

The Papal Bulls

#11 2:30 p.m.

(Information taken from www.doctrineofdiscovery.org)

Papal Bull Dum Diversas - 18 June 1492

Pope Nicholas V issued the papal bull Dum Diversas on 18 June, 1492. It authorised Alfonso V of Portugal to reduce any "Saracens (Muslims) and pagans and any other unbelievers" to perpetual slavery. This facilitated the Portuguese slave trade from West Africa.

The Bull Romanus Pontifex (Nicholas V) - 8 January 1494

The same pope wrote the bull [Romanus Pontifex](#) on January 5, 1494 to the same Alfonso. As a follow-up to the Dum Diversas, it extended to the Catholic nations of Europe dominion over discovered lands during the Age of Discovery.

The Bull Inter Caetera (Alexander VI) - 4 May 1493

In 1493 Alexander VI issued the bull [Inter Caetera](#) stating one Christian nation did not have the right to establish dominion over lands previously dominated by another Christian nation, thus establishing the Law of Nations.

Together, the Dum Diversas, the [Romanus Pontifex](#) and the [Inter Caetera](#) came to serve as the basis and justification for the Doctrine of Discovery, the global slave-trade of the 15th and 16th centuries, and the Age of Imperialism.

Expansion of Papal Bulls

Treaty of Tordesillas - 7 June 1494

The Treaty of Tordesillas was concluded on June 7 1494 to settle the contentious matter of the possession of the newly discovered lands of the non Christian world between Portugal and Spain.

Patent Granted by King Henry VII to John Cabot and his sons - 5 March 1496

By this public document, Henry VII indicated his official, royal support for Cabot's enterprise. As an agent of the English Crown, Cabot was empowered to investigate, claim and possess lands "which before this time were unknown to all Christians" - which meant he could not intrude on Spanish and Portuguese discoveries.

The Requerimiento - 1512

Requerimiento ["Requirement"], by Charles I of Spain [abridged]: Spanish conquistadors read this document, composed in 1514, to Indians of the new world. It briefly explains Spain's assertion of its legal and moral right to rule over the inhabitants of Latin America. It also provides a rationale for a "just war." Legalistic Spaniards devised this doctrine so that you could "legally" enslave Indians who refused to agree with all the statements of the requerimiento.