



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
(TO BE RELEASED APRIL 2, 2025)

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.



WHAT IS THE REAL 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. What was Vatican II?

- The Council was convened to respond to an increasingly irreligious world
- Abuses following Vatican II - the Council was the occasion, rather than the cause
- The Hermeneutic of Rupture and Discontinuity - the dangers of following a false "spirit" of the Council and rejecting actual Council documents
- The Three "Paracouncils" of Theologians, the Media, and the Age

II. Vatican II as the "Great Grace" of Our Time

- The Hermeneutic of Continuity and Reform - interpreting Council documents in light of Doctrine, Tradition, and the post-conciliar Magisterium
- The Council's goal of setting forth authentic doctrine in order to bring the message of salvation to the world
- The "Event" of Vatican II (1959-2013) and how we are still unpacking the Council's meaning in the life of the Church



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In 1873, St. John Henry Newman prophetically said that “Christianity has never yet had experience of a world simply irreligious.” This is perhaps even more readily apparent in the present era. What does it mean for the world to be irreligious? Where do you see examples of this in your experience of the world? How might this affect our approach to evangelization?

2. Pope Benedict XVI talked about a “hermeneutic of rupture and discontinuity” and a “hermeneutic of continuity and reform.” Describe what these terms mean. How does the hermeneutic, the method of interpretation, affect our understanding of the Council documents? Why is it important to read the Council documents in light of Tradition and post-conciliar magisterial documents?

3. What were the three “paracouncils” of Vatican II? Why might these be problematic?

4. Why is it important to know the authentic vision of Vatican II? How does this vision relate to conversion and mission?

5. Why does mission flow from communion? Is it possible to have mission without communion? Why or why not?



CLOSING PRAYER

Prayer to the Holy Spirit

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful
and kindle in them the fire of your love.
Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created,
and you shall renew the face of the earth.

O God, who have taught the hearts of the faithful
by the light of the Holy Spirit,
grant that in the same Spirit we may be truly wise
and ever rejoice in his consolation.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.



Gian Lorenzo Bernini - Dove of the Holy Spirit
(ca. 1660, alabaster, Throne of St. Peter, St. Peter's Basilica, Vatican)

LIVING IT OUT

In *Dei Verbum*, the Council Fathers talk about their hope that “by hearing the message of salvation the whole world may believe, by believing it may hope, and by hoping it may love.” This is the Kerygma - the joyful proclamation of the message of salvation. The Kerygma is the Good News that Christ came to save us from our sins, that he wants us to live forever with him in heaven, and the call to conversion. In our “simply irreligious” world, many people, even many Catholics, have never heard the Kerygma. Take 15 minutes to read Acts 2:14-36 this week, and consider ways you might be able to share the Kerygma with others.

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 1
- George Weigel, *To Sanctify the World: The Vital Legacy of Vatican II* - Part 1