

matters, although, had he lived, he might have instituted a number of reforms.

1523 Clement VII became pope. Curbing the power of the emperor was his chief ambition and his pontificate was met with disaster. The forces of Charles twice defeated his armies and those of his Italian allies, finally sacking Rome in 1527. His opposition to Charles--although he did crown him emperor (it was an "or else" proposition) cost him any opportunity to suppress Luther...and in the process he also lost the support of one of the most devout Roman Catholic rulers: Henry VIII.

1524-25 saw the development of the Regensburg League...an alignment of German Catholic princes, and the Lutheran League...need we tell you.

1525 found Luther marrying Catherine von Bora thereby prompting Erasmus' famous jest. It marked also the death of Frederick the Wise and the coming of John the Stedfast.

1526 found the Diet meeting at Speier (Speyer) Due to pressures from the King of France, the Italian princes and the Turks, the Imperial position was weakened. The decision of the Diet on religious matters was that each city would determine its religious situation for itself. It was a totally unacceptable position for the emperor and the pope as well as the Germans. But for the moment it stood. Philip of Hesse, one of Luther's most outspoken followers, reorganized the church in Hesse and put the power in the hands of the people, much to Luther's displeasure. But it was typical of the church state at Speier in 1526.

1527 saw the Emperor squelching the papal armies and the Italian forces that had made his life miserable in the last year. For a brief season he had both Italy and France placated.

1529 found another Diet at Speier and this time the Imperial forces were strong. The Emperor called for an end to all schismatic religion. A new act was passed in which the catholic states were to execute the dictum of Worms. Evangelical states were ordered to protect and defend the "old faith". Evangelicals were forbidden to proselytize or to propagate beyond their borders. Both groups were instructed to ferret out and prosecute any other type of religious ideology. From this unpopular edict the term