"To be deep in history is to cease to be a Protestant." -Cardinal John Henry Newman, An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine, Introduction, 5

1. The Investiture Controversy

Disputes between temporal and ecclesiastical leaders came to a head in the 1070s in a conflict known as the Investiture Controversy, which centered on whether or not a bishop could do homage to a political lord for possession of his office. The Holy Roman Emperor Henry IV and Pope St. Gregory VII were bitterly opposed on the issue. Eventually, Pope Gregory excommunicated the German emperor and absolved his subjects of allegiance to him, leading to widespread wars and insurrections throughout Germany. Henry did penance and was absolved by the pope after kneeling in the snow at Canossa (1077), but later raised an army and drove the pope out of Rome, where he died in exile (1085). For a time all of Christendom was divided on the issue, some siding with the pope, others with the emperors. The controversy was eventually settled in 1122 with the Concordat of Worms, a compromise which allowed bishops to do homage to temporal lords for their lands but with the understanding that they received their episcopal jurisdiction from the pope. It was a great triumph for the Church over the temporal lords who had been in the habit of meddling in ecclesiastical affairs since the late Roman period. After the Controversy, the Church found itself with greater independence.

2. The Crusades

Shortly after the controversy, large swaths of the Christian Byzantine Empire fell under the dominion of the Muslim Seljuk Turks. The Byzantine Emperor Alexius Comnenus appealed to the pope for aid, and at the Council of Clermont (1095) Pope Urban II called what became the First Crusade. Motivated by ecumenical zeal for the Christian East, indignation at the thought of the Muslims dominating the Holy Places, and a religious desire to see the places associated with our Lord's life, scores of nobles and thousands of regular Christians flocked to the standard of the Cross. The Crusading armies reached the Holy Land in 1098 and took Jerusalem in 1099. The newly established Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem would endure as a Latin Catholic presence in the Holy Land for the next century.

3. Height of Papal Political Power

Following the papal victories over the Holy Roman Emperors, the papacy reached a zenith of political importance between 1150 and 1218. The popes served as the arbiters of the Christian kingdoms and several rulers (like King John of England) ever swore fealty to them as temporal lords. The popes also promoted the canonist movement, by which the decrees and disciplines of the popes since the time of the early Middle Ages were gathered and organized into manuals of Canon Law. The greatest of these collections was that of Gratian (c. 1150). The Catholic Church under the great canonist-popes of the 12th and 13th centuries became the best organized administration in Europe. Innocent III taught that while the Church and State retained their own separate spheres of influence, the Church was superior and State gained legitimacy only insofar as it responded to the guidance of the Church.

4. Mendicant Orders

Meanwhile, Catholic spirituality was reformed by the emergence of the so-called Mendicant Orders ("mendicant" meaning "begging"). Led by St. Francis of Assisi (d. 1227) and the Spaniard St. Dominic Guzman (d. 1221), the Mendicant Orders travelled about in rags, preaching the Gospel and calling sinners to repentance. While the Dominicans would focus on converting heretics and teaching theology in the universities, the Franciscans promoted a spirituality of poverty that served as a rebuke to the materialism of the day. These two orders, as well as the Augustinians and the Carmelites, also Mendicants, served to revive Catholic spirituality in the 13th century.

5. Scholastic Theology

Even as the Church's organization and spirituality flourished during the 13th century, so did its intellectual life. With the increased commerce between East and West that resulted from the Crusades, the West had rediscovered the writings of Aristotle, which had a profound impact on Latin philosophy. The effect was an increased rationalism, a sharper distinction between grace and nature, and a confidence in the ability of the mind to discern the truth, guided by the ancient authorities. Aristotelian *hylomorphism* (the view that all things exist as a composite between form and matter) profoundly influenced theology, especially sacramental theology. Scholastic theology dominated the emerging universities, especially the renowned University of Paris, and reached its perfection under St. Thomas Aquinas (d. 1274) whose theology was recommended as the gold standard for all Catholic theologians by Pope Leo XIII.

6. Babylonian Captivity (1309-1378)

Following the inglorious death of Pope Boniface VIII, the Roman Curia succumbed to the pressures of the French king and elected a French pope, Clement V, in 1305. Clement, in France at the time of his elevation, refused to come to Rome for the coronation and instead chose to be crowned in Lyons. He set up his papal court at Poitiers, and then moved it to Avignon, France, in 1309 under the pretense that Rome was too insecure at the time, which was not entirely untrue. However, once in France, the papal court fell increasingly under the control of the French monarchs. Many French cardinals were created and the six successors of Clement V whole ruled from Avignon were all French. The abandonment of Rome by the Avignon popes was a scandal to Christendom, and while the Avignon popes were not necessarily bad leaders, it was obvious that the papal court and the monarch of France were too closely aligned during the 67 years of Avignon papacies. Because the popes were in Avignon for almost seventy years, contemporary writers called it the "Babylonian Captivity" of the Church, alluding to the seventy years the Old Testament Jews spent in exile in Babylon and Persia.

7. Great Western Schism

The Avignon Papacy was a scandal to Christendom, not only because it was evident that the traditional seat of the papacy was Rome, but also because so long as the popes remained in France, the Curia and the papacy were dominated by the French and became political tools of the

French monarchy. After intense pressure from ecclesiastics, as well as from St. Catherine of Siena, Pope Gregory XI finally returned the papacy to Rome in 1377 but died soon after. An Italian, Urban VI, was elected in 1378 under tremendous pressure from the Roman mob, but his strictness and reforming zeal soon made the Cardinals regret their choice. The Cardinals then declared that his election was invalid due to the pressure exerted by the mob during the conclave. They in turn elected another pope, Clement VII, who had the support of the College and who returned the papacy to Avignon. Urban refused to abandon his title, and the Church was faced with two claimants to the See of Peter. This sad state of affairs endured from 1378 to 1418 and became an international diplomatic crisis as well, with various kingdoms offering their allegiance to the rival claimants. Even saints and theologians of the Church were uncertain who the real pope was. At one point, an attempt to end the schism by getting both lines of popes to resign in favor of a newly elected pope went awry and there were three popes for a time. The scandalous state of affairs was finally resolved by the Council of Constance (1414-1418), which identified the Roman line as the legitimate line and elected a new pope, Martin V. The schism did irreparable harm to the papal power and the prestige of the Church and was a scandal to the faithful.

8. Lay Piety

The 15th century was also a time of great piety. Much of this was tied to the influence of the Mendicant orders, which went out among the people and preached devotion to our Lord and His Blessed Mother; much was due to increased literacy, especially after the invention of the printing press in 1453. Devotional books such as *Imitation of Christ* and many German spiritual works helped make holiness more readily available to lay people. Passion plays and morality plays held in towns throughout the year taught the basic narratives of our Lord's life and death or gave moral instruction. The blossoming of the Renaissance, especially in Germany and Italy, gave new artistic form to the truths of the faith. The 15th century was a great age of increasing knowledge and piety.

9. Reform Movements

Because of this increased piety and learning, many Catholics, lay and clerical, were scandalized by abuses within the Church. The education of low level clerics was not always exceptional, and dioceses were frequently administered by absentee bishops who held multiple offices. Many also believed the popes had become too involved in political affairs, and there were complaints about the lax state of many monastic houses. Around the turn of the 16th century, many reform movements began springing up in Italy, the Netherlands and England for the purpose of reforming clerical discipline and encouraging strict adherence to monastic rules. By 1510, these reform movements were bearing fruit throughout the Catholic world. Some, however, felt the reform was not happening quickly enough.

10. Martin Luther

In 1517, the German Augustinian friar Martin Luther protested what he perceived to be abuses in the Church's practice of issuing indulgences (remissions for the temporal punishment due to sins whose guilt has already been forgiven). His protest turned into a general revolt as everyone with

a grievance against the papacy got involved, especially powerful German barons who coveted the many lands held by Catholic monasteries. Goaded on by the temporal lords, Luther came to challenge the authority of Church councils, then the papacy itself, and asserted that the Bible alone was the sole rule of faith for a Christian. Luther was excommunicated in June, 1520, but the German nobility sheltered him and, in his name, began confiscating the lands of the Catholic Church throughout Germany. The Holy Roman Emperor Charles V (r. 1519-1556), a faithful Catholic, condemned the Lutheran movement, and what began as a religious dispute became a bloody civil war as rebellious German princes used the enthusiasm created by Luther's movement to revolt against Charles V and seize Church lands for themselves. By the 1530s, much of northern Germany was solidly in the hands of a small but wealthy Lutherans. In 1555, Charles V abandoned the war and abdicated the throne, declaring "*cuius regio, eius religio*", or "whosoever region, his religion", granting official recognition to Lutheranism in states where the prince had already gone over to Lutheranism. It was the first official recognition of what came to be known as Protestantism.

11. John Calvin

The breach caused by Luther was made worse by the teaching of the French theologian John Calvin, whose influential book *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (1536) denied the Catholic understanding of the sacraments and the Church, affirmed the principle of *sola scriptura*, and taught a doctrine that has come to be known as double-predestination – that God predestines some to heaven and others to hell, and that man cannot alter his destiny. Calvin's model for Church government was presbyteral, based upon a body of "elders" who would function as a sort of council of Church administration. Parishes which fell under Calvinist influence reorganized their parish government, establishing 'presbyteries' and electing their own pastors. This was the genesis of the Presbyterian movement, which was to have great influence in Scotland where it was spread by John Knox, Calvin's bodyguard. But the greatest gains for Calvinism came in France, where a very large minority left the Church throughout the 16th century. These French Calvinists were known as Huguenots and their defection from the Church became a cause of much turmoil in France.

12. Henry VIII Breaks from Rome

Seizing upon the confusion raging on the Continent, Henry VIII of England attempted to pressure the pope, Clement VII, to grant him a divorce from his legitimate wife, Catherine of Aragon, in order to marry his lover, Anne Boleyn. The pope consistently refused Henry's requests, affirming that the Holy See had no authority to dissolve a valid, sacramental marriage. When all legal means of appeal had been exhausted, Henry began to threaten the pope, but to no avail. Finally in 1533 Henry ordered the divorce and remarriage finalized by Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury. This was done on the premise that the king, not the pope, had final say on ecclesiastical matters in England. All royal officials were forced to swear to this in the so-called "Oath of Supremacy"; those who would not, like St. Thomas More and St. John Fisher, were put to death. Thus by 1533 Henry VIII had moved England into the sphere of Protestantism. When it became clear that Henry intended to use his new found supremacy to seize Church lands and deprive the Catholic Church of its jurisdiction, Pope Paul III excommunicated Henry in 1538**.**

13. The Council of Trent and Counterreformation

With almost half of Western Europe lost to the Catholic Church by 1540 and religious wars breaking out across Germany and France, the Church, under Pope Paul III, convened the Council of Trent in 1545. Due to a variety of factors the Council was stretch over eighteen years (1545-1563) and last twenty-five sessions. It had a two-fold purpose: to implement reform of Church discipline and government and to answer the attacks of the Protestant reformers. Against the Reformers, traditional Catholic doctrine was affirmed and elucidated on the Canon of the Bible, Tradition, salvation and a variety of other issues. In the realms of discipline, bishops were forbidden from holding office in more than one diocese and seminaries were decreed for the training of priests, and the moral reform of religious houses was urged. The reforms were spearheaded by St. Charles Borromeo, Archbishop of Milan, whose diocese became a model of holiness and efficient clerical administration.
The disciplinary reforms of Trent led into a period that is known in secular history as the "Counterreformation", corresponding roughly with the century of 1550-1650. It was characterized by an intense Catholic piety in art and music (spawning the Baroque movement), the blossoming of new religious orders such as the Society of Jesus (Jesuits), Capuchins and Discalced Carmelites, and a generally rising level of erudition and education in the Catholic hierarchy. It has been described accurately as a "Catholic revival." While the Counterreformation petered out after 1650, the disciplines and concerns of the Council of Trent defined the direction of Catholic development for the next four centuries.

14. Missions to the New World'

Even as the old world was fragmenting, the Age of Exploration was opening up vast new continents for missionary work. The religious orders were pivotal here. Traveling with the colonial expeditions of France, Spain and Portugal, Catholic missionaries reached the East Indies, China, Japan, India and the New World. Mexico and the other North American Spanish dominions were evangelized by the Franciscans, whilst the Philippines were home to the Jesuits, Dominicans and Franciscans. Japan and China were the provinces of the Jesuits, who yielded many martyrs there, as in New France (Canada), where many French Jesuits won the crown of martyrdom laboring among the Hurons and Iroquois. Meanwhile, the Spanish of South America brought the Dominicans. While the New World missions were generally more successful than those to India, China and the East, many small but thriving Catholic communities existed throughout the known world by the middle 17th century. It was as if God was making up among the pagans what was lost to the Church in Europe.

15. Age of the Religious Wars

Europe, meanwhile, was in chaos as dynastic and economic conflicts guised in religion tore Europe asunder. From the 1550s until 1648 Europe was in a constant state of warfare, each side, Protestant and Catholic, attempting to secure a purely military solution to the schisms rending Christendom. France was decimated by a series of wars between two rival houses, one Catholic and one Protestant (1562-1598). The Scottish Presbyterians, under the leadership of a bastard son

of King James V, waged war on the faction loyal to the Catholic Queen Mary and overthrew her (1567). Meanwhile, tensions between England and Spain were growing, due to political differences and English paranoia of "papist" plots. The Anglo-Spanish War raged from 1585-1604, its most famous battle being the defeat of the great Spanish Armada in 1588. But perhaps the worst religious war of the period was the Thirty Years War (1608-1648), which raged across Germany, Bohemia and Denmark. The war began as a religious conflict but gradually morphed into a purely political struggle between the Holy Roman Empire and various vassal kingdoms. By the Peace of Westphalia (1648), it was evident that the divisions occasioned by the Protestant revolt could not be solved by purely political-military approaches. The age of the religious wars was coming to an end.

16. Enlightenment, Deism & Josephinism

The age of the religious wars and the confusion brought about by the Protestant revolt led an increased skepticism about the very concept of revealed truth. This skepticism was fueled by new scientific discoveries, which seemed to call into question the older view of the cosmos. Catholic theology has always affirmed that there can be no contradiction between science and revelation, understanding that the same God that inspired the Scriptures is the God who has ordered nature. Consequently, Catholicism has never feared scientific advancement; during the 17th century, many of the great scientific discoveries were sponsored by the Church or ever carried out by clerics – 35 craters on the moon are named after Jesuit priest-astronomers. Still, some scientists, prejudiced by the rising skeptical attitude, used the new knowledge as an occasion to attack the concept of revealed truth.

Known as the "Enlightenment"-era thinkers, men such as Voltaire, Rousseau, John Locke, Thomas Jefferson and Montesquieu declared that divine revelation could not be trusted and only what could be known about God from reason alone was trustworthy. They rejected the miraculous and the supernatural, and have come to be known as Deists. The Deist conception of God was remote and impersonal; most disbelieved in the inspiration of Scripture and many denied the unique saving mission of Jesus Christ.

They also denied the reality of grace, preferring a Pelagian concept of morality that stressed good deeds and natural virtue over supernatural grace. Consequently, the Enlightenment thinkers found little value in a contemplative Christianity. This often found expression in attacks by the state against contemplative religious orders. A prime example of this was the Holy Roman Emperor Joseph II (1765-1790) who, influenced by Deist-Enlightenment philosophy, shut down the monasteries of most contemplative religious orders in his domains, allowing only those engaged in some sort of active work (teaching, hospital work, etc.) to remain open. This policy of valuing only the active religious orders was called "Josephinism." The preference for the active over passive virtues in general was later named "Americanism" by Pope Leo XIII.

17. Liberalism

The Enlightenment-era skepticism about revealed religion bore fruit in several anti-clerical movements within Europe in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Perhaps the greatest outburst of anti-clericalism was found in the French Revolution, whose radical phase (1789-1793) saw the

closure of Catholic Churches, martyrdom of Catholic priests and religious, and the replacement of the Catholic religion with the new "Cult of Reason" and "Cult of the Supreme Being." While such extremes were the exception and not the norm, even in countries that did not adopt such a radical anti-Catholic platform there was a general spread of similar ideas, especially anti-clericalism, anti-supernaturalism, and the belief that dogma and morality needed to evolve with the times. These erroneous beliefs were collectively referred to as "liberalism" and were supported by literary figures of the day and sometimes by political leaders seeking to win influence at the expense of the Church.

18. The Age of Pius IX (1846-1878)

In the midst of this era of liberalism there arose to the papal throne one of the most remarkable men to ever hold the See of St. Peter: Giovanni Mastai-Ferreti, who took the name Pius IX. Pius was initially in favor of some liberal reforms in the administration of the Papal States, but following massive liberal revolts in 1848, in which progressive clubs attempted to force the pope to accept lay administration of the Papal States and democratic government, the pope became staunchly opposed to the liberal movement, which he saw as a threat to the fundamental stability of Christendom and the Church. He dedicated the remainder of his pontificate to fighting liberalism. This was accomplished through (1) the 1864 promulgation of the *Syllabus of Errors*, a compilation of condemnations of various aspects of liberalism; (2) the summoning of the First Vatican Council in 1870 with the definition of Papal Infallibility; (3) the issuing of various other documents condemning liberalism and instructing bishops to root the menace out of their diocese.

19. Prisoners in the Vatican

The First Vatican Council was never formally ended, as in 1870 Italian atheist revolutionaries seized Rome and completed the unification of Italy, forcefully taking the Papal States from the pope. Because Pius IX did not want to formally recognize what he regarded as an illegitimate atheist government, he refused to leave the Vatican or set foot on the soil of the new Italian state. This refusal of the popes to visit or recognize Italy persisted from 1870 to 1929. During this time no pope, once elected, left the Vatican. The popes of this period are referred to as "prisoners of the Vatican." This unhappy turn of events naturally strengthened the resolve of Pius IX and his successors against liberalism.

20. On New Things

Upon the death of Pius IX in 1878, the new pontiff, Leo XIII, saw that the growing influence of socialist and communist agitation throughout Europe and the United States threatened the established social order and the well-being of the Church. In response to this, Leo issued the landmark encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, "On New Things." In this document Leo warned of the threat posed by socialist movements, but also conceded that the masses would not be allured by atheistic socialism if the conditions resultant from unfettered capitalism were not so dire. He calls for a recognition of basic workers' rights, including the right for workers to organize, but suggests this should happen under the auspices of the Church. He thus envisions a kind of

Catholic worker movement as a bulwark against atheistic socialism, which at the same time can correct the excesses of capitalism. It was the first of the Church's "social teaching" encyclicals and helped forge a pathway between socialism and capitalism.

21. Modernism

Meanwhile, the errors of liberalism had begun to fester in the very theology of the Church in a heresy known as Modernism. It is hard to succinctly define Modernism, because it was such a multifaceted heresy; Pope St. Pius X (1903-1914) called it the "synthesis of all heresies". The center tenets of Modernism, however, were (1) that the theory of evolution applies to doctrine, which must change to suit the changing condition of man, and (2) that internal religious experience is the ultimate criterion of truth. Using these assumptions, Modernist theologians within the Church attacked such doctrines as the inerrancy of the Bible, the fact of divine Revelation, the authority of the Church, the divine origin of the papacy and the Church's hierarchical structure, the reality of hell, the efficacy of the sacraments, and many other teachings. Pope St. Pius X vigorously strove to root this heresy out of the Church, issuing his powerful encyclical *Pascendi* (1907), which condemned the errors of the Modernists. He also required every theologian, priest and teacher of the faith to take an oath against Modernism before assuming his office, and directed bishops to demote or remove theologians infected with the error. By the decisive and thorough efforts of this saintly pontiff, the heresy was rooted out and went underground – until an opportune time.

22. Between the Wars

Between World War I and World War II the Catholic Church flourished in the United States and Europe, as well as Africa and Asia where Catholic missionaries made great strides. The dispute with the secular state of Italy was resolved in 1929 under the pontificate of Pius XI, and a series of encyclicals on social teaching and family life enriched the Church's deposit of truth. Catholicism in England underwent a kind of revival, and many eminent persons of that country returned to the Church. New studies in liturgy and history prompted a renewed interest in the Church's worship. Nevertheless, the errors of liberalism continued to spread, Modernism again began to creep into the Church (especially via the teachings of the Jesuit Pierre Teilhard de Chardin), and the rights of the Church were threatened in various European countries falling under the shadow of fascism, communism or National Socialism.

23. During the War

During World War II the Church was led by the capable pontiff Eugenio Pacelli, who took the name Pope Pius XII (r. 1939-1958). Despite the hardships of the war and the devastation that sometimes reached right to his doorstep, Pius XII was an effective and beloved pontiff who, besides offering clear moral courage to Catholics during the war, personally saved thousands of Roman Jews from perishing at the hands of the Gestapo. After the war, the moral prestige of the Church had never been higher. After a long and rough history, the Catholic Church was integrated into American society and accorded a place of respect, film and television portrayed the Church positively and priests and nuns as heroic figures. A renewed interest in religion in the

wake of the horrors of World War II swelled the ranks of the catechumens, and seminaries, convents and monasteries were thriving.

24. Second Vatican Council

As the world entered the nuclear age, there was a conviction by many that the Church needed to update the manner in which her teaching was presented to the world. This was the belief of Pope John XXIII (1958-1963), who stunned the world by announcing an ecumenical council shortly after his election. This seemed odd because Council's were usually summoned in times of great crisis or heresy; the Church of the 1950s, on the other hand, was experiencing a time of profound peace and growth. John explained that he wanted the Council to be pastoral in nature, not to define or propose definitions, but to find better means of communicating the Church's ancient teaching in the modern world. The Council met in four sessions from 1962 to 1965 and issued 16 documents.

25. Implementation and Disintegration

The prudence of Pope John's decision has been much discussed in light of subsequent events. There is no space here to give a succinct history of the Second Vatican Council; we recommend our addendum to this lesson on "Understanding the Second Vatican Council." It is sufficient to say that Vatican II (1963-1965) ended up marking a turning point in the direction of the modern Church. While the documents of the Council were relatively moderate in their reforms, the opening of the door to change gave entry to the Modernist element latent within the Church which sought to remake the Catholic Church along the lines of liberalism. These revolutionaries, working through diocesan administrations, pushed through many radical innovations in the name of the Council which the Council never called for. Couple this with the new rite of the Mass instituted by Pope Paul VI in 1969, and the result was great confusion in the immediate post-Conciliar period (1965-1978). In many places pastors became uncertain of the Church's message, and many of the faithful, disillusioned, left the Church in favor of fundamentalist Protestant sects who seemed to offer a clearer message. Vocations suffered during this period as well. In 1968 Paul VI stood up against the trend towards liberalism in the Church by the promulgation of *Humanae Vitae*, reaffirming the Church's traditional prohibition of artificial birth control. This document was massively ignored or evaded by liberal bishops, clergy and laity and introduced a culture of dissent into the Catholic Church. Worn out by disputes and disillusioned by the chaos rampant in the Church – which he had once referred to as the "smoke of Satan" – Pope Paul VI died in 1978. The Council which had promised so much had in fact marked the beginning of an era of chaos and dissent unparalleled in the history of the Church. Debates about the cause of this chaos continue – some assert that the Council was hijacked by liberals who ruined its implementation; others assert that the documents of the Council themselves made way for the chaos by their novel and sometimes vague formulations.

26. Pontificate of John Paul II

Following the brief papacy of John Paul I (1978), the College of Cardinals elevated the Polish Cardinal Karol Wojtyła to the throne of Peter, who took the name John Paul II. Alarmed by the growing disintegration in the Catholic world, John Paul II attempted to put the Church back on solid footing by emphasizing the Church's traditional teaching on the family, the Eucharist, and many other points of doctrine. He also commissioned the new Catholic Catechism, which would be an authoritative norm for the teaching of the Church, as well as a new Code of Canon Law. He also made a heroic stand against the tyranny of Communism in Eastern Europe and was integral to the fall of Communism in 1991. Though a very inspiring pontiff, and a pope who was groundbreaking in many aspects of his pontificate, the scourge of liberalism continued to plague the Church, vocations continued to decline in many places, and the confusion was heightened at times by conflicting messages coming from the pontiff in situations where his personal actions or administrative decisions seemed to be at odds with the beautiful teachings he promulgated in his compendious collection of writings. Nevertheless, the Church under John Paul II seemed to have regained some stability, and the advent of the Internet in the mid-1990s made the diffusion of Church teaching and papal messages easier – and this distortion of the Church's teaching more difficult. When John Paul II died in April, 2005, the Church was in a vastly better condition than it was in 1978, although there was still a long way to go.

27. Benedict XVI

In many ways, the pontificate of Benedict XVI (Joseph Ratzinger) complemented that of John Paul II. During Benedict's eight-year pontificate (2005-2013), the pontiff focused on restoration of the sacred liturgy, whose celebration had especially suffered since the Second Vatican Council. Benedict stressed the connection between the Church's liturgical life and its faith, and believed that a restoration of the Catholic faith would follow a restoration of the dignity of Catholic worship. In his sermons, actions and writings Benedict promoted the celebration of the sacred liturgy with dignity and solemnity. Integral to his vision was the promotion of the traditional Latin Mass (the Missal of 1962, as celebrated prior to the introduction of the new Mass by Paul VI in 1969). In his historic document *Summorum Pontificum* (2007), Benedict urged generous celebration of the old Mass and hoped that the riches of the old Mass would help form the liturgical sensibilities of those celebrating the new. Though many Catholics and bishops were less than enthusiastic about the restoration of the old Mass, an enthusiastic minority of Catholics, many of them too young to remember the pre-1969 Mass, took Benedict's words to heart and advocated for the wider use of the 1962 Missal. To this day, the movement for the restoration of Catholic life and holiness through the Missal of 1962 is steadily gaining momentum.

28. Abdication

Despite the great advances made by Benedict in liturgical matters, his pontificate was one of many setbacks as well. He failed ultimately to reconcile the Society of St. Pius X (SSPX) to the Church; dissent of Catholic teaching continued unabated in many parts of the Catholic world; the early years of his pontificate were rocked by a clerical sex abuse scandal which continued to cast a shadow on him throughout his reign, and corruption within the Vatican, especially with regards to the Vatican Bank, were continued sources of embarrassment. Worn out and physically ailing, Benedict shocked the world by announcing his abdication from the papacy in February, 2013.

His abdication became effective on February 28, 2013, making him the first pope to abdicate in over 600 years. Like John Paul II, he left the Church in a better state than he found it, but with many looming issues unresolved, and with Catholicism at a crossroads.

For Further Reading:

Acts 1
1 Cor. 15:14-17
Bl. John Henry Newman, *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*;
The Christians as the Romans Saw Them, Robert Louis Wilken;
Triumph: The Power and Glory of the Catholic Church by Harry Crocker III
Readings in Medieval History, Patrick J. Geary
Life of Charlemagne, Einhard
Faith of Our Fathers, James Gibbons
Faith of the Early Fathers, William A. Jurgens
The History of Christendom Series, Dr. Warren Carroll.