

SHORT ANSWER

10 minutes for these questions (4 points each)

- The term “Counter Reformation” generally refers to a period of Roman Catholic Church history in the 1500’s and 1600’s. The Counter Reformation consisted of two related movements: a defensive reaction against the Protestant Reformation, and a Catholic Church reform movement.
- William of Orange was a Prince of the Netherlands.
- Though his parents were Lutherans, the Prince became a Catholic in order to please the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, who had taken a liking to him, and eventually—in 1555—put him in command of troops on the French frontier.
- When the Emperor gave rule of the Low Countries and Spain over to his son Philip II, in 1555 and 1556, the new monarch tried to increase control and even abolish the Protestant religion in the Low Countries.
- The Prince rejoined the Protestant Church and led the Low Countries in a rebellion against Spain, in 1568. The rebellion failed, but eventually, in 1579, the seven northern provinces formed a league which would later become the Dutch Republic.
- The 1600’s were the Golden Age of the Netherlands. In those days the country became the leading sea power. Its merchant fleet tripled in size between 1600 and 1650, and the Dutch accounted for about half of Europe’s shipping. Amsterdam became a great trading center of Europe.
- During this Golden Age, Dutch banks and businesses thrived. The Golden Age also brought major cultural achievements, especially in painting.
- What was the Council of Trent?
The Council of Trent was a council called by the Roman Catholic Church between 1545 and 1563, partly as a defense against Protestantism. The council held its sessions in Trent, Italy. It defined Catholic doctrine on questions disputed by Protestant theologians.
- Name two ways in which the Roman Catholic Church expressed its renewal during this period.
Any two of these would be correct:
 - Prayer and religious devotion intensified.*
 - Missionaries brought new peoples to Catholicism.*
 - Religious orders experienced reform and considerable growth.*
 - The Counter Reformation influenced art and literature.*
- Who were the Huguenots?
The Huguenots were French Protestants concerning whom there was much religious and political struggle in the 1500’s-1600’s in France.

ESSAY QUESTION

20 minutes for the first question or 30 minutes for the second question. (60 points)

1. Describe the artistic, architectural, and doctrinal responses of the Roman Catholic Church to the Protestant Reformation that collectively came to be called the “Counter Reformation.”

Points an Excellent Answer Might Include

- Increase in religious enthusiasm
- Emphasis on meditation, mystical experiences, and personal reform
- “Baroque” period
- Paintings full of drama and emotion
- More passion, less restraint or classical balance, than Renaissance
- Use of contrasting lighting (“chiaroscuro”), close-ups, foreshortening
- Catholic religious and mystical themes: saints, Virgin Mary, Eucharist
- Emphasis on the humanity of religious figures, to the point of being considered irreverent; painted realistic scenes “dirt and all”
- Elaborate architecture compared to Renaissance
- Dramatic curving spaces
- Use of columns (sometimes arranged as clusters of thinner columns), sculpture, and painting to create the illusion of space
- Doctrinal response defined by Council of Trent
- Reform of corrupt practices, encouraging greater spiritual concern and pastoral care on the part of church leaders
- Required bishops to live in their dioceses and visit their parishes
- Established seminaries so that priests would be adequately trained
- Reaffirmed uniquely Catholic doctrines
- Declared advocates of nearly all specific Protestant teachings “anathema” (eternally cursed)

Sample Answer

The Counter Reformation was a multi-faceted response to the Protestant Reformation. It involved the visual arts, architecture, and doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church.

Artists of the Counter Reformation developed a style called baroque. It reflected the increase in religious enthusiasm in the Catholic church. Baroque paintings showed scenes of high emotion and drama. Painters used extreme lighting effects and close-up angles. Most of their themes were religious and mystical, emphasizing the saints and Mary. However, they also emphasized the humanity of biblical figures, painting scenes dirt and all. In these ways, they reflected the new sincerity of Catholic faith.

Baroque architecture similarly combined drama and piety. Baroque architects reacted to the classical balance of the Renaissance. They constructed elaborate curved spaces, full of thin columns and elaborate sculpture. They incorporated visual arts like painting to help create a sense of space. Many baroque architects used their talents to build churches. Some of them also designed secular palaces to display the power and opulence of their rulers. In either case, however, their architecture displayed a noteworthy dramatic flair.

Doctrinally, the Counter Reformation centered on the Council of Trent. At this council, the Catholic church worked to reform corrupt church practices while reasserting the main tenets of Catholicism with which Protestants disagreed. The Council of Trent required bishops to work at actually shepherding their flocks. It set up seminaries so that priests could be educated. It also declared that teaching justification by faith alone or irresistible grace apart from free will would make a man anathema (eternally cursed). Thus the Roman Catholic Church reaffirmed its rejection of Protestants.

The Counter Reformation was not merely a one-sided response to the Protestant Reformation. Rather, it involved a rebirth of distinctly Catholic faith and enthusiasm in many areas, including the visual arts, architecture, and doctrine.

2. The Council of Trent embodied the doctrinal response of the Roman Catholic Church to the challenges of the Protestant Reformation. Detail three major doctrines where the two movements differed.

Points an Excellent Answer Might Include

- **Justification:** Protestants affirm that justification is by faith alone; it is solely a legal transaction in which Christ's merits are imputed (counted as belonging to) the believer. Trent declares this anathema, insisting that there must also be an element of change within the believer's soul and cooperation on his part with the grace of God.
- **Nature of grace:** Council of Trent insists that grace has an active, substantive, qualitative element. It is a "stuff" that enters into a person's soul and changes him, rather than being just another name for an attitude on God's part (His favorable disposition, or His inclination to be merciful), as Protestants sometimes implied.
- **Free will:** Council of Trent teaches that people cooperate with the grace of God in being saved. Protestants, especially Calvinists, deny that man's will has any part to play in the initial stages of man's salvation.
- **Predestination:** Calvin taught that God chooses who will be saved before the creation of the world, and that the predestined equal all who are justified. Catholics agree that God predestines the saved, but they consider it arrogant to assume that people can know in any way who those people are.
- **Perseverance of the saints:** Catholics think of it as too proud to declare that one knows for sure that he will continue to obey God to the end, although they consider it right and true to believe that it is possible, by the grace of God, for every true Christian to endure. Calvinists and other Protestants view it as a natural consequence of God's initiative in predestination to believe that all those who are ever saved will continue to be saved for all eternity.
- **Assurance of salvation:** Council of Trent considers it presumptuous to believe for certain that one displays the necessary change of heart that Catholics associate with justification. True Christians may well not have such confident assurance, out of a due sense of humility, while impostors might. Protestants view it as a logical conclusion, from their belief that God alone enacted their justification, to have confidence in His work. They view this confidence as a necessary mark of a true believer.
- **Role of works:** Luther taught strongly against any meriting of salvation through works. Council of Trent denounces license (permission to do whatever one pleases, however sinful), declaring that true Christianity includes Jesus as Lord as well as Jesus as Savior. Trent asserts the meriting of rewards in Heaven through works.
- **Eternal rewards:** Luther strongly denied that works win men merit (righteousness, by which the sinner propitiates an angry God and "earns" salvation from God). Trent asserted that works do win men merit (righteousness, enabled and empowered by God's saving grace, which pleases a Father-God and "earns" rewards from Him.)

Sample Answer

The Council of Trent was the doctrinal response of the Roman Catholic Church to the challenges of the Protestant Reformation. It showed the irreconcilable differences between the two regarding such doctrines as justification, predestination, and the role of works in the Christian life.

One of the most central disagreements between Catholics and Protestants regards the doctrine of justification. The heart of Protestantism is the belief that justification is by faith alone. The Council of Trent, by contrast, pronounces this anathema. It utterly rejects the belief that justification could rest solely on the legal merit of Christ without including some sort of internal change in the direction of righteousness. Trent does insist that such change comes about by God's grace. Yet by refusing to separate justification from sanctification, the Catholic Church set itself permanently at odds with Protestantism.

Another strong disagreement between Catholics and Protestants is the doctrine of predestination. Calvin and other Protestants taught that people are so wicked that they can only be saved by God changing their hearts, without any involvement of their own will. Because God does this work, those who are saved can be sure that God will keep them saved forever. Catholic teaching, however, considers it presumptuous to assume that one can know for sure whether or not one is saved before the end of one's life. It also objects to Calvinists making it sound like man's "will" is just an illusion. For this reason, the Catholic Church rejects the central Protestant teachings on predestination.

One other point of disagreement between Catholics and Protestants has to do with the role of works in the Christian life. Luther made a point of saying that a man's works make no difference whatsoever in his legal justification before God. The Council of Trent expresses concern that this belief would cause people to not even try to live a holy life. It insists, therefore, that people do indeed have eternal rewards for their good deeds, though, of course, "through the grace of God and the merit of Jesus Christ." This emphasis on the importance of works kept the Protestants alienated from the Catholics.

The Council of Trent only deepened the fundamental differences between Catholics and Protestants. Its teachings on the doctrine of justification, predestination, and the importance of a Christian's works directly contradicted the most central teachings of Protestantism.