



- ### Middle Ages - Timeline
- End of the (Western) Roman Empire
    - Christianity spreads, Rome “falls”, Eastern Roman Empire eventually becomes Byzantium.
  - The Middle Ages
    - Early Middle Ages (about 500-1000)
      - Monasticism, Carolingian Renaissance
    - High Middle Ages (about 1000-1300)
      - Crusades, Gothic architecture, Scholasticism
    - Late Middle Ages (about 1300-1500)
      - Crisis of the 14<sup>th</sup> Century
  - Early Modern Europe
    - Renaissance, Reformation, Revolution . . .

## EARLY MIDDLE AGES (~500-1000 C.E.)

- Monasticism
- Emergence of the Catholic Church
- Feudalism
- The Great Chain of Being
- The Carolingian Renaissance
- Illuminated Manuscripts



- ## Christian Monasticism
- The word “monk” originated from the Greek word *monos*, which means “alone.”
  - Over time, communities of monks formed.
    - Monastery, from *monasterion* – “to live alone”
  - All monasteries had prayer in common, but early in the Middle Ages there was great diversity in how they organized themselves and in what ways they interacted with surrounding communities.

Monastery scriptoriums (“writing rooms”) kept literacy alive during the European “dark” ages by copying any and all documents the monastery happened to possess.

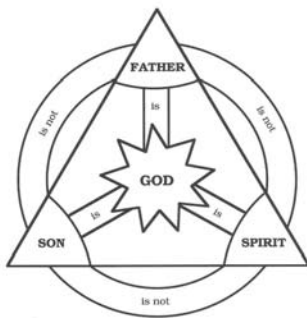
## The Emergence of the Church

- The word “church” comes from the Greek word *ekklesia*, which means “an assembly.”
- By A.D. 451, the Church had emerged and organized itself in a number of ways:
  - Christendom was divided into districts (dioceses) modeled on the Roman system of governance.
  - Rome had become the leading city and the Bishop of Rome was the position of highest eminence.
  - Christian theology had been unified into one set of beliefs. European Christians had to agree with the Catholic Church’s doctrine or else be considered heretics. (Example: Doctrine of the Trinity.)

The Resurrection of Jesus

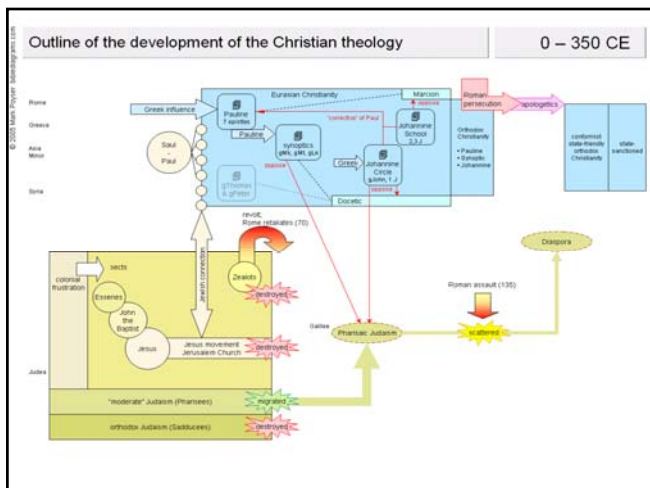


## The Christian doctrine of the Trinity



Early Christian theology was influenced by the prevalent philosophies of the time:

- Platonism
- Hellenistic Judaism
  - *Septuagint*
  - Philo of Alexandria (20 BCE - 50 CE), *Logos*
- Plotinus (204 - 270)
  - Neo-Platonism
- Augustine of Hippo (354 - 430)
  - Prolific writer:
    - *Confessions*, *City of God*
  - Church Father: Christian theology
    - allegorical interpretations, original sin



## Catholic Church Hierarchy

- The Laity: Members of the church.
- The Clergy: Those ordained for religious service.
  - Monks: Members of the clergy who live and work in monasteries. (Abbots: Heads of monasteries.)
  - Priests: Members of the clergy who live in towns and work in churches and cathedrals.
  - Bishops: Pastors of dioceses.
  - Cardinals: High officials, just under the Pope.
  - Pope: Head of the Catholic Church.

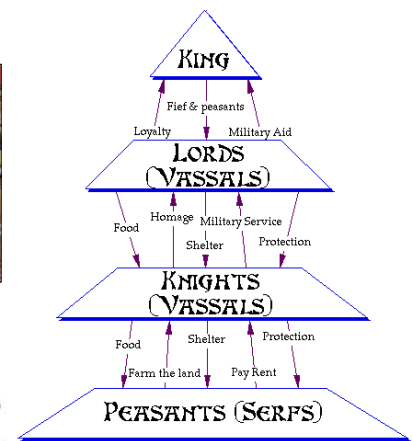
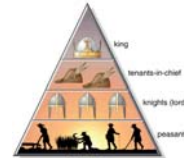
## Popes

- The pope is the Bishop of Rome.
- St. Peter was the first pope.
- Benedict XVI is the current pope.
  - He was elected on 19 April 2005.
  - He is the 265<sup>th</sup> pope.

[list of popes](#)

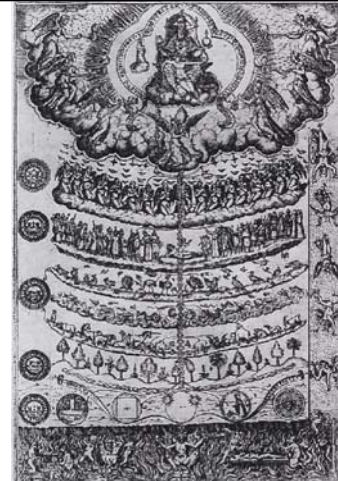


## Feudalism

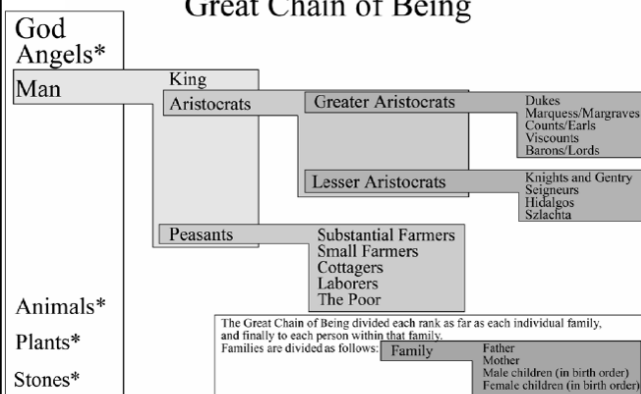


## The Great Chain of Being

- The great chain of being is the medieval conception of the order of the universe (worldview), whose chief characteristic is a strict hierarchical system.
- The central concept of the chain of being is that everything imaginable fits into it somewhere, giving order and meaning to the universe.
- Trying to change position on the chain was perceived as going against the natural order of things, against God's design.



## Great Chain of Being

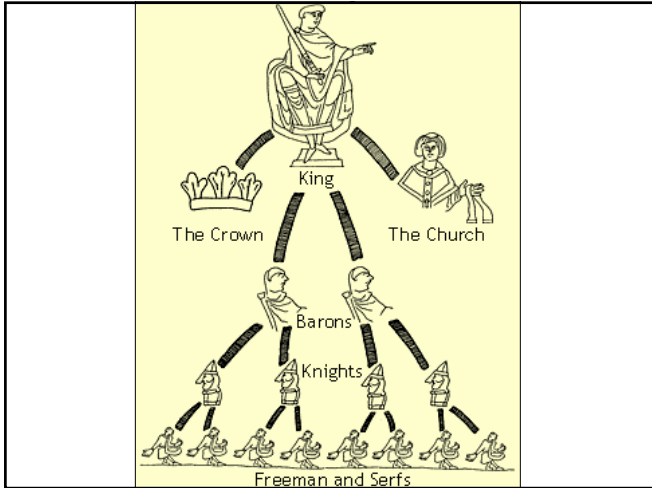


\*Apart from God, not only man, but each of the other ranks in the chain can be further divided.

## Medieval Hierarchy Catholic vs. Secular

Pope • King  
 Cardinals • Lords  
 Bishops • Knights  
 Priests • Farmers  
 The Laity • Laborers

If everything has a place in the hierarchy, who is on top?



## Charlemagne (742-814)

- King of the Franks
- In 800, Crowned 'Emperor' in Rome by Pope Leo III
- His rule is associated with the Carolingian Renaissance, a revival of art, religion, and culture through the medium of the Catholic Church.



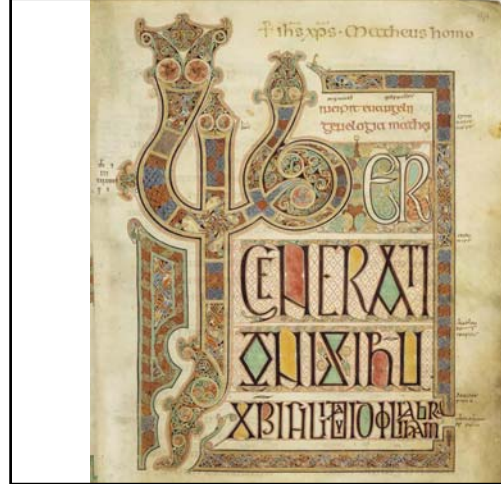
## Learning in the Time of Charlemagne

- Charlemagne built many cathedrals and monasteries.
  - All monasteries in his kingdom were to follow the Rule of St. Benedict.
  - The monasteries were ordered to open schools and operate scriptoria.
- Charlemagne standardized the curriculum.
  - *Trivium*: grammar, logic, and rhetoric
  - *Quadrivium*: arithmetic, astronomy, geometry, and music ("musicology")
- Literacy was considered a prerequisite for worship.
  - Study of "profane" Roman texts was allowed.

## Carolingian Miniscule

- Clearly formed letters
- Spaces between words
- Capital letters at the beginning of sentences

## Illuminated manuscripts

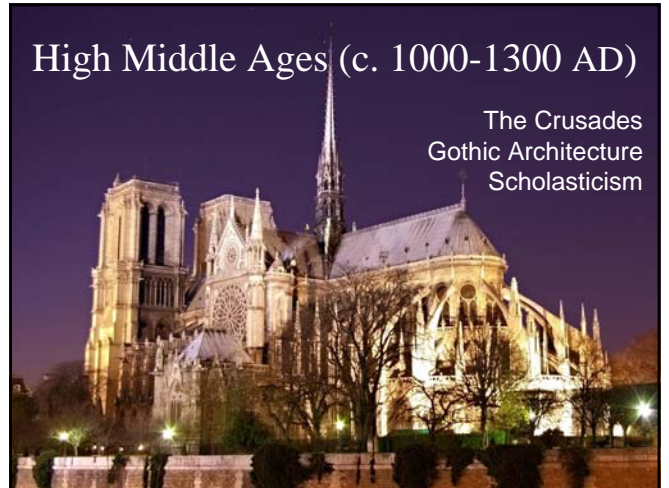


The Book of Kells. It was transcribed by Celtic monks c. 800.



## High Middle Ages (c. 1000-1300 AD)

The Crusades  
Gothic Architecture  
Scholasticism



## The Crusades

- The Crusades were a series of nine religion-driven military campaigns, mostly against Muslims.
- Crusaders were granted indulgences for past sins and believed they would go straight to heaven if they died.
- Considered heroic adventures to many in the West, barbarian invasions to those in the East.
- Crusaders brought back “new” ideas from the East.

## Purgatory

Christians believed that after death, the soul would be destined for either heaven or hell.

Purgatory was envisioned as a place of cleansing before a soul could be admitted into Heaven.

The more sin a soul had accrued during life, the longer the soul would have to stay in Purgatory before moving on.

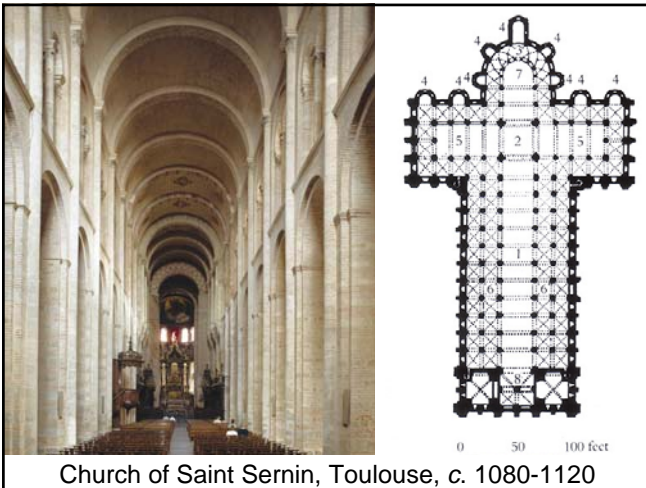


## Crusade Routes



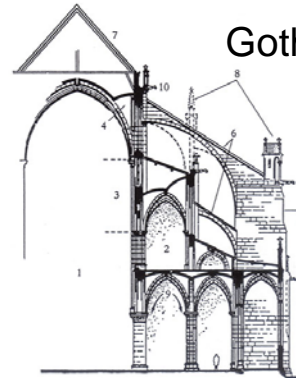
## Architecture: The Romanesque Style

- Large, “Roman-looking” architecture
- Influenced by travel, expansion
- Heavy stone arches
  - Larger, more spacious interiors
  - Fireproof stone and masonry roofs



Church of Saint Sernin, Toulouse, c. 1080-1120

## Gothic Architecture

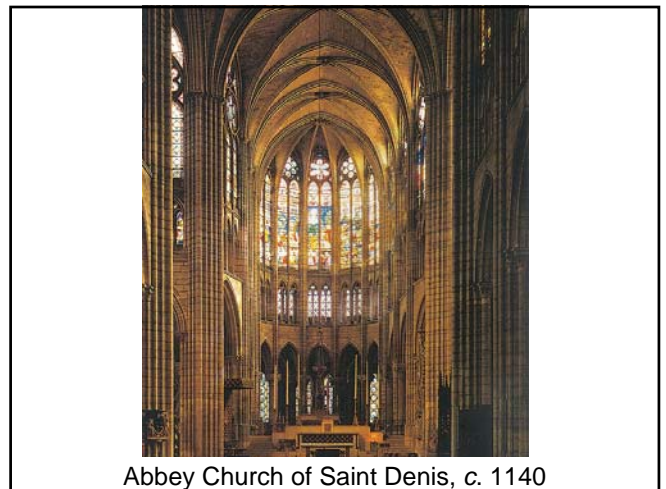


- “Gothic”
- Architectural features:
  - Flying buttresses
  - Pointed arches
  - Ribbed vaulting
  - Spires
  - Gargoyles
  - Stained glass
- Pilgrimage destinations

10.3 Transverse half-sectional drawing of the Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris. Height approx. 140' (42.7 m). The tiny figure at the lower right gives some sense of scale.



Cologne Cathedral, c. 1248



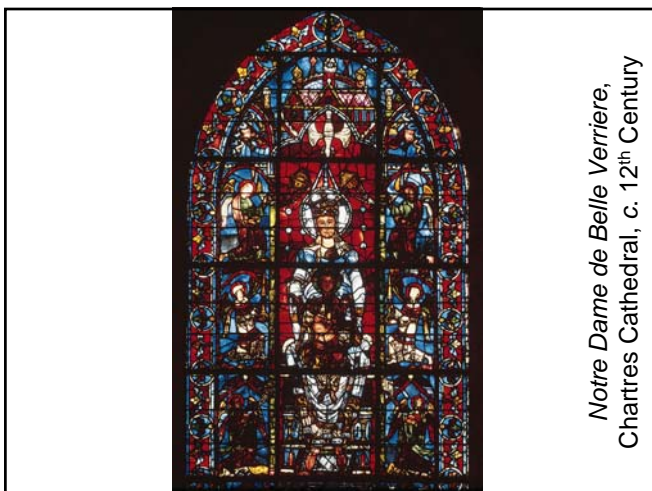
Abbey Church of Saint Denis, c. 1140



Notre Dame Cathedral, c. 1163-1345



La Sainte-Chapelle, c. 1248

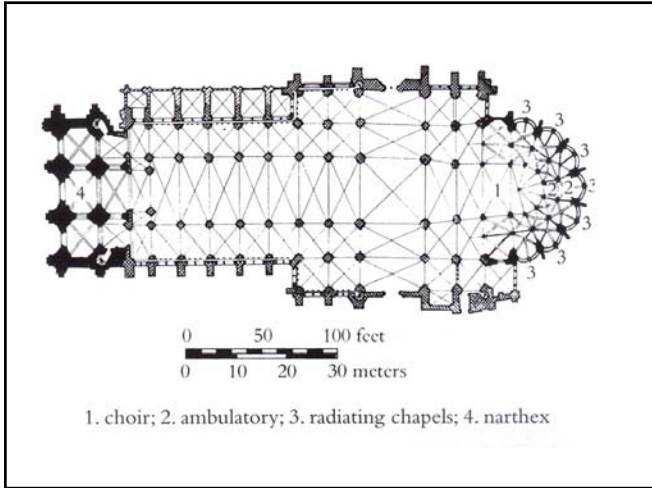


Notre Dame de Belle Verriere,  
Chartres Cathedral, c. 12th Century



Pilgrimage Destinations

Cathedrale Notre-Dame de Chartres, c. 1194



### The First (Western) Universities

- Many of the first universities were teachers' guilds.
  - Universities of Oxford and Paris by 1150.
- Subjects included theology, law, and medicine.
- Relied on ancient texts (Aristotle)
  - Uneasy relationship with Arab scholars
- Rough life for students



### Scholasticism

- Scholasticism was the dominant form of theology and philosophy during the Middle Ages.
- It aimed to reconcile the Christian theology of the Church Fathers (like St. Augustine) with the Greek philosophy of Aristotle and his commentators, many of whom were Muslim scholars.
  - Averroes was a Muslim polymath whose writings on Aristotle were so well respected, he was simply known as "The Commentator."

### The Islamic Golden Age

- [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islamic\\_Golden\\_Age](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islamic_Golden_Age)
- [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/House\\_of\\_Wisdom](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/House_of_Wisdom)
- [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Translation\\_Movement](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Translation_Movement)
- [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islamic\\_contributions\\_to\\_Medieval\\_Europe](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islamic_contributions_to_Medieval_Europe)

THE MEDITERRANEAN, AD 840

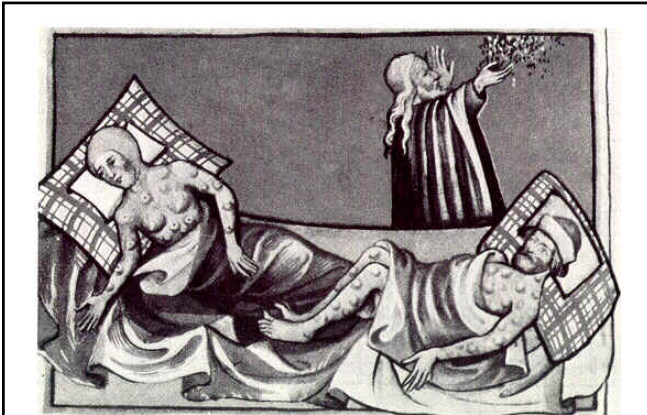


## The Crisis of the 14<sup>th</sup> Century

1. Climate change (the “little ice age”) and famine
2. The Black Death
3. Political Instability
  - The Hundred Years War
  - Popular revolts
4. Religious upheaval
  - The Western Schism

## The Black Death

- The Black Death, also known as the Black Plague, was a devastating pandemic that first struck Europe in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, killing about half of Europe’s population.
- The Black Death had a drastic effect on Europe’s population, irrevocably changing Europe’s social structure.
- For many, it provoked a crisis of faith: “Why was God doing this to us?” The uncertainty of daily survival created a general mood of morbidity influencing people to live for the moment.



The Black Plague is believed to have been an outbreak of bubonic plague caused by a bacteria spread by rats.



**Flagellation Scene:** This miniature painting represents a familiar scene across Europe during the plague years. The penitents, depicted with bare backs and feet, marched through towns whipping themselves. By this self-punishment, they hoped to atone for their own and society’s sins, and thus end the plague.



*La Danse Macabre*, also called the Dance of Death, is a late-medieval allegory on the universality of death: no matter one’s station in life, the dance of death united all.

## Bernt Notke's *Danse Macabre* St. Nicholas' Church, Tallinn, Estonia.



The painting shows Death dancing with a pope, an emperor, an empress, a cardinal, and a king, as the preacher admonishes the congregation.

## Political Instability

### The Hundred Years War

- England and France
- 1337 to 1453

### Popular revolts

- The Peasant's Revolt in England, 1387.



## The Western Schism (of the Roman Catholic Church)

- Avignon Papacy (1305-1378)  
– AKA the "Babylonian Captivity"
- From 1378-1418, there was a pope in Rome and a pope in Avignon.
- By 1409 there were three different popes.
- Finally ended by the Council of Constance (1414-1418).  
– Four anti-popes.



## Practice Question

How do you think the events of the 14<sup>th</sup> Century would have affected the worldview of common people in Europe?

Try to use the "great chain of being" in your answer.

## Heroic Tales from the Middle Ages

- Beowulf (c. 8<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> Century)  
– Epic poem written in Old English [LINK](#)
- Song of Roland (mid. 12<sup>th</sup> Century)  
– *Chanson de geste* (Song of deeds)
- King Arthur (c. 12<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> Century)  
– Romance: Narrative prose  
– Courtly and chivalrous, reflecting the increased stature of women



*The Très Riches Heures du Duc de Berry*, c.1410.