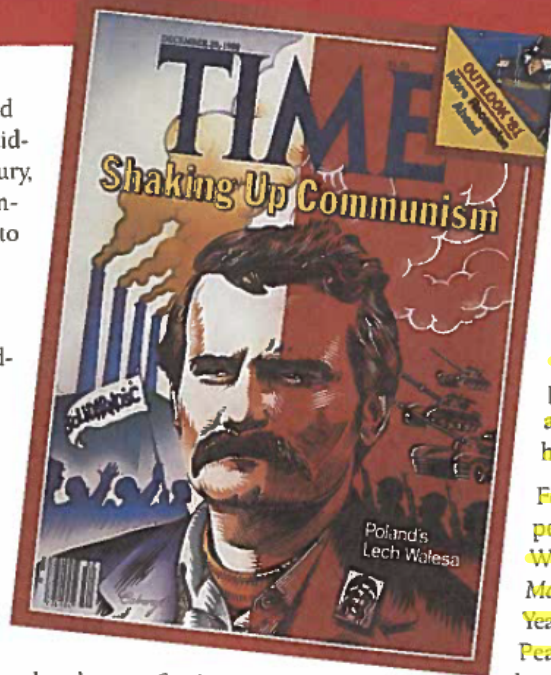


**F**rom the time Poland was formed in the middle of the tenth century, it encountered almost constant invasions and claims to its territory. Sandwiched between Germany and Russia, Poland achieved only a short-lived independence after World War I. Then Germany invaded it in September 1939, launching World War II. **After this war, Poland fell behind the "Iron Curtain"—the powerful communist regime governing the Soviet Union.**

Polish citizens struggled under the pro-Soviet communist government. The economy was failing. The people were oppressed. Their communist government did not allow free speech or religious freedom. It also regulated the price of food, strictly controlled employment and wages, took political prisoners, and limited citizens' rights. By the mid-1970s Poland's economy was in a terrible decline. It was in this unsettled environment that Lech Walesa lived and grew.

Born in 1943 into a working class family, Walesa received a primary education and training as an electrician. He began working as an electrician for a shipyard in Gdansk, Poland, in 1967. By this time, Polish workers were beginning to protest the poor living conditions in Poland. Strikes and protests in Gdansk eventually led to Walesa's organization of a noncommunist trade union for the workers. In time, despite the challenges of job loss and

**"We can choose to turn a crisis into an opportunity or into a negative experience," wrote Virginia Satir (1916–1988), U.S. family therapist and author.**



detainment by the government for his activism, **Walesa was able to lead the National Committee of Solidarity, an independent trade union that stood up for the freedoms and rights of the people. Walesa, a devout Roman Catholic, was supported by Pope John Paul II and the Catholic Church in his efforts.**

**For helping to lead the Polish people out of communism, Walesa was named TIME Magazine's 1981 "Man of the Year" and awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1983. He also became Poland's first popularly elected president in 1990.** His contribution to the end of communism in Europe stands as a testament to his ability to turn a challenge into an opportunity.

**Activity** Think of someone you know who was able to turn a challenge into an opportunity. List some questions that you could ask this person about his or her ability to meet a challenge this way. Then set aside some time to interview this person.

## BELIEVING...

### Abuses and scandals weaken the Church.

In the late Middle Ages the Church faced great challenges. General councils were called to deal with many crises, including the Great Schism of the West. At the Council of Constance the claim was actually made that such councils should have supreme authority in the Church, superior even to that of the pope. Pope Martin V refused to accept this claim, and the Church later officially condemned this idea, which is called conciliarism.

In addition to these internal questions, the Church also had to face questions from outside—questions that were brought on by the Renaissance. In universities across Europe, debates were occurring about the nature of the Church. There was widespread discussion about the origin and extent of the authority of the pope, the councils, and Europe's many princes. The papacy was still weak as a result of the Great Schism of the West. Often bishops lived in luxury, away from their dioceses. Some local priests did not lead holy lives and were poorly educated in the faith. Because of this, most ordinary Catholics



Village fair in Schelle by Jan the Elder Brueghel (1568–1625)

were not taught the truths of the faith. Yet people were hungry for a more personal relationship with God—one that was free from the control of what they saw as a corrupt Church. As the *Catechism* explains, the “mystery of the faith . . . requires that the faithful believe in it, that they celebrate it, and that they live from it in a vital and personal relationship with the living and true God” (2558).

At this time people began to think about their own individual rights. They began to feel angry about having to submit to traditional authority. Even Europe's princes started to resent the taxes they had to pay to the Church and to the Holy Roman Empire. Many local rulers began to envy the wealth of the Church and began to covet her land and buildings. At all levels of society, people began to call for change, or reform. And much of the talk of reform centered on corruption and scandal in the Church.

In Germany an Augustinian priest named Martin Luther (1483–1546) was angered by the many abuses and scandals that he saw in the Church. Luther worried about his salvation and found it hard to believe that a corrupt Church could be much help in saving souls. With Christian Europe longing for change, the beliefs of Martin Luther would prove to be the “kindling wood” that would be just enough to start the fire of a religious revolution. Few suspected that events were coming that would lead so many away from the Church.

**Activity** What challenges did the Church face during this period? Underline or highlight them on this page.

### Faith and good works

The Catholic Church has always taught that our good works on earth do matter. God's grace, working through us, enables us to cooperate in Jesus' work of salvation. Through Baptism we are saved by our faith in God and in his Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior; but we also must express our faith through good works. In fact, the Church teaches that God's gift of grace gives us a responsibility to do good works on earth—a responsibility to live our earthly lives as Jesus lived his.

“The charity of Christ is the source in us of all our merits before God. Grace, by uniting us to Christ in active love, ensures the supernatural quality of our acts and . . . their merit before God and before men.” (CCC, 2011)

**CATHOLIC IDENTITY**

How have you lived by both faith and good works in your own life?



## The Church faces the Protestant Reformation.

In the Catholic Church *indulgences* are “closely linked to the effects of the sacrament of Penance” (CCC, 1471). **An indulgence is the remission of the temporal punishment due to sins already forgiven by God.** Through certain good works or prayers, Catholics obtain indulgences from the Church for themselves or for the souls in purgatory. But, **unfortunately, during the late Middle Ages, the granting of indulgences also became a way for some to raise money for various purposes within the Church. And that practice led to abuses.**

**Faith requires that people “live from it in a vital and personal relationship with the living and true God” (CCC, 2558).**

Pope Leo X approved an indulgence for anyone who made a contribution of money for the building of Saint Peter's Basilica in Rome.

Martin Luther, mean-

while, believed that salvation was purely a gift from God and that it was not possible for a person to earn salvation. Thus, when preachers told the German people that they could automatically free their deceased relatives from purgatory by obtaining this particular indulgence for them, Luther was infuriated. He saw this as the sale of indulgences. **Luther made a list describing this and other Church-related issues that he felt were in need of reform.** On October 31, 1517, **Luther nailed his list, called his Ninety-five Theses, to the door of the church in the German city of Wittenberg.**



Luther's Ninety-five Theses were meant to be an appeal to the local bishop to correct certain abuses. But when the bishop did not respond to him, Luther appealed

*Martin Luther's 95 Theses* by Ferdinand Pauwels (1830–1904)

to the pope. The pope sent a cardinal to meet with Luther. That meeting broke up in anger, turning points of disagreement into a standoff. Now there was little possibility of Luther and the Church finding any common ground. Thus, **the chain of events that followed the posting of Luther's Ninety-five Theses started the great protest against the Church. This protest would spread through Western Europe and would become the Protestant Reformation—a great revolt against the Catholic Church.**

Over the years Luther's calls for reform grew more extreme. **Emphasizing the importance of Scripture and even translating it into German, he dismissed the authority of Tradition in Christian life. He rejected the Latin Mass and wrote his own communion service in German. He rejected the ordained priesthood, the monastic life, most of the sacraments, and the authority of the pope. He encouraged civil rulers to set up their own national churches. He also wrote many stirring hymns whose lyrics proclaimed his new doctrines. In 1520 Pope Leo X excommunicated Luther from the Church.** And in the city of Worms, in Germany, Emperor Charles V had the governing body of the Holy Roman Empire, called the *Diet*, declare Luther an outlaw. But Martin Luther continued to write and to promote his reforms. **Many people left the Catholic Church, followed Luther's teachings, and formed a new Christian community, called Lutherans.**

Emperor Charles V wanted to wipe out the beliefs of Luther and bring Germany back to the Catholic Church. But constant wars with the French and invasions by the Muslim Turks made this an impossible task. It was not until 1547 that Charles could bring his army to Germany to do battle with the Lutheran princes. By that time millions of Germans had already become Lutherans, as did these princes. And though Luther himself had died the year before, the Protestant Reformation continued to grow.

**Faith Word**  
**indulgence**

**Activity** Imagine that you are a journalist in Wittenberg during this period. Report on the events taking place.

## BELIEVING...

### A spirit of reform sweeps Europe.

*What in society needs reform?*

The invention of the printing press around the year 1450 allowed ideas to be quickly documented and shared. Thus, the spirit of the Protestant Reformation traveled far and fast. As it spread across Europe, it took on different forms.

In Switzerland a reformer named Huldrych Zwingli (1484–1531) rejected the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist, a truth that Luther had defended. Zwingli replaced the Mass with a memorial service commemorating the Last Supper. He also declared that the Bible was the only source of faith and encouraged ordinary people to interpret Scripture for themselves.

Luther thought that Zwingli was too radical. Yet other Protestant reformers were even more radical. Some of these were known as Anabaptists, or “rebaptizers.” Since they rejected the validity of infant baptism they baptized adults again. The Anabaptists complained that Zwingli did things not specifically approved in the Bible, such as baptizing infants and collecting church taxes, or tithes. The Anabaptists also rejected both the authority of the Church and civil government. They wanted to live their lives in their own isolated communities. Some Anabaptists, such as the Amish and the Mennonites, eventually came to America in search of religious freedom.



Printing press, circa 1450

Another reformer was a Frenchman, John Calvin (1509–1564). In 1533 Calvin experienced a conversion. He left France and settled in the Swiss city of Geneva. There he set up a kind of religious city-state that was run according to a strict moral code. Calvin rejected the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist. He also believed in predestination—a false doctrine that states that God, regardless of any efforts people make to live good lives on earth, chooses some people for heaven and some for hell.

In England King Henry VIII (1491–1547) did not set out to reform Catholic doctrine. He had even been given the title “Defender of the Faith” by the pope for speaking out against Luther’s claim that only Baptism and Eucharist were valid sacraments. But when Henry’s marriage did not produce a son, he became angry with the pope for refusing to allow his marriage to be annulled, or dissolved, so that he could marry again. Henry, taking matters into his own hands, persuaded Thomas Cranmer, the Archbishop of Canterbury, to declare the royal marriage invalid. The pope excommunicated Henry, but the king responded by having the English parliament name him supreme head of the Church in England. The king’s actions did not sit well with his lord chancellor, Sir Thomas More (1478–1535), a devout Catholic. More refused to attend the coronation of Henry’s new wife and to recognize Henry as the supreme head of the Church in England. More paid a high price for his courage: being executed by the king. Sir Thomas More was named a saint in 1886.

From 1547 to 1553 events that would truly change the Church in England took place. Under Henry’s son, the child-king Edward VI, Archbishop Cranmer and other reformers would refashion the English Church into something distinctly not Catholic. The rejections of the Catholic Church during this period were setbacks to the unity of Christian faith once shared throughout Europe.

**Activity** What would you do to live up to the title “Defender of the Faith”?



### Defending the faith

**P**ope Paul III approved a new society in 1540. The Society of Jesus—also known as the Jesuits—soon became famous for their scholarship in defense of the faith and for their missionary zeal. Ignatius of Loyola (1491–1556), Francis Xavier (1506–1552), Peter Canisius (1521–1597), Robert Bellarmine (1542–1621), Edmund Campion (1540–1581) are among the many famous Jesuits. Research how these men and other Jesuits have contributed to the growth of the Church.



## The Church responds with the Counter-Reformation.

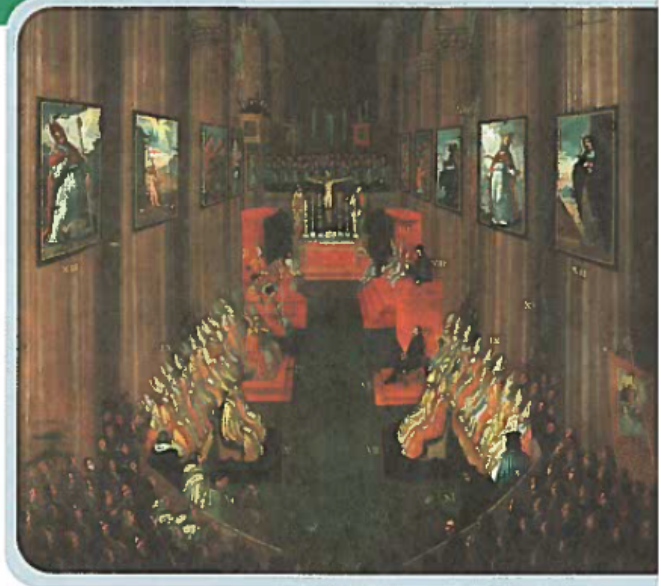
The Protestant revolt shocked the Catholic Church. At first the Church's internal crises kept it from responding effectively. Under Pope Paul III, the Church answered the reformers' challenge by calling a general council in Trent, Italy. The Council of Trent met from 1545 to 1563, in three sessions under the leadership of three popes—Paul III, Julius III, and Pius IV. It proved to be an important general council.

The Council of Trent focused on confronting the need for reform within the Church and disproving Protestant beliefs. In answer to John Calvin's belief, the Council of Trent affirmed that, though human beings are capable of terrible sin, humanity is not essentially evil—God's grace works through each person, enabling that person's cooperation in the work of salvation. The

Council of Trent also affirmed that there are seven sacraments and upheld the truth of the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist. Another belief reaffirmed at Trent was that people need the Church to guide them in their efforts to live a Christian life. Thus, people must interpret Scripture only within the faith community; they need the guidance of Tradition as well as Scripture to truly understand and live out their faith.

The council made clear that we are, as the reformers emphasized, saved by our faith in God and in Jesus Christ, his only Son. But the council also stated that faith must be expressed in good works. Although we depend entirely on God's grace, that grace gives us a responsibility to follow Jesus. The Council of Trent also upheld the practice of praying to the saints and for souls in purgatory, thus reiterating that the bond of Baptism joins all the members of the Church—those who are living and those who are dead.

The Council of Trent required all bishops to work to reform the Church. The council asked them to do this by living within their dioceses, caring for the spiritual welfare of their people, preaching regularly, visiting every parish at least once a year, watching over monasteries and convents, supervising hospitals and charitable institutions, and setting an example of good Christian conduct. The



*The Council of Trent* by Nicolo Dorigati (1692-1748)

“God's grace works through each person.”

council also put in place a system for selecting bishops, free from the interference of local princes. It also ordered that seminaries be

established to give future priests a good education and a strong spiritual formation.

Significantly, the council also called for the publication of a universal catechism, a summary of Catholic faith to guide the whole Church. A papal commission headed by Saint Charles Borromeo completed this task, and the *Roman Catechism* was issued by Pope Pius V in 1566. Thus, the Council of Trent set forth the official teaching of the Church on all important matters, signaling the beginning of a substantial program of reform within the Church itself. This enabled the Church to answer, or counter, the crisis begun by the Protestant Reformation.

Because of this, this period in history is known as the **Counter-Reformation**.

**Faith Word**  
**Counter-Reformation**

**Activity** On a separate sheet of paper make a two-column chart that lists Protestant reformers and their ideas, and the ways the Church responded to these ideas at the Council of Trent.

# RESPONDING...

## Recognizing Our Faith

Recall the question at the beginning of this chapter: *How can a challenge be an opportunity?* In light of this chapter, list some challenges that can present new opportunities for you to grow in and strengthen your faith.

## Living Our Faith

Find a community situation that is a challenge. Work with your parish members to turn it into an opportunity.

## Women of Renewal



One source of renewal for the Catholic Church during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries was the formation of women's religious orders. From these came notable women leaders in the Church who were strong and educated in their faith. They dedicated their lives to defending and spreading the Catholic faith in Europe and around the world. Here are just a few of them:

### Partners in FAITH

Saint Angela de Merici (1474–1540) was born in Italy. In 1531 she started the Order of Saint Ursula—the Ursulines—dedicated specifically to the teaching of girls. Saint Teresa of Ávila (1515–1582) was from a noble Spanish family. A brilliant spiritual writer, she helped to reform her religious order, the Carmelites. In 1970 Pope Paul VI declared her a Doctor of the Church. Saint Jane Frances de Chantal (1572–1641) was from a noble French family. In 1610 she founded the Order of the Visitation of Our Lady, who today still live lives of prayer and service around the world. These women helped to lead the Church through reform and renewal.

What women today are examples of service to the Church?

@\* For additional ideas and activities, visit [www.weliveourfaith.com](http://www.weliveourfaith.com).



## Putting Faith to Work

Talk about what you have learned in this chapter:



**We understand** what the Protestant reformers were seeking and what the Church did in response.



**We appreciate** the teachings of the Council of Trent, which reaffirmed the importance of both Scripture and Tradition.



**We respond** to the challenges of today's world with strength and courage.

Decide on ways to live out what you have learned.



## ENCOUNTERING GOD'S WORD



Speaking of Jesus, Saint Paul wrote:

**“For he is our peace, he who made both one and broke down the dividing wall of enmity”**

(Ephesians 2:14).



**READ** the quotation from Scripture.



**REFLECT** on the following:

By the word *both*, Saint Paul means “both the Jews and the Gentiles who had become one through belief in Jesus.” What are some divisions among believers today? What are some ways their faith in Jesus Christ can unite them?



**SHARE** your reflections with a partner.



**DECIDE** to follow Jesus Christ by bringing his peace and unity into your everyday life.

Write *True* or *False* next to the following sentences. On a separate sheet of paper, change the false sentences to make them true.

1. True An indulgence is the remission of the temporal punishment due to sins already forgiven by God.
2. False The great protest against the Church in the sixteenth century was known as the Counter-Reformation. ...was known as the Protestant Reformation.
3. False Reformation is a false doctrine that states that God, regardless of any efforts people make to live good lives on earth, chooses some people for heaven and some for hell. Predestination is a false doctrine...
4. False The invention of the printing press had a negative impact on the Protestant Reformation. ...had a positive impact on the Protestant Reformation.

Complete each statement with the name of a person discussed in this chapter.

5. Martin Luther wrote a list of Church-related issues in need of reform known as the Ninety-five Theses and believed that salvation was purely a gift from God, not possible to earn.
6. Pope Leo X approved an indulgence for anyone who made a contribution of money for the building of Saint Peter's Basilica in Rome.
7. John Calvin rejected the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist, believed in predestination, and in Geneva set up a kind of religious city-state that was run according to a strict moral code.
8. St. Charles Borromeo headed the papal commission to complete the publication of a universal catechism, a summary of Catholic faith to guide the whole Church.

9–10. **ESSAY:** The Council of Trent (1545–1563) proved to be an important general council.

What were some things that the Council of Trent focused on?

The council focused on confronting the need for reform in the Church and disproving Protestant beliefs.

- affirmed that there are seven sacraments
- Christ is truly present in the Eucharist
- called for the publication of a universal catechism to guide the Church

(p.131)