WHAT’S THE SIGNIFICANCE?

**Byzantine Empire**: Term used by modern historians to refer to the surviving eastern Roman Empire during the medieval centuries; named after the ancient Greek city Byzantium, on the site of which the Roman emperor Constantine founded a new capital, Constantinople, in 330 C.E. (pron. BIZ-an-teen)

**caesaropapism**: A political-religious system in which the secular ruler is also head of the religious establishment, as in the Byzantine Empire. (pron. SEEZ-ar-oh-PAPE-ism).

**Cecilia Penifader**: An illiterate peasant woman (1297–1344) from the English village of Brigstock, whose life provides a window into the conditions of ordinary rural people even if her life was more independent and prosperous than most.

**Charlemagne**: Ruler of the Carolingian Empire (r. 768–814) who staged an imperial revival in Western Europe. (pron. SHAHR-leh-man)

**Constantinople**: New capital for the eastern half of the Roman Empire, established by Emperor Constantine in 330 C.E. on the site of the ancient Greek city of Byzantium; Constantinople’s highly defensible and economically important site helped assure the city’s cultural and strategic importance for many centuries. (pron. con-stan-tih-NO-pul)

**Crusades**: Modern term meaning “ventures of the cross,” used to describe the “holy wars” waged by Western Christendom from 1095 until the end of the Middle Ages and beyond; Crusades could only be declared by the pope and were marked by participants swearing a vow and receiving an indulgence in return.

**Eastern Orthodox Christianity**: Branch of Christianity that developed in the eastern part of the Roman Empire and gradually separated, mostly on matters of practice, from the branch of Christianity dominant in Western Europe; noted for the subordination of the Church to political authorities, a married clergy, the use of leavened bread in the Eucharist, and insistence on church councils as the ultimate authority in Christian belief and practice.

**Ethiopian Christianity**: Emerging in the fourth century with the conversion of the rulers of Axum, this Christian church proved more resilient than other early churches in Africa.

Located in the mountainous highlands of modern Eritrea and Ethiopia, it was largely cut off from other parts of Christendom and developed traditions that made it distinctive from other Christian Churches.

**Holy Roman Empire**: Term invented in the twelfth century to describe the Germany-based empire founded by Otto I in 962 C.E.

**Icons**: Holy images venerated in the Eastern Orthodox Church.

**Jesus Sutras**: The product of Nestorian Christians living in China, these sutras articulate the Christian message using Buddhist and Daoist concepts.

**Justinian**: Byzantine emperor (r. 527–565 C.E.), noted for his short-lived reconquest of much of the former western Roman Empire and for his codification of Roman law.

**Kievan Rus**: State that emerged around the city of Kiev in the ninth century C.E.; a culturally diverse region that included Vikings as well as Finnic and Baltic peoples. The conversion of Vladimir, the grand prince of Kiev, to Orthodox Christianity in 988 had long-term implications for Russia. (pron. key-YEV-an ROOS)

**Nubian Christianity**: Emerging in the fifth and sixth centuries in the several kingdoms of Nubia to the south of Egypt, this Christian church thrived for six hundred years but had largely disappeared by 1500 C.E. by which time most of the region’s population practiced Islam.

**Prince Vladimir of Kiev**: Grand prince of Kiev (r. 978–1015 C.E.) whose conversion to Orthodox Christianity led to the incorporation of Russia into the sphere of Eastern Orthodoxy. (pron. vlad-IH-mir)

**Roman Catholic Church**: Western European branch of Christianity that gradually defined itself as separate from Eastern Orthodoxy, with a major break in 1054 C.E.; “Roman Catholic” was not commonly used until after the Protestant Reformation, but the term is just because, by the eleventh century, Western Christendom defined itself in centralized terms, with the bishop of Rome (the pope) as the ultimate authority in matters of doctrine.

**Western Christendom**: Western European branch of Christianity that gradually defined itself as separate from Eastern Orthodoxy, with a major break in 1054 C.E. that has still not been healed.