

## **Vatican II 1962-1965 – 21<sup>st</sup> Ecumenical Council**

### **Notes for a quick overview of the Council to stimulate discussion on a new historical/theological vision for the RC Church**

The French Council Fathers were heard to say: 'To be a good Council Father you need the patience of Job and the wisdom of Solomon and it also helps if you have a cast iron bottom – alas'.

(Read these notes in conjunction with my paper on 'Guests in Their House: Women at Vatican II').

Note: It is clear that male auditors and *periti* (theologians) worked well with women, in contrast to some Cardinals and Bishops. Cardinal Felici, who had overall responsibility for the oversight of the Council, was known as 'a woman hater'. He never acknowledged their presence and never spoke to any of them. Other bishops did likewise and they even covered their eyes as the women assembled.

John XXIII set the tone and mood of the Council by calling it a 'pastoral' not 'doctrinal' council. It was to be open to the needs of the whole world as well the specific needs of the Church. This was not only the largest Church Council in history but also one of the most momentous. The Council surpassed all expectations and was full of surprises. On the negative side the Church had to leave behind the heavy past of fear it inherited from the 18<sup>th</sup> century French Revolution. On the positive side the Church was heir to the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century developments in biblical and philosophical scholarship. Although the Church was faced with competition from the Protestant missions and the rise of socialism and communism, there was nothing to compare with the effect of the rise of the power of the papacy since Vatican I (1870). As the very wide agenda was tackled and discussed, a remarkable change of views took place among the majority of Bishops from 1962-1965.

The Council can be divided into two main sections the first session presided over by John XXIII who set the tone for the other three sessions, presided over by Paul VI.

## **John XXIII 1958-1963**

### **Session One: October 1962- change in style**

John XXIII was eighty years of age when he was called to the Papacy and ninety days later he called the 21<sup>st</sup> Ecumenical Council on 25<sup>th</sup> Jan 1959. John was a scholar of the Fathers of the Church as so many reformers have been and are. The Council itself opened in October 1962 after exhausting preparatory meetings and papers. Many of the women who were later called to the Council attended some of these preparatory meetings. John set the spirit of openness and respect for all. His style was one of co-operation and dialogue and was non-

condemnatory. He skilfully did not use his power as Pope to dominate it and he interfered personally only twice.

One of the striking first actions of John XXII was the rehabilitation of the theologians who in the two decades before the Council opened had been silenced by Pius XII for their theological views – theologians such as Karl Rahner S.J., Yves Congar O.P. and Henri de Lubac S.J. This action more than any other pointed the way for a change of thinking. Their theology was known as the 'new theology', referred to as a 'novelty'. This theology was based on scripture and early patristic theology. The official theology of the Church, where all *ressourcement*, *going back to the roots to find the way forward*, had long been built on the earlier Thomistic and more broadly Neo-Scholastic theology, a juridical theology that reached its peak in the 19<sup>th</sup> century in the proclamation of Papal Infallibility in 1870

This is the basic reason for the divergent views of the Council and underpins the very vigorous debates between Bishops that took place at the Council and outside. The best way to understand the Council is to read its lively and vigorous debates – the real flesh of the Council. It is these that bring the Council alive and these underlying theological tensions still thrive in the Church. As O'Malley says in his book 'What Happened at Vatican II', 2008, there are three clear issues under the issues of the Council documents – *aggiornamento*, *development*, *ressourcement*. Of these three development is the easier term; it is just what it says, development from a given point. However, the difficulty arises from which sources or *ressourcement* - biblical/patristic or Neo Scholastic of later centuries? What is the true identity of a Catholic is at the heart of this Council are we all satellites of Rome or do we have our own particular identities and rights in different cultures? The famous question of 'collegiality' lies at the heart of this *ressourcement*.

The key to this Council is summed up in the word – *aggiornamento* – opening the Church to the world, the great theme of *Gaudium et Spes*: 'The relationship between (the Church and the world) are words of mutuality, friendship, partnership, co-operation- and dialogue: (O' Malley 'What happened at Vatican II, p. 267). The Council produced 16 documents in Latin. Their style is very difficult to translate because of the lengthy and flowery language, e.g. the overuse of 'holy', for adjective translations made clarity of thought difficult as there is no translation in Latin for 'a' and 'the'.

John XXIII attitude to Council – 'see how much dust has collected on the See of Peter' i.e. since 312 A.D the decree of Constantine (Emperor) making Christianity the chief religion of Rome.

'He was faithful to the past but devoted to the present and he was wise enough to know that nothing from the past can really be preserved unless it is made meaningful here and now' (Xavier Rynne, 'The Second Session', letters from the Vatican Council II: the Debates during the Second Session at St. Peter's Basilica – Sept. 29<sup>th</sup> to Dec. 4<sup>th</sup>.1963' (1964).

Typical Johannine phrase 'With joy and without fear'-

In 1963, just before he died of stomach cancer, he wrote his famous encyclical 'Pacem in Terris' – 'Those who know they have rights must claim them': 36:17.

The physical make up of the Council- 2500 Bishops, known as Council Fathers, 500 *periti*, theologians of the Council. Bishop Butler was the most eminent of all British representatives. This number rose to 800 and John XXIII saw to it that the theologians, who had been silenced attended as well, including Karl Rahner S.J., whose works were still under scrutiny. These *periti* were usually attached to their own Bishop and the latter benefited by the numerous talks and discussions they had together on the newest developments in theology and scripture.

From the beginning there were Protestant and Orthodox observers with their wives. A small number of male lay auditors, initially 29, were called to the second session. 23 women were not called until 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> session of the Council. Cardinal Suenens (Belgium), one of the main architects of the Council, broke the silence on women with the explosive words: 'Women should be invited as auditors: unless I am mistaken, they make up half the human race'. Fortunately, Paul VI knew many of the women who came to third session and remarked 'Women must come closer to the altar'.

**A sea change in attitudes** - the greatest surprise to the Council was that the reforming element was in the majority, the biblical/patristic, not the conservative element, the juridical Neo Thomistic, who feared change and tried to slow down the Council on points of procedure. Cardinal Suenens, Belgium and Paul Léger, French Canadian, went to the Pope to tell him their fears about the preparatory papers. The Pope listened to these Cardinals and their contribution. He then called Jean Guitton, a well-known French philosopher, to 'cast a ray of sunshine over the Council'. Many preparatory papers were scrapped, new working groups were formed and the work of renewal for the modern world began – *aggiornamento*.

Note: At this Council the Church had, for the first time, an educated and articulate laity influenced by the democratic world, including very well educated women.

Note: Attitude changes we find in the Council documents that we now take for granted especially on the Jewish people.

Note: 'ressourcement', its nearest synonym is renaissance, a favourite word at this Council. It advocated skipping over what was currently in place to retrieve from the past something more appropriate. This methodology can be found in every document e.g.

It **undergirded** the Constitution of the Sacred Liturgy. The fundamental principle of liturgical reform was the participation of the whole assembly in the sacred action and restoring the dignity of the first part of the Mass etc.

It underpinned the re-introduction of 'collegiality' into the vocabulary of the Church.

It underpinned Ecumenism- the hope of the restoration of Christian unity.

Religious Liberty- in this case it retrieved and refashioned the old teachings on the free character of the act of faith and the primacy of conscience.

Lumen Gentium was a special case. It substituted the more rhetorical and poetic language of the theologians of the first millennium for the more juridical, political and agonistic language that had taken over dialogue on Church over the ages.

A style choice is an identity choice, a choice in this instance about the kind of institution the council wanted the Church to be. The shift in style that Vatican II promoted meant a change of behavioural patterns 'but the change in those patterns, as in the adoption of 'dialogue' as a preferred mode of discourse, was not a technique or a strategy but an outward expression of the adoption of an inner pattern of values (O'Malley, 2008, pp. 305-307).

Throughout the Council *aggiornamento*, *development*, *ressourcement*, all terms synonymous with change soon came into play. Sometimes it was all three on other occasions one or two. Of all these three categories *ressourcement* was the most traditional yet potentially the most radical. It was also the most pervasive. The 19<sup>th</sup> century historical scientific approach to history fuelled this demand to return to sources. The Decree on Religious Life and its call to return to sources embodies this historical movement. My own life lives out the truth of *ressourcement*, *aggiornamento* and *development*. By going back to the source, with my life experiences of Christian feminism, I found the power that transformed an understanding of the charism of my Congregation for today. For me it released new insights into future possibilities arising from the charism (See 'Prayer, Protest, Power: the spirituality of Julie Billiart Today', Myra Poole, Canterbury Press 2001).

## **Process of Council: Pope John set up 10 Commissions later one more added.**

### **Session One: 1962**

Document of Liturgy- initial document still insisted on primacy of Latin in the liturgy and the priest turning their backs to their people. Many Bishops began to raise the question how can people be involved if the priest has his back to them and Latin continued. It was the Melkite Bishop, Maximus IV, Saig, who reminded the people that Latin was a language of the Roman rite not that of the universal Church and Christ spoke the language of his contemporaries. Eastern Bishops insisted that the Latin tradition could not be equated with Latin rite. The Documents concludes: 'each individual Church (in communion with Rome) or rite retains its traditions whole and entire, while adjusting its way of life to the various needs of time and place' (Document Abbot p.374).

The document finally included the following statement: 'Let it be left to Episcopal conferences in different parts of the world...to propose to the Holy See the degree and modes for admitting vernacular languages into the liturgy' (O'Malley 2008 p. 132)

Liturgy of the Word – in past attending Mass began after the readings – now full attendance was required. Protestants were scandalised at former understanding.

An attempt in writing to tone down juridical side of liturgy and emphasis its vitality was made. Liturgy changes were immediately implemented unlike other later documents. Constitution on Sacred Liturgy – 97% of the Council approved and Pope Paul VI passed it on Dec. 4th, 1963.

2. Document on Revelation- in the end was thrown out and had to be revised – original version had talked of two sources of revelation, tradition and scripture. First two chapters presented tradition, where tradition was considered superior to scripture. Opposition to this document was immediate. The Council of Trent, of the 16<sup>th</sup> century Reformation, had not used two sources instead the Council spoke of the Gospel of Christ as the one source to which scripture and tradition gave witness. The *periti* were strongly opposed to this initial document and Maximus IV Saig, a Melkite Bishop, who was also strongly opposed to Latin masses, lamented the lack of ecumenical awareness, as did Belgium Bishop de Smedt and other Bishops. The Doctrinal Commission refused to back down but it failed to gain the support – 60 percent voted against the text. The Commission seized a technical point that a two-thirds majority was needed for approval and rejection; therefore the same text should still be used as a basis for discussion. John XXIII, on the advice of Cardinal Suenens, intervened and declared that a two-thirds majority was only needed for acceptance not rejection. Therefore John XXIII declared the document had to be re-assessed not by the Doctrinal Commission alone but also by the Secretariat for Christian Unity. As O'Malley puts it: 'the importance of Papal intervention can hardly be exaggerated' (Kelly p.189, 'The Ecumenical Councils of the Catholic Church' 2009).

3. De Ecclesia – the first draft of the later Lumen Gentium was also sent back to be re-assessed – first draft was denounced for triumphalism, clericalism and being too juridical because it fostered a pyramid concept of Church. It referred to members as 'subjects'.

The first Chapter of the new document was entitled '*The Mystery of the Church*'; this replaced the former 'On the Nature of the Church'. This initiated a significant change of perspective, *ressourcement* at work. It was no accident that the first chapter of Henri de Lubac's book 'The Splendour of the Church' was the same title.

- The principal issue to be treated in this document was the relationship between Vatican I and Vatican II, specifically the relationship between Pope and Bishops. By insisting that 'collegiality' be clarified meant it could not be side-stepped: 'Collegiality became the lightning rod issue of the Council' : O'Malley 2008, p. 163. For the juridically minded the Bishops were just appointees of the Pope. However, the Bishops acknowledged their fidelity to the Pope but reminded the Council that the authority of the role of the Bishop goes back to the early Church. Moreover the increased power of the Curia was causing great unease in many of the reforming Cardinals and Bishops.

- Collegiality- increasingly side-lined in the Church since the 11<sup>th</sup> century, re-emerged in the psyche of the Council, no doubt influenced in by the political democratic values in society as a whole. It was re-introduced by Cardinal Suenens. He urged the Council to look at 'Collegiality' in two ways, within the Church and with relations with other Churches. He abandoned the juridical approach and put before the Council the vision of Henri de Lubac S.J. in his book *The Splendour of the Church* i.e. the divine mystery of the Church. Lubac was a favourite of John XXIII, however, Cardinal Martini, the future Paul VI, was cautious, because of his concern for disunity among the Bishops and the place of the 'primacy' of the Pope, in the Church. In the end he threw his support behind the majority who favoured these changes. Suenens and John XXIII won the day. The Document on the Church was worked and re- worked and only emerged two years later as the final document. Out of this came a second document 'The Church in the Modern World' embodied in *Gaudium et Spes*. The only document 'not born in original sin', as it was referred to, because it came from the floor of the house and was not imposed from the top.

John had cancer of the stomach and he knew his time was nearly up. He created a Co-ordinating Commission which included Suenens and others outside the Curia so that the work of the Council could continue in his spirit.

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## **Paul VI (1963- 1978) - presidency sessions two, three and four (1963 – 1965)**

### **Second Session – 1963**

A very different character from John XXIII, he micromanaged the Council with his interventions, (John only intervened twice) and even modified documents after they had been passed by Bishops. He had also been a member of the Curia for twenty years and although he was highly trained theologically and harboured sympathy with some aspects of the new theology, he did not have a professional understanding of what was at stake (O'Malley, 2008 p.106). He gave the impression that the whole burden of the Church was on his shoulders. His main aim was unity. He tried to slow down the pace of the Council in the hope that the Council could win over the conservative minority.

Two major contentious documents were discussed at length during session two –

The Decree on the Church continued from the first session.

NOTE: 'Co-operate' emerged as a key word in the vocabulary of Vatican II with the emergence of the meaning of collegiality.

The question of Mary's place in the Church came up for discussion. Initially, many Bishops wanted a separate document on Mary but finally Mary was given her place inside the Church document – *De Ecclesia* but only by the smallest majority of 40 votes. Paul VI backed the

majority as the diehards tried to slow down the Council by intervening with 'practical' points of procedure.

NOTE: Some wanted to develop a practical way of implementing 'collegiality'. They wanted a permanent synod of non curial Bishops to advise the Pope but the Pope would not agree. Instead Pope Paul instituted the Synod of Bishops to meet every two or three years at which the Pope set the agenda. The Bishops were to be purely advisory.

Dogmatic Constitution on the Church finally signed by Pope Paul on November 24<sup>th</sup>, 1964.

Document on Ecumenism - proved to be as controversial as that on Church. The document was presented by the Secretariat on Christian Unity and the Commission of the Oriental Churches. Document did not talk about 'heretics' (Protestant) and 'Oriental' as schismatics anymore but as 'separated brethren'. This was acceptable to the Bishops but the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> chapters proved very contentious – relationship with Jews, Catholic traditional anti-Semitism 'perfidious Jews etc. which had been erased by John XXIII from the Good Friday liturgy. Cardinal Bea, a German and President of The Secretariat for Christian Unity, was in a good position to speak about how the inherited attitudes on Jews needed to be eradicated and after the Holocaust the Church could no longer reflect any form of anti-Semitism. However, this was for the Jews as a race and it did not imply the political problem of the Zionist state.

The question of Religious freedom then arose and Bishop de Smedt spoke on this point under the heading of 'development of doctrine'. This proved contentious especially with the Spanish Franco element. Hence discussion on the Jews and freedom of religion was to be continued in session III.

End of session – solemn ratification of Decree on Liturgy and one on Media Inter Militia. Encouraged Catholics to use the modern media.

Then Paul VI made the momentous announcement that he was going on pilgrimage to the Holy Land. This was the first trip made by a Pope outside Rome and was an ecumenical gesture in the spirit of the Council.

Third Session Sept. 14<sup>th</sup> 1964 This session where earlier work came to fruition

Lumen Gentium, the Constitution on the Church – further discussions. The Bishops accepted the Church as a 'divine mystery, beyond comprehension and therefore beyond precise definition. Chapter on laity and Mary were accepted. Religious Freedom and the Jews. This went against traditional teaching that error has no rights. De Smedt argued the Church had now outgrown this teaching and the early Church did not oppose religious freedom and 'Religious freedom was much more a fundamental, to the faith, than what it wanted to displace'. Lumen Gentium:32, 33 etc. : (Gal: 3:28 ) ' there is neither Jew nor Greek, neither slave nor freeman; there is neither male nor female. For you are all one in Christ'.

Note: change in Lumen Gentium as well as Gaudium et Spes 32, Gaudium et Spes:29 all on question of rights.

Most Bishops, except the few who had still not taken on the spirit of the Council, supported the necessity of the change.

Note: Lumen Gentium is not a definitive document – Dom Christopher Butler (Bishop Butler) declared 'I have no hesitation in saying the Constitution is a great document ... it is a stepping stone and not a final accomplishment'. (Abbott S.J. p.13 last paragraph).

Nostra Aetate, the Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to Non-Christian Religions. They then turned to the Jews – the Holocaust had changed attitudes here- but then Asian Bishops queried why this did not apply to Muslims and other Asian religions. It was drawn up with these changed views: 'the decree urges mutual understanding and respect... and the Church deplores the hatred, persecution, and displays of anti-Semitism directed at any time' any discrimination against men or harassment of them because of their race, colour, condition of life or religion... is foreign to the Church'. This Declaration should be read in conjunction with the Decree on Ecumenism.

Decree on Revelation, Dei Verbum: end of split between two forms of revelation. Scripture now accepted as primary source of revelation: 'the teaching office, the magisterium, is not above the word of God but serves it... and the Church draws from this one deposit of faith everything which it presents for belief as divinely revealed' (Dei Verbum II.IO). This killed the belief of some that the Church simply creates doctrines. The document states unequivocally that all teaching must have a basis in divine revelation.

Decree on laity met general acceptance: 'The laity are not simply in the Church, but with us; they are Church' (O'Malley 2008,p. 229). 'Priesthood of all believers' thought too Protestant by some, but theologians turned to 1Peter 2:9 and Rev. 5:10 and said it could have a Catholic interpretation. Important as this schema was, it was for the most part non-controversial. Much work needs to be done before the laity claim back their full role in the Church, clearly emphasised in the 'We are Church' movement across the world. Ladislaus Orsy (2009) comments on the revised Code of 1983 saying the absence of former Code 129, which at least mentions the laity, eliminates the rights of the laity in any form of process of decision making, clearly illustrating the unfinished agenda of Vatican II.

Note: Women auditors were not allowed to speak on the floor of the house so Patrick Keegan ( President of the World Federation of Christian Churches) was the spokesperson chosen to be the first of the laity to speak at a Council. However, Marie Louise Monnet, a French auditor, was responsible for a large input into the document. Also all the women were very well prepared for the Council, certainly better than many of the men there. This lack of recognition of women's intellectual experience coupled with years of practical experience, especially with the poor, still pervades the Church today . Mary Grey, the eminent theologian for women in Britain would say – Listen to the Women.



The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, *Gaudium et Spes*, was the most controversial document. As one Bishop said this was the only document not born in 'original sin' as the process of this document arose from the floor of the Council. Women played a significant part here in the original draft of this document. Women were on the sub-committees of this document – especially Australian Rosemary Goldie, a personal friend of the Pope. Their input was crucial, however Paul VI tampered with this document and much of their contribution was removed. But the following remained:

*Gaudium et Spes*:<sup>29</sup> 'With respect to the fundamental rights of the person, every type of discrimination social, cultural, whether it is based on sex, race, colour, social condition, language or religion, is to be overcome and eradicated as contrary to God's intent. For in truth it must be regretted that fundamental personal rights are not yet being universally honoured. Such is the case of a woman who is denied the right and freedom to choose a husband, to embrace a state of life, to acquire an education or cultural benefits recognised for men'.

Remember Pius IX 'Syllabus of Errors', 1864, had condemned the modern world and it had dominated Church teaching since the 19<sup>th</sup> century. But the spirit of John XXIII won out. The Church turned itself to the world outside the Church, a helpmate to all and addressed concrete problems such as world peace and matters of justice. No one opposed it and Cardinal Suenens two-part understanding of revelation had won through.

Note: Discussion on marriage drew the ire of Cardinal Ottoviani and followers. *Gaudium et Spes* avoided using text book terms of primary and secondary reasons for marriage i.e. teaching at time – three primary aims – for children, to overcome sexual urge and lastly to express love between two people (See paper on women).

Only married couple at the Council were (Mexican) Alvarez-Icazas. They were Co-Presidents of the Latin American Christian family movement and had done their work thoroughly before attending. Luz-Marie Alvarez- Icazas dressed the Bishops in the sub-commission as a mother of 14 children, who she said 'were all born in love' adding: 'I tell you when your mothers conceived you it was also an act of love'. When her Spanish words were translated, the Bishops first looked wide-eyed and then turned red and they laughed. Their response was 'We never thought of that; you have spoken truth'. Such was the ability of one married woman to sweep away, in a few words, centuries of an ill informed moral perspective that had been based only on a 'deductive male theology'. (See *Gaudium et Spes*, Chapter 4, Article 21 on the Dignity of Christian marriage and O'Malley (2008) pp. 236-238). The primary and secondary reasons for marriage were an explosive subject further complicated by the invention of the pill.

A birth control Commission had been set up by John XXIII in 1963, on the advice of Cardinal Suenens. The Council were informed that they were not to discuss this issue as it was being discussed in the Papal Commission. However, it proved impossible to keep off the floor of the Council. This issue also connected with the population explosion in the developing world. The

ever outspoken Saig stirred the Council with the following words 'do not the official positions of the Church in this matter require revision in the light of modern research – theological, medical, psychological, sociological' (O'Malley, 2008 p 237). The question of birth control remained in the hands of the Papal Commission and in 1968 'Humanae Vitae' was propagated by Paul VI. '*Humanae Vitae*' never found the inner assent of the 'people of God' i.e. it has not entered into the 'sensus fidelium' of the Church. It is now considered a footnote of history.

Religious Orders and priesthood. Religious were told to go back to re-find the charisms of their congregations and priest education was no longer to be based on scholastic theology but scripture as the 'soul' of theology.

NOTE: The minority conservative element, led by Cardinal Ottoviani, was bombarding Paul VI about passing unchanged some of the documents that were proposed. Paul above all wanted unity among his Bishops. He succumbed and intervened on Religious liberty and made 40 emendations to Cardinal Bea. The Cardinal accepted 19 of them because they did not fundamentally change the text. Even more serious was Paul's concerns with 'collegiality' in Lumen Gentium. His worry was whether collegiality would compromise Papal authority, most Bishops believed collegiality remained secure and a balance would be found between 'Primacy and Collegiality'. All but five Bishops voted for the Document in its final form. But they were annoyed at Paul's' last minute interventions.

At the end of the Council Paul finally confirmed the Ecumenical document and Lumen Gentium, but continued making repeated references to papal authority. He inflamed the Council by announcing , at the end of this session, 'Mary as the Mother of the Church', flagrantly going against the scriptural Lumen Gentium thinking on Mary as a part of the Church not above it. The session ended with some bitterness as he had deliberately re-asserted Papal Primacy. As he left the third session 'Paul was grim as row upon row of Bishops only applauded him perfunctorily or in some cases not at all'. He had micromanaged too much and changed wording in documents, influenced by the conservative minority. Clearly collegiality remained an unresolved theological and practical problem.

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#### **4<sup>th</sup> and last session March 7<sup>th</sup> – Dec. 8th 1965**

June 24<sup>th</sup> –Paul announced the creation of the Synod of Bishops but reaffirmed their advisory role only. The Roman Congregation and Vatican bureaucracy were to continue their role.

The Council gave its approval to the education decree.

Debate on Religious Liberty continued; 90 per cent of Bishops voted to approve document. It was to the relief of Pope Paul VI as he was going to give a speech at the United Nations and he would have been embarrassed if the Council had not approved of this.

Third session where the Bishops discussed Decree on Revelation. The minority diehards still wanted two sources. It is to the credit of Paul he did not go along with this but he did insist on a stronger statement on tradition: 'The Church does not draw her certainty for all revealed truths from Scripture alone' (Dei Verbum, II:9, Abbot p.17).

NOTE: Gaudium et Spes , the Church in the modern world, the future Pope John Paul II thought the document was too positive on the modern world. The majority wanted a positive statement, conscious of how the Church had been so condemnatory in the past: 'The terms the text uses to express the relationship between the Church and the world are words of mutuality, friendship, partnership, cooperation and dialogue. That is the great theme of Gaudium et Spes (see O'Malley 2008 , 'What Happened at Vatican II' p.261).

Nov. 18<sup>th</sup> Council at last accepted the Decree on Revelation and the laity

Nov 30<sup>th</sup> Pope signed all four remaining documents

Dec 7<sup>th</sup> Final approval accepted by the Bishops

The last working day ended on a high the Dutch Cardinal Jan Willebrands of the Secretariat of Christian Unity read a declaration from Paul VI that officially removed the 1054 excommunication of the Greeks (Patriarch Athenagoras made a similar declaration for the Greeks but not at the Council).

Dec 8<sup>th</sup> Council closed – the great Council was declared 'The Council is over but in fact 'the Council had only just begun'.

Final 16 documents passed by Council- the big four are Constitutions, the majority are Decrees and a few Declarations.

1. Dogmatic Constitution on the Church - Lumen Gentium
2. Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation
3. Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy
4. Pastoral Constitution on the Church - Gaudium et Spes
5. Decree on the Instruments of Social Communication
6. Decree on Ecumenism
7. Decree Catholic Eastern Catholic Churches
8. Decree on the Bishops Pastoral Office in the Church
9. Decree on Priestly Formation
10. Decree on Religious Life

11. Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity.
12. Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests.
13. Decree on the Church's Missionary Activities.
14. Decree on Christian Education
15. Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to Non Christian Religions.
16. Declaration on Religious Freedom.

### **Books to read**

1. Walter M. Abbot S.J 'Documents of Vatican II'. This book has the official texts of Vatican II. It is rather old may be able to get a newer version on Amazon.

2. Guiseppe Alberigo (general editor) and Joseph A. Komonchak, Five Volumes on this topic, Vol I £46.00. This is for the very serious student of Vatican II – library reading unless you are a millionaire). The editor says of Vatican II 'one of the most momentous occasions of 2,000 years of Christianity.

3. Robert A. Burns O.P, 'Roman Catholicism after Vatican II', 2001, University Press/Washington D.C. 2001. Titles of chapters

Jesus in Contemporary Thought

Authority in the Church

Catholicism as a Global Church: The problem of inculturation

Catholicism – the World Religions (200 pages) £21.75. For those who really want to do some serious reading it opens up relevant questions for all of us.

\*Paul Lakeland 'Catholicism at the Crossroads: how the laity can change the Church' 2009 £13.99

\*Carmel McEnroe: 'Guests In Their Own House: the women of Vatican II', A Crossroad Book, New York, 1996. Only known book written on women at Vatican II.

Dorothea McEwan and Myra Poole 'Making All Things New' : women's ordination in the Roman Catholic Church –a catalyst for change' (Chapter One – the State We Are In, p. 9-13: 2003).

\*Gerry O'Hanlon 'A New Vision for the Catholic Church: a view from Ireland' 2010 £8.50. (Only 116 pages and very readable)

\*L. Orsy 'Receiving the Council' 2009. Based on development of Canon Law. (£ 23.99).

Xavier Rynne, 'The Second Session', letters from the Vatican Council II: the Debates during the Second Session at St. Peter's Basilica – Sept. 29<sup>th</sup> to Dec. 4<sup>th</sup>.1963' (1964).Xavier Rynne `

\* John O' Malley S.J.

Tradition and Transition: Historical perspectives on Vatican II: Michael Glazier 1989

What Happened at Vatican II: Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 2008. This book is a series of lectures and is very readable.

Rosemary Radford Ruether, Women Church: Harper and Row, 1985, £14.98.

Elucidates the theological and historical understanding of Church as a community of liberation from sexism, describes a complete revisioning of the sacramental fundamentals of baptism and Eucharist and details women's liturgies and sacramental forms.

Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, the Church as a 'discipleship of equals', see In Memory of Her: A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins, 1986, Crossroads.

Natalie K. Watson, Introducing Feminist Ecclesiology, Sheffield Academic Press, 2002.

### **Conclusions of O' Malley (2008) pp. 290-313- What Happened at Vatican II**

*Transalpines*, emphasising the needs of the local Churches, *Ultramontanes* all answers lie in Rome, is the better way to talk of the different views that emerged in the Council, rather than the use of political terms e.g. cons. liberal or radical, but sometimes it makes for clarity. The first great surprise that emerged at this Council was that 85-90% would consistently side with the 'Transalpines'.

*The style of the documents is what sets it apart from other Councils.* The Roman Synod of 1960, the 'dress rehearsal' for Vatican II, issued 755 canons. The Council which ended just five years later issued none. The final documents were about winning 'inner assent'. To a large extent they engage in a rhetoric of praise and congratulation. The vocabulary formed by this remain remarkably consistent throughout :

'Although the words can be divided into categories like horizontal - words, equality – words, reciprocity - words, interiority –words, change words, empowerment –words, and others, they evoke an emotional kinship...and along with the literary genre, in which they are encased, imbue Vatican II with a literary genre unique among councils.... Vatican II was a language event'... Among the words are brothers/sisters, friendship, cooperation, collaboration,, partnership, freedom, dialogue, holiness, conscience, collegiality, people of God, the priesthood of all believers. Liberty, equality, fraternity, as well as other unwelcome guests knocked at the door... It suggests, indeed, that almost two different visions of forms

of Catholicism: from commands to invitations, from laws to ideals, from definition to mystery, from threats to persuasion, from coercion to conscience, from monologue to dialogue, from ruling to serving, from withdrawn to integrated, from vertical to horizontal, from exclusion to inclusion, from hostility to friendship, from rivalry to partnership, from suspicion to trust, from static to ongoing, from passive acceptance to engagement, from fault-finding to appreciation, from prescriptive to principled, from behaviour modification to inner appropriation' (O'Malley, 2008, p. 306-307).

Vatican II is also a teaching Council. It taught by its style, summed up in the opening of *Gaudium et Spes* : ' The joy and hope, the grief and the anguish of the men and women of our times, especially those who are poor or afflicted in any way, are the joy and hope, the grief and affliction of the followers of Christ. Nothing that is genuinely human fails to find an echo in those hearts'.

Though the documents have many weaknesses, their genre sets them apart.

Note change in *Lumen Gentium* 32, *Gaudium et Spes*:29 all on the question of human rights, including women's rights.

In the final outcome the cons, i.e. Ultramontane minority held the centre . Firstly, the centre operated with all the many advantages of having the organisation in place to hold firm. Secondly, the creation of the Synod of Bishops , as a purely consultative body, severed collegiality. Thirdly, it was destined to be interpreted and implemented by the centre.

The majority of Bishops were frustrated by not being able to make their words a reality through structural change.

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### **What happened after the Council ----- some comments**

Ladislav Orsy's book on Receiving the Council was commented on by Bishop Duffy of Ireland in 2010 at the time of the height of the paedophilia crisis in Ireland commenting 'sadly our Church has not embraced the great reform that was brought about by Vatican II'. (I wonder whether if these reforms had been implemented the paedophilia crisis would not have been as bad as it has been)

John Paul II letter to Bishops 'Apostolicos Suos' 1998'- only allows 'affective collegiality' not 'effective collegiality'.

*Tuendum Fidem* 1998 – introduced a new theological term into the vocabulary of the Church. The term 'definitive', held to be just one step away from 'Infallibility'. This document re-asserted the non- validity of Anglican Orders and the non - ordination of women. –( the 'Dubious Dubium' of Joan Chittister osb)

The over centralisation of the papacy throws up the need to re-look at the Curia, as it stands and go back to Lumen Gentium and a small group of Bishops forming any inner circle around the Pope.

Different visions of Church –

read pages 64-69 of Gerry Hanlon S.J. on different views on Church – Rahner, Dulles, Eamonn Duffy (historian), Orsy (Canon Lawyer). Note; O'Malley quote (2009) p.66 'until the time of Luther relatively few Christians knew that the Papacy existed... nor did they think it had anything to do with them: c.f. today Catholics believe the Pope runs the Church and this is the main criteria of fidelity'.

Avery Dulles S.J. we have to be careful of too much anti- Roman effect – a world Church requires strong government.

E. Duffy and A. Dulles believe we should not over idealise the synodal procedures of other Christian communities i.e. Orthodox, Eastern Catholics, Anglicanism, Presbyterians etc.

Church as 'people of God' – Lumen Gentium and Gaudium et Spes.

Karl Rahner S.J. advocated that the Pope limited his own powers in order to balance primacy and collegiality. He also believed in the 'diaspora' as Church and the future Christian will either be mystic or nothing at all. (See his book 'Future Church' and 'Theological Investigations Vol. 8)

Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza – the Church as a 'discipleship of equals'

Rosemary Radford Ruether – 'Women Church' – Church a community of liberation from sexism.

### **Points to reflect on and discuss**

Do not allow ourselves to be paralysed by the complexity of the issues of Vatican II and avoid 'they will never change' mentality.

Notice the shift from 'deductive theology', i.e. based on believed non changeable male logical principles to 'inductive theology' based on people's experience, women as well as men. Latter illustrated on the movement in the Council to listen to people's experience, especially that of the women on marriage and in Gaudium et Spes.

Prayer of discernment and action the basis of change – need dynamic action orientated prayer.

Different voices of all to be heard but especially the majority in the Church -lay faithful.

What are the problems in balancing 'primacy and collegiality' ?

Serious thinking needs to be done to unblock the structures of resistance, especially theological, at the centre of the Church i.e. the Curia.

How can we help our Bishops develop collegiality, at the local level, in our Dioceses, as well as making local Episcopal Conferences more effective?

Are our present official consultative groups in the Church e.g. Conference of Religious, Laity Commission, National Board of Catholic Women etc. really acting on everyone's behalf?

What is the role and importance of the many informal groups calling for change?

How can we influence a renewed historical/theological form of adult education needed in all parishes and dioceses beyond RCIA ?

What processes do you suggest towards opening up a serious debate on women's role in the Church including all ordained ministries?

In the light of the 'new theology' introduced in Vatican II what is your vision for a renewed Church in the 21<sup>st</sup> century ?