***Background/ context – Crusades***

***Medieval Europe – “Christendom” – meant what?***

**Church/ State/ Papacy**

* 590 – Gregory “The Great”/ Bishop Rome…elected… orig a Senatorial Roman – monk/ devout (monastic isolation), but also v ambitious for “God’s Church”.
* Missionary zeal (eg Augustine’s mission to Angleland). Roman Church to be a new empire – of the divine.
* Aim = estab primacy of Bish Rome…asserted direct line of authority from St Peter – “power to bind & loose”…Pope cld control “eternal destinies” of men & women via “excommunication”; in extremis, cld also place an “interdict” on a whole country/ population (eg England during reign King John)
* Popes needed control over all Christian clergy, at all levels.
* “Seculars” – ord parish priests, bishops etc. Priests often semi-literate peasants.
* Most “seculars” were married, and/ or…?!
* Bishops de facto temporal “lords” – Church = means of extending family estates/ infl!
* “Seculars expected to pass on their “livings”/ ppty to their children/ families.
* Therefore… prime allegiance of “seculars” was to chief liege lords and/ or kings, not Church/ Pope.
* Gregory started process of change/ tightening discipline/ increasing & centralising power of Papacy… main mechanism = *monasticism/ monks (“Regulars”)*

**Monasticism/ monks**

* E origins (Ethiop/ Copts/ Egypt)… Monks – “Rule of St Benedict” (“Regulars” because lives lived under a Rule) – Poverty, Chastity, Obedience.
* “Regulars” free of temporal ties – no families, ppty, wordly interests
* Spiritual devotion, prayer, scholarship/ learning, scriptorium, theology, Canon Law, medicine/ herbalism, agriculture/ horticulture, brewing, animal husbandry etc…
* Literate. Latin – language of Church, scholarship, educated men everywhere.
* Literate/ educated monks used by popes from Greg Great onwards to extend power/ infl of Rome… monks placed in key positions of influence/ employed as papal representatives, esp @ R courts & in households of great lords (“magnates”) – inexorably, church people (literate/ scholarly monks) became indispensable “fixtures” of life in centres of power & infl.
* Gradually, popes extended monastic “rules” (poverty, chastity, obedience) over all churchmen – gave Papacy power/ control, esp re ppty/ inheritance.
* “Seculars” remained in situ in parishes, bishoprics etc, but increasingly their authority/ legitimacy derived from Rome. “Regulars” contd their monastic lives: monasteries became powerhouses not only of scholarship & learning, but also of spiritual regeneration/ revival, as well as economic hubs for their locales.
* C11th Church undergoing spiritual revival, led by “Cluniac Movement” (Monastery of Cluny) – tool of Papacy to extend/ tighten control further.
* 1095 Synod (or Council) @ Clermont – Pope Urban II rec’d plea from Byz Emp Alexius I Comnenus for military assistance v Seljuk Turks… arguably, too good a chance to miss for a pope working on ways/ means to tighten unity of “Christendom” & extend Papal power/ infl – possibly even perceived an opportunity to reunify E & W branches of Christian world.

**Medieval Europe – “stuff” you need to be familiar with – checklist:**

1. **Feudalism:**
2. **Popes…Church & State…Politics/ Learning/ Power…Seculars/ Regulars/ monasticism:**
3. **The Holy Roman Empire:**
4. **The Investiture Controversy (C11th):**
5. **The Medieval Warming – effects/ implications…**
6. **Europe’s relatively peripheral status in global terms – compared with Asia:**
7. **The Normans and their empire:**

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