



# Celebrating the 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Reformation



## 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, What Does This Mean?

Several people have asked me what exactly is this the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrating. It is the first in what could be a whole long line of 500<sup>th</sup> anniversaries. 2017 marks five hundred years since the young monk Martin Luther posted his “95 Theses” on the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg – October 31, 1517.

Luther was alarmed with some of the things that he saw happening in the name of the church, not the least of which was the sale of indulgences. Through the purchase of a single sheet of paper you could free your family members from the pains of **purgatory**\*. You could also buy a “get out of purgatory free” indulgence to cover your past and future sins.

These together with other teachings that Luther found troubling were posted in the theses for scholarly discussion and debate. Thanks to the invention of the printing press in 1440 and its ability to mass distribute information, news of

Luther’s concerns spread quickly, and were not well received! This was the moment that sparked one of the greatest reformations the world has ever seen.



### **Purgatory**

(in Roman Catholic doctrine) a place or state of suffering inhabited by the souls of sinners who are expiating their sins before going to heaven.



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