Prayer: James 4:1-10
Hymn: 640 "Now Thank We All Our God"

The Thirty Years' War (1618-1648) was the worst of the wars of religion. It began as a war between Protestants and Catholics, but religion and politics were inseparable. It degenerated into a barbarous and ruinous power struggle between the Bourbon dynasty of Catholic France and the Dynasties of the Catholic Hapsburgs of Austria and Spain, largely fought on German soil, and into which not only the Germans but most of the nations of Europe were drawn. The Peace of Westphalia that ended the war marked the end of the medieval papacy with strong, dominating political influence, and also the end of the medieval Empire with strong religious interests. The Thirty Years' War prepared the way for the modern state-system of Europe, more secular than religious, with its formulated principles of international law and its definite usages of international diplomacy. The Peace drew the lines between Catholicism and Protestantism, roughly to correspond with the religious loyalties of the people. The Peace of Westphalia of 1648 brought to a close the period of the Reformation on the Continent.

EUROPE AT THE BEGINNING OF THE WAR

Spain with its Hapsburg dynasty was the leading power in Europe. Philip II had failed to bring Holland, England and France under Spanish control, but he left to Philip III (1598-1621) a vast empire that included Spain, Portugal, Sicily, Naples, Milan, Sardinia, Belgium, Mexico, Peru, the Philippines, and the Indies. Wealth from America and from the Portuguese East Indies poured into the ports of Cadiz and Lisbon. Spain was the leader in European culture and art. Philip III was extremely virtuous and pious, but he was temperamentally a procrastinator and mentally a sluggard. He was followed by Philip IV (1621-1665), a fine horseman, a patron of art and letters, but pleasure-loving and weak of will. Both of these Spanish Hapsburgs left the conduct of public affairs largely to fawning courtiers and unworthy favorites. The consuming interest of both was the welfare of the Hapsburg family. Charles V of Spain and Ferdinand I of Austria had been brothers. Philip II and Maximilian II were first cousins. Maximilian II married Philip's sister and Philip married Maximilian's daughter. Philip III was grandson of Maximilian II of Austria. He married a niece of Maximilian. The sister of Philip IV married Ferdinand III, and Philip IV married the daughter of Ferdinand III who was his niece. The Spanish Hapsburgs took a lively interest in the Austrian Hapsburgs.

The Austrian Hapsburgs ruled Austria, Bohemia and Hungary and the Holy Roman Empire that included the Electorates of Germany. When Charles V had abdicated he had made Ferdinand I the emperor and had given Spain to Philip II. Maximilian passed it on to his son Rudolph II (1576-1612), and art-loving but unbalanced recluse.
He was followed by his brother, Matthias (1612-1619) whose ability did not equal his ambition. It was under the weak rule of the two brothers that religious, economic, and political conditions brought on the war. To the Spanish the Thirty Years' War that began as a revolt in Bohemia, was a threat to their relatives. The Spanish put forth their utmost on behalf of Austria.

The truce between the Dutch and Philip III of Spain in 1609 meant that Holland was lost to Spain but also that Spain was relieved of Dutch attack on Spanish colonies and shipping. Spain looked to the eventual reconquest of Holland.

The peace established by the Treaty of Vervins (1598) between Henry IV of France and Philip II of Spain continued during the minority of Louis XIII of France. Cardinal Richelieu, the chief minister to Louis XIII saw in the Thirty Years' War an opportunity to humiliate the Hapsburgs of Spain and Austria and to relieve France from the threat to its borders.

James I of England was much impressed by Spain and made a formal peace with Philip III in 1604. James entertained hope of marrying his son, Charles, to the Spanish Infanta. He used his authority to restrain English pirates and freebooters from raiding Spanish colonies and robbing Spanish treasure-ships. James sent observers to the Dutch Synod of Dort in 1618.

The peace of Augsburg (1555) had been expected to settle the religious question in the Holy Roman Empire. Neither side kept the terms of the peace. The Peace had forbidden further secularization of church property. The Protestant princes continued to confiscate Catholic estates; some Catholic ecclesiastics, becoming Protestant, continued to convert their church lands. Protestantism in Germany reached its flood-tide of territorial advance about 1566. The Catholic Revival or Counter-Reformation, led by the Jesuits became increasingly aggressive; it received support from earnest Catholic princes like the dukes of Bavaria who crushed the Protestant nobility and people in his territory. The abbot of Fulda repressed Protestantism in his territories in 1572-1602. The archbishops of Mainz and Trier moved against the Protestants. When the archbishop of Cologne, Gebhard Truchsess, one of the seven German Electors, embraced Protestantism in 1582, he was forced out of office and Cologne was restored to Catholicism. Jesuits made life most unpleasant for Protestants in Austria, Bohemia and Poland.

German Protestants were unable to take effective action against the spreading Counter-Reformation because of division and turmoil in Germany. Although the Peace of Augsburg recognized only Catholicism and Lutheranism, Calvinism made great advances in Southern Germany. Lutheranism was torn by theological controversy. Osiander raised a storm of protest with his doctrine that the sinner received actual righteousness and not simply imputed righteousness. The German universities and theologians divided over Melanchthon who was accused of being a crypto-Calvinist. The University of Jena became the center of opposition to Melanchthon and champion of a strict Lutheranism. The Universities of
Wittenberg and Leipzig defended Melanchthon. George Major in agreement with Melanchthon affirmed the necessity of good works as evidences of salvation, against Amsdorf who asserted that good works were a hindrance. Westphal attacked Melanchthon as a Calvinist on the Lord's Supper. In 1563, Elector Frederick III of Electoral Palatine accepted Calvinism; in 1562 the theologians Kaspar Olevianus and Zacharias Ursinus had prepared for him the Heidelberg Cathechism, one of the most important of the confessions of Calvinism. In 1573 Elector August of Saxony led a move to purge the universities of all sympathizers with Melanchthon. Theologians were imprisoned and even tortured. The struggle for a pure, orthodox Lutheranism resulted in the Formula of Concord in 1577 prepared by Jakob Andreae, Martin Chemnitz, and Nicholas Selnecker. It was approved in 1580 by fifty-one princes, thirty-five cities, and some eight or nine thousand ministers. High, orthodox, scholastic Lutheranism received classic exposition in 1622 in the Loci Theologici of Johann Gerhard of Jena.

Calvinism continued to spread with Nassau in 1577, Bremen in 1581, Andhald in 1597, and part of Hesse turning Calvinistic. The electoral house of Brandenburg became Calvinist in 1613; most of the inhabitants remained Lutheran.

The city of Donauwoerth was overwhelmingly Protestant but tolerated Catholic monasteries. In 1606 a Catholic procession was stoned by Protestants. The Emperor ordered the Catholic Duke of Bavaria, Maximilian, to occupy the city and to repress Protestantism. At the meeting of the Reichstag of 1608 the Catholics demanded that all ecclesiastical property confiscated since 1555 be restored. In some of the confiscated districts, in the two generations since Augsburg, the population had become solidly Protestant.

In response to the Catholic demands on May 4, 1608, the Calvinist Elector Frederick IV of the Palatinate formed a defensive "Union". The strong Lutheran states of Northern Germany refused to join. Maximilian of Bavaria took the lead in organizing a Catholic "League." Europe was on the brink of a great war.

It was a time of great unrest. Business was bad and poverty was spreading. The enforcement of unity of belief in Protestant and Catholic territories had resulted in intellectual stagnation. The delusion of witchcraft was rampant among both Catholics and Protestants with thousands put to death between 1580 and 1620.

THE OUTBREAK OF THE THIRTY YEARS' WAR IN BOHEMIA (1618-20)

The Austrian Hapsburg, Matthias, was Holy Roman Emperor and king of Bohemia. He was childless. Next in succession to his titles was his cousin, Ferdinand of Styria, a fanatically loyal Catholic. The Czech nobles of Bohemia, many of whom were Calvinists, feared Ferdinand would deprive them of their religious liberty and privileges. The Protestant nobles held an assembly and sent a petition to the emperor, Matthias, calling for the recognition of their ancient right to elect their own king. Matthias declared their assembly illegal and a number of violent attacks were made
on the Protestants of Bohemia.

On May 23, 1618 Count Heinrich von Thurn, leader of the Protestant nobles, with an armed force, broke into the room where the representatives of Matthias and Ferdinand were conferring and hurled two of them and their secretary out of the window and into the moat some fifty to sixty feet below. The Protestant nobles held an assembly in which they declared the dethronement of the Hapsburgs in Bohemia and the election to the kingship of Frederick, the Calvinist Elector Palatine. Frederick accepted their offer and was crowned king of Bohemia in Prague in November, 1619. He prepared to defend his crown. He was recognized by the Protestant Union, Venice, Holland, and Sweden. Bethlen Gabor, Calvinist Prince of Transylvania, came to his defense with troops.

Emperor Matthias died in March, 1619, and Archduke Ferdinand went to Frankfort where he was elected Emperor. He began preparations to expel Frederick. He made special concessions in Italy to Philip III of Spain in return for his invasion of the Palatinate with a Spanish army. He promised to make Maximilian of Bavaria Elector of the Palatinate in return for his joining the forces of the "League" with those of Austria in an invasion of Bohemia. The joint forces were to be commanded by the Bavarian general, Count Tilly. He also got support from Elector John George of Saxony. He received money from the pope and from Genoa and Spain.

Frederick received only verbal support from his father-in-law, James I of England. The Lutherans did not support him. Marie de' Medici of France offered to mediate. The Protestant Union disbanded and Frederick was virtually isolated.

Frederick's army, commanded by Prince Christian von Anhalt and Thurn was decisively defeated at the battle of White Hill near Prague on November 8, 1620 by the imperial forces under Count Tilly, whose army rushed into the battle crying, "For the Virgin Mary."

Protestantism was outlawed in Bohemia, the nobles were executed and their property confiscated. The emperor seized about half of the land of Bohemia, distributing part to his favorites and selling the rest at low prices to replenish his treasury. A chief beneficiary was Albert Wallenstein, a Bohemian noble who had joined the Catholics and by marriage had gained large estates in Moravia. He had supported the emperor with loans and military service. Soldiers were billeted in homes of Protestants to force their reconversion to Catholicism. The University of Prague was given to the Jesuits. All the Protestant clergy were expelled from Bohemia. The most famous of the exiles was the educator, Comenius.

Protestants in Moravia were given the same treatment as in Bohemia. Catholicism was also restored in Hungary where Bethlen Gabor had to give up the struggle. Protestant clergy and teachers were expelled from Austria and the University of Vienna was put under the Jesuits. Fierce persecution caused thousands of Protestants to flee Austria in 1526.
THE PALATINATE (1621-23)

Spinola led the Spanish troops into the Palatinate. Count Ernest von Mansfeld gathered armies to support Frederick who wandered from court to court in Europe trying in vain to enlist support. Even his father-in-law, James I, gave only half-hearted support. Both Catholic and Protestant troops were permitted to live off the land, robbing and pillaging. This became the pattern for the whole Thirty Years' War. As the wars went on much of Germany was turned into a virtual desert. In 1622 Count Tilly and Spinola defeated the Protestants. Maximilian was given the title of Elector in the place of Frederick.

Spain also had renewed the war against Holland in 1621 after twelve years of truce.

THE DANISH PERIOD (1625-29)

James I finally realized that he would never be able to marry Charles, Prince of Wales, to the Spanish Infanta. He began negotiations to try to regain the Palatinate for his son-in-law. He tried to enlist help from Gustavus Adolphus but the Swedes were still involved in war with Poland. He was able to influence Christian IV of Denmark and Norway who had an ambition to be the leader of Protestantism.

When Charles I succeeded James, he promised to provide Christian of Denmark with a monthly subsidy and to send the English fleet against the Spanish coast. Cardinal Richelieu reversed the policy of Marie de'Medici and promised help against the Hapsburgs. The Lutheran princes of Northern Germany feared Christian almost as much as the Catholics and refused support. Mansfeld supported Christian with his army.

Wallenstein offered Ferdinand to supply a large army raised at his own cost. He raised an army of 20,000 whose pay was to be the plunder from conquered territories. Christian and Mansfeld were no match for Tilly and Wallenstein. Parliament refused to allow Charles I to keep his bargain. Richelieu failed to keep his promise. In April, 1526 Wallenstein routed Mansfeld at Dessau Bridge. Tilly defeated Christian in the Harz Mountains in August. Tilly took Brunswick and marched into Brandenburg. Wallenstein occupied Silesia. Their joint forces conquered Schleswig, Holstein, and Jutland. In 1528 Mecklenburg-Schwerin and Mecklenburg-Strelitz were occupied. The imperialists took the Baltic shore from Luebeck to Danzig. Christian fled to his islands and they had no navy to follow.

In the Peace of Luebeck of 1629 Christian retained a devastated Denmark, Schleswig, and Holstein but renounced all claims to bishoprics in Saxony that had been under Denmark. The year 1629 was the apex of the career of Ferdinand and the high point of the Counter-Reformation. Without the consent of the Diet Ferdinand issued the Edict of Restitution of 1629 in which he demanded that all ecclesiastical lands alienated by Protestants, whether Lutheran
or Calvinist, since 1552, must be returned to the Catholics, the administration of ecclesiastical lands by Protestants was forbidden, Catholic prelates were to be restored in such lands, and Calvinists were excluded from the peace. The edict was carried out by imperial commissioners. Within three years Catholicism in Germany regained five bishoprics, thirty towns, nearly a hundred monasteries, and many parish churches.

The Lutherans were alarmed. They had been willing for the Catholics to take Calvinist territory. Now strict enforcement of the edict would give the Catholics five of the seven electorates. Of the two remaining the elector of Brandenburg was Calvinist. That would leave only the elector of Saxony.

The Catholics could not take full advantage of their victories over prostrate Protestantism. The Catholic League insisted that the Emperor dismiss the plundering and ambitious Wallenstein from his service. Bavaria began disputing with Austria over the bishoprics of Minden and Verden. The other Catholic orders began bitter disputes with the Jesuits over reclaimed church property. Pope Urban VIII began looking for ways to check Spanish power in Italy. Richelieu began making plans to check Spain.

THE PASSES OF THE VALTELLINA

The Spanish needed the Alpine passes of Valtellina in the Rhaetian Alps as a highway through which to move Spanish troops. Valtellina was Catholic but was in the possession of Protestant Grisons. The Spanish viceroy of Milan and Archbishop Borromeo encouraged the inhabitants of Valtellina to revolt against their Grison masters and to massacre the Protestants. Richelieu threatened war against the Spanish but the Huguenot revolt and the siege of La Rochelle in 1628 kept him from carrying out his threat.

THE SWEDISH PERIOD (1630-1635)

The Lutherans were thoroughly aroused by the Edict of 1629. The King of Sweden was the Lutheran, Gustavus Adolphus (1611-1632). He dreamed of making Protestant Sweden the leading power of Northern Europe. In his wars with Russia he had gained Finland, Estonia, and Ingria. From his war with Poland he had gained Livonia and the mouth of the Vistula River. He longed to take the Baltic coast of Northern Germany held by the victorious Catholics. He was determined to make the Baltic a Swedish lake. He could count on the help of the Lutheran princes of Northern Germany because of their fear of the Edict. Cardinal Richelieu was finally ready to move against the Hapsburgs and promised to supply arms and money, asking only that liberty of worship be allowed Catholics in conquered territory.

Gustavus Adolphus landed in Pomerania in 1630 and took the northern fortresses. He began to negotiate with the elector of Brandenburg and the elector of Saxony.

Tilly and the imperialists after a long siege took the Lutheran stronghold of Magdeburg (May, 1631). The imperialists
massacred the garrison and some 20,000 of the citizens, plundered and burned the town.

The sack of Magdeburg aroused the Lutherans to great indignation and many of the princes of Northern Germany joined Gustavus Adolphus. The electors of Brandenburg and Saxony joined. Gustavus Adolphus marched toward the Rhine, hoping to form a union with the Calvinist princes. Tilly was defeated near Leipzig. Richelieu persuaded him not to take Cologne, Trier, and Mainz. He turned into Bavaria. Tilly was defeated and lost his life in a battle on the Lech (April, 1632). The Swedish king was ready to invade Austria.

The emperor recalled Wallenstein and gave him full power over his army. He concluded a close military alliance with Philip IV of Spain.

The armies of Gustavus Adolphus and Wallenstein met in late autumn in 1632. Wallenstein was defeated but Gustavus Adolphus was killed. News of his death aroused his troops to a mighty effort for victory.

The Swedes had no one to take the place of Gustavus Adolphus. Rumors reached the emperor that Wallenstein was negotiating with the Protestants to become their leader. Wallenstein was assassinated by some of his own officers (February, 1634).

The imperialist forces defeated the Protestants at Noerdlingen. The Protestant victories at Breitenfeld and Luetzen had shown the Catholic forces they could not subdue the Protestant North; Noerdlingen showed the Protestants they could never control the Protestant South. The Peace of Prague was signed on May 30, 1635 between the emperor and the German princes who were anxious to end the war. In the treaty it was agreed that ecclesiastical lands should revert to those who held them in 1627 and remain in their possession for forty years. At the end of the period a special court composed of an equal number of Catholic and Protestant judges should decide ownership by the process of law. All territories lost by the emperor were to be returned. All leagues and armies were to be disbanded and the imperial army alone would keep the peace. The Swedes and the French refused to accept the treaty which would have deprived them of all territorial gains. Spain prepared for a full-scale attack on France. Richelieu agreed to attack the Spanish Netherlands. In May, 1635 he declared war on Spain. In September, 1636, the emperor declared war on France.

THE FRANCO-SWEDISH PERIOD (1635-1648)

The final period of the war was no longer a religious war between Protestants and Catholics. It was a gigantic struggle between two great Catholic powers. France had the support of the Swedes and a number of the German Protestant princes. At first the Hapsburg armies seemed superior to the French. In 1636 a large Spanish force invaded northern France and almost captured Paris. Another Spanish force crossed the Pyrenees invading southern France in 1637.
Gradually the balance shifted and the improving French drove the Spanish back in the Netherlands, in the Rhineland, in northern Italy, and in Southern France. The Dutch helped France in the Netherlands. In 1640 the Portuguese had declared John IV their king. Revolts against Philip IV broke out in Naples and in Catalonia. Philip put down the revolts in Italy and Catalonia. He held the Belgian Netherlands. He was unable to recover Holland and Portugal.

At first the Hapsburg emperor with Maximilian of Bavaria and other Catholic princes made gains against the Protestant Germans and Swedes. When France sent larger forces into Germany the tide turned against the emperor.

Ferdinand III, who had followed Ferdinand II in 1637, opened negotiations for a general peace. Cardinal Richelieu died in 1642. Mazarin continued the struggle against the Hapsburgs. The French occupied Bavaria in 1645.

**THE PEACE OF WESTPHALIA, 1648**

In March, 1648, Holland forced peace with Spain. On August 8, 1648, at Osnabrueck in Westphalia, Sweden and representatives of the Hapsburgs agreed to end the fighting. France and the Hapsburgs made a similar agreement at Muenster in Westphalia in September 17, 1648. In spite of a bitter war of pamphlets put out by a radical group of Catholics, a general peace treaty was signed on October 24, 1648, known as the Peace of Westphalia.

The treaty reaffirmed the Peace of Augsburg of 1555 with the addition that its provisions were extended to adherents of the Reformed faith—alike Calvinists were given equal privileges with the Lutherans. Church property was to belong to such Catholic or Protestant powers who held it at the beginning of the year 1624. An equal number of Catholic and Protestant judges were to sit in imperial courts. Each prince was invested with sovereign authority in his own territory, with power to make war or peace without hindrance from the emperor. France obtained Alsace except for the free city of Strasburg, and was given possession of the bishoprics of Metz, Toul and Verdun. Sweden received part of Pomerania, the mouth of the Oder, and the bishopric of Bremen and the mouths of the Elbe and Weser. Brandenburg secured eastern Pomerania and several bishoprics, including Magdeburg. The Palatinate was divided between Maximilian of Bavaria and the son of the deposed Frederick. Bavaria and the Palatinate became electorates. Switzerland and Holland were recognized as free and independent states.

Spain and France continued to fight for eleven years—1648 to 1659. The French won victories in Belgium and northern Spain. They made an alliance with Portugal. They ceded Dunkirk to England in return for an alliance. An exhausted Spain agreed to the Treaty of the Pyrenees in 1659. Spain ceded to France the province of Roussillon at the eastern end of the Pyrenees and a southern strip of the Belgian Netherlands. Philip IV agreed to the marriage of
his daughter Maria Theresa to the Bourbon king of France, Louis XIV. In return for the promise of a large dowry by the Hapsburg wife, Louis XIV agreed to give up claims to Spanish dominions.

Philip IV was defeated by the Portuguese in 1665. He died that same year leaving to his infant son, Charles II, a ruined Spain. France had replaced Spain as the dominant power of Europe.

THE END OF THE REFORMATION

The Peace of Westphalia marked the end of the control of Europe by the medieval papacy with strong political influence and the end of the medieval Holy Roman Empire with strong religious interests. The war had prepared the way for the emergence of the modern state-system of Europe based on the principle of the essential equality of independent sovereign states with the recognition that there were great powers and lesser powers. These states looked to international law and diplomacy rather than to pope and emperor. Pope Innocent X (1644-55) refused to recognize the peace, but both Catholics and Protestants ignored his protests. Emperor Ferdinand III (1637-1657) had lost both authority and lands. More than three hundred small states of the Empire retained their autonomy, with freedom to carry on diplomatic negotiations with the great powers. Peace depended on the work of diplomats and congresses of ambassadors representing the theoretically equal sovereign states.

The horrors, ruin and revolting cruelty of the war moved a number of scholars to turn attention to formulating rules for the protection of non-combatants in time of war, the treatment of the sick and wounded, the prohibition of wanton pillage, and the horrors that so shocked the more enlightened of Europe. Foremost among these scholars was the learned Dutch humanist, Hugo Grotius (1583-1645). Imprisoned in Holland in 1619, he escaped to Paris where in 1625 he published his On the Law of War and Peace, the first systematic treatise on modern international law.

Germany had suffered most in the war. The ruin left by the war and the selfishness of the multitude of little princes delayed the rise of a national German state for over a century. The war left Germany almost a desert. Two thirds of the population had disappeared. The population had fallen from sixteen million to six million. The misery of the survivors was terrible. Five sixths of the villages had been destroyed. One village in the Palatinate had been plundered eight times in two years. In the north a third of the land was out of cultivation. Commerce and manufacturing had ceased. Education had disappeared. The moral decline of the people, the coarsening of the manners and the growth of superstition was shocking. Few signs of spiritual life remained. Amidst the darkness and misery appeared a few great German hymn writers like Paul Gerhardt (1607-1676) and the great Protestant mystic, Jakob Boehme (1576-1624) of Goerlitz.