

## Spring History & Heritage -- #8 (May 19)

### **Death of St. Augustine --- (Kirk; *Roots of American Order*, pp. 158-169)**

**This event (430 AD)**, the passing from this world of Christianity's greatest thinker of the first millennium, coincided with the near passing of Roman and Christian North Africa? As the bishop of Hippo ministered to his flock and eventually succumbed to illness, King Geiseric and his Vandals wreaked havoc on the cities and churches of the region. A colleague observed that, "Those days, therefore, that he lived through, or endured, almost at the very end of his life, were the bitterest and most mournful of all his old age."

### **Rome & the Italian Peninsula --- (Kirk; *Roots of American Order*, pp. 169-176)**

**This once-mighty city and region**, from about 450-600 AD or from Augustine to Gregory, lost its imperial seat and was subdued by barbarian tribes like the Lombards? Nominally under the authority of the emperor in the East by means of his viceroys, still the civilization would likely have expired had not the popes filled the leadership void. Among them, Pope Gelasius I (r. 492-496) asserted the classical doctrine of Church and State (the "two swords"), observing that, "Two there are by whom this world is ruled."

### **Gregory the Great --- (Kirk; *Roots of American Order*, pp. 169-176)**

**This Bishop of Rome (r. 590--604)**, known humbly as "Servant of the Servants of God," at first fled the papal office to which he was called insistently by the people? Raised in an old-line senatorial family, his administrative skill and theological insight held crumbling Western Europe together, raising up "the see of St. Peter," as one scholar put it, "like a lighthouse in a storm." He superintended lands, negotiated peace, founded monasteries, sent missionaries to the pagans, and wrote influential treatises.

### **Church and State --- (teacher commentary)**

**These institutions and their interrelationship** served as the focal point for Pope Gelasius I (r. 492-496) when he noted that, "Two there are by whom this world is ruled"? In the medieval concept, the "two swords" are separated by function—the greater to draw men to God's saving mercy, the lesser to remind them of His fearful judgment. Separation and historical tensions aside, however, medievals believed the two were divinely ordained to support and restrain one another for the common good.

### **Every Culture Has its Cult --- (Kirk; *Roots of American Order*, pp. 169-176)**

**This affirmation**, ignored or denied in our day, highlights the inescapable relationship between a common core of religious belief and the character and condition of a people? The civilizations of the Hebrews, Greeks, and Romans, in fact, were all shaped by faith or mythology, as was Medieval Europe by Catholic Christianity centered in Rome. In the latter "Age of Faith," even kings and lords ordinarily honored religious authority and tried to govern in a manner more or less consistent with it.

**(sources for the Q&A's are indicated; any errors of judgment are those of Veritas history teacher Mr. Zaffini, writer of this post for his students and their families)**