

St. Therese Catholic Church

Vatican II - Introduction
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Vatican II

- Dates for the Vatican II Course:
 - September 20
 - October 4, 18
 - November 15, 29
 - December 6



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Vatican II

- *Reclaiming Vatican II* by Fr. Blake Britton
- Read Introduction, Chapters 1 – 2
- Fr. Felix Just, S.J., Ph.D., provides an excellent overview of Vatican II with links for full texts of the documents of Vatican II
- **Site:** <https://catholic-resources.org/ChurchDocs/VaticanCouncil2.htm>



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Difficulties of Modern European History for the Church

- French Revolution 1789
- Reign of Napoleon, capture of both Pius VI and Pius VII
- Revolutions of 1830, 1848
- Unification of Germany and *kulturkampf* ('cultural struggle') targeting Catholic Church
- Unification of Italy - loss of virtually all temporal power of Pope
- Emergence of atheism
- Rise of *laissez-faire* capitalism economics
- Marxism
- Nationalism
- Totalitarianism
- Two World Wars
- Threat of Nuclear War

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Post World War II

- After two world wars, the world was in need of faith, hope, and love. The two world wars had devastated the spiritual as well as the material lives of the twentieth-century people.
- The skepticism born in the Enlightenment had produced moral relativism, that led to the horrific atrocities of the wars. Darkness, despair, and fear remained.
- Pope Pius XII died in his summer palace at Castel Gandolfo, Italy, on October 9, 1958. His death marked a major transition as the Church embarked on major reforms under Pope John XXIII (1958 – 1963), who convoked the Second Vatican Council.

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Pope John XXIII

- Angelo Roncalli was a jovial priest who exuded personal warmth and holiness. He was ordained in 1904, and he earned a doctorate in canon law.
- He served as secretary to a bishop, as well as a seminary professor, early in his priesthood. When World War I broke out, he was drafted into the Italian army, where he served as chaplain and a member of the medical corps.
- Several years later, Roncalli entered the Vatican Diplomatic Corps as the papal representative to Bulgaria. Roncalli excelled as a diplomat and received postings to Turkey, Greece, and France.

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Pope John XXIII

- Cardinal Roncalli was elected pope on October 28, 1958. He was 77 years old.
- Less than three months after his election, he spoke to the cardinals, telling them his desire to hold an ecumenical council.
- He prayed that the council would be a new Pentecost in the life of the Church and provide an opportunity for the Church to proclaim Christ to a broken world.



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pope_John_XXIII

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Pope John XXIII

- Pope John XXIII was very loved and had a terrific sense of humor.
 - Not long after he was elected pope, Blessed John was walking in the streets of Rome. A woman passed him and said to her friend, "My God, he's so fat!" Overhearing what she said, he turned around and replied, "Madame, I trust you understand that the papal conclave is not exactly a beauty contest."
 - "It often happens that I wake up at night and begin to think about the serious problems afflicting the world and I tell myself, I must talk to the pope about it. Then the next day when I wake up I remember that I am the pope."

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Pope John XXIII

- Pope John XXIII believed that the Church must not become insular and reject the world, but rather actively engage modernity.
- For Pope John XXIII, the council would focus on these tasks:
 - *Aggiornamento* (renewal): The Church must help modern man form a lasting relationship with Christ and His Church;
 - *Ressourcement* (return to the sources): Sacred Scripture, Writings of the Fathers;
 - Defense and advancement of the truth.

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Pope John XXIII

- The goal was not to debate the finer points of theology, but rather to center its attention on how the truth was presented.
- Pope John XXIII understood that modern man would not simply acquiesce to the Church's teaching because it was proclaimed; he would want to know why he must believe in the Gospel.
- The focus would be on developing new ways to demonstrate the validity of the Church's teachings so as to bring a fresh impetus to the Church.

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Council Preparation

- Declares Ecumenical Council, January 25th, 1959
- **Antepreparatory Period:** Spring 1959 – Spring 1960
 - Bishops, Catholic theological faculties, Departments of the Curia (the various departments of the Vatican bureaucracy) consulted about the topics they desired the Council to address
- **Preparatory Period:** Summer 1960 – Fall 1962
 - Ten “Preparatory Commissions” formed to address major topics from the antepreparatory survey
 - Each commission corresponded to departments of the Curia and was chaired by the heads of those curial departments
 - Prepared “schema”, draft documents that would serve as basis of Council’s work

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Opening Address

- Pope John XXIII’s opening address on Oct. 11, 1962 set the tone for the pastoral renewal of the Church.
 1. Be filled with hope and faith. Do not be prophets of gloom.
 2. Discover ways of teaching the faith more effectively.
 3. Deepen the understanding of doctrine.
 4. Use the medicine of mercy (no “anathemas”).
 5. Seek unity within the Church, with Christians separated from Catholicism, with those of non-Christian religions, and with all men and women of goodwill.

Source: <https://catholic-resources.org/ChurchDocs/VaticanCouncil2.htm>

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Second Vatican Council

- Pope John XXIII joyfully opened the twenty-first ecumenical council in Church history, the first in nearly a hundred years, on October 11, 1962.
- Nearly 3,000 bishops from around the world gathered at the Vatican to participate in the historic event.
- Each day began with Mass, the procession of the book of Scripture to the main altar, and the recitation of the Creed. All documents were written in Latin and all speeches were given in the ancient language of the Church.

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Second Vatican Council



<https://www.vaticancitytours.it/blog/what-is-vatican-ii/>

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A Council Like No Other

- **Size:** Over 2900 official “Council Fathers” (usually around 2200 at any given time during sessions), plus *periti*, observers, auditors, press; it was perhaps the largest organized meeting in history
- No condemnations
- No *specific* cause, crisis, or heresy (no Arians, no Protestants, no grave abuses)
- John XXIII suggests it came to him suddenly, in a flash of inspiration

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Vatican II: Communicate the Faith

- The greatest concern of the Ecumenical Council is this: that the sacred deposit of Christian *doctrine should be guarded and taught more efficaciously*. That doctrine embraces the whole of man, composed as he is of body and soul...
- In order, however, that this doctrine may influence the numerous fields of human activity, with reference to individuals, to families, and to social life, it is necessary first of all that the Church should *never depart from the sacred patrimony of truth* received from the Fathers. But at the same time she *must ever look to the present*, to the new conditions and new forms of life introduced into the modern world, which have opened new avenues to the Catholic apostolate.
~Pope John XXIII, from the opening address of the Council

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Vatican II: Promote Unity of Christians

- ...at a time of generous and growing efforts being undertaken in various areas to reconstitute that visible unity of all Christians which corresponds to the will of the divine Redeemer, it is quite natural that the forthcoming Council provide the premises of doctrinal clarity and of mutual charity that will make even more alive in our separated brethren the desire for the hoped-for return to unity and will smooth the way to it.

~Pope John XXIII, from *Humanae Salutis*, Apostolic Constitution convoking the Council

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Vatican II: To Address Modern Needs

- ...to a world which is lost, confused, and anxious because of the frightful threat of new frightful conflicts, the forthcoming Council is called to offer a possibility for all men of good will to turn their thoughts and proposals toward peace, a peace which can and must come above all from spiritual and supernatural realities...

~Pope John XXIII, from *Humanae Salutis*



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Second Vatican Council

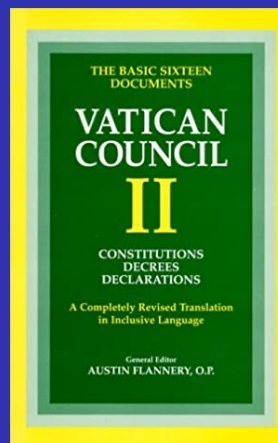
- There were four sessions of the council (1962- 1965). After the first session, Pope John XXIII died. Paul Paul VI was elected.
- Pope Paul VI was “a complex man, affectionate, capable of deep and enduring friendship, yet reserved, prone to fits of depression, easily hurt.”
- Pope Paul VI established mandatory retirement age for bishops (75), and decreed that cardinals over the age of eighty could not hold curial office or vote in a conclave. He was the first pope to visit the United States.

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Second Vatican Council

- The next three sessions of Vatican II produced sixteen documents, which included four major constitutions that form the foundational teachings of the council.
- The four major constitutions deal with the Church in terms of her worship, her inner nature, her source of belief, and her mission to the modern world.



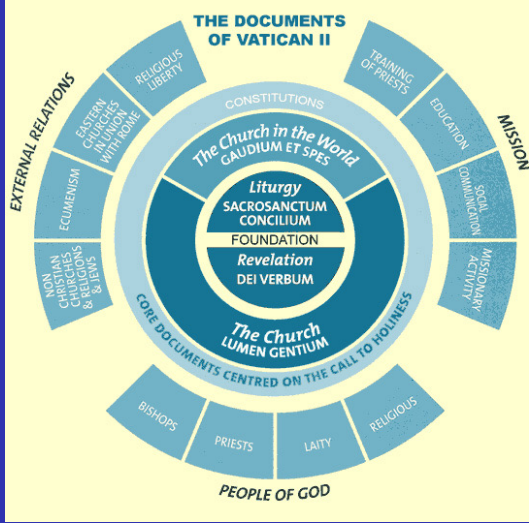
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Four Major Documents

- *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (Liturgy)
- *Lumen Gentium* (Church)
- *Dei Verbum* (Revelation)
- *Gaudium et Spes* (Church in modern world)



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Second Vatican Council

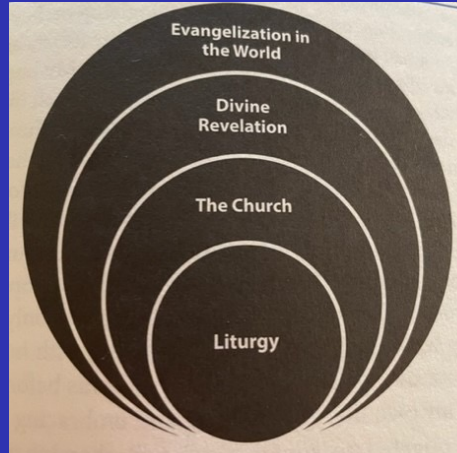
Constitution	Explanation
<i>Sacrosanctum Concilium</i> (Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy) (1963)	Role and function of the liturgy in the life of the Church
<i>Lumen Gentium</i> (Dogmatic Constitution on the Church) (1964)	The inner nature of the Church
<i>Dei Verbum</i> (Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation) (1965)	Sacred deposit of the Word of God
<i>Gaudium et Spes</i> (Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World) (1965)	Presence of the Church and her activity in the Modern World

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Logic of Vatican II

- **Liturgy:** Nourishes and sustains the Church.
- **Church:** Sustained by liturgy and directed by Divine Revelation.
- **Revelation:** Shown forth in Sacred Scripture and Tradition.
- **Modern World:** Church called to evangelize the modern world.



Source: Blake, Reclaiming Vatican II, p. 35

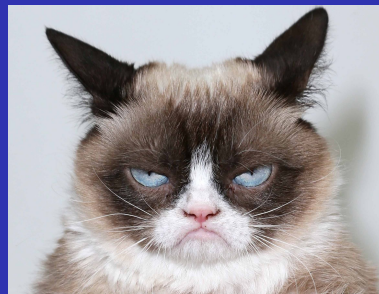
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Be an Evangelizer with Joy



Evangelizer



Non-Evangelizer

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Next Time

- October 4
- Chapter 3 – Sacred Liturgy
- Pages 39 - 92

