

The Wittenberg Times

1526-1550



All the news that's fit to print with some editorializing by Martin Luther
Editor: Hank Bitten

1527 - May 7, 1527 - Imperial Troops Pillage Rome

Yesterday 34,000 troops of Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor, began their assault on Rome. Weather conditions were not favorable for an attack as dense fog covered the area throughout most of the day.

The defeat of the French troops in Italy, a few months before, led directly to the decision to attack the Vatican. The troops of the Holy Roman Empire had not been paid for over a year and when the assault began they looted the city and private homes of their treasures. Over 4,000 inhabitants were killed, as were 114 Swiss guards. The massacre ended when Pope Clement VII agreed to pay 400,000 ducats to spare his life and go to prison in the Castel Sant'Angelo.

An eyewitness reports, "*For more than a week the city of the Caesars was given over to horrors far more awful than those of barbarian days. Lust, drunkenness, greed of spoil, and in some cases, religious fanaticism, combined in truly hellish fashion to produce the worst outburst of savagery in the annals of the period.*"

As an outside observer, I see this as the end of the Renaissance. The attack is barbaric having no respect for civil law, culture, or Christianity.

Martin Luther did not approve of the violence of the undisciplined troops, he released the following statement from Wittenberg, "*Christ reigns in such a way that the Emperor who persecutes Luther for the Pope is forced to destroy the Pope for Luther.*" (LW 49:169).

There is no future for Rome as the exodus of the survivors to the countryside is imminent.

The Wittenberg Times 1526-1550



All the news that's fit to print with some editorializing by Martin Luther
Editor: Hank Bitten

1527 May 27 - First Protestant University at Marburg

Philip of Hesse opened the doors this morning for the start of the new academic year with 84 students and 11 professors. Although younger than Martin Luther and only 23 years old, his message was that his university would “educate God-fearing people for the good of the common land.”

The university was built with the sale of the confiscated property of the Roman Catholic Church in the province of Hesse. In addition to a theological faculty, there are programs in law, medicine, and philosophy. The University of Marburg is the oldest Protestant university in the world!



The Wittenberg Times

1526-1550



All the news that's fit to print with some editorializing by Martin Luther
Editor: Hank Bitten

1527 - Reformation Takes Hold in Sweden

King Gustav I Vasa, the new king of an independent Sweden, seized the property of the Roman Catholic Church in an attempt to eliminate its extensive economic power. The king continues to gain popular support after winning independence four years ago from Denmark.

His new chancellor, Laurentius Andreae, supports the new teachings of the reformer, Martin Luther, and Olaus Petri has recently returned to Sweden from studying to be a pastor at the University of Wittenberg. His life was spared by Last year he published the New Testament and a hymnal in the Swedish language. Pastor Olaus Petri conducted the first mass in Swedish last month and wrote a new catechism for the children. His brother, Lars is also actively promoting the Lutheran faith and ideas as a pastor and teacher.

The Lutheran faith appears popular in Stockholm but not in Uppsala or the rural areas of Sweden, where the people remain quietly sympathetic to their Roman Catholic beliefs and unsure of the aggressive actions of their new king. The bishop at the Cathedral of Uppsala excommunicated both Olaus and Lars Petri for their heresy two years ago. However, as many Catholic priests and bishops are leaving Sweden, the future of the Roman Catholic influence is in doubt. Pastors Lars and Olaus are preparing a resolution for the adoption of the Lutheran faith as the new religion in Sweden and this is expected to be approved when the Diet of Vasteras meets in 1531.