



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

Session 5 - *Dei Verbum*: The Word of God in the Life of the Church

Session 6 - *Sacrosanctum Concilium*: The Source and Summit of the Christian Life

Session 7 - *Gaudium et Spes*: Joy and Hope for the Modern World

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 45-60 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.



GAUDIUM ET SPES: JOY AND HOPE FOR THE MODERN WORLD



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, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

CLASS OUTLINE

I. Dialogue with the Modern World

- *Gaudium et Spes* is oriented towards pastoral renewal *ad extra*.
- The Church reads the signs of the times:
 - External: what's going on in the culture in this time in history.
 - Internal: how the Gospel can penetrate the hearts and minds of modern men and women.
- Pastoral theology is reading the signs of the times in light of doctrine for the sake of dialogue.
- The Church desires to help modern men and women discover the truth about themselves in Christ.

II. Christian Anthropology

- Jesus Christ fully reveals the human person and our dignity and high calling.
- We are made in the image of God who is love. We can only come to know ourselves when we give ourselves away in love.
- Through the Incarnation, Jesus unites himself with every person and heals every aspect of what it means to be human.
- Conscience is the seat of human dignity.
- We need to be experts in humanity.
- The apologetics of meaning: Jesus Christ is the answer to all the pressing questions modern men and women are asking.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are some of the signs of the times that are present in our culture that we should be aware of in bringing the Gospel to the modern world?

2. In what ways does Jesus fully reveal what it means to be a human person? How can this bring hope to our modern world?

3. What does it mean that Christ has redeemed every aspect of the human person? How does this affect your relationship with Christ when you consider that there is no suffering that he has not experienced?

4. What role does conscience play in our life? Why it is important for the conscience to be well-formed?

5. What is the apologetics of meaning? What are some ways that we can show how Jesus fulfills the deepest longings of the human heart?

CLOSING PRAYER

The Fragrance Prayer

Dear Jesus,
Help me to spread your fragrance everywhere I go;
Flood my soul with your spirit and life;
Penetrate and possess my whole being so completely
That all my life may be only a radiance of yours;
Shine through me and be so in me
That everyone with whom I come into contact
May feel your presence within me.
Let them look up and see no longer me—
but only Jesus.
Amen.

-ST. JOHN HENRY NEWMAN



Unfading Flower Icon
(18th century, Greek)

LIVING IT OUT

The Catechism of the Catholic Church says that the heart is the place we encounter God, our “hidden center” (CCC 2563). What can you do to foster this encounter? How are your daily routines, environment, and/or lifestyle helping (or hindering) you from being present to your innermost self? What practices might be beneficial to growing in this aspect of your life?

GOING DEEPER

- ***Gaudium et Spes***: Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World
- Fr. Blake Britton, *Reclaiming Vatican II: What It (Really) Said, What It Means, and How It Calls Us to Renew the Church* - Chapter 6
- George Weigel, *To Sanctify the World: The Vital Legacy of Vatican II* - Chapter 13