



# 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

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**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

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

## WHAT TO EXPECT FOR EACH SESSION

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**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.



# THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COUNCIL IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH



## 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. The Event of Vatican II and Renewal for Mission

- Outpouring of the Spirit of Pentecost
- Relevance and fruits of Vatican II for many years to come
- The “Event” of Vatican II: we are still witnessing the unfolding of the effects of the Council’s teachings
- Areas of renewal:
  - Catechesis and evangelization
  - The Catechism of the Catholic Church
  - The role and mission of the laity
  - Moral and pastoral theology
  - Sacred liturgy

### II. Into the Third Millennium

- Entering the Third Millennium renewed for mission
  - Contemplation of Christ
  - Proclamation of Gospel
  - Mercy and witnessing to love
- Pope Benedict XVI
  - Mission awareness
  - Conversion for mission
  - Evangelization and witness
- Pope Francis
  - Becoming a missionary of mercy
- Pope Leo XIV
  - Continuing the path of renewal



# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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1. In learning about the teachings and documents of Vatican II over the past eight sessions, what stood out to you the most? What surprised you?

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2. How do you see the “event” of Vatican II continuing to unfold in the life of the Church? What fruits do you see being produced?

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3. Have the teachings of Vatican II in the various documents changed any previous understanding you had about the role of the laity? Have these teachings inspired you to do anything differently?

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4. How do some of the post-conciliar documents about marriage and family reveal what it means to be fully human and fully alive? In a world where many misunderstandings about these teachings exist, how can we help others see the beauty of these teachings?

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5. What is the role of the Church into the Third Millennium? How do you see the Council teachings being implemented in the papacies of John Paul II, Benedict XVI, Francis, and now, Leo XVI?

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# CLOSING PRAYER

## Prayer for the New Evangelization

*"Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.' But how can they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how can they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone to preach? And how can people preach unless they are sent?"* -Romans 10:13-15

Heavenly Father,  
pour forth your Holy Spirit to inspire me with these words from Holy Scripture.  
Stir in my soul the desire to renew my faith and deepen my relationship with your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, so that I might truly believe in and live the Good News.  
Open my heart to hear the Gospel and grant me the confidence to proclaim the Good News to others.  
Pour out your Spirit, so that I might be strengthened to go forth and witness to the Gospel in my everyday life through my words and actions.

In moments of hesitation, remind me:  
If not me, then who will proclaim the Gospel?  
If not now, then when will the Gospel be proclaimed?  
If not the truth of the Gospel, then what shall I proclaim?  
  
God, our Father, I pray that through the Holy Spirit I might hear the call of the New Evangelization to deepen my faith, grow in confidence to proclaim the Gospel and boldly witness to the saving grace of your Son, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.  
Amen.

<https://www.usccb.org/prayers/prayer-new-evangelization>

## LIVING IT OUT

The Catechism of the Catholic Church contains many beautiful teachings about our Catholic Faith, and offers a solid foundation from which we can evangelize better. How can you become better acquainted with the Catechism? Consider resources, such as Fr. Mike Schmitz's *Catechism in a Year*, or incorporating readings from the Catechism as part of your daily devotions, that can help you dive deeper into the treasures of the Faith.

## GOING DEEPER

- Pick any document referenced in the session and start reading!
- Fr. Blake Britton, *Reclaiming Vatican II: What It (Really) Said, What It Means, and How It Calls Us to Renew the Church* - Chapter 7
- George Weigel, *To Sanctify the World: The Vital Legacy of Vatican II* - Chapters 17-22