THE POLITICS OF CONVERSION
1. The Franks and the Church
   a. Frankish rulers viewed themselves as protectors of the papacy
   b. Charlemagne also worked to spread Christianity in northern lands
2. The spread of Christianity
   a. Charlemagne's military campaigns, forced the Saxons to accept Christianity
   b. Pagan ways did not disappear immediately
   c. By 1000 C.E., all western Europe had adopted Roman Christianity

THE PAPACY
1. Pope Gregory I (590-604 C.E.)
   a. Organized defense of Rome against the Lombard menace
   b. Reasserted papal primacy over other bishops
   c. Strongly emphasized the sacrament of penance
2. The conversion of England
   a. Gregory’s missionary campaigns in western Europe
   b. First converted English kings
   c. By 800 C.E., England was securely in the fold of the Roman church

MONASTICISM
1. Origin
   a. Devout Christians practiced asceticism in deserts of Egypt, 2nd and 3rd century
   b. Monastic lifestyle became popular when Christianity became legal, 4th century
2. Monastic rules
   a. St. Benedict (480-547 C.E.) provided a set of regulations
   b. Virtues of Benedictine monks: poverty, chastity, and obedience
3. St. Scholastica (482-543 C.E.)
   a. St. Benedict’s sister, a nun
   b. Adapted the Rule, and provided guidance for religious life of women
4. The roles of monasteries
   a. Became dominant feature in social and cultural life of western Europe
   b. Accumulated large landholdings
   c. Organized much of the rural labor force for agricultural production
   d. Provided a variety of social services
      1. Inns and shelters for travelers and refugees
      2. Orphanages, medical centers
      3. Schools
      4. Libraries and scriptoria
   e. Monks patiently and persistently served the needs of the rural population