Pearson New International Edition

The World: A History, Volume 2

Felipe Fernandez-Armesto

Second Edition

ALWAYS LEARNING™

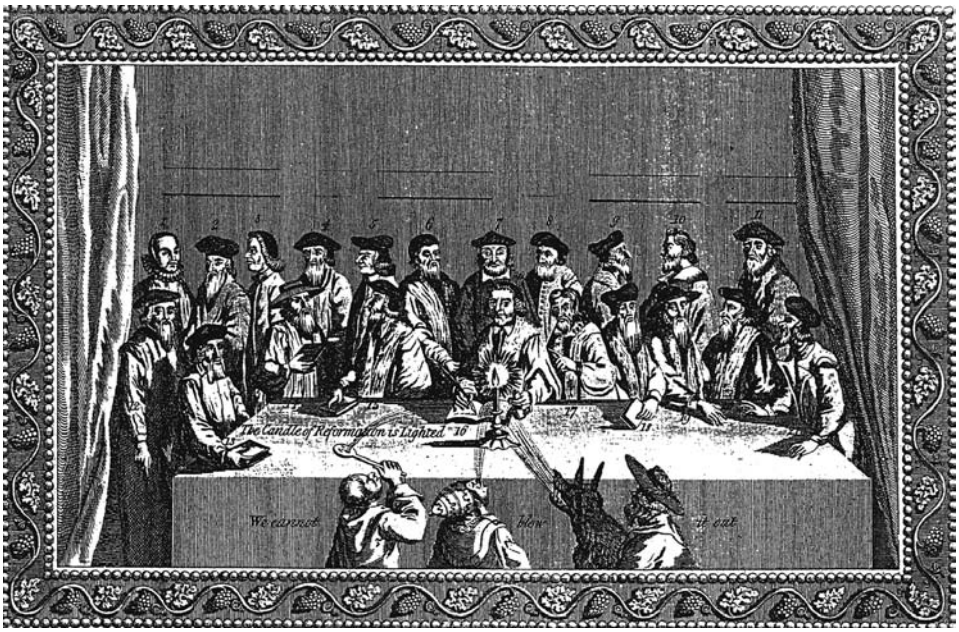
PEARSON®

Pearson New International Edition

The World: A History, Volume 2
Felipe Fernandez-Armesto
Second Edition

PEARSON®

Inextinguishable light: Pope, friar, and devil cannot blow out the candle of the Reformation lit by Martin Luther, who sits behind it surrounded by other Protestant theologians of the sixteenth century. The Frenchman Jean Calvin is next to Luther, aptly turning away from him. The standing figure touching Luther's arm is the Scots reformer John Knox. Immediately behind Luther is the Swiss Ulrich Zwingli. Luther's disciple Philip Melancthon is seated to his left. The scene is imaginary. All these reformers never gathered together, and Luther and his followers were bitterly opposed to the theological ideas of Calvin, Zwingli, and Knox. The border of the engraving alludes to Jesus' claim to be "the true Vine."

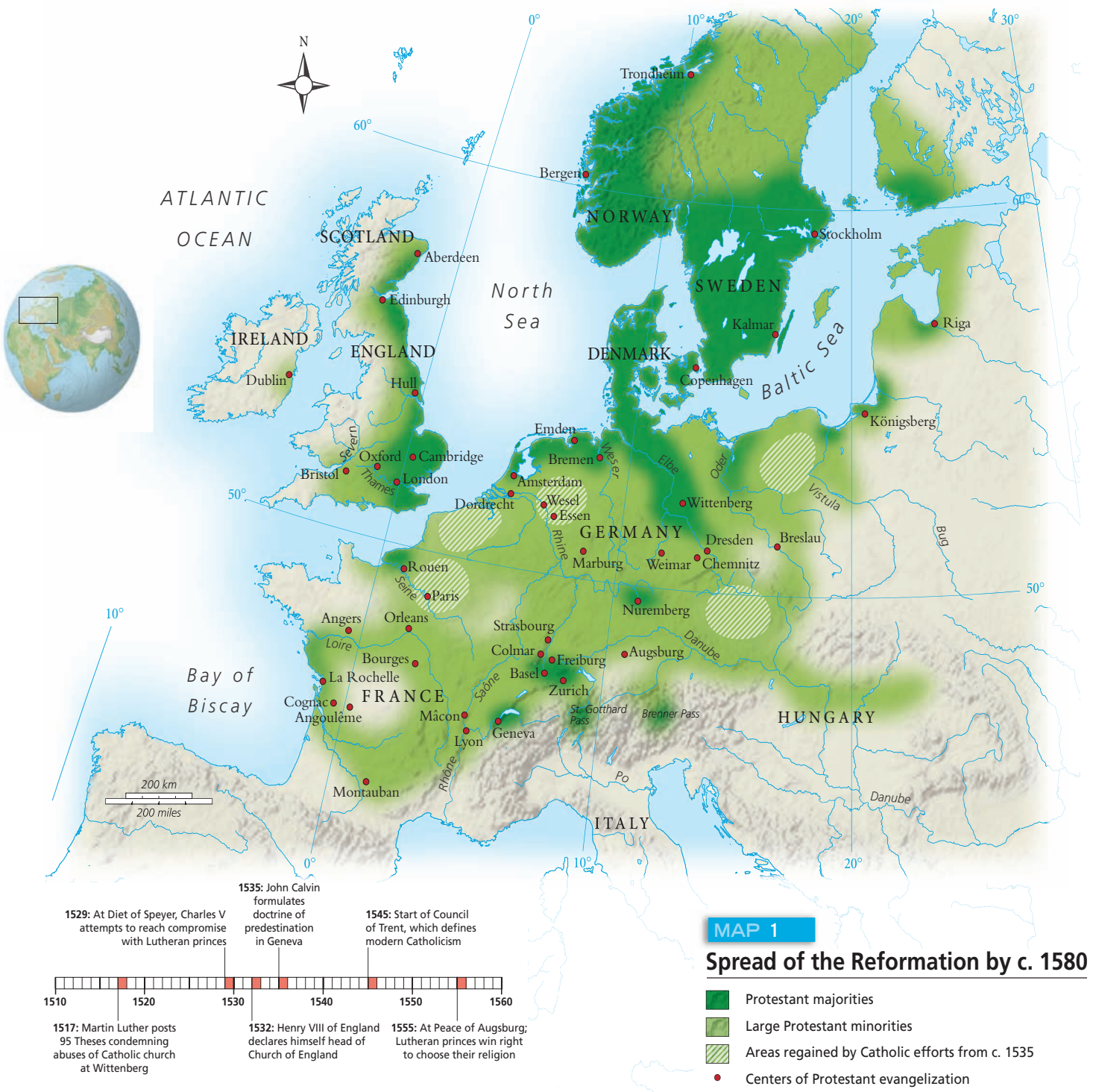


The Candle of Reformation is Lighted: Meeting of Protestant Reformers from Various Countries, engraved by Lodge (engraving) (b/w photo) by English School © Private Collection/The Bridgeman Art Library Nationality/copyright status: English/out of copyright

"Having broken the principle that the church was indivisible and that authority within the church was unique and binding on all Christians, the new Christian movements tended to split among themselves in often bitter and bloody disputes over Christian dogma and how to organize the church."

Calvin differed from Luther on a further point of dogma. He insisted that logically if, as Luther believed, God had chosen some people for salvation from before time began, he must have excluded others. So some people would spend eternity in hell, no matter how virtuous they were in this life. More important than this doctrine, called "predestination," in making Calvinism appealing to Christians were Calvin's gifts as a writer and administrator. His theology seems austere and chilling. Yet when he wrote about it he made it moving and humanly compelling. Strictly speaking, if everyone was saved or damned from before time began, Jesus' life and sacrifice seem pointless. Yet Calvin's writings are full of a sense of Jesus' reality and effectiveness as the focus where human and divine love meet. Calvin established a power base in the Swiss city of Geneva, where revolutionaries renounced allegiance to their ruler, the duke of Savoy, and organized missionaries who radiated from there across Europe. No state church in Europe, except those of Scotland, some German principalities, and the United Provinces of the Netherlands, adopted his teachings; but many of his followers came to occupy influential positions in the church hierarchy in England, and communities of his adherents took root in many parts of France and Switzerland, and were scattered in patches around Germany and parts of northern Italy, Hungary, and Transylvania. Having broken the principle that the church was indivisible and that authority within the church was unique and binding on all Christians, the new Christian movements tended to split among themselves in often bitter and bloody disputes over Christian dogma and how to organize the church.

The schism within Christianity endures to this day (see Map 1). Some national or local churches in the affected areas—northern and eastern Germany; parts of France, Switzerland, Hungary, and Holland; Scandinavia; Scotland , England, and Wales—seceded from obedience to the Church of Rome, calling themselves "Evangelical" or "Protestant," or "Reformed" (hence the term *Reformation* for the movements they formed.) A Catholic movement that historians commonly call the Counter-Reformation or the Catholic Reformation reconverted some churches to Roman obedience. Partly in reaction against Protestantism, but at a more profound level to pursue the common, underlying project to re-Christianize Europe that all Christian elites shared, new religious orders sprang up within the Catholic Church. The most significant of these for the future of world history was the Society of Jesus or Jesuits, which Ignatius Loyola (1491–1556)



founded in 1540. Loyola was an ex-soldier under the Spanish crown who brought martial virtues to the movement he founded: tight discipline, comradeship, self-sacrifice, and a sense of chivalry. He was also a gifted mystic, who taught his friends and followers self-transforming techniques of prayer, and a natural intellectual, who insisted on the highest standards of learning for those who joined his order. The Jesuits became the Roman Catholic Church's most effective missionaries and educators, both in Europe and in the wider world, and the schools they established were nurseries of science and scholarship.

Having broken the principle that the church was indivisible and authority within the church was unique and binding on all Christians, the Protestant movements tended

Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Jesuit missionaries. The Jesuits' pride in the success of their overseas missions radiates from this eighteenth-century painting in which three of the order's sixteenth-century saints are prominently depicted. Flanked by personifications of the four continents in the foreground, the mythical giant Atlas presents the world to the Jesuits' founder, St. Ignatius Loyola. St. Francis Borja on the left-hand pedestal represents the order's preaching vocation; St. Francis Xavier, on the right, represents the ministry of the sacraments. Xavier also wears a Chinese-style vestment, a reminder of the Jesuits' long efforts to convert China. One of the leading Jesuit missionaries in China, Matteo Ricci, is in the background, among other Jesuit saints and heroes. Representatives of peoples the Jesuits converted kneel in prayer.

to split among themselves in often bitter and bloody disputes over Christian dogma and how to organize the church. A sense of hostility among the different forms of Christianity grew up in the aftermath of the schism—leading to wars justified, if not caused, by religious cant. As a result of this climate of hostility, traditional history has exaggerated the differences between Protestant and Catholic Christianity. Few people understood or cared about the subtleties of doctrine and worship that divided theologians. The doctrine most commonly said to define the Protestant reformers is that of "salvation by faith alone," according to which God imparts grace freely to anyone who professes belief in him without the sinner needing to perform pious works or obey church rules. Yet many Catholics stayed in the church while sharing Protestant views on this point, while Luther himself repeatedly insisted, in his own catechism for young Christians, "We should fear God because of his threat to those who transgress his law and love him for his promise of grace to those who keep it."

The missionary impulse within Europe produced no great revolution in spirituality. Most people remained as indifferent and shallow-minded as ever. But the language and imagery—the total communication—of the Christian faith were genuinely transformed. For Protestant clergy, services in the vernacular and the promotion of the Bible in translation were ways to help the laity become more actively involved in their faith. For Catholics, frequent communion and—to involve women in particular—the extension of the cults of the Virgin Mary and the founding of new orders of nuns who taught the young and nursed the sick served the same purpose.

Both traditions made God more intelligible, more accessible. "You seem to think that Christ was drunk," thundered Luther against radically subversive readings of the story of the Last Supper by rival Protestants like Zwingli, "and wearied his disciples with meaningless words!" This daring joke had the great virtue of treating Christ's humanity as literal and picturing him in the flesh of human weakness. In 1573, the Inquisition in Venice forced the Italian painter Veronese to re-label his painting of the Last Supper as *Dinner at the House of Levi*, because it contained scenes of feasting and mirth, but by the century's end, another Italian painter, Caravaggio, could depict the *Last Supper*, without irreverence, as an episode of tavern low life. The German artist Mathias Grünewald in the 1520s had to hide his drawing of Jesus as a low-browed, warty-faced loser, but a century and a half later, the Spanish painter Murillo could revive the ancient tradition of depicting the Christ child as a naughty boy. As a result of the church's mission to bring Christianity to the people, relevance to the lives of ordinary folk sanctified sacred subjects.

In eastern Christendom, too, reform movements led to conflicts between the Christianity of the clergy and the religion of ordinary people, and ultimately to splits in the Orthodox Church as they did in the West. A reformation parallel to that of the West began in 1621, when the Patriarch of Constantinople, Cyril Lukaris (1572–1638), renounced what he called the "bewitchment" of tradition "and took for my guide," he said, "Scripture . . . and Faith alone." The Russian priest Avvakum, "though a miserable sinner," tackled popular excesses violently. He drove mummers from his village, breaking their masks and drums, clubbing one of their dancing bears senseless, and releasing the other into the wild. In 1648, the Russian Orthodox clerical brotherhood known as the Zealots of Piety captured the czar's attention. At their insistence, the czar banished the vulgarities of popular piety from the Russian court and banned popular music as a presumed survival of paganism. Yet within 20 years, the clergy who had triumphed together in championing these changes fell out among themselves over a further proposed elimination of impurities: the standardization of texts and the harmonization of rituals. The leader of one party was exiled in 1666, the other burned at the stake in 1681.

Exaltation of the ordinary. The Italian painter Caravaggio's "Supper at Emmaus" (1599) is famous among art historians for its innovative, dramatic use of light and shade, but it is equally extraordinary for its treatment of a sacred subject: a meeting at which Jesus revealed himself to his disciples after his Resurrection. Caravaggio depicted the disciples, not as glorious saints, but as shabby, commonplace peasants.

CHRISTIANITY BEYOND CHRISTENDOM: THE LIMITS OF SUCCESS

Beyond Europe, the world that exploration and imperialism disclosed was a magnet for missionaries. "Come over and help us," said the Indian on the official seal of the trading company responsible, under the English crown, for colonizing Massachusetts in the early seventeenth century. On the whole, however, overseas missionizing was a rare vocation in Protestant Europe. There were a few exceptions. The conviction that the Algonquin Indians were a lost tribe of ancient Israel inspired John Eliot (1604–1690), who created "praying towns" in New England where Native American pastors preached and led congregations in prayers and readings from the Bible. Normally, however, only Roman Catholic religious orders had enough manpower and zeal to undertake the missions on a large scale, and outside areas of Spanish rule, their efforts were patchy.

In Asia, the contrast between the Philippines, where Spanish rule built up what is by far the biggest Christian community in Asia, and the many mission fields that proved barren or only briefly productive illustrates this patchiness. Even in the Philippines, Christian success in direct competition with Islam was limited. In the Sulu Islands, where Muslim missionaries were active within reach of protection from a strong Islamic state in Brunei, the Muslim threat could be met by force of arms, but Christian preaching could not eradicate it. In the Philippine island of Mindanao, Muslim intruders arrived from the small but spice-rich sultanate of Ternate in the 1580s. The Christian mission on Mindanao had barely begun and could not be sustained. In the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, it was all Spanish garrisons could do to keep at bay Muslim hotheads who launched holy wars against the Spaniards' main base in Luzon. Yet, responding to his advisers' view that the mission was not worth the cost and effort, King Philip II of Spain (r. 1556–1598) insisted that he would rather spend all the gold in his treasury than sacrifice one church where the name of Christ was praised.

Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Christian missionaries. In late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century Japan became victims of their own success. Not only did they attract hundreds of thousands of followers, but they also established close ties to many of the daimyos, regional lords whom the central authorities distrusted. The missionaries' Spanish and Portuguese allegiance also made them suspect as potential foreign agents. A series of persecutions, beginning in the 1590s, included many martyrdoms, like that of the Jesuit Sebastião Vieira, tortured to death with some of his converts in 1634 in an episode depicted here. After 1639, the only Christians allowed in Japan were a small group of Dutch Calvinist merchants, whose servants had to trample on a crucifix in an annual ceremony, in order to prove their rejection of Christianity.

For a while, Franciscans and Jesuits in Japan encountered amazing success by targeting lords whose conversions were catalysts for the conversions of their followers. Once the missionaries had a place to say mass and a conspicuous aristocratic patron to make Christianity respectable, they could attract potential converts by displays of devotion, such as the magnificent requiem mass sung for the local ruler's wife, Lady Gracia, at Kokura that attracted thousands of mourners in 1600. By the 1630s, more than 100,000 Japanese had been baptized. Successive central governments in Japan had been suspicious of the new religion, as a source of subversive political ideas, foreign influence, and encouragement to local lords to usurp central authority. Sporadic persecution from the 1590s, however, had failed to halt the progress of Christianity. So from 1639, it was banned outright, and Christians who refused to renounce their faith were forced into exile or put to death.

China could not be converted by means similar to those the Jesuits followed in Japan. It was a relatively centralized state with no intermediate lords to serve as local flashpoints of Christian illumination. The Jesuits made most of their converts at modest social levels but focussed disproportionate efforts on the scholar officials, or mandarins, who enjoyed huge social influence. Some of their converts were impressively committed: using Christian baptismal names, passing Christianity on to their friends and families, and proclaiming their faith in public. Yang Tingyun (yahng teeng-yuhn) recalled a vivid conversion experience in the presence of one of the Jesuits' pictures of Jesus, which inspired him "with feelings of the presence of a great lord." Debates with Jesuits followed. Why could reverence for the Buddha not be accommodated alongside acknowledgment of Jesus? How could the Lord of Heaven be subject to disgrace and suffering by being crucified? How could bread and wine be turned into the body and blood of Jesus? (Answer: "My Lord's love for the world is boundless.") After much agonizing, Yang repudiated his mistress—a more impressive test, perhaps, of Christian commitment than baptism—and went on to build a church, finance the printing of Christian works, and write books explaining Christianity. His fellow Christian, Xu Guangqi (shew gwang-Kee), explained as an act of God his failure to pass the exam to enter the civil service that first brought him into contact with the missionaries and attributed to divine revelation, by way of a dream, his insight into the doctrine of the Trinity.

Despite such promising instances, the Jesuits failed to convert China for three reasons. First, as we shall see, most Chinese were more interested in the Jesuits' scientific learning and technical skills as mapmakers, astronomers, artists, clock makers, and designers than in their religious teaching. Second, the strategy the Jesuits adopted to convert China was a long-term one, and the revolutions of Chinese politics tended to interrupt it. No sooner had the Jesuits converted an empress than the Manchus overthrew the Ming dynasty in 1644. Finally, the church lost confidence in the Jesuits' methods. This was the outcome of a conflict that began with the founder of the mission, Matteo Ricci (1552–1610). He developed a healthy respect for Chinese wisdom. Indeed, the Jesuits became mediators not only of Western culture to China but also of Chinese learning in the West. Ricci decided that the best way to proceed with Chinese converts was to permit them to continue rites of reverence for their

ancestors, on the ground that it was similar to Western veneration for saints. As we have seen, this was just the sort of practice that, in the West, the clerical elite was attacking. The missionaries split over the issue, and the effectiveness of the mission suffered when Pope Clement XI ruled against the veneration of ancestors early in the eighteenth century.

In parts of South and Southeast Asia, missionary strategists targeted potential converts at various social levels. In the seventeenth century in the Molucca Islands and Sulawesi (formerly Celebes) in what is today Indonesia, Protestant and Catholic missions alike approached sultans, local notables, and village headmen, with results that usually came to embrace many ordinary people but that never seem to have lasted for long. In Manado in northern Sulawesi, Franciscans launched an intensive mission in 1619. They began by obtaining permission from an assembly of village headmen at the ruler's court. But these notables disclaimed power over their fellow villagers' religious allegiance. The friars preached from village to village, encountering universal hostility. The audience would shriek to drown out the preaching, urge their unwelcome guests to leave, and profess fidelity to their gods. They withheld food and shelter. The friars therefore withdrew in 1622. Their Jesuit successors made some progress by concentrating on the ruler and his family. When Franciscans returned to the villages in the 1640s, they enjoyed a much more positive reception. By the 1680s, under Dutch sponsorship, a Protestant mission in Manado made further headway by employing converted native schoolmasters to work among the children of the elite, wherever a local ruler would permit it. In Sri Lanka, Portuguese missionaries were more successful, but the Dutch who took over the island in 1656 were as keen to undermine Catholics as to convert Buddhists to Protestantism, and the long-term impact of Christianity proved slight.

The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg. Photograph © The State Hermitage Museum

Chinese Madonna and child. When Jesuit missionaries first brought images of the Madonna and Child to China in the late sixteenth century, they were alarmed to find that the Chinese misidentified the Virgin Mary with Guanyin, goddess of mercy, who, in fertility charms, was often depicted with a child in her arms. But in a new mission field, unencumbered with local versions of Christianity, the Jesuits could not resist promoting the great universal cults of the Church: those of the Savior and his mother. Native Chinese artists began producing images of Mary with her son in her arms in the early seventeenth century, blending Western and Chinese treatment and technique.

The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg. Photograph © The State Hermitage Museum

In the New World, the bottom-up strategy of conversion was more usual. After initial contact, which, of course, often brought missionaries into touch with local leaders, ambitious programs of mass baptism and mass preaching rapidly followed. In the 1520s and 1530s, Franciscans baptized literally millions of Native Americans in Mexico, in an experiment typical of the time. It was an effort to re-create the actions and atmosphere of the early church, when a single example of holiness could bring thousands to baptism and altar as if by a miracle. Clearly, most conversions in these circumstances cannot have been profound, life-changing experiences of the kind specified in traditional definitions of conversion. The doctrinal awareness the friars succeeded in communicating was limited. The first catechism the Franciscans used in Mexico does not even refer to the divinity of Jesus, which is the central doctrine of Christian belief. Dominican friars denounced the superficiality of Franciscan

Chronology: The Revitalization and Spread of Christianity

1478	Spanish Inquisition founded
1500s	Spanish Christians compete with Muslims for dominance in the Philippines
Early sixteenth century	Martin Luther initiates Protestant Reformation in Europe
1520s and 1530s	Franciscans baptize millions of Native Americans
1540	Ignatius Loyola founds Jesuits
1545–1563	Council of Trent meets
Seventeenth century	Jesuits lead Christian missionary effort in China
1621	Reformation in Eastern Orthodox Church begins
1630s	Over 100,000 Japanese baptized
1639	Christianity banned in Japan