

churches in France. Faithful preaching was accompanied by fervent psalm singing. Versified by Clément Marot and Theodore de Bèze (Beza), the Psalms were sung to tunes by Matthias Greiter, Louis Bourgeois and others. Most famous of all was Greiter's setting of Psalm 68, which became the Huguenot battle-hymn. It was a constant source of inspiration during terrible persecution.

During the appalling St Bartholomew massacre of 24 August 1572, many thousands of Huguenots perished throughout France including their godly leader, Admiral Gaspard de Coligny. King Henri IV's *Edict of Nantes* (1598) provided a fragile and frequently violated peace. Directed by the Jesuits, the Roman Church pursued a cruel policy of extermination. The *Edict of Nantes* was revoked by King Louis XIV in 1685. Huguenot temples were demolished and the flocks scattered. The faithful worshipped in woods, caves and other remote places; their assemblies were known as the 'churches of the desert'. Those captured by the dragoons were punished. Pastors were either hanged or sent to the galleys. Women were sent to prison and the children educated in Jesuit schools. Many emigrated to Holland, Germany, Great Britain and elsewhere. The sufferings of those who remained provoked the heroic yet tragic Camisard war in the Cévennes (1702-4). But God did not forsake His people. Under the inspired leadership of Antoine Court and Paul Rabaut, there was a revival of the Reformed Churches during the eighteenth century.

Persecution gradually eased. Galley slaves were released in 1775. In 1787, Louis XVI's *Edict of Toleration* opened an era of liberty on the eve of the French Revolution (1789). The French monarchy was overthrown in the bloodshed that followed. It was a miracle that French Protestantism ever survived. Yet, in the midst of indescribable suffering, the testimony of the Huguenot pastors and people alike stood firm. They remain a model for us all. The assurance of the psalmist was theirs: 'Blessed be the Lord, who daily loads us with benefits...the God of Israel is He that gives strength and power unto his people. Blessed be God.' (*Psalms* 68: 19, 35).

Further reading:

Sons of Calvin - Three Huguenot Pastors by
Alan C. Clifford (Charenton Reformed Publishing)

EUROPE FOR CHRIST

REFORMATION AND REVIVAL

Dr Alan C. Clifford

EUROPE FOR CHRIST

British Euro-scepticism operates on two levels. In political terms, UK citizens are rightly concerned at the undemocratic character of EU institutions and their highly-centralised bureaucracies. The proposed new Constitution of the European Union ought to alarm all who value the political heritage of the United Kingdom. In religious terms, British Protestant Christians have just cause to suspect the on-going politico-religious aspirations of the Roman Catholic Church. While even Rome has to contend with secular liberal forces in Europe, her influence remains pervasive and her religious vision undimmed. In short, Rome dreams of returning to the heady days of the Emperor Charlemagne and the Holy Roman Empire.

The last thing British Protestants can afford is the luxury of insularity and irrelevance. What then should be our stance? While we still retain some freedom of movement, what of our Continental brothers and sisters in Christ whose nations are fully embedded in the EU, Euro and all? In view of the fact that the religious and political liberties we are fast losing owe their rise in great measure to the Protestant Reformation, it is surely time to revive this heritage on an European scale. Whether we approve of the EU or not, this must be done with all the dedication, imagination and zeal of the Reformed heroes and heroines of yesteryear. Only then may we challenge the growing political and religious despotisms of our day.

The adhesive card design symbolises the task before us. We are all familiar with the symbol of the EU. Some of us might be unaware that the Roman Catholic version of the ring of stars includes an image of the virgin Mary at the centre. By replacing Mary with the Huguenot Cross and adding the

motto 'Europe for Christ - Reformation and Revival', an ominous symbol is converted into a logo of immense significance for those who love the Gospel of Jesus Christ. For those unfamiliar with the Reformed meaning of the Huguenot Cross, this is explained on the reverse side.

If you share the sentiments of this statement and are concerned to revive a vision which must not die, then please tell your friends about it. Also, display the card on car boots and other display areas. They may be used as book marks and as domestic exhibits to arouse the interest of guests and friends. They might lead to stimulating opportunities for witness and discussion. In view of the defeatism and ghetto-mentality of much pietistic Protestantism, this venture is designed to enable us to present the Reformed Faith in an interesting, relevant and effective manner.

The cards are 50p each or £4.00 for 10. For further enquiries or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me. I remain

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Yours sincerely in our Lord Jesus Christ,

Dr Alan C. Clifford
Pastor of Norwich Reformed Church
(www.geocities.com/nrchurch)

WHO WERE THE HUGUENOTS?

In the history of the Reformation, no story is more moving and humbling than that of the martyr churches of France. For nearly three centuries, the Huguenots earned the title of the suffering saints of Europe. Led from Geneva by exiled John Calvin, they bravely proclaimed the true Gospel of Christ. In 1559, the first National Synod held in Paris adopted a Reformed *Confession of Faith* and *Church Order*. By 1561, there were about 2,000 Reformed