How far did the Papacy reform itself during this period?

In the early 16th Century the Papacy was in a bad way:

- Indulgences controversy
- The Borgia Popes (e.g. Alexander VI – Romagna, Cesare, Lucrezia)
- The Medici Popes (e.g. Julius II – warrior pope, Julius Exclusius)

• The traditional view of popes as being power-crazy and opposed to reform is over simplistic.

▪ Following the Great Schism Princes and bishops wrested control from the Papacy by promoting Conciliarism (the view that the Church should be run by General Councils rather than the Pope).

• Therefore, Popes had no choice but to become politically and militarily astute to preserve their authority. They hated the idea of a General Council not because it wanted reform, but because it wanted to undermine the Papacy; the Popes failed to pursue reform not out of a lack of inclination, but a lack of time.

• The turning point was The Sack of Rome (1527) which convinced the Papacy of the need for reform.

• **Adrian VI** was the first Pope to sow the seeds of reform. Died swallowing a wasp.

• **Paul III** watered them by
(a) Reforms of the Ecclesia
(b) The Council of Trent

▪ Paul III – became Pope in 1534 at age of 66. Complicated – very worldly but very religious too. E.g. immediately created 2 grandsons as Cardinals and took the Duchy of Parma out of Papal control and put it into that of his disreputable son. But also a reformer – partly because CV was demanding reform and HVIII had already broken away in disgust, but also because he was genuinely eager for reform. Hence he immediately appoints 6 reforming Cardinals including Contarini and Carafa (the future Paul IV).

▪ He then appointed the *Concilium de Emendada Ecclesia*, a commission which reported back on the state of the Church and called for pluralism and simony to be stopped. This was much too radical to be practical, as Paul realises. He therefore stalls on it; but the report leeks out to Protestants in Germany who jubilantly stress how it shows the weaknesses of the Church.

▪ Contarini met Melanchthon at the Regensburg Colloquy in 1541 and considerable compromises were made but not over the really big issues like Papal primacy and besides, the agreements that are reached are rejected by Pope and Luther. Contarini dies the next year.

▪ Some reformers are pro-active (i.e. the Christian Humanists who are keen to reach agreement with Lutherans); some are re-active (e.g. Carafa, who simply aims to crush the Lutherans). Paul drifts over to the latter after Regensburg.

THE PAPACY – POSITIVE AGENTS OF REFORM?

• **Key words to inlcude:**
Liturgies (Breviary, Missal, Catechism), Dismissals, Reduction of Corrupt Business, New Cardinals, Congregations (propoganda).

	Name of Pope	Evidence of reactionary / corrupt tendencies	Evidence of progressive / upright tendencies
POPES BEFORE TRENT.	Alexander VI (1492-1503)		
	Julius II (1503-1513)		
	Leo X (1513-21)		
	Adrian VI (1522-23)		
	Clement VII (1523-34)		
POPES IN THE ERA OF TRENT	Paul III (1534-49)		
	Julius III (1550-55)		
	Paul IV (1555-59)		
	Pius IV (1559-65)		
POPES AFTER TRENT	Pius V (1566-72)		
	Gregory XIII (1572-85)		
	Sixtus V (1585-90)		

Questions:
1. Do the reforms of the Papacy during the 16th century substantiate the interpretation "Catholic Reformation" or "Counter Reformation"?

2. How could you argue that Pope Paul III was of more significance for the Christian religion than either Luther or Calvin?

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