

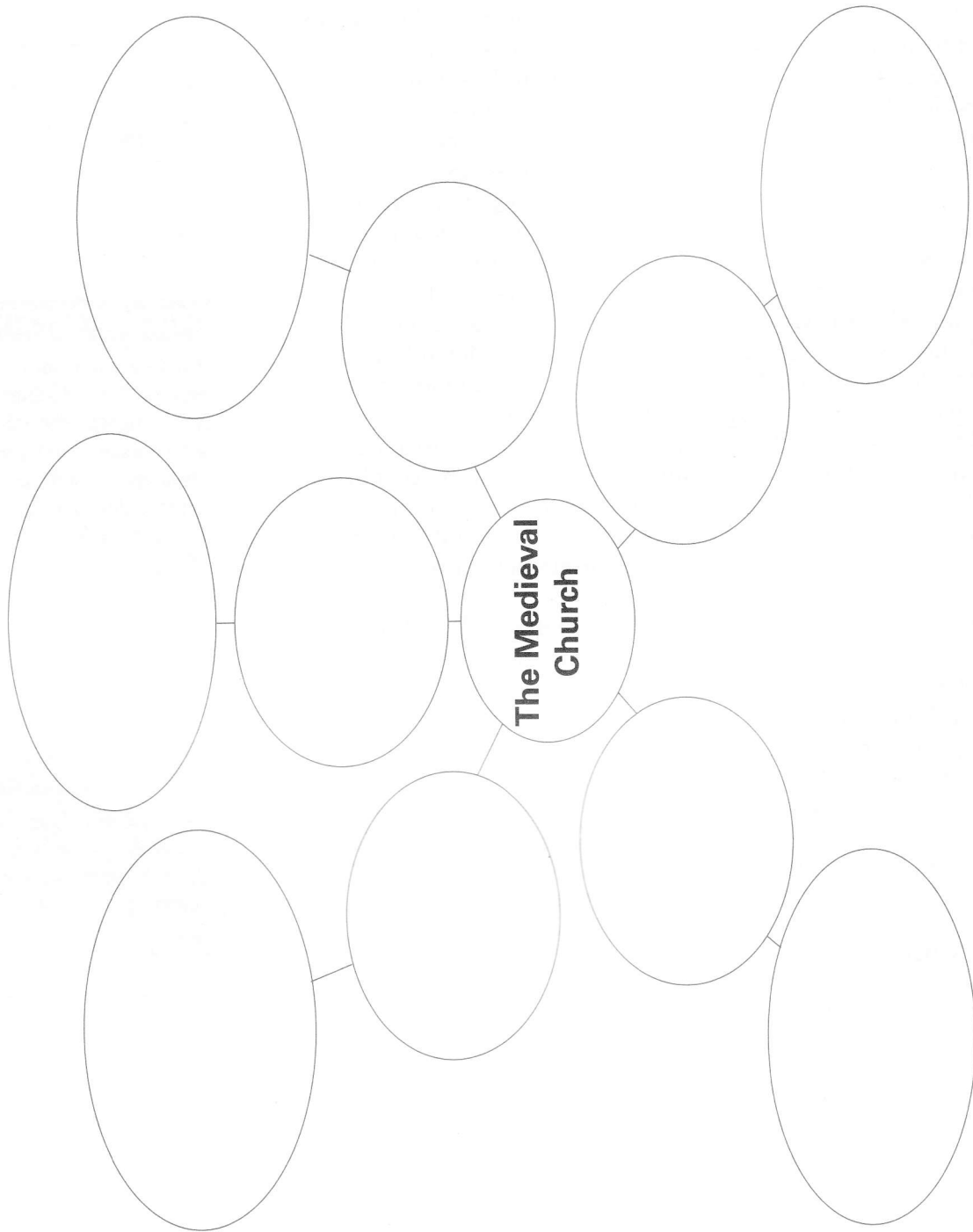
CHAPTER
7
SECTION 3

Note Taking Study Guide

THE MEDIEVAL CHURCH

Focus Question: How did the Church play a vital role in medieval life?

As you read this section in your textbook, use the concept web below to identify main ideas for all the headings in the section.



CHAPTER
7
SECTION 3

Section Summary

THE MEDIEVAL CHURCH

During the Middle Ages, the Roman Catholic Church controlled the spiritual life of Christians in Western Europe but was also the strongest worldly or **secular** force. Church officials were closely linked to secular rulers. Clergy might even be nobles with lands and armies.

For most people, village churches were the center of community life. Their parish priest celebrated mass and administered **sacraments**, or sacred rites. Church doctrine also taught that men and women were equal before God.

Some chose to live a religious life in monasteries or convents. About 530, a monk named Benedict created rules governing monastery life. They required vows of obedience, poverty, and chastity, or purity. In time, this **Benedictine Rule** was used by monasteries and convents across Europe.

As God's representatives on Earth, medieval popes eventually claimed **papal supremacy**, or authority over kings and emperors. The Church had its own courts and body of laws, known as **canon law**, and issued punishments. One was **excommunication**, or the withholding of sacraments and Christian burial. This condemned a sinner to hell. In addition, rulers could be punished by the pope with an **interdict**. This barred entire towns, regions, or kingdoms from receiving sacraments and Christian burial. The Church also used its authority to end warfare among nobles by declaring times of peace known as the Truce of God.

However, as Church wealth and power grew, so did corruption. Monks and nuns ignored their vows. Throughout the Middle Ages, there were calls for reform. In the early 900s, Abbot Berno of Cluny brought back the Benedictine Rule. Over the next 200 years, monasteries and convents copied these reforms. Other reforms came from **friars**, or monks who traveled and preached to the poor, and did not live in monasteries. The first order of friars, the Franciscans, was founded by **St. Francis of Assisi**. The Franciscans preached poverty, humility, and love of God.

In the Middle Ages, Jewish communities also existed all across Europe. Yet by the late 1000s, prejudice against Jewish people had increased. The Church eventually issued orders forbidding Jews from owning land or having certain jobs.

Review Questions

1. What vows did the Benedictine Rule require?

2. What two actions could the Church take to punish Christians?

READING CHECK

Medieval popes claimed authority over kings and emperors. What was this called?

VOCABULARY STRATEGY

What does *doctrine* mean in the underlined sentence? What clue in the sentence lets you know that it has something to do with teaching? Use context clues to help you figure out the meaning of *doctrine*.

READING

Identify Main Ideas Find and underline the sentences that give the main idea of the Summary.