



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

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 45 minute video provides a teaching on a different topic or aspect of Vatican II.

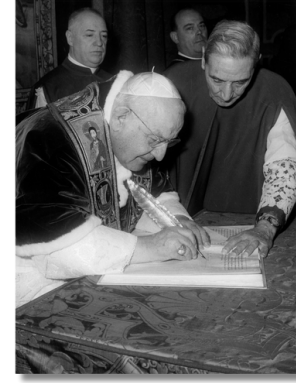
Discussion Questions: These questions will help spark further discussion for a small group - or inspire deeper reflection if you're taking the class on your own!

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 DOCUMENTS AND THEMES OF THE COUNCIL



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. The Documents of Vatican II

- The Four Constitutions (*Lumen Gentium*, *Dei Verbum*, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, and *Gaudium et Spes*) have a certain primacy and carry the overarching vision of the Council
- The other documents must be interpreted in light of the Four Constitutions.
- Of the Four Constitutions, *Lumen Gentium* is central
- The Decrees, Declarations, and Messages are more specific for how to live the teachings of the Council and speak more directly to particular groups within the Church

II. Themes within the Documents

- The Church as Christocentric
- Universal call to holiness
- Unity of faith and life in the Church
- Apologetics of meaning
- Christian anthropology
- Communion and co-responsibility for mission
- Church's solidarity with modern men and women
- Pope St. John Paul II and the call to true conversion



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How is the Church Christocentric, and why did Vatican II strive to highlight this reality? Why is it so important to recognize Christ's presence in the Church? Where do you see Christ at work in the Church today?

2. Why did the Council Fathers emphasize the universal call to holiness? Why is the universal call to holiness so important? Why do you think holiness is so important for missionary discipleship and evangelization in the Church?

3. What is a Christian anthropology? Why is it impossible to separate what it means to be human from God? How do you see questions about the human person playing out in the culture, and how can you respond?

4. *Gaudium et Spes* states that the "split between faith which many profess and their daily lives deserves to be counted among the more serious errors of our age" (43). Why might the Council consider this to be such a serious error? What are the repercussions of not living out the faith we profess?

5. Why is it important to be an "expert in humanity"? What are the pressing existential questions that people are asking today? How can we present the faith in such a way that people can see Christ as the answer to these questions?

CLOSING PRAYER

Prayer of St. Thomas Aquinas

Grant me, O Lord my God,
a mind to know you,
a heart to seek you,
wisdom to find you,
conduct pleasing to you,
faithful perseverance in waiting for you,
and a hope of finally embracing you.
Amen.



Christ Pantocrator - St. Catherine's Monastery
(6th century, Sinai)

LIVING IT OUT

Consider the universal call to holiness, one of the central themes of the Council. Holiness is for everyone - in all walks of life and in all circumstances of life. How do you live out the universal call to holiness every day? How are the aspects of your daily life directed towards becoming holy? Are there things you need to add or subtract to live out this calling better?

GOING DEEPER

- *Lumen Gentium* - Dogmatic Constitution on the Church
- Fr. Blake Britton, *Reclaiming Vatican II: What It (Really) Said, What It Means, and How It Calls Us to Renew the Church* - Chapter 4
- George Weigel, *To Sanctify the World: The Vital Legacy of Vatican II* - Chapter 11