Objectives

• Describe Western Europe after the collapse of the western Roman Empire.

• Describe how Germanic tribes carved Europe into small kingdoms.

• Explain how Charlemagne briefly reunited much of Western Europe and what happened to his empire after his death.
How did Germanic tribes divide Western Europe into small kingdoms?

When the unifying force of the Roman empire disappeared from Western Europe, Germanic kingdoms replaced it.

Greco-Roman, Germanic, and Christian traditions blended during the Middle Ages.
The period between ancient times and modern times during A.D. 500–1500 was called the Middle Ages.

After winning a battle in 496, King Clovis established a Christian kingdom in Western Europe.

It was one of many kingdoms that developed when Roman authority collapsed.
Europe declined during the early Middle Ages, for several reasons.

1. The unifying force of the Roman empire was gone.
2. The region was invaded repeatedly.
3. Trade and classical learning decreased. This is sometimes referred to as the “Dark Ages”
Many Germanic tribes conquered parts of the Roman empire.

After converting to Christianity, Clovis earned the support of his subjects in Gaul and the pope in Rome.

At the same time, Muslims were creating a new civilization and empire in the Mediterranean region.
Muslim armies overran Christian lands in Spain and crossed into France.

Charles Martel, the “Mayor of the Palace” led Frankish warriors in the battle of Tours to push them back in the year 732.
Charlemagne, Martel’s grandson, briefly united Western Europe.

• He fought Muslims, aided the pope in Rome, and was crowned Emperor of the Romans.

• Charlemagne was a skilled leader who revived Latin learning and brought scholars to his court.
When Pope Leo crowned Charlemagne Emperor of the Romans, the idea of a united Christian empire was revived.

Charlemagne spread Christianity to conquered people throughout his kingdom and set up a strong, efficient government.

However, the pope's action angered the emperor in Constantinople and deepened the split between east and west.
After Charlemagne died, his empire was split up. His heirs faced waves of invasions.