



VATICAN II

Proclaiming the Joy and Hope of Christ to the Modern World

A PARISH VIDEO STUDY WITH PROF. LUCAS POLLICE, MTS



PARTICIPANT STUDY GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Vatican II: Proclaiming the Joy and Hope of Christ to the Modern World!

For nine sessions, we will rediscover the true teaching and vision of Vatican II - and rediscover the New Evangelization for our world today.

Vatican II provides a pastoral vision and renewal that is the foundation for the New Evangelization. The documents of Vatican II reveal a renewal of the mission of the Church to bring Christ to the modern world. The Council shows how every Catholic is called through their Baptism and Confirmation to continue the saving mission of Christ in the world today.

The Council took place from 1962-1965 - but the "event" of Vatican II lasted until the end of Benedict XVI's papacy, who was the last pope to be present at the Council itself. This means that the Church is still unpacking and implementing the Council. This also means that it's important for Catholics to understand what the Council really was. While there have been many "spirits" of the Council that claim authority apart from the actual teachings of the Council documents, it's important to understand the true teaching and vision of the Council.

If you look at any of the previous 20 ecumenical councils, it always takes at least 50-100 years for the dust to settle in the life of the Church after the council. Popes from St. John Paul II to Francis have insisted that there needs to be a rediscovery of the true spirit of the Council by the reading of the documents themselves, as interpreted and implemented in the life of the Church by the Magisterium.

This course is intended to help you do just that!



EPISODE LIST

Session 1 - What is the Real Vatican II?

Scan to access videos!



Session 2 - The Missionary Renewal of Vatican II

Session 3 - The Documents and Themes of the Council
(TO BE RELEASED MAY 21, 2025)

Session 4 - *Lumen Gentium*: The Church Renewed for Mission
(TO BE RELEASED JUNE 11, 2025)

Session 5 - *Dei Verbum*: The Word of God in the Life of the Church
(TO BE RELEASED AUGUST 20, 2025)

Session 6 - *Sacrosanctum Concilium*: The Source and Summit of the Christian Life
(TO BE RELEASED SEPTEMBER 17 2025)

Session 7 - *Gaudium et Spes*: Joy and Hope for the Modern World
(TO BE RELEASED OCTOBER 29, 2025)

Session 8 - The Implementation of the Council in the Life of the Church
(TO BE RELEASED NOVEMBER 19, 2025)

Session 9 - The New Evangelization: The Extraordinary Mission of Our Time
(TO BE RELEASED DECEMBER 17, 2025)

WHAT TO EXPECT FOR EACH SESSION

Opening Prayer: Each session begins with the opening prayer that was used to commence Vatican II.

Class Outline: The outline gives you a brief high-level overview of the session.

Video: Each 30-45 minute video provides a teaching on a different topic or aspect of Vatican II.

Discussion Questions: These questions will help spark further discussion for a small group - or inspire deeper reflection if you're taking the class on your own!

Closing Prayer

Living It Out: This section provides a starting point for some practical ways to live out the teachings of Vatican II.

Going Deeper: Further reading recommendations to help you learn more about the topics being covered.



THE MISSIONARY RENEWAL OF VATICAN II



OPENING PRAYER

Prayer of Vatican II

We stand before you, Holy Spirit,
conscious of our sinfulness,
but aware that we gather in your name.
Come to us, remain with us,
and enlighten our hearts.
Give us light and strength
to know your will,
to make it our own,
and to live it in our lives.
Guide us by your wisdom,
support us by your power,
for you are God, sharing the glory of Father and
Son.

You desire justice for all;
enable us to uphold the rights of others;
do not allow us to be misled by ignorance
or corrupted by fear or favor.
Unite us to yourself in the bond of love
and keep us faithful to all that is true.
As we gather in your name, may we temper
justice with love,
so that all our discussions and reflections
may be pleasing to you, and earn the reward
promised to good and faithful servants.
We ask this of You who live and reign with the
Father and the Son, one God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

CLASS OUTLINE

I. A New Cultural and Ecclesial Reality

- A post-Christian culture demands a new way of teaching, witnessing, and living the Gospel
- A “simply irreligious” world is one in which religion does not hold any significant place in culture
- The Signs of the Times: widespread separation of faith and life, liturgical indifference, rise of secular humanism and culture atheism, perceived irrelevance of the faith in a technological world
- A new shift and focus in the Church from institutional survival to an emphasis on the Gospel

II. Vision and Goals of the Council

- Two pillars at the heart of the vision of Council: *Ressourcement* and *Aggiornamento*
- Pastoral renewal *ad intra* and *ad extra*
- Four goals of Vatican II: renewed discipleship, adaptation for renewal and mission, ecumenism, and evangelization
- Pope St. Paul VI and paths of renewal: awareness, renewal, dialogue/mission
- A renewal of the Church’s missionary mandate



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In his book *A Secular Age*, Charles Taylor observes that we have moved “from a society in which it was virtually impossible not to believe in God, to one in which faith, even for the staunchest believer, is one human possibility among others.” Why is it necessary to read the signs of the times? What areas of our lives tend to be influenced by secular culture, and what can we do about it?

2. Why is it important to interpret Vatican II through the dual lens of *ressourcement* (return to the sources) and *aggiornamento* (bringing up to date)? Why do we need both in order to interpret Vatican II properly? How do false interpretations of Vatican II divorce these two pillars?

3. What are the differences between pastoral renewal *ad intra* (within the Church) and *ad extra* (ordered towards the world)? How do they relate to each other? What is the relationship between these two areas of pastoral renewal and *ressourcement* and *aggiornamento*?

4. What are the four goals of Vatican II? Why do these goals provide an interpretive “key” to the Council? How are each of these goals a response to the problems of a post-Christian world?

5. How does the Church’s ecclesiology (theology as applied to the Church) affect the identity of the Church? What is the relationship between identity and mission? How is Pope St. Paul VI’s definition of dialogue different than how dialogue is typically understood today?



CLOSING PRAYER

St. Augustine's Prayer to the Holy Spirit

Breathe in me, O Holy Spirit,
that my thoughts may all be holy.
Act in me, O Holy Spirit,
that my work, too, may be holy.
Draw my heart, O Holy Spirit,
that I love but what is holy.
Strengthen me, O Holy Spirit,
to defend all that is holy.
Guard me, then, O Holy Spirit,
that I always may be holy.
Amen.



Andrei Rublev - Icon of the Trinity
(ca. 1400, Moscow)

LIVING IT OUT

In the video, Prof. Pollice discusses the importance of preaching the truth with love. Love communicated without truth is chaos, and truth communicated without love is a hammer. This week, reflect on how you tend to discuss the truth with others. Do you lean towards either of these two extremes? Are there any areas where you might need to grow? What knowledge or skills could help you better share the truth with love?

GOING DEEPER

- Fr. Blake Britton, *Reclaiming Vatican II: What It (Really) Said, What It Means, and How It Calls Us to Renew the Church* - Chapter 2
- Pope St. John XXIII, *Gaudet Mater Ecclesia* - Opening Address of the Second Vatican Council
- Pope St. Paul VI, *Ecclesiam Suam* - Encyclical Letter
- George Weigel, *To Sanctify the World: The Vital Legacy of Vatican II* - Chapters 8 and 9