

# Medieval Europe

## What It Wasn't

Life in Medieval Europe is often depicted with knights in shining armor, kings, queens, and glorious pageantry, but in truth it was often harsh, uncertain, and dangerous.



## What It Was

Also called the “Middle Ages,” this era occurred in Europe between the fall of Rome in 476 CE and the beginning of the Renaissance in the 14th century.



# Medieval Europe

## The Catholic Church

Catholic Church = most powerful institution found in every social and political level on the European continent

leaders of the medieval period got their power from the Church



the Church was financially supported by “tithes” - 10% of peoples’ earnings

the Church was exempt from most taxation



## Hierarchy of the Church



*secular clergy*: religious leaders who lived “in the world”

parish priest:

responsible for the religious instruction of his community



bishop:  
managed a group of  
parishes (diocese)

archbishop:  
managed several dioceses



cardinal:  
highest rank of clergy  
adviser to the pope

pope:  
elected by cardinals  
supreme authority of the church



## The Sacraments

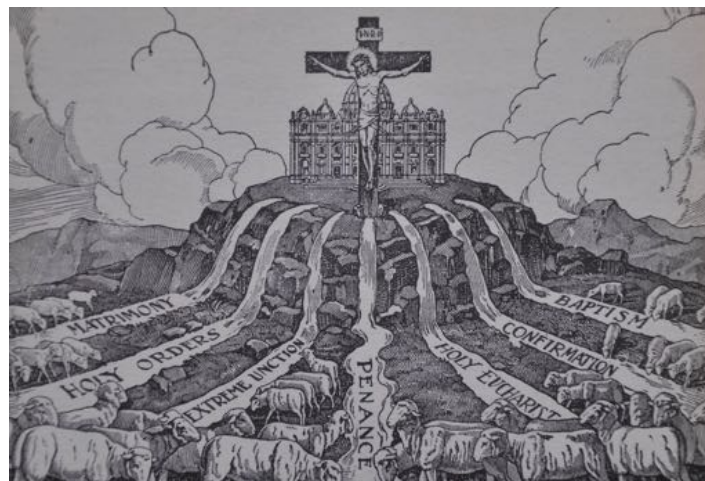
to receive God’s grace one must take part in the seven sacraments

**Baptism**

**Penance and  
Reconciliation**

**Confirmation**

**Eucharist  
(Communion)**



**Anointing of  
the sick**

**Holy Orders**

**Matrimony**



# Veneration of Saints



The dismembered, mummified head of the revered Saint Catherine of Siena (1347-1380) is set in an ornate reliquary in the Basilica San Domenico in Siena, Italy.

Saints were men and women who were especially holy and had earned a special place in Heaven

objects connected with saints called relics were believed capable of producing miracles

people would make pilgrimages to visit relics



Her right thumb resides in a smaller reliquary.



Reliquary Casket with Scenes from the Martyrdom of Saint Thomas Becket, ca. 1173–80

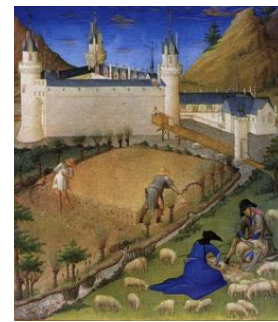
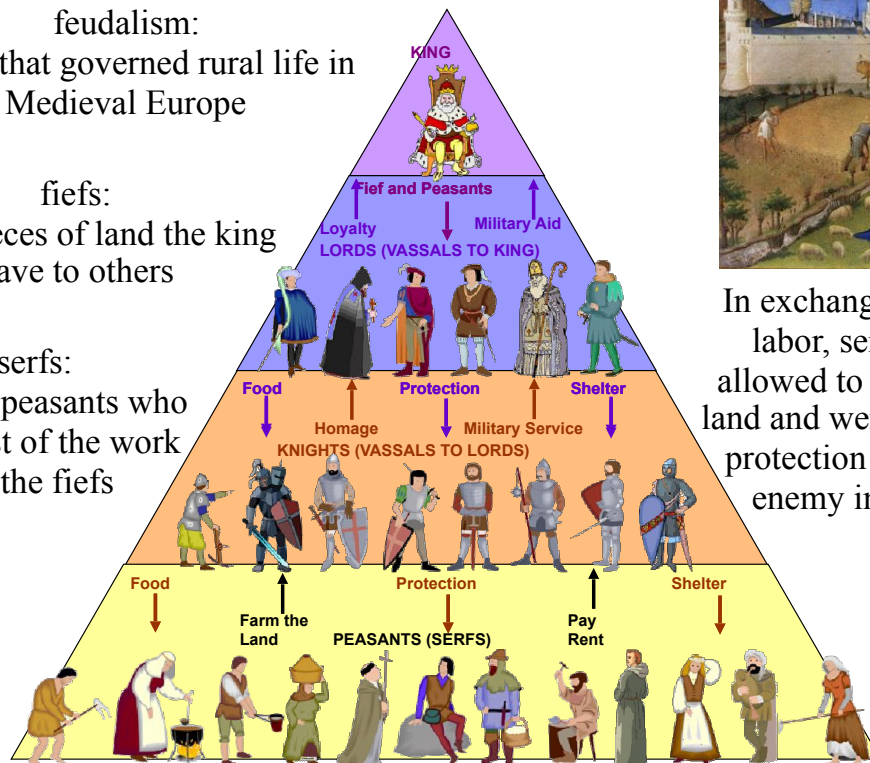
# Medieval Europe

## Feudalism

feudalism:  
system that governed rural life in  
Medieval Europe

fiefs:  
large pieces of land the king  
gave to others

serfs:  
landless peasants who  
did most of the work  
on the fiefs



In exchange for their labor, serfs were allowed to live on the land and were promised protection in case of enemy invasion.

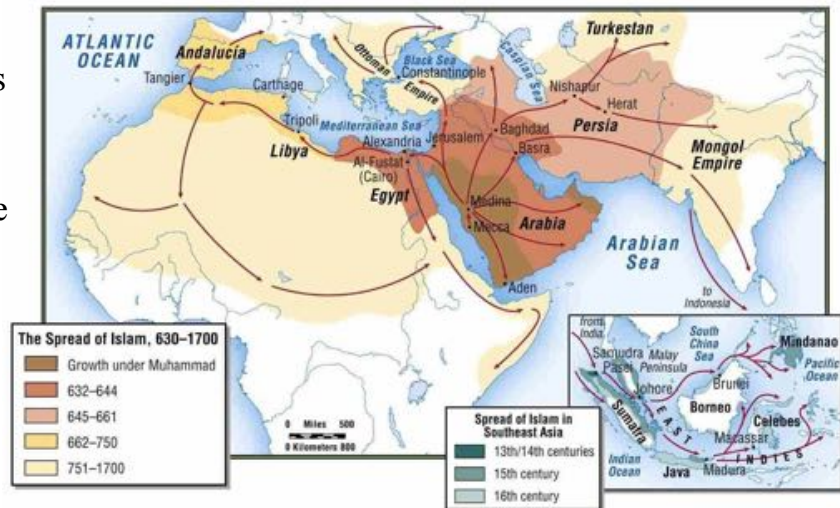
## Medieval Europe

### The Rise of Islam

632 CE: Muhammad's death

Muslim armies conquered much of the Middle East

now united in cities under one caliph



poets, scientists, and philosophers wrote thousands of books  
 scholars translated Greek, Iranian, and Indian texts into Arabic

inventors devised technologies:  
 soap, windmills, surgical instruments, a flying machine, numerical system  
 religious scholars and mystics translated, interpreted, and taught the Quran



## Medieval Europe

### The Crusades:

series of military expeditions authorized by the Catholic Church to expel Muslims from the Holy Land



in 1095 Pope Urban summoned a Christian army to fight its way to Jerusalem

continued on and off until the end of the 15th century

no one "won" and many thousands of people from both sides lost their lives  
 united Catholics across Christendom under a common purpose and inspired waves of religious enthusiasm

exposed Crusaders to Islamic literature, science, and technology



Crusaders wore red crosses on their coats and believed that their service would guarantee that they could spend all eternity in Heaven

# Timeline of the Crusades

**The First Crusade (1096 - 1099):**

the People's Crusade - Freeing the Holy Lands

**The Second Crusade (1144 -1155):**

led by Holy Roman Emperor Conrad III and King Louis VII of France

**The Third Crusade (1187 -1192):**

led by Richard the Lionheart of England (made a truce with Saladin), Philip II of France, and HRE Frederick I

**The Fourth Crusade (1202 -1204):**

led by Fulk of Neuil French/Flemish advanced on Constantinople

**The Children's Crusade (1212):**

led by a French peasant boy, Stephen of Cloyes

**The Fifth Crusade (1217 - 1221):**

led by King Andrew II of Hungary, Duke Leopold VI of Austria, John of Brienne

**The Sixth Crusade (1228 - 1229):**

led by Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II

**The Seventh Crusade (1248 - 1254):**

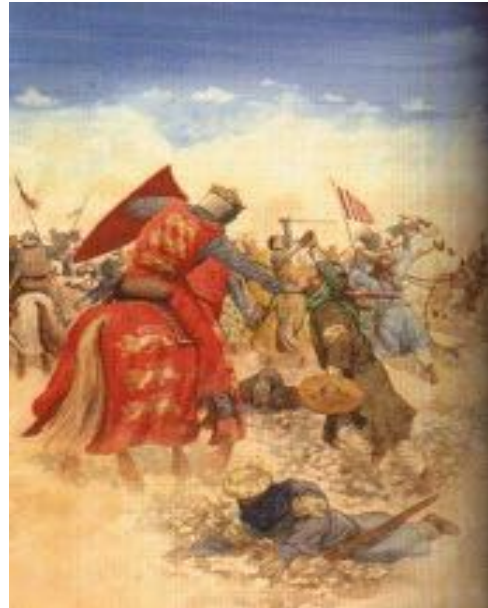
led by Louis IX of France

**The Eighth Crusade (1270):**

led by Louis IX of France

**The Ninth Crusade (1271 - 1272):**

led by Prince Edward (later Edward I of England)



## Medieval Europe

### The Decline of Feudalism

11th century

agricultural innovations = more efficient and productive farming



expanded and improved food supply

increase in population

fewer farm workers needed

more people were drawn to towns and cities

peddlers began to go from village to village selling goods

tradesmen including included artisans, masons, and bakers, established guilds to gain higher wages for their members



a commercial economy developed in cities along these expanded trade routes

feudalism declined and a new era was born: the Renaissance