A. The Fall of the Papal States

1. What are the Papal States? The Papal States include all of the territory in the central part of the Italian peninsula over which the popes were not only the spiritual leader but also the temporal ruler.

2. How did they begin?

They began with the donation of Pepin in 755. The barbarian tribe known as the Lombards were harassing the Christians in Rome. The pope asked Pepin, the newly crowned King of Franks, to come to his assistance in protecting the people of Rome. Pepin’s army came over the Alps and beat up on the Lombards. Pepin gave the land he conquered to the pope so he could raise and support an army to protect Rome himself. Similarly in the late 700’s the Lombards once again were harassing Rome and Pope Leo III asked Charlemagne, Pepin’s son, to bring the Frankish army south to protect Rome yet again. Charlemagne’s army totally crushed the Lombards. Charlemagne donated more land to the pope. On Christmas Day in the year 800, Pope Leo III crowned Charlemagne as Holy Roman Emperor.

3. How does Nationalism affect the Italian peninsula and the Papal States in the 1800’s?

In the spirit of Nationalism there is a desire to unite all of the Italian peninsula into a single nation. There are those who wish for a democratic republic. Others are seeking a constitutional monarchy. Some are even considering the pope as the possible constitutional monarch.

4. Who is:

a) Victor Emmanuel II: He is the King of Piedmont-Savoy. He will become the first King of Italy.

b) Cavour: He is the Prime Minister of Piedmont-Savoy. He will work behind the scenes arranging for the peoples of the other kingdoms, principalities and city-states in the peninsula to support Victor Emmanuel II as the first King of an united Italian peninsula.

c) Garibaldi: He is a freelance freedom fighter. In 1859 when revolutions break out all over the Italian peninsula he will lead his army up and down the peninsula supporting the revolutionaries overthrowing their local governments. He works for Victor Emmanuel II and Cavour.

g) Pius IX: He is the pope from 1846 to 1878. He has the longest papacy in history. In the beginning of his papacy he did support some democratic reforms for the civil government of the Papal States. He was opposed to a unified Italian peninsula since it would mean the loss of the Papal States. He will witness the fall of the Papal States to Victor Emmanuel II in 1861 and the fall of Rome to the new Italian kingdom in 1870. He is the first to declare himself the “Prisoner of the Vatican.”
B. The Roman Question

1. What does “Prisoner of the Vatican” mean?

This was the title the popes proclaimed for themselves from 1870 to 1929. It was a protest against the illegal seizing of the Papal States and the city of Rome from the papacy by the Kingdom of Italy. Not sure of their status within the new kingdom of Italy and whether or not they would be arrested, the popes from 1870 to 1929 never left the grounds of the Vatican.

2. Why is this a problem for the Kingdom of Italy?

The popes from 1870 to 1929 basically told Italian Catholics not to participate in the new national government since it was illegal. Without the support of the Catholic population, the new kingdom of Italy would never become a power within Europe.

3. Who is Mussolini? What does he want to do for Italy?

He becomes Prime Minister of Italy in 1919. He will negotiate a treaty with the papacy so as to resolve the Roman Question and normalize relations between the papacy and the kingdom of Italy. Hence with the support of Catholics the Italian nation can take its’ place as a nation within Europe. The treaty is called the Lateran Agreement of 1929.

4. Who is Pius XI?

He is the pope who negotiates the Lateran Agreement of 1929 with Mussolini thus restoring peace between the papacy and the kingdom of Italy.

5. In the Lateran Agreement the Popes agrees to:

a) to give up any claims to territory in the Italian peninsula and to recognize the ruling dynasty as the legal government

b) promises to stay out of Italian politics thus allowing Catholics to participate now in the national government

c) will allow the government to have the right of approval over the appointment of bishops in Italy

6. In the Lateran Agreement Italy agrees to:

a) recognize Vatican City as an independent nation with the pope as its’ sovereign ruler

b) to pay for the Papal States which they seized

c) legalized religious orders in Italy

d) allow Catholic faith to be taught in all secondary schools (government, religious or private)

e) civil marriage laws would follow Church (canon) law