THE DUTCH REFORMATION #1
THE BATTLE FOR THE NETHERLANDS

Prayer
Scripture: Hebrews 12:18-29
Hymn: 664 "We Gather Together"

One of the last great breaks with Rome occurred in the
Netherlands. Climaxing a long struggle, in 1581 seven northern
provinces of the seventeen provinces that constituted the
Netherlands, declared their independence of Spain and renounced
the Roman religion that Spain had championed, becoming a new,
independent Protestant nation. Ironically the Netherlands had
furnished the first martyrs of the Reformation when two Augustinian
monks, Henry Voes and John Esch, were burnt as heretics at Antwerp
on July 31, 1523. The long struggle of almost sixty years was
a struggle for both religious liberty and national independence.

The Netherlands of the Reformation had been the domain of
the dukes of Burgundy. The Burgundian dukes of the fourteenth
and fifteenth century added to their medieval
and bishoprics to form an important domain. Philip the God, Duke
of Burgundy (1419-67) by successful wars and a successful policy
of centralization increased the realm. Charles the Bold (1467-1477)
increased the holdings and passed them on to his daughter, Mary,
wife of the Emperor Maximilian. Their son, Philip the Handsome,
moved Juana, heiress of Ferdinand and Isabella (August 1496).
Charles V, son of Philip and Juana, when he was elected Emperor
of Germany and Austria in 1519 had already inherited the
Netherlands from his father and Spain from his mother. The
kingdom of Spain included the Kingdom of Naples, claimed Northern
Italy and Milan, and included the vast Spanish American Empire.
Charles was a devout Catholic and the most powerful man in Europe.

The Netherlands that Charles inherited consisted of seventeen
provinces that made up the coastal plain and deltas of the Rhine,
the Meuse, the Scheldt and lesser rivers. The people were hardy,
industrious and independent, accustomed to battling the floods of
the rivers and the storms and rising tides of the North Sea. There
were some three hundred and fifty cities in the Netherlands--some
of the largest and busiest in Europe. Antwerp was reputed to
surpass any other European city in trade. Agriculture, manufacturing,
and commerce made the Netherlands one of the most prosperous parts
of Europe. The people of the Netherlands were some of the most
proficient in science, in the invention of machines and implements,
and in letters. The people were some of the most literate in
Europe with even common laborers and fishermen proud of their
ability to read, write, and to discuss the Scriptures. They loved
their freedom and took great pride in local self-government, their
chartered rights, privileges and immunities, and in long standing
customs and traditions; Charles V was determined to fuse them into
the common system of his empire with one absolute ruler and one
religion, that of the Roman church. Much in his favor was a
general feeling of loyalty to the house of Hapsburg and the fact
that he had been born in Ghent and reared in the Netherlands by
an aunt on account of the illness of his mother. He grew up
speaking the French of the Walloons so that his subjects in the Netherlands regarded him as one of themselves.

The seventeen provinces were quite independent in the management of affairs and quite jealous of their rights. The population of the Netherlands was divided racially and linguistically. The people in the northern provinces were Dutch and were considered Germans and had close ties with Germany. The people of the middle provinces were Flemish. Those of the south were French-speaking Walloons and had close ties with France. Religious and ecclesiastical jurisdictions did not coincide. Many of the churches in the Netherlands were under French and German bishops who did not reside in the Netherlands.

The clergy and the nobles, including government officials, tended to be subservient to and loyal to the monarch. The third estate, made up of the commercial class and the gilds, was just coming into its own and tended to be quite conscious of rights and privileges.

BACKGROUND INFLUENCES IMPORTANT FOR THE REFORMATION

Jan van Ruysbroeck (1293-1381), one of the most influential of the fourteenth century heart-searching Mystics, was Flemish. For a time he was a curate of St. Gudule's in Brussels before he became an Augustinian monk and established a school of sanctity at Groenendael, near Brussels, where he attracted many disciples. He was the founder of the "Devoto Moderna", an attempt to revive and deepen the spiritual life provoked by the worldliness and corruption of the church. His pupil, Gerard Groot, founded the Brethren of the Common Life to spread Christian education among the laity in the Netherlands. The schools of the Brethren of the Common Life were highly admired for their high educational standards. Thomas à Kempis, a pupil of Gerard Groot, was the author of The Imitation of Christ. Thomas à Kempis lived most of his long life of ninety years in a small convent at Zwolle in Utrecht. Netherlands theologians, John Pupper of Goch and John Wessel were "Reformers before the Reformation" who spoke and wrote against abuses in the church. Artists of the Netherlands of the fifteenth century were Hubert, Jan van Ecyck and Hans Memling. The Trouvères, a school of poets in the southern provinces, and the Chambers of Oratory, unions of actors who performed miracle and morality plays, diffused culture and influenced the thinking of the people. Alexander Hegius of the Netherlands was one of the greatest educational reformers of his time. Cornelius van Hoen's book on the Eucharist greatly influenced Zwingli's thinking. Erasmus of Rotterdam, the prince of Renaissance Humanism, was born and educated in the Netherlands. His works were widely read. Erasmus could not stomach the ignorance, laziness and immorality of the clergy and the corruption of the church. His satires helped awaken the consciences of many.

The teachers in the schools of the Brethren of the Common Life encouraged their pupils to read the Bible in the Latin but they also worked to make the scriptures available in the vernacular. A translation of the Bible into Dutch was published at Delft in 1477. Between 1513 and 1531 at least twenty-five translations
of the Bible or New Testament appeared in Dutch, Flemish, and French. Printing came to the Netherlands quite early and between 1525-55 some fifty new publishing houses were established.

LUTHER'S INFLUENCE IN THE NETHERLANDS

Tracts against indulgences were circulating in the Netherlands even before Luther nailed his Theses to the church door in Wittenberg--the authors were probably influenced by the works of Pupper and Wessel. Hendrik of Zutphen, Prior of the Augustinian convent at Antwerp, had been a pupil of Staupitz and a fellow student with Luther. He spread Evangelical teachings in his order and throughout Antwerp. Luther's writings were eagerly received and widely circulated in the Netherlands almost from the beginning. Hoen at the Hague, Hinne Rode at Utrecht, Gerard Lister at Zwolle, Melchior Miritzsch at Ghent corresponded with Luther and circulated his ideas and writings. At first his books circulated among the learned in Latin, but by 1520 Dutch translations of Luther were in circulation. The German commercial colony at Antwerp played an important role in circulating Luther's works. Albert Dürer spread Luther's Gospel. When Aleander visited the Netherlands before attending the Diet of Worms, he was horrified at the influence of Luther and secured the burning of eighty Lutheran and other heretical books at Louvain. He returned ten months later and held another public book burning.

Catholics carried on a vigorous counter-propaganda against both Luther and Erasmus. They charged that Erasmus laid the eggs and Luther hatched them; that Erasmus was the father of Luther; that Luther, Zwingli, Oecolampadius and Erasmus were the four soldiers who had crucified Christ. Priests like Nicholas of Egmont stormed in their pulpits against the heretics, calling them "geese, asses, and Anti-christs."

The University of Louvain was the center of the literary attack on Luther. The university followed the lead of the University of Cologne in condemning Luther. Leading professors wrote against him. Adrian of Utrecht, a professor, then bishop, then cardinal and finally pope strongly attacked Luther.

CHARLES V'S EFFORTS TO STAMP OUT HERESY IN THE NETHERLANDS

When Aleander first burned Luther's books he was acting under an edict issued by Charles V in October 1520 but not published until the following March 22. After Worms, Aleander toured the Netherlands preaching against Luther and burning his books. At Antwerp he read the emperor's edict while burning four hundred copies of Luther's books--three hundred had been confiscated from the book shops and one hundred had been surrendered by the people. Probst, Prior of Antwerp was arrested; he recanted. After escaping from the Catholics he again turned to Lutheranism.

Charles V wanted to introduce the Inquisition into the Netherlands but his advisors were against it. In 1522 Francis van der Hulst was appointed chief inquisitor and Pope Adrian VI confirmed the appointment with a bull. The town clerk of Antwerp, Cornelius Graphaeus, was the first victim. He had published John Pupper's Liberty of the Christian Religion. On the scaffold in
in Brussels he had to retract several propositions and throw the
book into the fire. He was imprisoned and then banished. Two
Augustinian monks, Henry Voes and John Esch, became the first
martyrs in the Netherlands when they were burnt at Antwerp on
July 31, 1523. Luther composed a moving hymn in memory of them
when he received the news of their martyrdom. In 1524 a supreme
tribunal of three judges was established to try heretics. Thirty-
eight laborers were arrested at Antwerp in 1524 for meeting to
discuss the gospel. Censorship of the press was established.
Lutheranism continued to spread and popular feelings began to
run high. Criticisms of the church were applauded. Few were
willing to openly confess that they were Lutheran but many were
secretly of that persuasion and sympathy. An Italian in Antwerp
wrote home that if the Germans were to march on Antwerp, twenty-
thousand armed citizens would join them. There was a riot when
a Lutheran was drowned in the Scheldt on July 31, 1525.

In 1527 an English ambassador wrote home to Wolsey that two
out of three persons in the Netherlands held Luther's opinions.
He also reported that an English New Testament was being printed
to be smuggled into England and that he had been unable to get
the magistrates to act.

Charles issued edict after edict against the heretics, with
each becoming more severe. His aunt, Margaret of Austria, whom
he appointed Regent of the Netherlands found it impossible to
enforce the edicts. In 1530 he made his sister, Mary, widowed
Queen of Hungary, Regent. She showed little zeal in enforcing
the edicts. She even confessed to the emperor certain sympathies
with the Lutherans; she did not join them so he allowed her to
continue as Regent.

Charles attributed the spread of heresy to lax enforcement
of his edicts. In 1524 he had forbidden any book to be printed
without approval by his censors. In 1525 he forbade all open or
secret meetings to read spiritual writings or to preach the
Gospel; he also forbade the discussion of the Faith, the Sacraments,
the power of the Pope and councils in private houses at meals.
In 1526 he issued edicts against reading or preaching the Gospel
and holy writings in Latin, Flemish or Walloon. In 1528 he issued
a decree against unlicensed books and against monks leaving
their cloisters.

Alarmed at the continued spread of heresy on October 14, 1529,
he issued an edict that inaugurated a reign of terror. Death was
decreed for anyone found with a Lutheran book. Anyone printing
an unlicensed book could be publicly whipped on the scaffold,
branded with a red hot iron, an eye could be put out, or a hand
cut off at the discretion of the judge.

In spite of these efforts against heresy the works and ideas
of Zwingli, also, were spreading in the Netherlands and winning
followers. Some turned from Luther to Zwingli.

By 1530 much more alarming than the spread of Lutheranism or
the ideas of Zwingli was the spread of the Anabaptists. The
Anabaptists were more revolutionary and socialistic. As early
as 1527 Jan Walen and two others became the first Anabaptist martyrs in the Netherlands. At the Hague in 1527 instead of being burnt alive they were chained at a distance from a great fire and slowly roasted to death. This became the usual punishment for Anabaptist men in the Netherlands. Women were drowned. In 1530 in Amsterdam, Jan Volkertz and nine of his followers were beheaded and their heads set on poles in a circle where they could be seen by ships entering the harbor. On October 7, 1531, a severe edict calling for a general massacre of Anabaptists was issued. In Haarlem in 1532 a woman was drowned and two men roasted alive.

Melchior Hoffman and Jan Matthys, the Haarlem baker, were most successful in spreading Anabaptism in the Netherlands. In 1534 in one day a hundred persons were rebaptized. By March in 1534 two thirds of Monnikendam was Anabaptist. Daventer, Zwolle and Kampen became almost wholly Anabaptist. The government patrolled the cities and their environs, and made midnight visits to round up Anabaptists. The prison dungeons were filled with Anabaptists.

Lutherans and Zwinglians tended to support the government in the persecution of the Anabaptists.

Whereas Lutherans and Zwinglians offered passive resistance to the emperor's edicts, the Anabaptists began to advocate the use of force against what they regarded the forces of the Anti-Christ. In 1534 they attempted to take control of Amsterdam. The revolt failed; the men were burned and the women drowned. In 1535 all Anabaptists were ordered out of Antwerp. Anabaptists were massacred in the northern provinces. The Anabaptist plotted to seize Leyden. The plot was discovered and fifteen men were beheaded and nine women were drowned in 1535.

The stories of the Munster Revolt filled the ruling class in the Netherlands with horror. The fierce persecution in the Netherlands and the prospect of a welcome to Munster caused many Anabaptists to attempt to flee. The authorities of the Netherlands used soldiers and the navy to try to block the flight of the Anabaptists, to capture them and to confiscate all their belongs. Death was their usual fate. In 1535 in Amsterdam seven men and five women ran through the streets crying "Woe! Woe! The Wrath of God!" They were arrested and put to death. The woman in whose house they had held their meetings was hanged in front of her own door.

After the collapse of Munster Menno Simons took the lead in gathering and guiding non-violent Anabaptists. Hated, slandered and bitterly persecuted they survived. Anabaptists furnished more martyrs than any other group.

Lutheranism continued to spread. A new edict was published in 1540 with sterner penalties. The Inquisition grew increasingly unpopular. The Inquisitors were obliged to make their arrests at night to avoid riots. When Enzinas
in 1543 asked an Antwerp printer to print a Spanish Bible the printer told him he had published Bibles in almost every language of Europe. Enzinhas was arrested and imprisoned at Brussels. Four hundred Protestant citizens visited him in prison. In 1544 an edict was issued against printing and distributing unlicensed books in Italian, Spanish, or English. In 1546 all booksellers were required to take an oath not to deal in heretical books. The University of Louvain drew up the first "Index of Prohibited Books." On the list were eleven editions of the Vulgate published by Protestants, six editions of the Bible and three of the New Testament in Dutch, and two editions of the Bible in French, with many others. Schoolmasters were forbidden to use unlicensed books. A censorship of plays was established.

Charles V issued a final edict (all these edicts were called Placards) in April, 1550, confirming all the previous edicts, strengthening the Inquisition, and requiring everyone who entered the Netherlands to have a certificate of Catholic belief. Foreign merchants began leaving the Netherlands. Prices fell and trade almost ceased. The Inquisition was bringing economic ruin. The provinces of Brabant and Antwerp repudiated the Placard declaring it would ruin all trade.

In 1555 Charles V, failing in health and crushed by his failure to reach his goals, abdicated to seek rest for his soul in a monastery. He left the empire to his brother, Ferdinand, and he left Spain and its dependencies, including the Netherlands, to his son, Philip II. As he descended from his throne he was supported by his treasured courtier, William Prince of Orange.

THE NETHERLANDS UNDER PHILIP II

Philip II accepted the throne in his native language, Spanish. From Spain he would try to govern the Netherlands. To the people of the Netherlands he was a hated foreigner. Philip was dedicated to the plans of his father—an absolute monarch over a united empire with an absolute religion. From the first he would earn the hatred of the people of the Netherlands by ignoring their rights, privileges, immunities, and local customs and traditions. The hatred grew as he taxed them to finance his dreams of Spanish Empire.

THE RISE OF THE CALVINISTS IN THE NETHERLANDS

In the 1540's and 1550's before the coronation of Philip II the Calvinists were infiltrating the Netherlands and spreading rapidly. The first Calvinist missionaries came secretly or quietly, preaching in private homes. Often people attended in disguise and after dark. They made converts among the merchants in the cities. They made great conquests among the middle class. Calvinism then spread to the laborers. Calvinist employers would employ only fellow Calvinists. Among the poor even some Anabaptists joined the Calvinists hoping to better their lot. In his Placard of 1550 Charles V
had mentioned these new heretics. By 1560 some of the nobles had been converted. In the South Calvin's French writings spread rapidly. Latin writings and translations into the vernacular circulated in the North. The Calvinist preachers instilled into the middle class the doctrine that the state must serve and be subservient to the true church. They spread the idea of the right of revolution against tyrants who hindered or set themselves against the true religion. An enthusiasm for martyrdom spread. In 1561 a Walloon who had studied in Geneva, Guy de Bray, prepared a Calvinistic confession, known as the Belgic Confession, to guide the Dutch Reformed Church that was taking shape. In 1571 the first Calvinistic synod was held in the Netherlands. The Calvinists were beginning to supplant the Lutherans as the leading Protestant body in the Netherlands.

THE NETHERLANDS UNDER MARGARET OF PARMA AND GRANVELLE

Philip II spent the first four years of his reign in the Netherlands. His Spanish language and Spanish manners proved highly offensive to the people. He brought in Spanish troops who were hated. He greatly increased the taxes to pay the troops and to finance his foreign policy. He reissued the Placards of his father and issued a new edict against heresy. He brought in Jesuits to help enforce his policy. The people were forbidden to have, to copy, to sell or to circulate any writing of Luther, Zwingli, Oecolampadius, Bucer, Calvin or any other heretic. No one was to injure an image of Mary or any of the Saints. No one was to attend any heretical conventicle. Laymen were forbidden to read Scripture or to discuss disputed points of doctrine. Men who transgressed the edicts were to be beheaded and women were to be buried alive. The property of transgressors would be confiscated. A reward was offered to those who would inform on heretics. To fail to inform made one guilty of heresy. The Inquisition proceeded with its bloody work.

Philip secured from the pope a special bull permitting him to reorganize the religious districts to make them correspond with the political districts. He received permission to form six new bishoprics. The plan met with fierce opposition from the people.

In 1559 Philip II left the Netherlands never to return. He appointed his half-sister, Margaret of Parma, the illegitimate daughter of Charles V to be regent of the Netherlands. At fourteen she had been married to Alexander de' Medici, nephew of Pope Clement VII. Becoming a widow she had married Ottavio Farnese, nephew of Paul III. She was thoroughly Italian in feeling and manners and another foreigner to the Netherlands. For her chief adviser she was given the Bishop of Arras (Cardinal de Granvelle). To serve under Granvelle he appointed the Baron de Barlaymont who was president of the Council of Finance; Viglius van Aytt, a lawyer of Friesland who was President of the Privy Council; also two Netherland nobles, Lamoral, Count of Egmont and Prince of Gavre, and William, Prince of Orange and Nassau.
William was the richest man in the Netherlands. William's father and mother were Lutherans. The Emperor had required as a condition for him to inherit Nassau in the Netherlands and Orange in France that he be sent to the Netherlands to be reared as a Catholic in the home of a Catholic noble. He added to his possessions by marrying Anna van Buren, heiress of the Egmont estate in Holland. Before Philip left the Netherlands he made William governor (Stadholder) of the provinces of Holland, Zeeland, and Utrecht. William was an eloquent orator and spoke seven languages but in history he is called "The Silent" because of his reputation for never revealing a secret or speaking an imprudent word—he was slow to speak but was respected for his wisdom.

Granvelle and Margaret continued the Inquisition. In 1561 Granvelle received his cardinal's hat. He and the other two members of the council tended to ignore Egmont and William of Orange. Granvelle ignored the traditional rights and privileges of the provinces. The spirit of rebellion grew in the land. Egmont and William of Orange resigned from the council because they were never consulted. The people of the Netherlands began to look to them as their real and natural leaders. William of Orange married Anne of Saxony gaining large holdings in Germany. Not only the Protestants but even Catholic nobles turned against Granvelle. Twenty nobles met in Brussels to denounce the Edicts and to demand the removal of the hated Spanish soldiers. Three hundred other nobles signed the compact they drew up. It was known as the Compromise of 1565. The Calvinists took the lead but Catholics were included. William of Orange, still a Catholic, signed the Compromise. The nobles presented the Compromise to Margaret in 1566. Her advisers urged her not to fear or yield to the nobles, calling them "Beggars." "Beggars" became a party epithet and the nobles and their supporters adopted and wore as their badge small emblems consisting of a beggar's bowl and bag.

The Calvinist preachers boldly preached revolution. Iconoclastic riots broke out in 1566 and spread through the provinces. Mobs sacked cathedrals and churches, destroying the images and costly works of art. Books and manuscripts were destroyed. William of Orange opposed the lawless destruction. When the Beggars were outlawed the Calvinists turned to Civil War. Louis of Nassau, brother of William, raised Netherlands forces. In the first battle of the war the Beggars were routed by the government forces. When the Regent did not follow up the victory to crush the rioters they grew bolder and the iconoclasm spread. Catholic nobles in the South were alienated by the excesses of the rioters. Nobles in the North tended to side with the Calvinists.

ALVA IN THE NETHERLANDS

Philip II ordered ten thousand Spanish veterans to the Netherlands to crush the rebellion. William of Orange had guessed this would be the response of Philip and urged
preparation for war. Egmont and another leader among the nobles named Hoorn, along with many other nobles were not convinced. William of Orange retired to his estates in Germany.

Philip put the Duke of Alva, Ferdinand Alvarez de Toledo, a veteran of the wars with Germany in command of the Spanish troops. The Netherland rebels were no match for these veterans. Egmont and Hoorn were arrested and beheaded. Alva set up a tribunal, the Council of Troubles, and inaugurated a reign of terror. Heretics and agitators, all patriots obnoxious to the government were rounded up and executed. During Alva's six years in the Netherlands between 6,000 and 18,000 were executed. Some 400,000 people fled from the Netherlands. Thousands fled to the woods and became freebooters. The country was ruined. Alva levied heavy taxes and conducted wholesale confiscations of goods.

William of Orange was declared an outlaw and summoned for trial. He replied with his famous Justification of the Prince of Orange against his Calumniators. He declared as a Prince of the Holy Roman Empire, a Knight of the Golden Fleece, and a sovereign Prince he could not be summoned before an incompetent tribunal. By 1568 he had raised an army to relieve his countrymen. He sought help from Germany, France and England but the troops he was able to raise were unable to drive out Alva. Each side gained some victories and also suffered losses. Alva could not crush the forces of William of Orange. The Netherlands fought with determination. Alva began a new reign of blood executing nobles of high rank. He received strong reinforcements from Spain. Coligny in France was not able to send the Huguenot reinforcements that William of Orange desperately desired. Coligny advised him to move the battle to the sea. William of Orange encouraged the forming of sea raiders and privateers that were called "Beggars of the Sea." They preyed on Spanish commerce and seize a number of important port cities of the Netherlands. Alva tried raising taxes to pay his troops but was unsuccessful. Trade declined. When Alva was unable to pay his troops they began to mutiny and to sack the cities.

In 1571 the Calvinists held their first synod in the Netherlands at which they adopted the Belgaic Confession. It was the real beginning of the Dutch Reformed Church. They were willing to tax themselves to carry on the war.

William of Orange turned Lutheran and was chosen Stadholder of four of the northern provinces. The Massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day in France made it clear that no help could come from France and that the Netherlanders would have to fight their own war for independence.

In 1573 Philip II replaced Alva with Don Louis Requesens and Alva left the Netherlands.
Requesens continued the war with initial successes in besieging and starving out cities the Sea Beggars had captured. Leyden was put under siege. The people defended their city with great heroism. Finally they cut the dykes. The Sea Beggars were able to sail their ships over the flooded fields to relieve the city.

William of Orange in 1573 declared himself a Calvinist. He gave the movement inspired leadership.

Requesens died in 1576. He was replaced by Don John of Austria. Don John tried to reverse the policy of Spain and offered to withdraw the troops in return for a large financial settlement from the Netherlands to pay the expenses of the troops. The offer came to nothing and the war continued. The people petitioned Philip II to remove Don John and to send in a prince of the blood to rule the Netherlands. Archduke Matthew, son of the Emperor Maximilian, was chosen but when he entered the Netherlands war broke out again. The Duke of Anjou was chosen by the States General of the Netherlands to become the Defender of the Freedom of the Netherlands. Calvinists were loyal to William of Orange. Catholics were at first divided in sympathy. William of Orange proposed a peace based on the status quo but Calvinists rejected the proposal. The provinces were polarizing into a Calvinist North and a Catholic South. In 1579 the Southern provinces formed the League of Arras for the protection of the Catholic religion. The Northern provinces responded forming the Union of Utrecht with Calvinism the prevailing religion but tolerance offered to the Catholic minority. Many Catholics in the North migrated South. Protestants in the South moved North.

Don John was succeeded by Alexander Farnese, son of ex-regent Margaret of Parma. With a large force Farnese took control of the South and the Protestant religion was forbidden by law.

Philip II put a price on the head of William of Orange. In 1582 Juan Jaureguy, a Biscayan Catholic, attempted to assassinate William. His pistol was so close Williams' hair and beard were set on fire. The bullet entered his right ear, passed through the palate and out the left jaw. He survived. Two years later on July 9, 1584, he was assassinated in the presence of his family by a fanatical Catholic, Balthasar Gerard. The last words of William of Orange were "My God, have mercy on my soul and on these poor people."

The Assassination of William of Orange fired the Calvinists with even greater patriotism. Under the able leadership of John van Oldenbarnevelt the war continued. The defeat of the Spanish Armada by English and Dutch made it impossible for Spain to pursue the war in the Netherlands. The ten Southern provinces developed into a separate Catholic nation that would become Belgium. The seven northern provinces threw off the Spanish yoke and became the Dutch Republic known as Holland. In 1609 Spain granted a twelve year truce in the war but did not finally recognize the independence of the Dutch Republic until 1649 in the Peace of Westphalia. The Dutch Republic was Calvinist but offered tolerance to a Catholic minority.