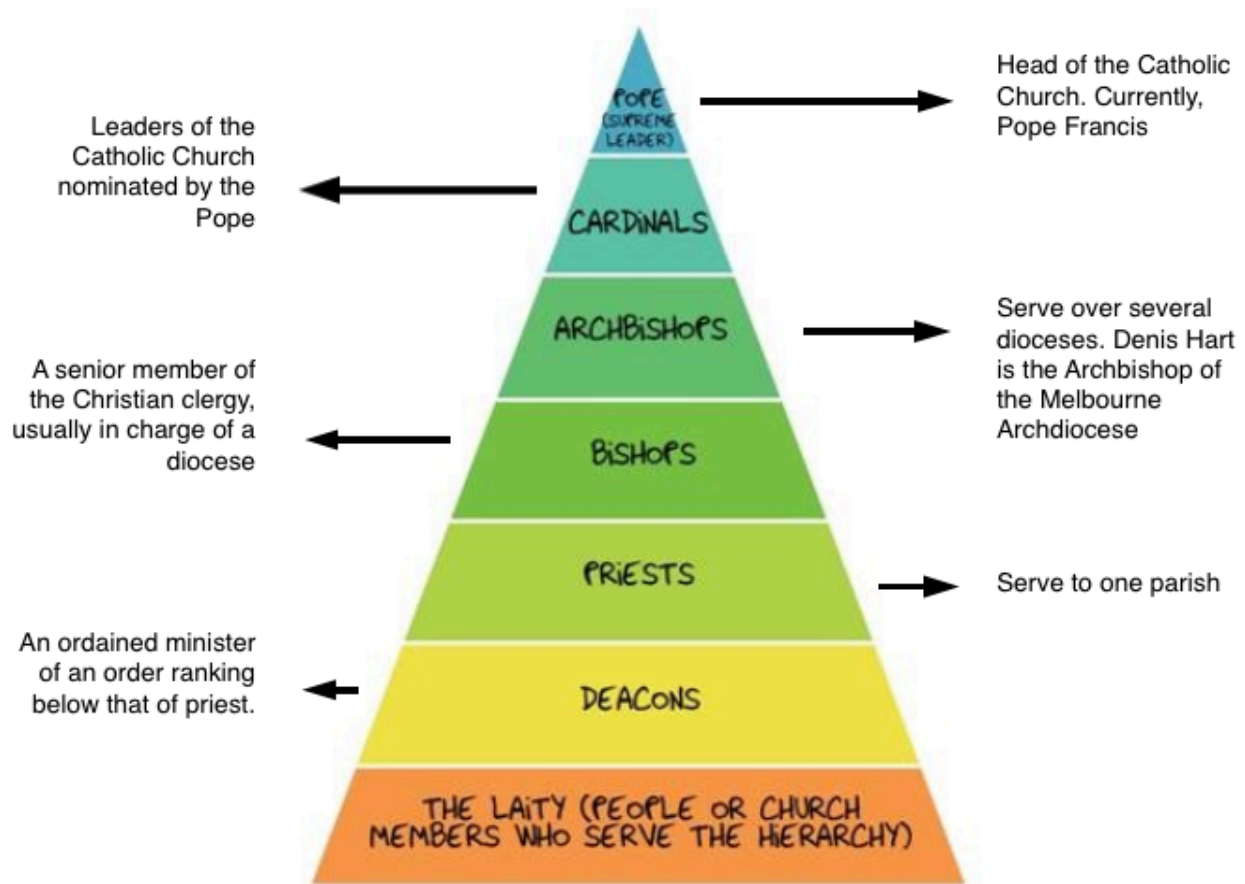


## 6. The Middle Ages

### YEARS – YEARS

#### 6.3 Religion

- Clergy is most powerful
  - Political structures were always changing and very divided, Christendom (all who are Christian) is held together by the clergy
  - Anglo Saxons, Franks, Central EU = Roman Catholic  
Eastern EU = Eastern Orthodox  
South of Spain, Byzantine Empire = Islam
  - Astoundingly powerful spiritual authority
    - As shown by the crusades, fear of excommunication, etc.
  - A government in itself? Tithes (taxes connected by church), courts, Inquisition, ...
  - Religious hierarchy = centralized and consistent



- A mutually beneficial arrangement: government supplies land, legal power and defense. Church gives good to the poor, contributes to stability, legitimacy (encourages obedience, legitimacy of God), education (educated individuals for public office)

## 6.4 Philosophy, Science, Art and Architecture

- Philosophy
  - Intellectual world dominated by Christian theology (study of the nature of good and religious truth; rational inquiry into religious questions, especially the truths posed by an organized religious community)
  - The Bible is the source of all truth! Theologians use it to debate theology
  - Anything that contradicts the Bible must be discarded
    - For this reason, the work of medieval philosophers is often to translate or reinterpret the work of antique philosophers to align them with Christianity
    - Aristotle: most important source of knowledge and thought throughout middle ages thanks to Christian translations by Thomas Aquinas (medieval monk). Bible + Aristotle = very respected
- Science
  - Popular opinion: science was in decline because of the church (stagnation, or not decline) → but this is an oversimplification
    - The middle ages only affected Europe
    - Chinese and Muslim advanced during the European stagnation
    - Monks would translate and recopy texts! Very important
  - Arrival of universities through this institution. The church wished to further theological studies.
  - In terms of technology, many advances...
    - Agriculture: heavy ploughshare, three crop rotation, hops, horse collars and horse shoes, wine press, vertical windmill
    - Architecture and construction: castles and heavy fortifications, artesian well, central heating using hot water, fireplaces and chimneys
    - Warfare: chainmail, plate armor, stirrups, cannon powder, guns, fortifications, crossbows
    - Foreign technologies:
      - Arabic numerals and the concept of 0
      - Algebra
      - Gunpowder and early rifles
      - Paper making
      - Compass
      - Stern post rudder
      - Distillation used to make alcohol
    - Miscellaneous: oil paint, hourglass and mechanical clock, blast furnace (melt metals), spectacles, glass making, rat traps, soap
- Art
  - Complex art history
    - In essence, it's a blend of classical art (Greek and Roman sculptures), early Christian art (drawings and paintings of icons), "barbarian" art.
  - This art has been disparaged as being barbaric, narrow minded, reminiscent of a backwards period

- Very closely linked to Christianity
- Art historians are rehabilitating medieval art, rising interest
- Architecture
  - Blend between Germanic and classical forms
    - Pre Romanesque (Merovingian, Carthaginian): very simple
    - Romanesque (high middle ages): massive pillars, large arches
    - Gothic (late middle ages): e.g. Notre Dame cathedral, very Germanic style
  - not many buildings still stand... WWI + WWII = BOMBARDMENT

## 6.5 Legacy in Western Societies

- The invention of the Middle Ages
  - The Mediocre period, the Dark ages, the Barbarian period... pejorative connotation
  - Not a brutal age. People often paint the middle ages as being a bad period sandwiched between two great ones (Greek and Roman antiquity and Renaissance).
- Why?
  - 1200s to early 1400s, an age of crisis
    - Famine, starvation, warfare, inner turmoil
    - Humanists of the 1400s to 1700s
    - French Revolution + revolutionary period = idea of abolishing the feudal system. Root of hatred, separation from the demonized Middle Ages
    - This bleak view has stayed with us ever since

## 6.6 The Name of the Rose

- William, the old man, is the embodiment of Renaissance values (out of his time)
- The concept of "episteme"
  - Invented by Michel Foucault
  - "The fundamental body of ideas and collective presuppositions that defines the nature and sets the bounds of what is accepted as true knowledge in a given epistemic epoch."
  - i.e., for each era and place, there is an episteme and this is the boundary of what ppl will accept as true and as false
  - In the Middle Ages: religion bounds the episteme of this era
  - So, what is so different about the monk William, compared to Bernardo Gui or the other monks? He uses
  - How are truths established through rationality?
  - What is the consequence of this for women? They are not respected, they are not seen as equal to men bc they are unpure
  - What is an epistemic shift? A change in episteme.