

# VATICAN II AND YOU



ITS STORY AND MEANING  
FOR TODAY

# Session Topics

- **The Story of the Second Vatican Council**
- **Exploring the Reform of Our Liturgy**
- **The Wisdom and Relevance of the Constitutions on the Church and Divine Revelation**
- **The Calling and Mission of the Laiety and the Church in the Modern World**





# Session 1

## The Story of the Second Vatican Council

### Opening Prayer



# Our Memories

What do you remember about the Catholic Church on the eve of the Council (before 1962)?

Or, if younger, what have you heard older folks say about Catholic life before the Council?



# WHY the Council?

## 50s the “Golden Years of Catholicism”

- Lots of Priests and Religious (Nuns)
- Catholic Schools Full
- No Real Dissent With Pope
- Most Attended Mass Regularly

# WHY the Council?

**“Today, if it were not  
for Vatican II, ...”**





# WHY the Council?

## Pope John XXIII

- Angelo Roncalli born 1881
- Elected Pope October 1958
- First announced his intention to call a Council in January 1959
- Council idea “completely unexpected, like a flash of heavenly light”
- Opened First Session in October 1962

# WHY the Council?

## Pope John XXIII's Opening Speech

- “By bringing herself up-to-date where required, the Church will better help people turn their minds toward heavenly things”
- “Council's greatest concern is how the sacred and central truths of our Christian faith should be guarded and taught more effectively”
- “Substance of ancient doctrine is one thing, the way it is expressed is another”





# Video

## The Faithful Revolution: Genius of the Heart (Part 1)







# Video

- **What are your thoughts?**
- **What are your feelings?**

# ★ WHO was at the Council?

- **Average Daily Attendance 2,400 Bishops and Other Prelates**
- **From Around the World**
  - Europe: 1089
  - South America: 489
  - North America: 404
  - Asia: 374
  - Africa: 296
  - Central America: 84
  - Oceania: 75
- **Non-Catholic Observers**
- **Theologians, Laity, etc.**



# HOW Council Operated

- **Sept. 1962, Pope John XXIII issued Council Rules and Procedures**
  - **Council meetings at St. Peter's in Vatican**
  - **Prescribed Latin to be the only official Council language**
  - **Established Procedures for Discussion at General Sessions (written, 10 min. max.)**
  - **Required 2/3 Majority to Enact Decrees**

# WHERE Real Action Was

- No real debate at formal Latin sessions (10:15 am - 12:15 pm)
- Real debates in variety of accommodations around Rome
- Two coffee bars adjoining St. Peter's Basilica
  - Established by Pope John XXIII
  - Barabbas and Bar-Jonah
- Showdown with Curia at First Session



# Curia vs. World's Bishops

- **Roman Curia**

- Administrative bureaucracy of the Roman Catholic Church
- Offices in Vatican
- Maintain order, tradition, and stable functioning of Roman Catholic Church

# Curia vs. World's Bishops

- **Curia Feared and Opposed Council**
  - Feared a bunch of bishops from around the world causing chaos in Church
  - Feared doom and division in the Church
  - Cardinal Ottaviani led Curia traditionalists
    - At “Holy Office” for 50 years
    - Now “Congregation for Doctrine of the Faith”





# Curia vs. World's Bishops

- Curia traditionalists tried every strategy to prevent what they saw as dismantling of Church
- Curia-controlled *Preparatory Commissions* prepared 70 draft documents
  - Too many for Council to seriously consider
  - Curia wanted a “rubber stamp” Council

# Curia vs. World's Bishops

- **Pope John XXIII did not agree with Curia traditionalists. Opening Speech:**

**“As I go about my daily work as pope, I sometimes have to listen, with much regret, to voices of persons who though burning with zeal, are not endowed with much sense of discretion or measure.**

**In these modern times, they can see nothing but a decline of truth and ruin of the Church.”**



# Curia vs. World's Bishops

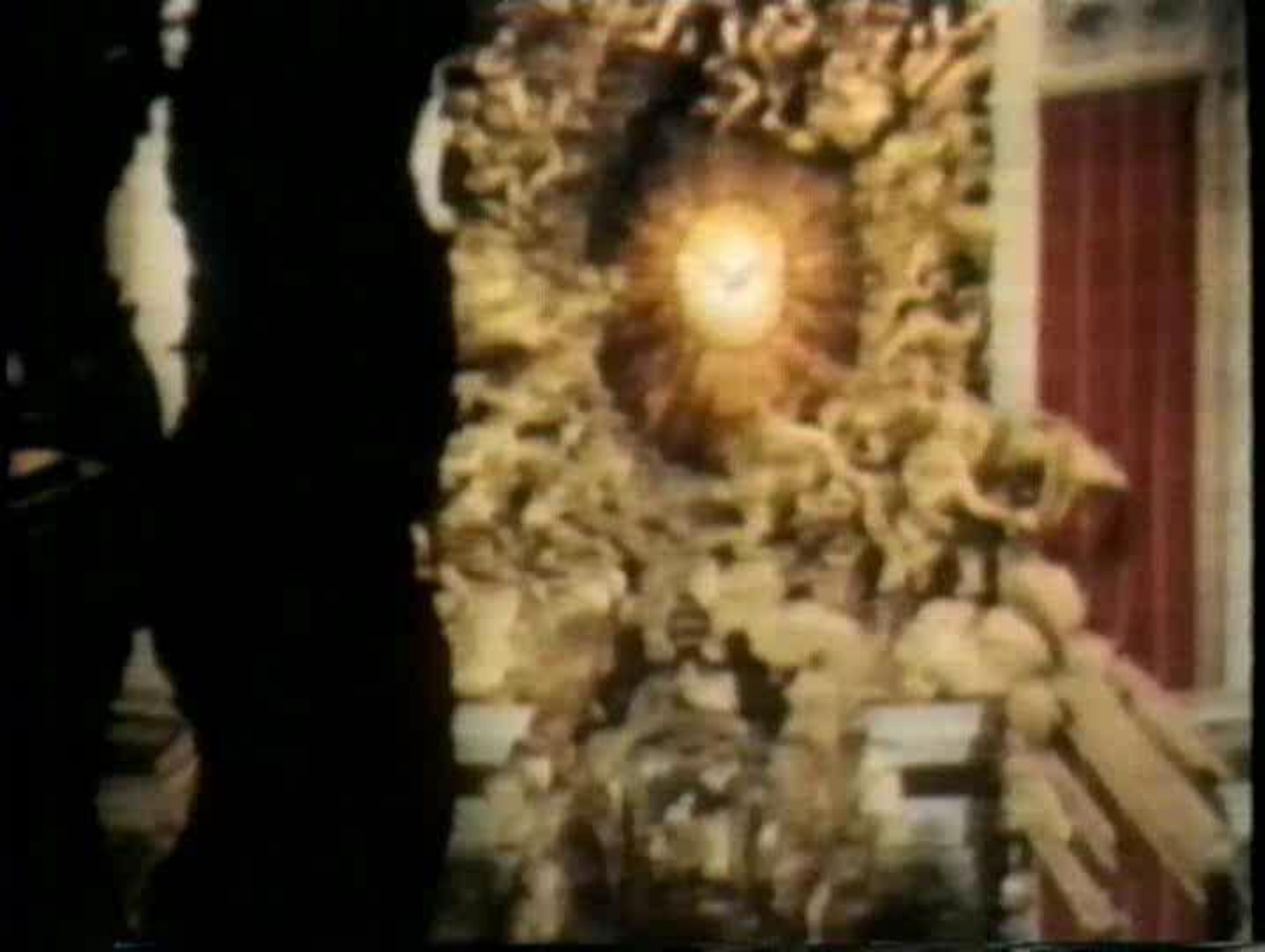
“They say that our era,  
in comparison with past eras,  
is getting worse,  
and they behave as though they had  
learned nothing from history,  
which is, none the less,  
the teacher of life.

But I must disagree with these prophets of gloom  
who are always forecasting disaster,  
as though the end of the world was at hand.”

# Curia vs. World's Bishops

- At first Council session, bishops rejected 69 of 70 draft documents
  - Prepared by Curia-controlled *Preparatory Commissions*
  - Not even a basis for discussion
  - Only document on Liturgy accepted as basis
  - Selected fewer topics to concentrate on
  - Everyone distressed and disturbed
  - Outcome & success of Council uncertain







# Video

- **What are your thoughts?**
- **What are your feelings?**



# WHEN was the Council?

- **1st Session Oct. - Dec. 1962**
  - Pope John XXIII
- **2nd Session Sept. - Dec. 1963**
  - Pope Paul VI
- **3rd Session Sept. - Nov. 1964**
- **Final Session Sept. - Dec. 1965**

# ★ WHAT Documents Issued? ★

- **Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy**
  - Approved Dec. 4, 1963, 2147 yes, 4 no
- **Dogmatic Constitution on the Church**
  - Approved Nov. 21, 1964, 2151 yes, 5 no
- **Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation**
  - Approved Nov. 18, 1965, 2344 yes, 6 no
- **Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World**
  - Approved Dec. 7, 1965, 2309 yes, 75 no



# Kinds of Pronouncements

- **Decretal Letter**
  - Infallible statements of the Pope
- **Constitution**
  - Central and substantial Church teaching
  - Assumption: 1950, Pope Pius XII
- **Papal Bull**
  - Sealed with a “bulla” - red seal
  - Very solemn pronouncements
  - Immaculate Conception: 1854 Pope Pius IX
  - Convoke Vatican II: Dec. 25, 1961 John XXIII

# Kinds of Pronouncements

- **Encyclical**

- Social and moral teachings of the Church
- Vatican II did not issue any encyclicals
- Don't use law to enforce encyclical ideals

- **Decrees**

- Significant teachings, but requires further discussion

- **Declarations**

- Controversial, needing further development



# WHAT Documents Issued?

## Decrees:

- Instruments of Social Communication
- Ecumenism
- Eastern Catholic Churches
- Bishops' Pastoral Office in the Church
- Priestly Formation

# WHAT Documents Issued?

## Decrees:

- Appropriate Renewal of Religious Life
- Apostolate of the Laity
- Ministry and Life of Priests
- The Church's Missionary Activity



# WHAT Documents Issued?

## Declarations:

- Christian Education
- Relationship of the Church to Non-Christians
- Religious Freedom

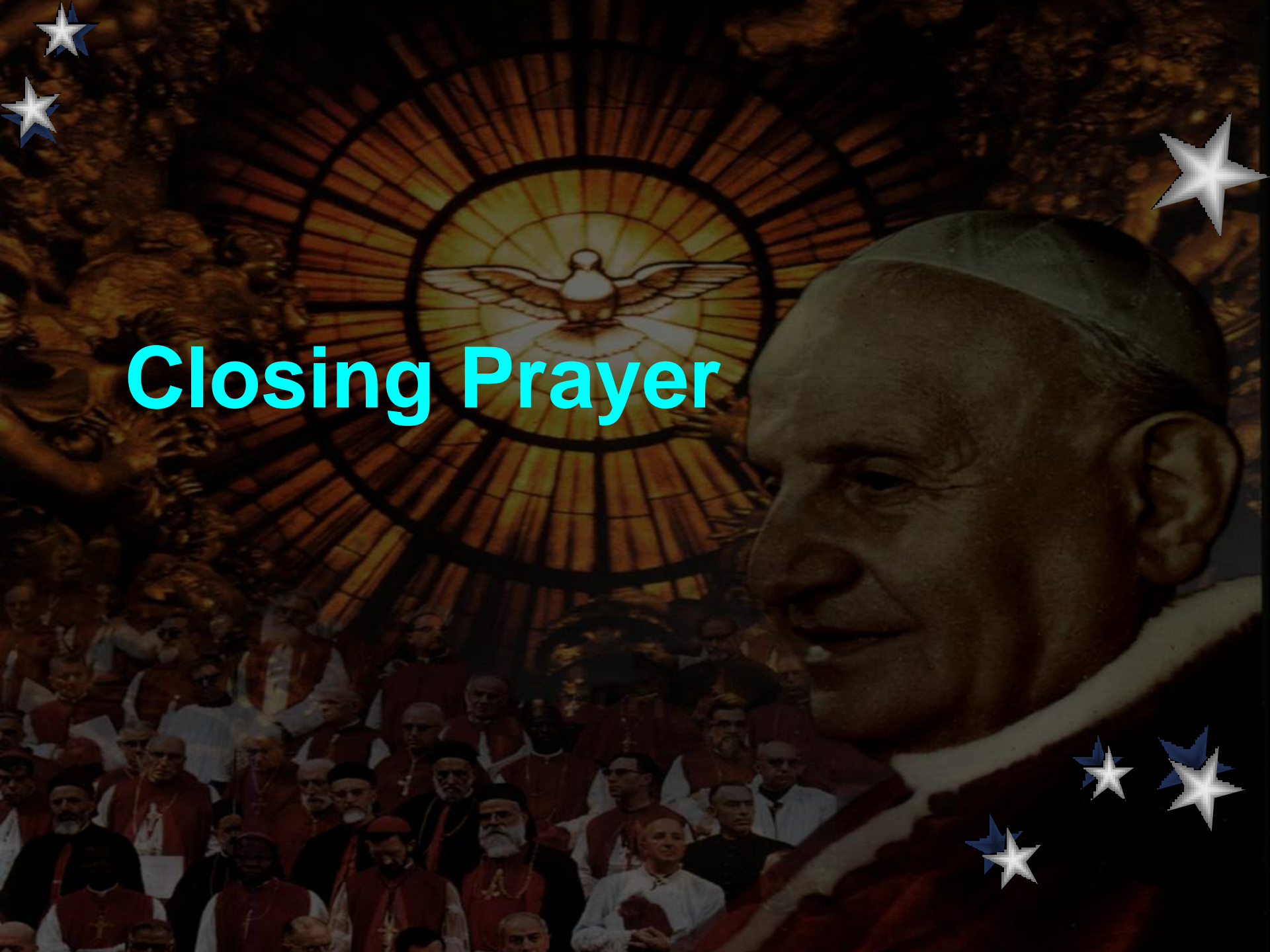


# Next Session

Exploring the  
Reform of  
Our Liturgy



# Closing Prayer



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