As Protestantism spread, the Catholic Church responded with a program of serious reform. It clarified its teachings, corrected abuses, and tried to win people back to Catholicism. This movement is known as the Counter-Reformation, or Catholic-Reformation.

**The Council of Trent**

A major feature of the Counter-Reformation was the Council of Trent. The council was a meeting of Catholic leaders that began in Trent, Italy, in 1545. Pope Paul III summoned the council to combat corruption in the Church and to fight Protestantism. The council continued its work in more than 20 sessions over the next 18 years.

In response to Protestant ideas, the council gave a more precise statement of Catholic teachings. It rejected predestination, declaring that individuals do have a role to play in deciding the fate of their souls. The council agreed with Protestants that faith was important and that salvation was God’s gift. But it rejected justification by faith alone. The council insisted that faith, good works, and the sacraments were all necessary for salvation. It reaffirmed the Catholic belief in seven sacraments. The council acknowledged the importance of the Bible. It insisted, however, on the importance of the clergy in interpreting the Bible. It said that the Latin Bible was the only official scripture. The council also took action to make other needed changes in the Church. It required better education and training of its clergy. It called for priests and bishops to spend more time preaching. It corrected many of the abuses involving money and Church offices, including forbidding the sale of indulgences. It also established rules for religious services so that they would be more consistent from church to church.

The Council of Trent went a long way toward achieving the goals of Pope Paul III. The council’s work brought a higher standard of morality to the Church’s clergy and leadership. Its statements of Catholic belief and practices helped to unify the Church. The reformed Church was now better able to compete with Protestantism for the loyalties of Christians.

**Catholic Reformers and Missionaries**

The spirit of reform brought new life to the Catholic Church and its followers. Many individuals and groups helped to reform the Church and spread its message. For example, Teresa of Avila, a nun, started a new religious order in Spain and helped reform the lives of priests and nuns. Her example and writings inspired many Catholics to return to the values taught by Jesus.

Other new orders were formed to preach, to educate people, and to perform such services as feeding the poor. The most important of these orders was the Society of Jesus, also known as the Jesuits.

The Jesuits were founded by Ignatius of Loyola, a Spanish nobleman. As a young soldier, Ignatius had his leg shattered by a cannonball. While he was recovering, he read about the lives of saints. He vowed to become a “soldier for Jesus.”

After years of study, Ignatius started the order that became the Society of Jesus, or the Jesuits. The Jesuits were dedicated teachers and missionaries. They founded schools and colleges, and they brought many Europeans back to the Church. They worked to spread Catholicism in Africa, Asia, and the Americas. They became the largest order in the Church and actively supported the pope.

**Fighting the Spread of Protestantism**

The Catholic Church also fought the spread of Protestantism by condemning beliefs that it considered to be false beliefs and by dealing harshly with those it labeled as heretics. It looked to Catholic rulers to support its efforts and to win back lands lost to Protestantism.

To deal with heresies during the Middle Ages, the Church had established “The Inquisition.” This body was made up of clergy called inquisitors who sought out and tried heretics. Inquisitors could order various punishments, including fines and imprisonment. Sometimes, they put heretics to death.

King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella used the Spanish Inquisition to persecute Jews. With the start of the Reformation, the Spanish Inquisition also fought the spread of Protestantism. In Rome, the pope established a new Inquisition. The Roman Inquisition also sought out and condemned people whose views were considered dangerous.

**NAME:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**DIRECTIONS: Use the “Counter Reformation” reading to answer the questions below IN COMPLETE SENTENCES.**

1. **What is another name for the Counter Reformation?**

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1. **a-What was the Council of Trent? b-What was the council’s purpose? c-In what year did the Council begin? d-In what year did the Council end?**

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1. In response to Protestant ideas, the Council of Trent would give a more precise statement of Catholic teachings; identify the 8 major clarifications of Catholic teachings that came out of the council.

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1. **What did the spirit of reform that the Council of Trent do for/to the Catholic Church?**

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1. **a-What was another name for the Society of Jesus? b-Who was its founder?**

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1. **Identify 3 things that the Society of Jesus did that helped strengthen the Catholic Church.**

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1. **What institution from the Middle Ages did the Catholic Church use to try to stop the spread of Protestantism?**

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1. **On a separate sheet of paper, (use your notes or textbook if necessary), identify Martin Luther’s 3 main complaints about the Catholic Church (from his 95 Theses), and explain how/if the Council of Trent addressed each of those issues. Staple that sheet of paper to these questions before you turn them in.**