

Questions on Letters

Letter: _____

Answer the following questions based on your reading.

1. Before the letter begins, what language is it written in?
2. Why do you think it is written in this language?
3. Which religion follows the Pope?
4. Which religion follows the Patriarch?
5. What type of Architecture did the Byzantine Empire have?
6. Instead of stained glasses what type of art did the Byzantine Empire have?
7. What does the Byzantine Empire allow its priests to do that the Roman Catholics cannot?
8. What do you notice about the tone of the letters?

Diary A – Diary of a Roman Catholic writing about the Byzantine Empire.

[Written in Latin]

Dear Diary,

Today was a day just like any other. As a good practicing Roman Catholic Christian, I showed my respect for my God and Pope. The Pope has called on us Christians to liberate the Holy Land from the Muslims. How can I say “no” to the Pope?

However, those Orthodox Christians don’t even believe in the Pope! Can you believe that? Instead they treat their emperor as the living God on Earth. I guess he has absolute power, like an autocrat. Don’t they know what happened to King Henry IV when he challenged the authority of the Pope? The pope proved his power over kings. In Byzantium, instead the emperor appoints a patriarch. The patriarch is the religious head of the church. Even worse, they allow their priests to marry. Those crazy Byzantines, they even conduct their Church services in Greek! What was so great about Greece anyway? They built some columns and had a few people that would question authority. They even had a crazy idea about letting people rule their own government. Why would anyone want that?

I heard in the Byzantine Empire they consider themselves the heirs to the Roman Empire. Rome fell - get over it. They want to keep preserving Roman and Greek culture. They think they are better because they don’t have a feudal system. I heard in the Byzantine Empire the serfs actually farm the land for money and get paid for it. Those losers; Why pay people when they could work for free? Being a lord right now is awesome. Supposedly the peasants are the backbone of the Byzantine Empire’s money-based economy.

....And what’s the deal with the Dome Architecture? A Church Cathedral is supposed to have gargoyles and flying buttresses. Their churches have domes on the top. Apparently they think the domes are less showy than our cathedrals and reflect the true nature of a church. Also the Byzantine’s are missing out on some cool art. They can’t have Icons, or religious images because it borders on idol worship. The Byzantine Empire uses mosaic art. They piece together a few pieces of stone to create an image. Granted, it looks pretty, but in my opinion stained glass is so much cooler.

Well, it’s time to go; the church bells are calling me. It is time to pay my respects to the almighty God and the Pope.

Diary B – Diary of a Orthodox Christian writing about a Roman Catholic.

[Written in Greek]

Dear Diary,

After hearing today's Church service conducted in Greek, I was inspired by the word of God to follow the true path of His teachings. Did you know that there are Christians that still believe in the authority of the Pope? Those silly Western Europeans, I hope they are happy in their Dark Ages. All those Kings fighting with the Pope – what a waste of time. We Byzantine's made it much simpler. As first done by our Great absolute ruler Justinian, the role of the Emperor is both political and religious. The Emperor is the representation of God on Earth. Not the Pope. The Emperor is able to appoint church officials. He appoints the Patriarch, or the head of the Church. He doesn't get involved in state matters, like the Pope. Can you believe that the Pope is calling all Christians to fight in a crusade? I don't trust the Roman Catholics. I fear they might stab us in the back. They still conduct their services in Latin. How can anyone trust Latin?

The Roman Catholics should know that the Byzantine Empire prides itself on many things. We try to follow the glory that was once Rome and Greece. We borrow their ideas and adapt it to our own culture. We modeled our Churches after Roman architecture. We took it one step further though and built a dome to show our faith in God. I heard that the W. Europeans built Cathedrals that are very showy and flashy. We Byzantines take our religion seriously and ban the use of Icons in our churches. Sometimes people tend to worship these icons over the actual deity they should be praying to. Unlike the ugly stained glass that is cluttered about in all the RCC Cathedrals, our church has mosaics that showcase art. We create mosaics out of stone or other materials to make a picture or design.

The Roman Catholics are so strict with their treatment of priests. Our priests are allowed to marry. We believe that marriage helps them become connected to God. I heard that Priests in the Roman Catholic faith are banned from the sacrament of marriage.

...and I hear that in W. Europe their peasants work the land for protection of a lord. That's no way to live. Our glorious military protects our Empire. Our serfs work for money! This allows our empire to flourish and spread the glory of Rome, Greece and even our own culture.

I don't want to keep the Almighty Emperor waiting, so now I must go.

NAME _____

PER _____

Comparing the Roman Catholic Church to the Orthodox Church

	Roman Catholic Church	Similarities	Orthodox Christian Church
Official Language:		Base their faith on the teachings of Jesus and the Bible. Have sacraments such as Baptism Priests and Bishops are the religious leaders They seek to convert people to their faith.	
Power:			
Spiritual Authority:			
Marriage & Divorce:			
Architecture:			
Art Work:			
Other:			

NAME: _____ PER: _____

RCC or OCC?

After the following statement, decide if it is the Roman Catholic Church (RCC) or the Orthodox Christian Church (OCC).

1. Banned marriage of priests.
2. Banned worship of idols.
3. Emperor rules over the Church
4. Services conducted in Latin
5. Patriarch is the religious leader