

Lesson 4 – The Dissolution of the Monasteries

L.O. To understand why Henry dissolved the Catholic Church

Dissolve: to close down or dismiss

Dissolution: the action of formally ending or dismissing an assembly, partnership, or official body.

Remember if you have any questions about your learning please email learning@wembleyprimaryschool.brent.sch.uk

How Religious Was Henry VIII?

In 1521, Pope Leo X granted Henry VIII the title of 'Defender of the Faith' after Henry wrote a pamphlet defending the Catholic Church from the criticism of the Protestant movement.

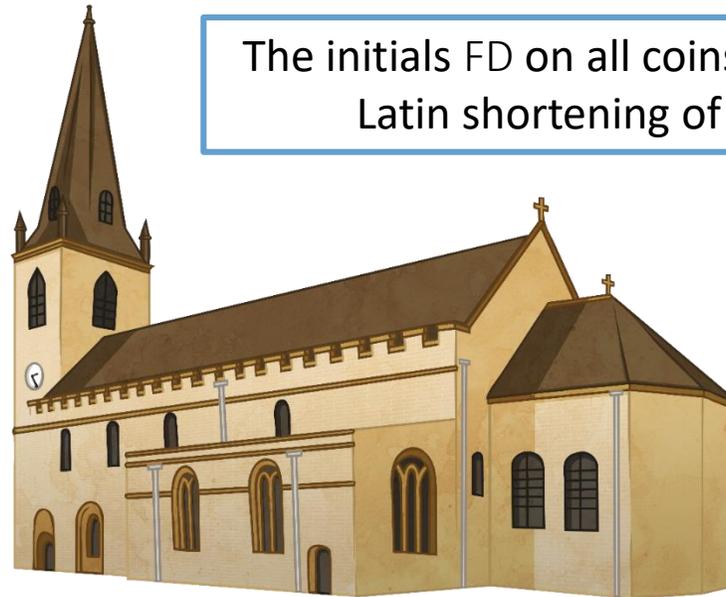


The title 'Defender of the Faith' was passed down to the future monarchs of Britain.

Henry VIII was a devout Catholic, as was his wife, the Spanish Catherine of Aragon.



What evidence of Henry's religious commitment can you find on a coin today?



The initials FD on all coins today are the Latin shortening of the title.



Why might the phrase 'Defender of the Faith' still be important to have on coins today?

What Was the Reformation?



Throughout the 16th Century, many people in Europe were critical of the Catholic Church. Many protested against the inequality of the Catholic Church and what they believed to be the decadence of the Church.

In 1517, Martin Luther nailed his 95 theses against the Catholic Church against a church door in Wittenberg.

Many people agreed and there was a reforming (changing) of the Church in Europe.

This was The Reformation.



What Problems Did Henry Have in 1533?



1509 – Henry becomes King and marries his dead brother's widow (Catherine of Aragon).

1521 – Henry becomes the 'Defender of the Faith'.

1527 – Henry falls in love with Anne Boleyn – Catherine was too old to have more children.

1533 – Anne Boleyn gets pregnant.

The Pope refuses to grant Henry an annulment (end) to his marriage to Catherine of Aragon.

Henry needs money to fund war with France.

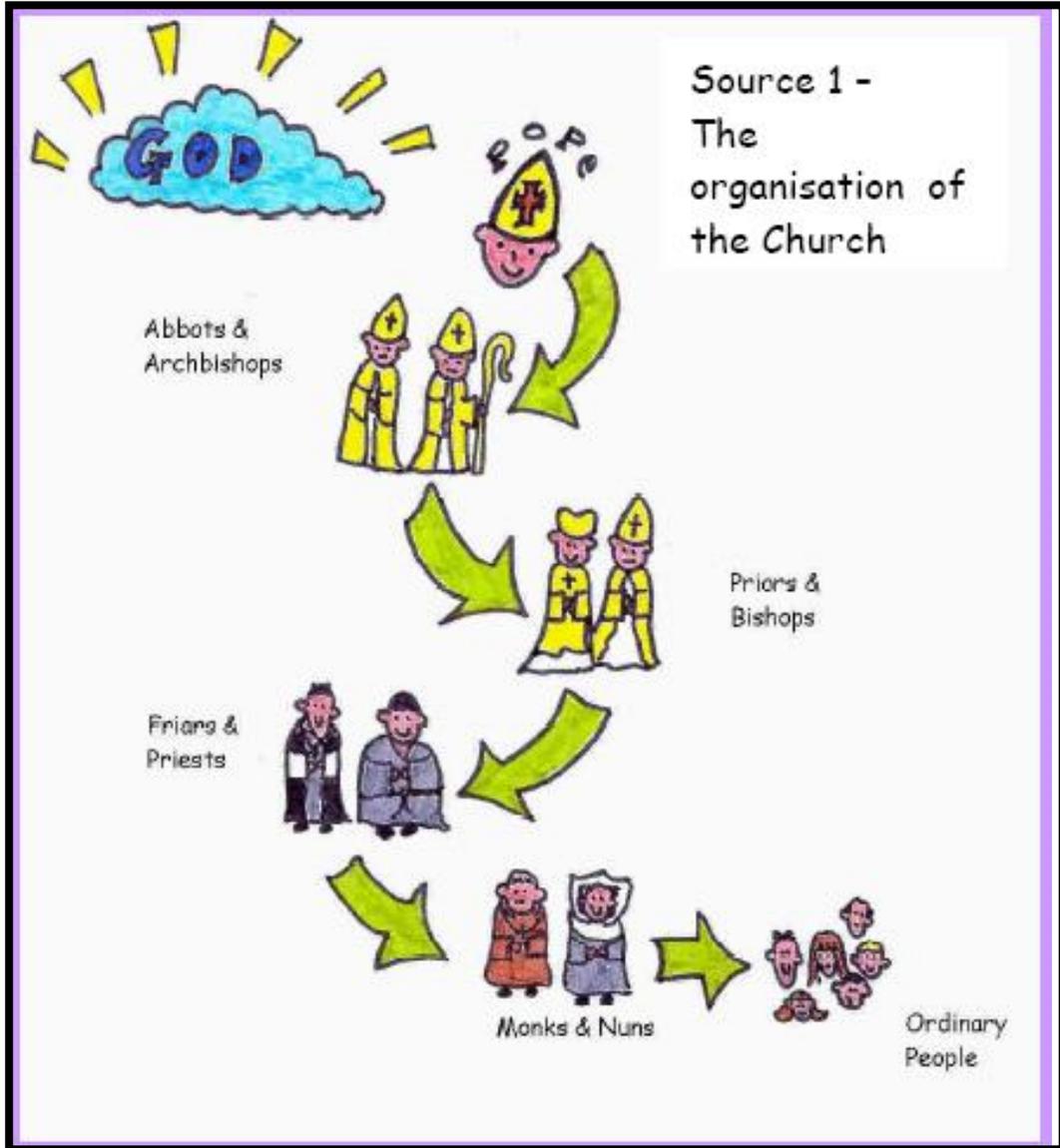
Task 1

What problems was Henry facing? How might this link to the reformation?
Write a paragraph – or a few sentences – explain this with help of the previous slides.

When your done, move onto the second half of the lesson.

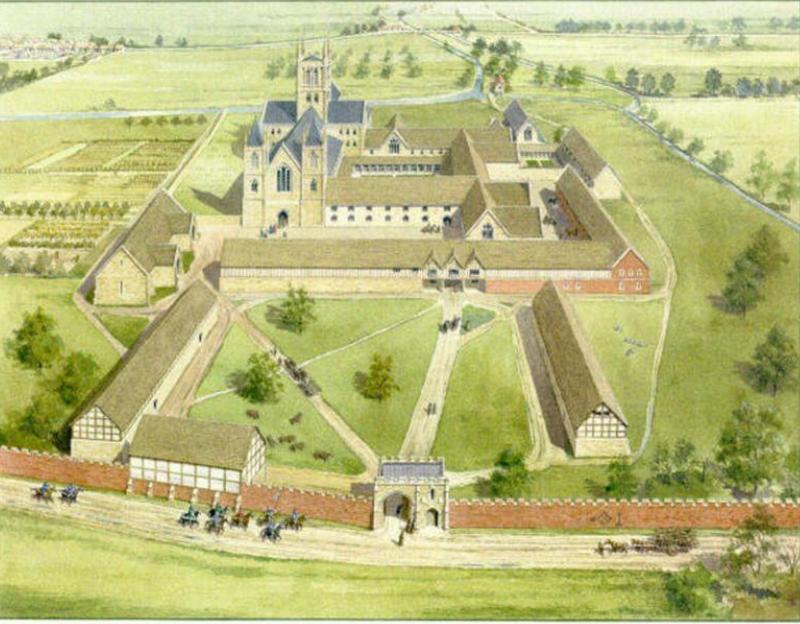
So we now understand Henry's problems and the reformation. But what exactly is the dissolution of the monasteries and how did it happen?

First, let's look at what a monastery is and how the Catholic Church was organised.



The drawing shows how the catholic church was (and still is) organised

What was a monastery?



This image depicts a type Tudor style monastery, they were run by the Catholic Church.

But what were they used for?

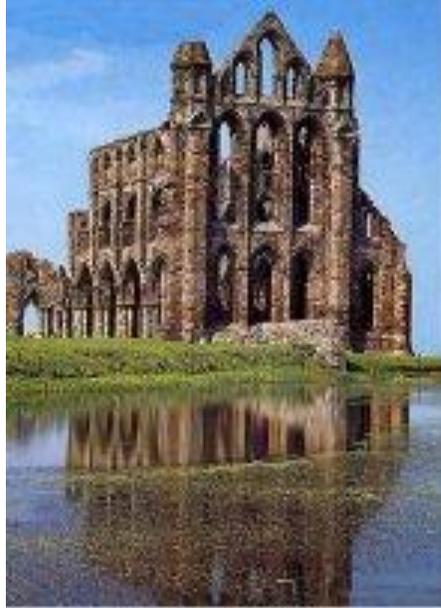
- Built in isolated places
- Where monks could lead a life of contemplation, spending much of their time in prayer or worship.
- Monks and nuns establish communities, they usually followed similar patterns of daily life.

Monastic life was generally one of hard physical work, scholarship and prayer. Fully-fledged monks could then concentrate on prayer and learning.

The day of a monk or nun was regulated by regular prayer services in the abbey church. The services took place every three hours, day and night. When the services were over the monks would be occupied with tasks, which maintained their community.

Monasteries were the only places of learning because monks were by far the best educated members of society. Monasteries acted as libraries for ancient manuscripts.

This is how Monasteries were used in the Middle Ages



1) Looked after Travellers

2) Teach children

3) Copied books

4) Looked after the sick

What caused the dissolution of the monasteries in England?

In the reign of Henry VIII the Pope was the head of all the Christian Church. When the Pope refused to grant Henry VIII a divorce from **Catherine of Aragon**, he set up the **Church of England**. (The Roman Catholic faith believed in marriage for life. It did not recognise, let alone support, divorce.)

What is the Reformation?

The Reformation is the process by which the English Church is split off from the Roman church. Rather than the pope, the king would be the spiritual head of the English church.

The word reformation is made from two Latin words:

re = "again" and **formare** = "to form or make"

It means that the people who left the Roman Church again formed or made the Church.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zkp7TPZHjyA>

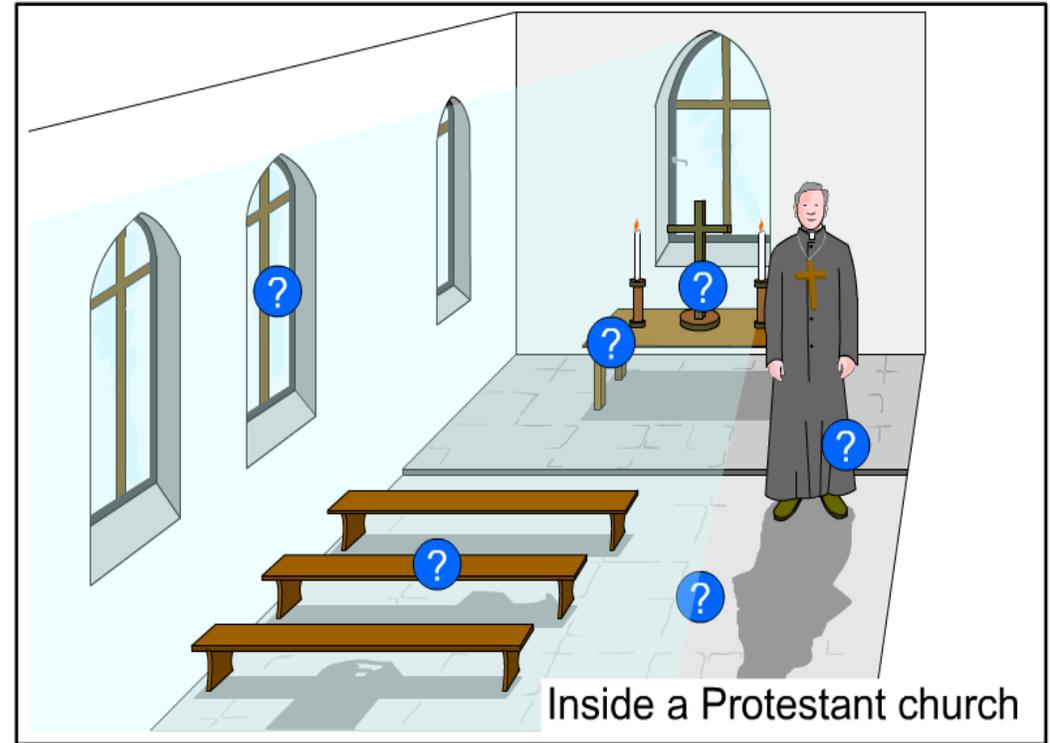
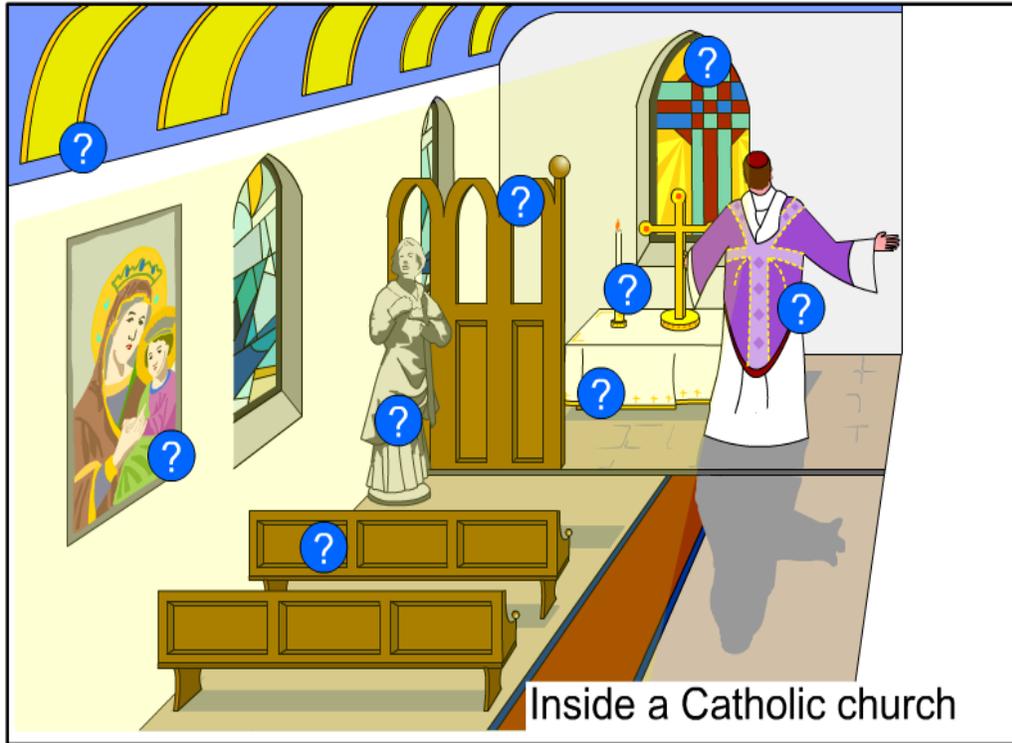
This link takes you to a short video to explain in further detail.

At this time it is important to remember that England was Catholic, which meant they followed the religion of the Pope and looked to him for guidance – the Pope lived (and still does, although its not the same one) in Rome. Which is why its often referred to as the ‘split’ or ‘break’ from Rome.

The main other religion at this time in Europe was Protestant. Now these are both denominations of Christianity, but they practices are very different.

Denominations: A branch of the Christian church

Inside a Catholic and Protestant Church



What difference are there between the Catholic and Protestant Church?

How did the reformation start?

With Martin Luther in 1517

How is this linked to the dissolution?

Henry want to get divorced but the Catholic Church wouldn't permit it.

Anne Boleyn offered Henry a banned book about the reformation and sparked the chain reaction.



Thomas Cromwell:
Henry's chief adviser, who came up with the idea to break with Rome, and who was in charge of closing the monasteries.

Remember these men from the previous lesson? They become extremely important now!



Thomas Wolsey



Thomas More



Thomas Cromwell

What caused Henry to order the dissolution of the monasteries?

- Henry VIII had **fallen out** with the **Pope** over his **divorce** with Catherine of Aragon. Henry felt let down by the Pope. The monasteries were the last bastion of Papal authority in England and recognised the Pope as the head of the Church in England. Henry would not tolerate this.
- The early monasteries had provided hospitals, charity, shelter and education amongst many other things. The wealth they had amassed had led to **laziness and greediness** amongst many monks. Also there were rumours that nuns and monks were not following their vows of chastity. These developments had resulted in a drop in the popularity of monasteries.
- The Church owned up to 30% of the land in England, and the monasteries took much of this up. They were **enormously wealthy**, and Henry believed he could put their wealth to better use.
- **Thomas Cromwell** had different motives. He was an **Evangelical** and **dislike monasteries**.

Evangelical: of a tradition within Protestant Christianity



How did Henry go about the dissolution?



Establishing the Facts

- Early in 1535, **Thomas Cromwell** was appointed **Vicar-General**.
- Cromwell immediately ordered a survey to establish how wealthy the monasteries were. These results were compiled in July 1535 and a book called '**Value of Church Property**' was published. The monasteries were valued at £100,000 a year from land and £25,000 from other means.
- Later in the year, another group of men called '**Intendents**' visited the monasteries to investigate the rumours about idleness, greed and debauchery. They reported back that the monasteries were 'idle, corrupt and useless'. There were allegations of monks fathering children and of monks getting married. They wrote their Findings down in a book, known as the '**Black Book of the Monasteries**'
- Henry and Cromwell now had the evidence they needed to act. Some did however report back that 'religion is well kept and observed'.

How did Henry (and Cromwell) go about this dissolution?

Smaller monasteries

1536

Parliament passed The Act of Suppression

All monasteries that has an income of less than £200 a year were dissolved.

376 monasteries were closed

2000 monks were pension off or sent to larger

monasteries or nunneries



Larger monasteries

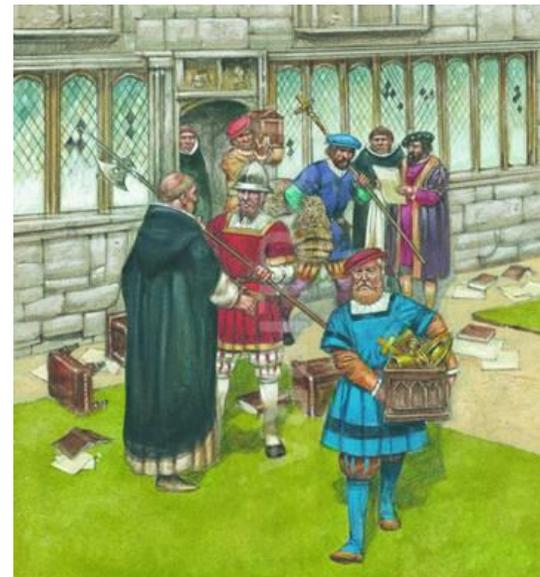
1538

250 Friaries were closed down.

1539

645 greater monasteries were closed.

Building were pillaged.



What did they take?

- Lead and copper from the roofs
- Statues were smashed and pulled down
- Paintings were scratched or painted over
- Ornaments were melted for their gold or silver
- Books were burned or sold
- Stones were taken and used to build houses

What effect did the dissolutions have on England?

- The treasury now had an enormous amount of additional money.
- Henry gained an enormous amount of land.
- However, he needed money urgently to fund the war with France and Scotland. Therefore, he sold the land to over 40,000 people
- Henry squandered the money on futile, fairly unsuccessful wars.
- 7000 monks were pensioned off. Even in 1551, this pension scheme was costing the treasury £440,00 a year.
- Abbots lost their seat at parliament.
- Some monks went to work in local parish churches while other monks wandered around the country as vagabonds.
- The closure of the monasteries resulted in a reduction of hospitals, schools and places of accommodations and caring for the poor.
- In some places where the monastery was the centre of life, the community collapsed.

Treasury: the funds or revenue of a state (of a country, in those days of the king)

Squandered: waste (something, especially money) in a reckless and foolish manner.

Abbots: is a title given to the male head of a monastery

Vagabonds: a person who wanders from place to place without a home or job.



This image shows what is left of the monasteries after they were dissolved and all the useable parts were taken. Many like this one were left in ruins

Task 2

Explain the following:

What caused the start of the reformation?

What happened during this time?

What was the lasting impact on the country?

Do you think Henry did the right thing and why?

You can write this in paragraphs, type it up on the computer (just make sure you save it) or film yourself answering and explaining the questions.