

Reflection Questions for Foreword, Introduction, and Chapters 1 - 3

Read Chapters 1 through 3 in *Reclaiming Vatican II* by Fr. Blake Britton. Begin with Pope John XXIII's prayer for the Vatican Council: "Almighty God! In Thee we place all our confidence, not trusting in our own strength. Look down benignly upon these members of Thy Church. May the light of Thy supernal grace aid us in taking decisions and in making laws. Graciously hear the prayers which we pour forth to Thee in unanimity of faith, of voice, and of mind." Your reflections will be shared **October 4th** in your small group. Your group may not get to all the questions. Allow the Holy Spirit to guide you to those questions most important for your group.

Foreword xiii. Fr. Blake talks of his feelings "that this was a point of no return...But these feelings were overshadowed by the enthusiasm I felt for finally being able to understand the Mass and to experience it as a living act in which I could participate directly." *If you have memories from this time, what were they? If you were too young to remember this, what stories were you told about the changes from Vatican II?*

Introduction xxvi. Fr. Blake writes that, "Our duty is to trust in the Lord's inspiration, giving ourselves to what has been given to us so that His will may be done." *How do you see Vatican II reforming and refocusing the Church through the Holy Spirit? How will you choose to actualize your own call to sainthood?*

Ch. 1:2 The "Spirit" of Vatican II. *What is the implied meaning of focusing on the council's spirit "in lieu of promoting the documents as written and in cooperation with the magisterium...?" Do you think that this is still present today?*

Ch. 1:16 "If we are to effect true reform in the heart of Mother Church, it will be as her children, not as her critics." *What does this statement mean to you? How do you see yourself making this a reality in your life?*

Ch. 1:17 "Some claim that Vatican II is the great divider in the Church. In reality, it ought to be the very thing that bridges the divide." *What are your thoughts on this statement?*

Ch. 2:20 "...the Church, far from being a mere institution, is a living organism rooted in the life of Christ." *How do you see the Church in the world today being "living and effective" (Heb 4:12) and bound to our relationship with Jesus?*

Ch. 3:39-53 Vatican II calls the Sacred Liturgy the "source and summit" of the Church's life (SSC, 10). "The Eucharist is the principal manifestation of Christ's priesthood." The Passion "is not intended to be simply a memory but a living reality constantly present in the heart of the Church." **It is Jesus' gift to the Father first and second to us.** *What do you think the liturgy and the sacrifice in the Eucharist do for the Church?*

Ch. 3:53-56 Being "active" participants does not mean "to do stuff." **We grow holy through Christ's grace, not by our own choice.** *Do you find yourself consciously recognizing what is happening to you in the liturgy and not so much what you are doing in liturgy? **Think of Mary's fiat, her yes.** Can you remember a time where you bravely said yes like Mary and allowed God to transform you?*

Ch. 3:57-60 "Sacred silence is a prerequisite of active participation." *How comfortable are you with silence introduced in Mass? Do you see this as a powerful tool in liturgy? If so, how? If not, why not?*

This week when you are at Mass, notice how your faith is nourished and your mind is raised to God. Pay particular attention to the ways that Christ is present in the liturgy. *Are any of these ways new since you've read about the Sacrosanctum Concilium?*

Remember, we do not follow Christ alone. We are one body that is gathered by God. Our responsibility to pray for each other is a shared duty of all baptized Catholics.