I. THE ORIGIN OF THE JESUITS:

Igantius Loyola was born in a feudal castle in Spain in 1491. His first job was in the Spanish army where, during a battle, one of his legs was shattered. While he was recuperating, he began to read religious literature, and he was soon dreaming of becoming a crusader to the Holy Land. This mixture of religious and military zeal impelled his commitment to “mystical militarism.”

Soon Loyola was trying to convince others to join him in his dream of a spiritual conquest of the Holy Land. In 1538, he and his followers created a permanent organization, the Society of Jesus, also known as the Jesuits, to carry reform and spiritual enlightenment to all Catholic countries and beyond. Many began to join this new order that soon acquired a reputation for piety, saintliness, and military-style discipline. Jesuits begged for bread in the streets, slept in the poorhouse, cared for prisoners in jail, and engaged in other acts of charity.

But the Jesuits’ distinguishing characteristic was that its members cultivated close contacts with the nobility, especially men and women in important positions. It was not long before its influence spread from Spain to Italy and France. At the time when the Church was suffering from Protestant attacks, the Jesuits brought new vitality, enthusiasm, methods and spiritual outlook to the Church.

The Jesuits became the leading instruments of the Catholic Reformation. The religious reconquest of southern and western Germany for the Church, and the preservation of the Catholic faith in France and other countries, were due primarily to their efforts. From the very beginning, the Jesuit missionary efforts in India, Japan, China, Canada, and Central and South America were as important as their activity in Christian countries in Europe.
II. SPREADING CATHOLICISM IN THE AMERICAS

Directions: Read the statements by Pope Alexander and Christopher Columbus. Speculate, on the basis of these statements, how the Spanish will treat the Native Americans in the New World (North & South America).

| Document 1 |
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| **Source:** Excerpt from Pope Alexander VI, Papal Bull *Inter Caetera*, May 4, 1493 |
| Wherefore, as becomes Catholic kings and princes, after earnest consideration of all matters, especially of the rise and spread of the Catholic faith, as was the fashion of your ancestors, kings of renowned memory, you have purposed with the favor of divine clemency to bring under your sway the said mainlands and islands with their residents and inhabitants and bring them to the Catholic faith. |

| Document 2 |
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| **Source:** Excerpt from Letter from Christopher Columbus to King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain |
| In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. ... In consequence of the information which I had given your Highnesses respecting the countries of India and of a Prince, called Great Can, which in our language signifies King of Kings, how, at many times he and his predecessors, had sent to Rome soliciting instructors who might teach him our holy faith, and the holy Father had never granted his request, whereby great numbers of people were lost, believing in idolatry and doctrines of perdition [damnation]. Your Highnesses, as Catholic Christians, and princes who love and promote the holy Christian faith, and are enemies of the doctrines of Muhammad, and of all idolatry and heresy, determined to send me, Christopher Columbus, to the above-mentioned countries of India, to see the said princes, people, and territories, and to learn their disposition and the proper method of converting them to our holy faith; and furthermore directed that I should not proceed by land to the East, as is customary, but by a Westerly route, in which direction we have hitherto no certain evidence that any one has gone. |
III. THE REQUIRIMIENTO

When the conquistadors (Spanish conquerors) encountered a Native American community they hoped to convert, a priest would read a requerimiento to them in Latin or Spanish. Sometimes the declaration was read even when no Indians were present. The requerimiento was the only warning the natives had to convert or otherwise suffer.

**Consider:** How did the Spanish use the Requerimiento to justify their actions in the Americas? How do you think the Native Americas might react to it?

"On behalf of the King, Don Fernando, and of Doña Juana I, his daughter, Queen of Castille and León, subduers of the barbarous nations, we their servants notify and make known to you, as best we can, that the Lord our God, Living and Eternal, created the Heaven and the Earth, and one man and one woman, of whom you and we, all the men of the world at the time, were and are descendants, and all those who came after and before us. But, on account of the multitude which has sprung from this man and woman in the five thousand years since the world was created, it was necessary that some men should go one way and some another, and that they should be divided into many kingdoms and provinces, for in one alone they could not be sustained.

Of all these nations God our Lord gave charge to one man, called St. Peter, that he should be Lord and Superior of all the men in the world, that all should obey him, and that he should be the head of the whole Human Race, wherever men should live, and under whatever law, sect, or belief they should be; and he gave him the world for his kingdom and jurisdiction.

And he commanded him to place his seat in Rome, as the spot most fitting to rule the world from; but also he permitted him to have his seat in any other part of the world, and to judge and govern all Christians, Moors, Jews, Gentiles, and all other Sects. This man was called Pope, as if to say, Admirable Great Father and Governor of men. The men who lived in that time obeyed that St. Peter, and took him for Lord, King, and Superior of the universe; so also they have regarded the others who after him have been elected to the pontificate, and so has it been continued even till now, and will continue till the end of the world.

One of these Pontiffs, who succeeded that St. Peter as Lord of the world, in the dignity and seat which I have before mentioned, made donation of these isles and Tierra-firme to the aforesaid King and Queen and to their successors, our lords, with all that there are in these territories, as is contained in certain writings which passed upon the subject as aforesaid, which you can see if you wish.

So their Highnesses are kings and lords of these islands and land of Tierra-firme by virtue of this donation: and some islands, and indeed almost all those to whom this has been notified, have received and served their Highnesses, as lords and kings, in the way that subjects ought to do, with good will, without any resistance, immediately, without delay, when they were informed of the aforesaid facts. And also they received and obeyed the priests whom their Highnesses sent to preach to them and to teach them our Holy Faith; and all these, of their own free will, without any reward or condition, have become Christians, and are so, and their Highnesses have joyfully and benignantly received them, and also have commanded them to be treated as their subjects and vassals; and you too are held and obliged to do the same. Wherefore, as best we can, we ask and require you that you consider what we have said to you, and that you take the time that shall be necessary to understand and deliberate upon it, and that you acknowledge the Church as the Ruler and Superior of the whole world, and the high priest called Pope, and in his name the King and Queen Doña Juana our lords, in his place, as superiors and lords and kings of these islands and this Tierra-firme by virtue..."
of the said donation, and that you consent and give place that these religious fathers should declare and preach to you the aforesaid.

If you do so, you will do well, and that which you are obliged to do to their Highnesses, and we in their name shall receive you in all love and charity, and shall leave you, your wives, and your children, and your lands, free without servitude, that you may do with them and with yourselves freely that which you like and think best, and they shall not compel you to turn Christians, unless you yourselves, when informed of the truth, should wish to be converted to our Holy Catholic Faith, as almost all the inhabitants of the rest of the islands have done. And, besides this, their Highnesses award you many privileges and exemptions and will grant you many benefits.

But, if you do not do this, and maliciously make delay in it, I certify to you that, with the help of God, we shall powerfully enter into your country, and shall make war against you in all ways and manners that we can, and shall subject you to the yoke and obedience of the Church and of their Highnesses; we shall take you and your wives and your children, and shall make slaves of them, and as such shall sell and dispose of them as their Highnesses may command; and we shall take away your goods, and shall do you all the mischief and damage that we can, as to vassals who do not obey, and refuse to receive their lord, and resist and contradict him; and we protest that the deaths and losses which shall accrue from this are your fault, and not that of their Highnesses, or ours, nor of these cavaliers who come with us. And that we have said this to you and made this Requisition, we request the notary here present to give us his testimony in writing, and we ask the rest who are present that they should be witnesses of this Requisition."
IV. SPANISH STRATEGIES FOR CONVERTING NATIVE AMERICANS

What were the various strategies used by the Spanish in converting Native American populations that they encountered? Besides conversion, what other cultural changes occurred for Native Americans?

“The New World people the Spanish encountered were not without culture. Several Native American civilizations were complex and productive and in many ways equal to those in Europe. Tenochtitlan, the major city of Mesoamerica, was a huge city with great temples and beautiful gardens.

The Incas of Peru controlled an empire of thousands of square miles and practiced a sophisticated form of agriculture that was more varied than any European nation could equal.

Although Native Americans built empires, cities, and a complex agricultural system, they did not have the weapons or the knowledge of steel that the Europeans did. The superior European power, combined with the Spanish religious zeal to convert the world to Catholicism, impelled a major effort to bring the Native Americans to Christianity. The institutions for this massive conversion were the schools, churches, and energetic missionaries, who often use force in their conversion project.

The orders from the Spanish Church dictated that Native Americans be gathered into villages and that each village open a school for young children, where they would be taught Christian doctrine. These schools, where around fifty students learned the new faith, produced teachers to instruct other children. By 1500, there were many such schools in Mexico and Peru.

Fray Martin de Valencia, the “St. Patrick of Mexico,” sums up the general Spanish reasons for the mass conversion of Native Americans. “God has brought us here...to seek...your salvation. Wherefore, beloved brethren, it is necessary that you put your young children into our hands that they may be taught. ...Furthermore, they, being but children, will understand more easily the doctrines we teach. ...Afterward, they will aid us in teaching you what they have learned.”

By 1525, the Spanish began systematically to destroy the Aztec cultural and religious heritage. The colonizers destroyed the Aztec temples, religious images, and manuscripts. Native American students were required to march through the streets of Mexico City on Sundays to smash all pagan objects. Student converts were encouraged to spy on their parents so that priests could go to their homes and smash idols. ...

The Catholic priests used both punishment and rewards to achieve their goal of conversion. Sometimes they whipped the Native Americans with a lash and then gave out gifts of grain and meat to facilitate conversion.

Because the Native American societies were so diverse, the Catholic leaders began to require that people learn Spanish. The Spanish produced simple books that explained concepts such as the Trinity and Grace, concepts not found in the local languages.”

Source: Adapted and simplified from R.V. Farrell, The Conquest of Minds: Lessons and Strategies from Latin American Educational History, Florida International University,