

The Roman Catholic Church in Latin America

The churrigueresque style of many churches of New Spain, this one from the Cathedral at Zacatecas, Mexico.



Papal bulls: *Inter Caeterae* (1493) & *Sublimus Dei* (1537)

Royal patronage established in early 1500s

retain tithes of crops for church activities in the Americas, ability to nominate bishops, right to review papal edicts before their dissemination in the Americas

Huge increase in missionary activity by regular priests (Franciscans claimed that 60 Franciscan priests baptized 6 million Amerindians by 1536)

King Philip II in 1565 orders tribunals of Spanish Inquisition set up in the Americas

Economic power of Catholic Church in Latin America—up to half the land in New Spain

legacies

tithes

pius works (*obras pias*)

Missions

The annual report for 1784, with only 9 missions established in California, gave 5400 head of cattle, and 380 metric tonnes of maize grown that year.

Downfall: secular reformist government in Mexico dismantled mission system. By 1840, when the missions were dismantled, they produced a combined 4700 metric tonnes of wheat and maize, and enjoyed 425,000 cattle, 62,000 horses, 320,000 sheep, and supported 30,000 Amerindians.