

Sixth Age of the Church

Toward the Modern Age

An Age of Change

- Enlightenment—The Age of Reason
- Romanticized ancient Rome and Greece
- Emphasized logic and science
- Objected to state-controlled Church and Church-controlled state
- Heavily influenced American revolutionary leaders and statesmen
- Led to French revolution

French Revolution

- French monarchy controlled Church in France; fairly independent of Rome.
- Church in France controlled most aspects of people's lives—schools, hospitals, public life.
- Large gap between bishops and clergy in status. Parish priests were instrumental in starting the revolution.
- The revolutionaries quickly turned on the Church and established an anti-clerical, anti-religion platform. Church was outlawed, priests fled or were murdered.
- Napoleon used re-establishment of Church as tool to take over France.

Role of Church Changed

- Church no longer dominant in life of the state.
- In Europe, especially France, nobility in Catholic areas remained nominally Catholic; peasants remained fervent, but uneducated in faith, Catholics.
- Intelligentsia and the working classes, became atheists.
- This led to the rise of communism and socialism.

Discussion: “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.”

- The separation of Church and State is an important tenet of American democracy, but exactly what it means is often debated.
- What does the separation of Church and state mean to you?
- How do you interpret “establishment of religion?”
- For you, what would be the ideal role of the Church in society?

Liberal Catholicism

- Academics who wished to stay with the Church sought to bring it into the modern world—freedom of religion, free press, freedom of conscience, right of assembly.
- Promoted critical method of biblical study.
- Against temporal power for the pope.
- Pope Gregory XVI opposed these efforts and began long fight against modernism.

Ultramontanism

- “Over the mountains”—looking toward Rome for direction.
- Society of Jesus (Jesuits), suppressed in 1773 were restored in 1814.
- Pius IX continued Gregory’s opposition to modernism, wrote the *Syllabus of Errors* which caused a greater split with modernists and secular world.
- Further separated Church and state and formed culture of Church for next 150 years.

Vatican Council I

1869-1870

- First general council since Trent.
- Liberal Catholicism, reform of the liturgy, and papal states prime topics for consideration.
- Papal infallibility became the number one topic.
- Council ended as Franco-Prussian war removed French protectors from Rome which was immediately seized by Kingdom of Italy. Pope was made prisoner.

Discussion: Role of the Pope

- Much of the turmoil surrounding the papacy in Church history centered on the temporal power of the pope; he was both secular and religious leader and this led to inherent conflicts of interest.
- Was the loss of the pope's temporal power, papal states, army etc., good, bad, or neutral for the Church as a whole?
- How do you understand the role of the pope in the modern world?
- What is your ideal vision for the pope's place in the Church and the world?