

# Off to Church We Go...Or Else!

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## Overview

**Topic:** The role of the Church in the Middle Ages. This lesson is focused on the role of the Catholic Church in Medieval society as well as on the individual. Students will use Internet resources, supplemented by print material, to research the impact of the Church on all segments of society.

## Time Allotment

Two 90-minute blocks

## Media Components

*The Middle Ages* #3, The Church  
Web resources:

WebQuest  
[wizard.hprtec.org](http://wizard.hprtec.org)

Click open. Worksheet id. # 10731

This site is maintained by the High Plains Regional Technology in Education Consortium. It consists of electronic worksheets created by teachers and available for anyone's use.

About.com Topics in Medieval Christianity  
[historymedren.about.com/cs/christiantopics/index.htm?once=true&rnk+r3](http://historymedren.about.com/cs/christiantopics/index.htm?once=true&rnk+r3)

This site is a list of articles and links to information about the Medieval Christianity. It contains an excellent list of vocabulary essential to a beginner's understanding of the subject matter.

The Nun's Realm  
[emuseum.mankato.msus.edu/history/middleages/nun.html](http://emuseum.mankato.msus.edu/history/middleages/nun.html)

This site was researched by students and constructed by a teacher. It is a very accurate, reli-

able source of information which provides a lot of insight to Medieval Cathedrals and those who worked there.

Annenberg/CPB Learner.org Middle Ages  
[www.learner.org/exhibits/middleages/](http://www.learner.org/exhibits/middleages/)

This is a site created by the Annenberg. It contains valuable information and cathedral tours.

## Learning Objectives

The student will be able to:

- explain the influence of the Catholic Church on society during the Middle Ages
  - explain the role of the Catholic Church on individuals' lives during the Middle Ages
- (This lesson addresses Va. SOL Social Science 8.7)

## Materials

- WebQuest Questions printed from Student Materials Section, one per student
- Supplemental print materials for research from library media center for the class to share
- magic markers, colored pencils, rulers,(scissors and tape if you allow them to print illustrations from the computers) for the class to share when making posters
- 1 poster board per pair of students



### Preparation for Teachers

- Assemble a box or basket of slips of paper as directed in the Introductory Activity section.
- Preview the video and cue it according to the first part of the Learning Activities section.
- Secure a location for students to use computers and print materials from the library. Make sure the WebQuest site is still active as well as all sites used in the WebQuest.
- Provide students with additional sources of information by having your school's library media center assemble available materials on the Middle Ages to be sent to wherever the students will be working. If that is not possible it may be necessary to alter the lesson by scheduling a time for the class to visit the library media center to use the materials.
- Assemble poster boards and supplies for creating posters.

### Introductory Activity: Setting the Stage

#### Day One

1. Divide your class into pairs ahead of time and write on slips of paper "serf," "monks and nuns," "priest," "king," and "Pope." Make sure there are enough slips of paper that each pair will get one slip. You should have two to three groups for each role, depending on the size of the class.
2. Say, "Today and tomorrow we will learn what it was like to live during the Middle Ages, but we will especially focus on what role the Catholic Church played in people's lives every day, not just on Sunday! Regardless of whether you were a serf, monk or nun, priest, a king, or the Pope, all were equally answerable to the Church."
3. Assign each student a partner and have one student from each pair choose a slip of paper. Each pair should announce to the rest of the class what role they chose so that students are aware of the roles that will be researched. Say, "As a pair you will research together to create a poster about the Medieval Church. One half of your poster will contain general facts about the Medieval Church, the

other half will focus on the Church's impact on the person whose role you are assuming."

#### **Pause vs. Stop**

When using a video interactively with students, teachers need to decide when to use **PAUSE** and when to use **STOP**. **PAUSE** the video when the anticipated discussion or activity will take less than two minutes. **STOP** for longer periods. Pausing for too long at one time can cause video heads on the VCR to become clogged which may require cleaning to correct.

#### **Time Cues**

To synchronize your VCR with the time cues that are included with this lesson, zero/reset your time counter at the very beginning of the program, before the introduction and titles. Time cues are expressed as "minutes:seconds;" for example, 3:15 means three minutes and fifteen seconds.

### Learning Activities

1. To provide students with a specific task to complete while viewing say, "Before we start researching the Church and your role, let's learn some general information about the Medieval Church by looking at a segment on a video about the Church."
2. **FAST FORWARD** through the skit of the three pilgrims and cue the video to begin with the narrator in front of the church. Provide students with a focus for media interaction by saying, "Listen to the narrator and see if you can catch him say what religion people in Western Europe were in the Middle Ages and whether or not it was an option." **PLAY**, then **PAUSE** as soon as he finishes saying, "...you were a Catholic." Ask, "What did we find out?" (Catholic, not an option)
3. Provide students with a focus for media interaction by saying, "In this next segment, try to listen for the titles of the people who ran the Church, and who was most important." **RESUME** the video and **PAUSE** when the illustration on the screen ends. Ask students, "What were the titles of those who

took part in running the Church?” (Pope, archbishops, bishops, priests, monks, nuns, and friars, Pope was the most important)

4. Provide students with a focus for media interaction by saying, “In the next segment listen for things that the Church took care of for people during the Middle Ages that the government, or some other institution, takes care of now.” **RESUME** the video and **PAUSE** when he finishes saying “...most people believed in God then more than most of us do nowadays.” Ask students, “Can you list the services?” (care of the poor, the sick, elderly, education, courts)

5. Provide students a focus for media interaction by saying, “In this last segment, take a look at the church and pick out things that you see that showed how important the Church must have been.”

**RESUME** the video and **PAUSE** when the video stops showing the stained glass window and the narrator finishes saying, “...but if you didn’t, you went to live with the sinners in hell.” Ask, “What evidence did you see?” (Accept responses that include comments concerning the size of the church and its rich embellishments.)

6. Provide students with a specific task to complete by saying, “As you can see already, the Church was a central part of people’s lives during the Middle Ages, but we need to be more specific. We will now go to the computer lab so that you can complete a WebQuest that will help you find more information about the Medieval Church and its impact on the role of the person that your pair is playing. Your pair will complete a poster about the Medieval Church. One side of the poster will contain 10 facts about the Medieval Church in general plus one illustration, and the other side will contain 10 facts and 2 illustrations concerning the Church’s impact on the role your pair is playing, such as peasants or priests. You will have a worksheet for the WebQuest sites that you are responsible for completing that should be turned in with the poster. You should also take any necessary notes from the sites that will help you complete each side of your poster. You will have library print materials to help you as well. Make sure you gather enough information so that you can include 10 facts and one illustration for the Medieval Church side of your poster, and 10 facts

and two illustrations for the ‘role’ side of your poster.”

Take the students to the computer lab or library media center to complete their WebQuest listed at the website shown in the Media Components section. The directed activities to complete for each website on the WebQuest are listed on the worksheet in the Student Materials Section.

## Culminating Activity

### Day Two

1. Allow students to assemble their posters in the classroom. If students did not have access to the library print material while researching the Internet yesterday, it may be necessary to have print materials sent to the classroom or to schedule some time in the library at the beginning of class.

2. Allow each pair to present their poster to the class and display them in the room or in the hallway, if permissible.

## Assessment

Each student should compose one of the following essays, which can be a homework assignment if time does not allow completion in class:

1. Write an essay comparing the power of the Pope to Western European kings during the Middle Ages.
2. Write an essay in which you express your opinion concerning the treatment of peasants by the Church during the Middle Ages.
3. Write an essay in which you describe services provided by the Church during the Middle Ages that government takes care of today.

## Community Connections

1. Take students on a field trip to a Catholic Church to tour and speak with clergy about the differences in the Church today versus the Middle Ages.

2. Invite a local priest or monk to school to speak to a student group.

### **Cross-Curricular Extensions**

**English:** Students could read primary sources concerning religion from the Middle Ages or literature concerning the Church such as *Chaucer's Canterbury Tales*

**Technology/Architecture:** Students could examine Medieval Church architecture in terms of use of columns, arches, buttresses, etc., and the historical origins of the use of these elements.

## Medieval Church WebQuest Questions

### **I. Go to About.com Topics in Medieval Christianity**

[historymedren.about.com/cs/christiantopics/index.htm?once=true&rnk+r3&ter](http://historymedren.about.com/cs/christiantopics/index.htm?once=true&rnk+r3&ter)

Click on “Ecclesiastical Terminology” and define the following terms:

abbey —

Benedictine Order —

canon —

chapter house —

eucharist —

interdict —

tithe —

### **II. Go to The Nun’s Realm**

[emuseum.mankato.msus.edu/history/middleages/nun.html](http://emuseum.mankato.msus.edu/history/middleages/nun.html)

Click on the hypertext word “church” in the second paragraph. Answer the following questions from the information.

1. What type of people were Catholic Christians during the Middle Ages?
2. How old were people when they joined the service to God’s Church?

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3. Who was the Pope? What could he do to those who went against the Church?
4. To what extent was the Church a part of peoples' everyday lives?
5. List five things that took place in the parish church.
6. Why did people make pilgrimages to shrines?
7. Why did people become monks or nuns?
8. How did monks and nuns live?

### **III. Go to Annenberg/CPB Learner.org Middle Ages**

[www.learner.org/exhibits/middleages/](http://www.learner.org/exhibits/middleages/)

Enter the site and click "religion" on the right. Read the first and second pages, then take the tours listed on the left of the screen on the second page.

Take notes in the space below.