperors and other secular rulers. Now the focus shifts to the attempts by the popes to claim and exercise absolute sovereignty over the Church. In practice, this issue is one for the Western Church, especially after the East-West Schism that occurred in 1054 and still persists.

There is an ahistorical strand of Catholic thought that sees the bishops of Rome receiving juridical power over the Church directly from Jesus, through St. Peter who in turn conferred this power on the bishops of Rome who have in turn endowed those who followed them with the same power or authority. However, as our author points out, the issue of juridical power - the legal control of every aspect of Church life - was not an issue in the first three centuries. The Church was not so organized. And certainly even a cursory reading of the New Testament can dispel any view that Peter held or exercised any such power over the early Church. Certainly in the first three centuries the exercise of authority is best described as collegial, rather than monarchical.

Ancient Claims for Papal Authority

However, by the 4th century, Pope Damasus (366-84) and Pope Siricius (384-99) did begin to make claims of authority over all other churches and the right to make universally binding decisions in the area of discipline as well as doctrine. These claims were largely ignored by the Churches of the East, who did not even judge it extraordinary that the bishops of Rome were not personally present at many of the early ecumenical councils. The East also operated on a more collegial level with a great deal of autonomy for the various patriarchates and their local churches. And the West the African Churches, even in the time of St. Augustine, resisted Rome's attempt to usurp their local authority, even though they did make appeals to Rome from time to time. It was also the fate of the African Churches to succumb to the Muslim invasions and nearly disappear.

In any event, whether we explain it as the work of the Holy Spirit or the human quest for power, the See of Rome soon became dominant for the western churches and was accepted as such by those same churches. The process was not, however, without its ups and downs, as we shall see. Certainly at the present time we do have a strong centralized, if not monarchical papacy, which claims and exercises jurisdiction over all aspect of local church life and worship.

Factors in the Development of the Concept of Papal Authority

Historical circumstances converged over time to make the pyramidal concept of the Church, with Rome as its apex, an accepted and functional reality in the West. There were many such circumstances, but here are some important ones: First, there were the strong western popes like Leo I who understood themselves as "speaking for Peter", secondly, as

we saw in earlier chapters, the Eastern Emperors lost interest and/or governing power over the West and it fell to the strong popes to fill the vacuum, thirdly, the ability of strong popes to gain the support of emperors for their claims of authority, fourthly, the African Churches who protected their autonomy were soon swept away by Muslim invasions and finally, the missionaries sent out from Rome to places like England tended to draw their converts close to Rome.

A historical oddity also helped shape the concept of the supreme authority vested in the See of Rome. This oddity was a set of documents known as the *Pseudo-Isidorian Decretals* or the *False Decretals*. These decretals were drawn up in 850 by a Frankish bishop. They contained some seven hundred pages of fine print. There were 115 completely forged documents and 125 authentic documents which, however, had been falsified by subsequent changes. The decretals gave the impression that the early churches had been ruled by papal decrees down to the minute details of Church life, they asserted the absolute and universal supremacy of the Bishop of Rome, they asserted that the decrees of councils of bishops had to be validated by the pope and that Rome was the court of last appeal for all serious matters.

This forgery also included another forgery, the *Donation of Constantine*, in which the Emperor Constantine supposedly gave Pope Sylvester (314-35) temporal authority over Italy and other western regions. Interestingly, these forgeries were used by Nicholas I (d. 867) and others and would come to form the legal basis for the Romanization of the Western Church. Their influence is felt today.

This trend came to an abrupt halt with the decline of the State and the Church in the latter part of the 9th century. The Church again came under the power of the emperor.

The Eleventh Century Revival of a Strong Papacy

A revival of a strong Rome began again with Pope Leo IX (1048-54). In his efforts to combat lay investiture, simony and clerical marriage he toured churches throughout the Western empire. His powerful presence made the authority of Rome a visible reality throughout the churches of the empire. His work was continued by the efforts of strong popes such as Nicholas II under whose watch the Lateran synod of 1059 gave control over papal elections to the cardinals which facilitated church reform.

Next on the scene was the powerful Hildebrand, Pope Gregory VII (1020-85) who fought Henry IV over lay investiture. Much more lasting was the concept of absolute papal authority over the Church. Using ancient canon law and the forged decretals, his theory of a papal monarchy was expressed in his *Dictatus papae*:

the pope can be judged by no one; the Roman church has never erred and never will err till the end of time; the Roman church was founded by Christ alone; the pope also can depose and restore bishops; he alone can make new laws, set up new bishoprics, and divide old ones; he alone can

translate bishops; he alone can call general councils and authorize canon law; he alone can revise his judgments; his legates, even though in inferior orders, have precedence over all bishops; an appeal to the papal courts inhibits judgment by all inferior courts; a duly ordained pope is undoubtedly made a saint by the merits of St. Peter. (Bokenkotter p. 112, Trans. by R.. W. Southern)

This type of centralization developed gradually into a reality and was facilitated by and met the needs of a civilization often on the brink of anarchy. The papal monarchy depended on and received the support of the ruling class and other important groups. Among these influential groups were the religious orders. They supported the pope because he had the power to protect them from local bishops and lords. Clerics were also immune from secular jurisdiction, their wrongdoings were dealt with in ecclesiastical courts.

While the popes of today exercise great power over the appointments of bishops through the papal nuncios, the popes opposed the process of lay investiture, not to secure for themselves the right to appoint bishops, but for the right of the clergy and the people to elect their bishops. This right was fairly well recognized by the middle of the 12th century.

In many cases there were election disputes which were settled by the pope. These disputes were often long and involved affairs, so that by the 14th century the pope simply took over the process of episcopal appointments. This often involved the cooperation of secular authority to insure compliance, which got the civil authorities right back into the process.

Popes vs. Emperors and Kings in the 12th Century - Popes Win!

We now consider events during the reigns of two of the most powerful and able medieval popes of the 12th and 13th century - Alexander III and Innocent III.

Alexander III (1159-81) - Alexander was a scholar and a diplomat and the first pope who was a lawyer. Alexander's conflict with the emperor Fredrick I "Barbarossa" began with his election as pope in 1159. Two parties existed among the cardinals divided on loyalty or opposition to Fredrick. Although elected by a majority, an anti-pope was chosen by the minority and Fredrick supported a succession of three anti-popes and, with the majority of the German bishops, remained in schism until 1177.

In 1167 Fredrick conquered Rome, installed a new anti-pope and made plans to subjugate Italy and the cities of the Lombard League. However, his army was ravaged by plague and he had to withdraw. The Lombard League supported Alexander and in 1176 decisively defeated Fredrick and his Germans. Fredrick made peace and in the Peace of Constance in 1183 he gave up his long schism, restored all papal temporal rights in the State of the Church and agreed to protect the Church in every way.

During this same time conflict arose in England and the players were King Henry II, Thomas Becket and Alexander. The issue was papal authority over the Church. In 1164 Henry had published his *Constitutions of Clarendon* which had challenged papal control over the English Church, including the immunity of clergy from the jurisdiction of secular courts.

Thomas Becket, former chancellor and friend of Henry, was made Archbishop of Canterbury by Henry, but it was he alone among the English bishops who challenged Henry's attempts in the *Constitutions* to control the English Church. Thomas fled to France and returned to England in 1170 with powers from the pope to censure the king if he attempted to revive the *Constitutions*. In response, four of Henry's barons murdered Thomas as he celebrated Vespers at the Canterbury Cathedral. The Western Church responded so vigorously that, fearing for his crown, Henry sought peace with Alexander, but had to swear obedience to Alexander and to cease attacks on the authority of the Church and the pope.

Innocent III (1198-1216) - Innocent was one of the most brilliant and powerful popes in history and certainly the greatest of the medieval popes. He was elected pope at the age of thirty-seven. He had the credentials of a lawyer, administrator, diplomat, theologian and a skilled orator. He was born to rule.

In the mould of Gregory VII he claimed authority not only over the whole Church, but over the whole world as well. His analogy of Church-State relations was that of the sun and the moon: "As the moon receives its light from the sun and is inferior to the sun,....so the royal power derives its splendor and dignity from the spiritual authority." "No king can rule justly unless he devoutly serves Christ's vicar."

He was totally committed to the Gregorian reform and Thomas Becket was his hero. Under Innocent, the papacy became the international arbiter of European affairs. Sicily, Aragon, Portugal and England acknowledged him as their feudal lord. He was the first pope since Gelasius in the 5th century to take the title "Vicar of Christ".

The first crisis that confronted Innocent was to act as arbiter between two contenders for the imperial crown - Philip and Otto. Innocent chose Otto who pledged to help maintain the papal states. When war broke out, Otto fled to England. Upon Philip's death at the hands of an assassin, Otto took the throne. He came to Rome for his coronation and then immediately reneged on his pledge and invaded the papal states.

The pope excommunicated and deposed Otto and chose Frederick II of Sicily as Emperor. Frederick was Barbarossa's grandson and when his mother died in 1198 she left Frederick as Innocent's ward. In the Golden Bull of Eger (1213), Frederick granted the Pope immense authority over the Church in Germany, including the right to decide disputed episcopal elections.

Otto and Frederick now went to war -- England supporting Otto and France Frederick. In the Battle of Bouvines (1214) Frederick and thus the pope won out. Again, the papacy was the major player in Church affairs and a major player in political affairs and in both cases to the advantage of the popes.

The next challenge for Innocent came in the person King John of England (1199-1216). He confronted Innocent when he defied Canon Law, prohibited a free election and placed his own person, John de Grey, as Archbishop of Canterbury. Upon appeal, Innocent proposed the learned cardinal Stephen Langton who was duly elected by the clergy, but was refused entry to England by John.

In response, hoping to goad the people into rebellion, the pope placed England under an interdict that lasted some six years. During that time only baptisms and funerals were allowed to be celebrated. King John struck back by terrorizing the clergy and confiscating their property. Innocent then excommunicated John, but John then seized the children of nobles to guard against a revolt. Thus in 1212 Innocent deposed John and released all Englishmen from their oath of allegiance to the king. Finally, Innocent made an alliance with Phillip Augustus of France and threatened an invasion of England.

With discontent at home and the threat of war, in 1213, John capitulated. He accepted Langton, agreed to compensate the church for confiscated revenues, issued a charter of liberties for the English Church and surrendered his kingdom to the pope, placing England under feudal vassalage to the pope and paying annual tribute to the Holy See.

Now in a ironic turn of events, the pope found himself on the side of King John and against Langton and the English barons. The issue concerned the revolt of the barons against abusive acts of John. Langton sided with them and they proposed written guarantee of their rights from the King - the Magna Carta. It guaranteed the rule of law over the whims of a despot. John then appealed to his overlord, Innocent, and Innocent annulled the charter because it had been extorted by force. He then suspended Langton and excommunicated the barons. To end the story, John died, most of the nation supported John's young son Henry. Langton went to Rome and was reconciled with the pope and returned to act as a mediator concerning the naming of a new king.

Innocent also had his ups and downs with Phillip Augustus of France (1180-1223). We have mentioned above Innocent's alliance with Phillip against king John. However, Innocent had also confronted Phillip on the matter of his marriage.

In 1193 Phillip married Ingeborg of Denmark and separated from her the next day. He received an annulment from the French bishops on the grounds of a distant affinity. Ingeborg appealed to Rome. Innocent denounced the annulment and demanded Phillip take Ingeborg back. Phillip refused because he had been living openly with his mistress, Agnes of Meran, and had married her. In response to his refusal, Innocent placed France under interdict for six months in the year 1200.

Phillip now submitted and acknowledged Ingeborg as Queen, but did not treat her as such for many years. Innocent refused to grant a divorce. Finally, after some twenty years, Phillip capitulated and restored all of Ingeborg's rights as wife and Queen. Another victory for the pope.

Innocent and Church Legislation

Like other popes who saw themselves as the spiritual fathers of all Christendom, Innocent composed many decrees or decretals that sought to regulate the details of the individual lives of Christians. Their content was often formed in answer to questions from various bishops. These decrees became part of Canon Law and were considered binding on the whole Church. Innocent made a substantial contribution to the body of such decretals and they were subsequently included in the *Decretals* of Gregory IX which were to have the force of universal church law.

Perhaps Innocent's most important legislative event was the Fourth Council of the Lateran (12th ecumenical council) which he called in 1215. Historians have labeled it as the most important church assembly in the Middle Ages. Its large assemblage included clerics from East and West -- over 400 bishops, 800 abbots and priors and ambassadors from all the kingdoms.

Some of the results of the Council included the obligation of annual confession for serious sin and annual reception of the Eucharist. The Eucharist was also defined in terms of transubstantiation. There were also rules for the valid election of bishops, qualifications for admission to the clergy, and regulation of clerical life style and dress. There was also a prohibition for the founding of new religious orders. The Curia was also reorganized to meet new demands put upon it.

The Dark Side of Innocent's Policies

The first dark note is an appendage to the Fourth Council of the Lateran. In its many decrees was included one that demanded that Jews and Muslims wear distinctive, identifiable dress. Jews were also prohibited from holding public office or leaving their homes on Good Friday and they had to pay a compulsory tax to the local clergy. This decree had its imitators, including Hitler.

A second dark note was Innocent's use of force, even death, against heretics. After the time of Constantine and Theodosius Christianity was declared the religion of the State. The connection of religion and state were often very close in ancient times. Thus, an affront to the gods was an affront to the state. Before Constantine, Christians were persecuted for failure to offer homage to the gods. After all, the gods had protected Rome for hundreds of years and to offend them was to risk disaster for the Empire.

And so it was with Christendom. When State and Church are bound together as one entity, offenses against the Church are also seen as threats to civil harmony and, the logic

goes, must be punished. Heresy, in other words, is a criminal offense.

The heretics targeted by Innocent were the Cathari (“pure” or “clean”). This term was a general definition which included Novatianists, Manichaeans and Albigensians. Like the Gnostics before them, they were dualists - spirit was good, matter was evil. Some held for two equal powers of good and evil and others held that the power of evil would be overcome by the power of good. Their odd ethic condemned use of all material things, prohibited marriage and encouraged suicide. They also refused to bear arms or swear oaths and rejected both the Catholic hierarchy and its sacraments.

Their presence was strong in southern France around Albi where they had won over most of the populace. Innocent first approached them with persuasion. He sent the famous preacher Dominic de Guzman, the founder of the Dominicans (The Order of Preachers), to convert the heretics. The Order of Cistercians also sent preachers. However, after ten years there was little improvement. Then in 1207 Innocent’s legate, Peter of Castelnau, was murdered and the suspect was a Catharist.

Innocent now changed tactics. A crusade was preached by Innocent and two large armies under the command of Simon de Montfort, took the cities of Bexiers and Carcassonne and massacred their inhabitants. A final, decisive battle was won at Muret.

As a final dark note on Innocent’s record, in connection with this crusade the Inquisition was established. The Inquisition was a special investigative tribunal of the pope which replaced and was independent of local episcopal authority. It was formed into a permanent body of inquisitors by Pope Gregory IX in 1233. The inquisitors were usually chosen from the mendicant friars, Dominicans and Franciscans. They may have felt that their cause was noble, but as Lord Acton would later observe, “power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely”.

For the Inquisition power was the name of the game. Victims were accused by anonymous denunciations; there was no defense counsel; no favorable witnesses were allowed to speak in their behalf; and “confessions” were obtained by the use of brutal torture. It was left to the state authorities to carry out punishments - burning at the stake, cutting out tongues, etc..

It is often observed that the powerful popes of the 11th, 12th and 13th century brought stability and unity to Europe. They also renewed the Church as well as society. However, such abuses as the Inquisition, crusades and bloody wars speak volumes against the idea of a union of Church and State and of the dangers of absolute power in the hands of an Emperor or Pope or for that matter anyone.

Note: While burning at the stake and torture to extract confessions are no longer approved methods by the Church, the office of the Roman Inquisition goes on. Its name has changed - Holy Office and now Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith headed by Cardinal Ratzinger - but many of its medieval tactics remain in place. For example, in

2004, if someone (usually a theologian) is suspected of false teachings, the proceedings against them are kept secret. Informants remain anonymous. There is no cross-examination of witnesses, nor are there any experts. Accusers and judges are identical. There are no appeals to an independent court. Critics claim that this process tends to aim, not at finding the truth, but to bringing about submission to Roman doctrinal expression, which is given the presumption of truth. Ironically, some of the most influential theologians, including St. Thomas, have had their works suppressed by this procedure.

Chapter 13

The Eastern Schism

While the Bishops of Rome in the West spent centuries of effort and bloodshed to establish themselves as the absolute authority in the Church and often in the secular world, it was this very notion of a monarchical papacy that was at the heart of split in the Church known as the Eastern Schism. It remains to this day the main barrier to an East/West, Catholic/Orthodox reunion.

While most historians date the Schism at 1054 others note that it was not until the end of the Fourth Crusade in 1204 that a final split had been cemented. In any event, there were a multitude of factors over many centuries that prepared the way for the possibility of a split between East and West. There were cultural differences, the West spoke Latin and the East Greek; Latins perceived the Greeks as sly and arrogant, while the Greeks viewed the Latins as uneducated barbarians. There were differences in histories, liturgies, theological expressions, church law and especially church organization. As is all human disagreement, each side had its own particular point of view.

The East saw the Church in NT terms as a *koinonia* or “fellowship” of believers, of local churches and their bishops, the patriarchates were a self-governing federation of dioceses under a chief bishop, but with a collegial order, based on a common faith and sacraments. The Western notion of a church built on a monarchical, legal, centralist authority yielding uniformity based on church law and papal decrees was foreign to eastern thought and practice.

While in times of doctrinal crisis the East had accepted leadership from the West, as in Leo’s Tome concerning the two natures and one person of Christ at the Council of Chalcedon (451), at the same Council, Leo offended the East when he rejected Canon 28 that declared Constantinople and Rome equal in dignity. While at one time the East offered the bishop of Rome a ceremonial primacy - *primus inter pars* (first among equals) - the East had never recognized the direct authority of the bishop of Rome over all bishops and all aspects of Church life, nor was it inclined to do so.

The East felt it had history on its side. Christianity had begun in the East and for the first four centuries the real power was concentrated in the great patriarchates of Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem. They were unimpressed with the claim to the apostolic founding of Rome, since there were many sees founded directly or

indirectly by apostles, especially those of Paul, within their own territory. Furthermore, the center of imperial power had shifted to the East with Constantine in the 4th century. The great early Ecumenical Councils were held in the East and were called, not by the bishop of Rome, but by the Eastern emperors. In fact, the bishops of Rome were rarely in attendance at the great Councils nor were many western bishops.

Before the final schism (Gr. *schisma* “tear”), there were a number of incidences from the 5th century through the 13th century that highlight the growing split between East and West. We shall only outline them:

5th century -- Pope Leo’s rejection of Canon 28 of the Council of Chalcedon which granted equal jurisdiction powers to East and West within their territories. Leo’s rejection of the jurisdictional power of the Patriarch of Constantinople was ignored in the East. The tensions remained.

-- Acceptance by the Patriarchs Acacius of Constantinople and Peter Mongus of Alexandria of the emperor Zeno’s *Henoticon* (482), a formula to promote unity between the Orthodox East and the Monophysites (only one divine nature in Christ). It did condemn Nestorius (two persons in Christ), however, it omitted the question of the number of natures in Christ and did not mention Leo’s *Tome* (one person and two natures in Christ). Pope Felix III (II) (483-92) excommunicated Acacius for his concessions to the Monophysites and created a schism that lasted until 519.

6th century -- Controversy of the Three Chapters - The Emperor Justinian was anxious to unite the Christians of the empire. Heresies and their adherents were a divisive force. In this case, for political harmony, Justinian wanted to appease the Monophysites. In 431 the Council of Ephesus had condemned Nestorius who had taught that there are two persons in Christ and in 451 the Council of Chalcedon had condemned the Monophysite (*mono*, “one”; *physis* “nature”) view that in Christ there is only one nature. By the end of the 5th century the accepted formulation was: in Jesus there is one person (divine) and two natures (divine and human). However, the Monophysite view had been held as orthodox by many until Chalcedon and, still in the 6th century, many felt that it could ultimately still be considered orthodox if the Chalcedonian formula was revisited.

In any event, the Monophysites wanted three “teachers” of Nestorius condemned, because they had opposed the Monophysite formula of “one nature” in Christ. Their works were compiled into the “Three Chapters” and Justinian appealed to Pope Vigilius for a condemnation. Vigilius refused, citing Chalcedon. Vigilius was taken by force to Constantinople and with pressure applied reversed himself in 548. The Western bishops were up in arms and so Vigilius reversed himself again, broke off relations with the Emperor and published a strong anti-Monophysite profession of faith in 552. Justinian reacted by calling the Second Council of Constantinople in 553 which immediately condemned the “Three Chapters”, adopted a strong anti-Nestorian position, accepted the Monophysite position and excommunicated and imprisoned Vigilius. While in prison Vigilius finally reversed himself again and supported the Council. The western

bishops again strongly objected and many broke off with Rome, this schism persisted until about 689. Another display of major tensions between the East and West.

7th century -- The Monothelite Question - Monothelitism (*mono*, “one”; *theleis*, “will”) was a heresy that held that Jesus had two natures, but only a divine will. In an effort to reconcile the Monophysites with the Church, Pope Honorius I (625-38) followed the advice of the patriarch of Constantinople, Sergius and spoke of Christ as having one will. Actually, two synods in Constantinople in 638 and 639 confirmed the teaching, which, however, was then condemned by a Lateran Council in 649. Finally the Third Council of Constantinople (680-681) declared Christ to have two wills and two natures, one human and one divine. The Council also excommunicated the deceased Pope Honorius who had died in 638. Again, the Roman view had triumphed over the East, but the tensions remained.

8th century -- The Iconoclast Controversy.-- When Leo III became emperor of the East in 717, for reasons not quite clear, he began a program of the destruction of sacred images of Christ, Mary and the saints, especially those painted on wooden surfaces. It was argued by some that icons were vehicles of idolatry. Conflict with the West occurred when Popes Gregory II and III protested, but were ignored and persecutions ensued. Leo’s son Constantine V (741-75) continued the policy and the persecutions. Through various other emperors icons were banned and restored, finally in 843 the empress Theodora restored the icons to end the controversy.

-- In a related event, a Roman synod in 731 decreed excommunication for the iconoclasts, whereupon Emperor Leo III sent a fleet to attack Rome and capture the pope. The fleet was destroyed in a storm, but Leo was able to take Italian provinces from the jurisdiction of Rome and transfer them to Constantinople. That was not appreciated in Rome.

-- Another important event in the century came about when Pope Stephen (752-57) sought military aid from the eastern emperor Constantine V to defend Rome against the Lombards. Constantine refused and this set the stage for Rome to make an alliance with the Franks, which would ultimately lead to Chalmagne’s coronation as Emperor of the West, a direct affront to the Emperor in Constantinople. In retrospect this event is seen as setting the stage for the emergence of medieval Christendom. Again, East and West were at odds. However, at this time no new schism occurred.

9th century -- The Photian Schism. -- The next minor schism, centered on Photius, the Patriarch of Constantinople. In 858, the emperor Michael III deposed and exiled Ignatius, the Patriarch of Constantinople. He replaced him with Photius, a brilliant civil servant and a layman. He was quickly ordained and consecrated as Patriarch. Ignatius, however, objected that he had been deposed without the sanction of a Church council. These events greatly disturbed Pope Nicholas I and he sent legates to investigate. The legates actually decided in favor of Photius, but when Photius would not acknowledge the pope’s supremacy, Nicholas refused to recognize Photius. Photius stayed on. In 863 the pope sent a letter deposing Photius, it was ignored and instead Photius called a Council in

867 and excommunicated the pope. Thus began the Photian Schism.

It continued through a long series of bizarre events, in which Photius was eventually deposed, then reinstated and finally exiled into retirement where he died. In 879 a council held in Constantinople achieved reconciliation between East and West. The reconciliation held until the major events of the 11th century. In all of this, the central issue was the Western concept of supreme papal authority over the Churches of the East as well as the West. And throughout all of this, the East disagreed.

10th century -- The *Filioque* Question. In the East, the great ecumenical Councils from the 4th to the 8th century were held as sacred and definitive expressions of faith. In the Nicene-Constantinople Creed, which we still use today, it is stated that the Son proceeds from the Father and that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father. However, Western theologians wanted to add that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father *and the Son* (filioque), an addition that had long been used in the West.

They appealed to Pope Leo for approval and he refused. Eastern theologians also strongly objected citing the Council of Ephesus (431), which stated that no additions could be made to the Nicene-Constantinople Creed. Again East and West confronted each other with different theological perspectives. For the East the Councils were the authority, not the Bishop of Rome. If a change or a refinement in doctrine was needed it would come from a Council, not the authority of a pope. The debate continued and was cited as one of the complaints against Rome in 1054, which we shall now consider.

11th century -- Most histories match the beginning of the Eastern Schism with the events of the year 1054. These events actually took place on at least two important levels - between the pope and the eastern emperor on military/political issues and between the pope/papal legates and the Patriarch of Constantinople on Church issues (not dogma).

The Normans had successfully occupied southern Italy, defeating the armies of the East. They now posed a threat to papal provinces too. Pope Leo IX mounted a force to attack the Normans, but was defeated in 1053 and placed under "house arrest" for a year.

While a prisoner, Leo sent three delegates, including the reformer monk Humbert, to accomplish two things: 1) to refute accusations and criticisms of the Latin churches by the Eastern archbishop of Achrida, which included a criticism of the Latin use of unleavened bread and 2) to strike a new alliance with Constantine IX to defeat the Normans.

In preparation for the trip and in response to the Archbishop of Achrida, Humbert composed a sharp treatise in which he condemned many customs of the Eastern Christians. However, before he departed, an imperial embassy appeared at the papal court with a brief, polite and conciliatory letter from the patriarch Cerularius and the emperor expressing hopes for greater East/West unity. Unfortunately, the letter addressed the pope "Brother" instead of "Father" and was signed by Cerularius as "Ecumenical

Patriarch”, Nevertheless, the pope decided not to publish Humbert’s harsh treatise, but to send a milder “corrective” letter. He then sent Humbert and two other legates with the primary mission of meeting with the emperor to form a new military alliance against the Normans.

When the legates got to Constantinople they were well received by the emperor, but he gave them too little time. In the meantime, Humbert tried to meet the Cerularius, but Cerularius would not see him, because Humbert’s “corrective” letter denied him the title of Ecumenical Patriarch and openly doubted the validity of this ordination.

Thus offended, the arrogant Humbert came public with his sharp, anti-Greek treatise and engaged local theologians on such volatile issues as the *Filioque* question. This generated great hostility and critical responses concerning such things as the western rule of celibacy. Again offended, Humbert composed a Bull in the name of Pope Leo (who ironically had died three months earlier), in which he excommunicated Cerularius and the emperor and condemned many of the customs of the Greek Church. He “delivered” the Bull by marching into the great church, Hagia Sophia, just before the afternoon liturgy and placed it on the altar. He then departed shaking the dust from his feet. Due to his prejudicial dislike and ignorance of Eastern Christianity, many of his criticisms and assumptions were blatantly false. The public was enraged and the emperor was forced to burn the Bull in public.

Humbert had botched his diplomatic mission, which was first and foremost to make an alliance with the emperor against the Normans. Interestingly, the pope was dead, so technically Humbert did not officially represent Rome. And indeed, when the patriarch called a synod to reciprocate and excommunicate Humbert and his fellow legates, the pope was not mentioned. The door had not technically slammed, but for all practical purposes it had closed. Reconciliation was possible, but the new pope, Victor II, believed Humbert’s analysis of the situation and no peace initiatives were then made.

The First Crusade -- Nearly thirty-five years later, with the election of Urban II (1088-99) there was still a glimmer of hope for reunion. Negotiations were opened again with the East and the excommunication of the emperor, the new and very competent Alexius, was lifted. However, after some inquiries by Alexius for Western military aid, in 1095 the pope called for the First Crusade with the motive of first, liberating Jerusalem from the Muslims and secondly, helping Alexius.

The Crusade had the added dimension of a pilgrimage and indulgences were granted to the armies for their efforts. How these indulgences “worked” would bedevil theologians well into the 13th century, until they came up with the concept of a vast “Church treasury of merits” that had been won by Christ and could be distributed, for good reasons, to worthy people by the Church. Knights had sewn a cloth cross to their garb, this was the sign of the crusader’s vow, a religious obligation and at the same time a military symbol. In former times pilgrims to the Holy Land had not been allowed to bear arms, now in a new ritual blessing, the sword was added to the old pilgrimage symbols of the staff and wallet. In an odd twist, we now have the spectacle of a pope, entrusted with the Gospel

message of Jesus to love friends and enemies alike, having launched a holy war of unspeakable cruelty and mass slaughter, which soon was out of his personal control.

Unfortunately, before the real military crusaders were ready, in 1096, Peter the Hermit of Amiens organized an armed people's crusade. This mob of some 50,000 to 70,000 peasants filled with religious fanaticism, pillaged their way through Germany and the Rhineland and perpetrated frightful persecutions of the Jews in Germany and Prague. The early contingent did reach Constantinople, but those who followed were almost totally exterminated in Hungary because of the pillaging and deeds of violence. Those who did reach Constantinople disregarding all warnings attacked the Turks and were wiped out.

Next came the military crusaders and knights. In many ways this First Crusade was a disaster. Latins and Greeks did not understand or trust each other. Some of the crusader armies were old enemies, Normans who had fought against the East some fifty years earlier. Latins and Greeks quarreled over who would control the reconquered cities of Antioch, Odessa and Jerusalem. The crusaders had sworn an oath to Alexius to return conquered territories to him, but they reneged. The rape and pillage behavior of the crusaders disgusted the populace, especially the sack of Jerusalem, in which Muslims and Christian alike were massacred. Also, at Antioch, the crusader leader provoked a crisis when he exiled the Greek patriarch and replaced him with a Latin patriarch. Later, with less than 5,000 soldiers left to defend newly conquered cities, the stage was set for new crusades, each with their own memories to further the breach between East and West.

While no exact date is usually placed on the cementing of the Eastern Schism, most historians point to the Fourth Crusade (1202-04) as the last straw. In 1203 the crusaders sacked Constantinople and even destroyed the churches. The great Eastern Schism was now a reality and it has not been healed to this day.

Eastern Rite Catholics - Over the centuries, beginning with the Crusades, certain Eastern Christian communities reunited with Rome. These are now known as the Eastern Rite of the Catholic Church. For a long time they were referred to pejoratively as "uniates". While in union with Rome, they have kept much of their original Eastern Christian liturgical, canonical, structural and theological heritage.

They retain differing liturgical languages for their liturgies. Some of these are dead languages, like Latin. They include Coptic, Syriac and Grabar, while others like Arabic, Romanian, Hungarian and Albanian are living liturgical languages. In the 20th century, the vernacular has been introduced almost everywhere, except among the Russians and the Greeks, who celebrate in Old Slavonic and the Greek of Christian antiquity.

Eastern Rite Catholics have also retained the patriarchal form of church government. Dioceses under the jurisdiction of a chief bishop (Patriarch) form an autonomous, self-governing federation. There are presently six such patriarchates. Some distinctive features include: leavened bread in the Eucharist, Baptismal and Confirmation rites combined, even for infants, and priests and deacons are allowed to

marry before ordination, but bishops must be celibate.