



Outline Module 4 Lesson 3: Catherine De Medici & Her Sons, Francis II & Charles IX

Let's First look at Catherine and Francis II

- In **1559**, when **Henry II** died, his son **Francis**, became **King Francis II**.
 - **Francis II**, was born in 1544 and came to the throne as a sickly 15 year-old. He **died** at the age of 16 in **1560**. He was married to **Mary Queen of Scots** in **1548** when she was 6 years old.
 - **After Francis II's death Mary Queen of Scots** returned to England as an eighteen-year-old widow.
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Let's look at Charles IX

- **When Francis II** died in **1560**, his brother Charles became **King Charles IX** at 9 years old.
- He (and Catherine) inherited a fractious country on the verge of civil war.
- Under Catherine's regency relations between Protestants and Catholics broke down completely.
- In the **summer of 1561**, Catherine convened a **Colloquy (meeting of the representatives of the clergy) at Poissy** to give the Protestants a hearing
- In **January 1562**, *Catherine had given **limited tolerance to the French Protestants in the Edict of St Germain.***
- During the public worship on a Sunday morning outside the town at Wassy, The **French Wars of Religion burst into flames**



- **The Protestant Prince of Condé (Charles de Bourbon)**, led Protestants in **protecting** Protestant churches
- The city of **Orleans was already a Protestant city** where important positions in the civil government were held by Protestants.
- The **Prince of Condé** moved his garrison to Orleans, making it a Protestant stronghold. **In 1562**, the Guises captured Condé and Montmorency.
- **In 1563** the Catholics, under **Francis Duke of Guise**, tried to take Orleans.
- **On February 18 1563, Francis of Guise was killed the Edict of St Germain en Laye** was revoked
- Catherine negotiated a truce called the **Edict of Amboise / Edict of Pacification in 1563.**
- When Charles eventually **DID** announce his majority in the summer of **1563**, he called a special Parlement to sign the edict himself (*lit de justice*)
- **In 1564 and 1566**, Catherine accompanied Charles on a tour of the country



- In **1567/1568**, the **Second War of Religion** was triggered by an attempt by Protestants led by **Louis de Bourbon** to abduct **Charles IX**.
- The **Edict of Longjumeau** reiterated the **Edict of Amboise** giving religious freedoms to Protestants. This treaty ended in **August 1568**
- Throughout the **summer of 1568**, the Guise brothers encouraged the setting up of **Leagues** (The Catholic League) to protect Catholicism. By the end of the summer, the **Edict of Longjumeau** was rescinded
- The **Third War of Religion** from **1568 -1570** broke France's coffers
- When **Louis Prince of Conde** was killed, **Admiral Gaspard de Coligny** took charge on behalf of Louis' son, **Henry Duke of Conde** and **Henry of Navarre**, who became the de facto leaders of the Protestant army at 15 and 16 years old respectively.
- As the debt of war rose, **Charles IX** wanted to find a peaceful solution which led to another **Peace of St Germain en Laye (1570)**,
- In **1572** after many failed peace attempts, it is said that Charles ordered his sister, **Marguerite de Medici**, to marry **Henry of Navarre**.
- The **St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre** Charles allowed the killing of the Protestants who had gathered in Paris for the wedding in August of **1572**. The massacre went on for 5 days, with Calvinist homes in Paris invaded, its inhabitants murdered (including women and children) and their property looted.



Sir Francis Walsingham, the British Ambassador to France witnessed the massacre and saved many Protestants by sheltering them in his house. He described it as the 'most horrible spectacle I have ever seen'.

- Charles' **siege on the Protestant stronghold of La Rochelle (1572)** failed at that time. He thought that he could attack while the Protestants were in disarray.

The Siege of La Rochelle (1572-1573)

- Since **1568, La Rochelle (20,000) was a stronghold of the French Protestants.** It was an important port, had administrative autonomy (no bishop, parlement or seigneurs), and was Calvinist in outlook.
- After the **St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre in 1572**, Protestants flocked to the fortified city as their city of refuge with access to the sea.
- Military assault by Catholic troops were led by **Henry Duke of Anjou (future Henry III of France), in 1573.**
- **Henry Duke of Anjou was elected as king of Poland** where there was a sizeable Protestant minority. He **negotiated Peace of La Rochelle in June of 1573.**
- **Charles IX signed the Edict of Boulogne, allowing La Rochelle to be one of three cities where the Protestant faith was allowed under strict conditions.**



Edict of Boulogne (1573)

Withdrew many of the rights previously given to Protestants and limited their freedoms. These included:

- Amnesty for past wrongs committed
- Freedom of belief (in 'justification by faith alone')
- Freedom to worship ONLY in La Rochelle, Montauban and Nîmes and ONLY in your own house.
- Worship anywhere else outside those 3 cities, was strictly prohibited.
- Protestant nobles with judicial rights could perform marriages and baptisms in the presence of an assembly, **BUT that assembly could ONLY be made up of family members and 10 people from outside the family.**

Charles IX died of TB in 1574 at age 23 (1553-1574), after actually ruling for seven years.

