**The Jesuits**

The Society of Jesus, also known as the Jesuits, is a religious group of male members who follow the teachings of the Catholic Church.  The group was founded just before the start of the Catholic Reformation, in 1543.  The Jesuits are known well for their founding of many schools and universities, intellectual research, and for their work as being missionaries. The Jesuits were not formed to put down the Protestantism, but simply to follow the church.  Their main goal at the beginning of the society’s existence was to convert Mohammedans to Catholicism.  The Jesuits have been around for many centuries, and they are still here to this day.

On August 15, 1534, seven students from the University of Paris formed the Society of Jesus.  Those students were, Ignatius of Loyola, Francisco Xavier, Alfonso Salmeron, Diego Laínez, Nicolás Bobadilla, Peter Faber, and Simão Rodrigues.  The men believed that they were brought together by Christ, so that is why they called them self the Company of Jesus.  The society went to Pope Paul III to ask if they could train to be ordained priests in the Catholic Church.  In 1540, after they were accepted to be priests, the group officially became the Society of Jesus.

The Jesuits started to do their first work for the Pope and the Catholic Church during the beginning of the Catholic Reformation.  At first, the Jesuits served the Catholic Church by encouraging people to continue following the Catholic scriptures, and to stay loyal to the Catholic Church.  A little after the reformation had started, the Jesuits realized that the Catholic Church did need a reformation.  In the Catholic Church, there was a great amount of religious exhaustion and corruption, which caused many struggles for the Jesuits and the church as a whole.

Throughout the period of the Catholic reformation, the Jesuits were doing good things to benefit the Catholic Church.  The Jesuits did many things to try to convert non-believers of the Catholic Church, or people who were leaving the church they tried to convince to stay.  They opened up their society to the world, by letting anyone who wanted to apply to their society.  The Jesuits were constantly loyal to the Catholic Church, and they dedicated their whole lives to the church basically.  Everything they did was to benefit the church, by helping in masses, or by converting people to follow and believe in their scriptures.  Not only did the Jesuits help the Catholic Church but also they helped the world.  The also dedicated their lives to educating everyone around the world.  They built many schools around the world, which were very big schools in making lawyers and public officials.  The Jesuits were great people, who dedicated their lives to make the world a better place.

**Synthesis Question**

**Answer in complete sentences**

1. Who were the Jesuits, what is their mission, and what have they done in the world?