



VATICAN II AND YOU

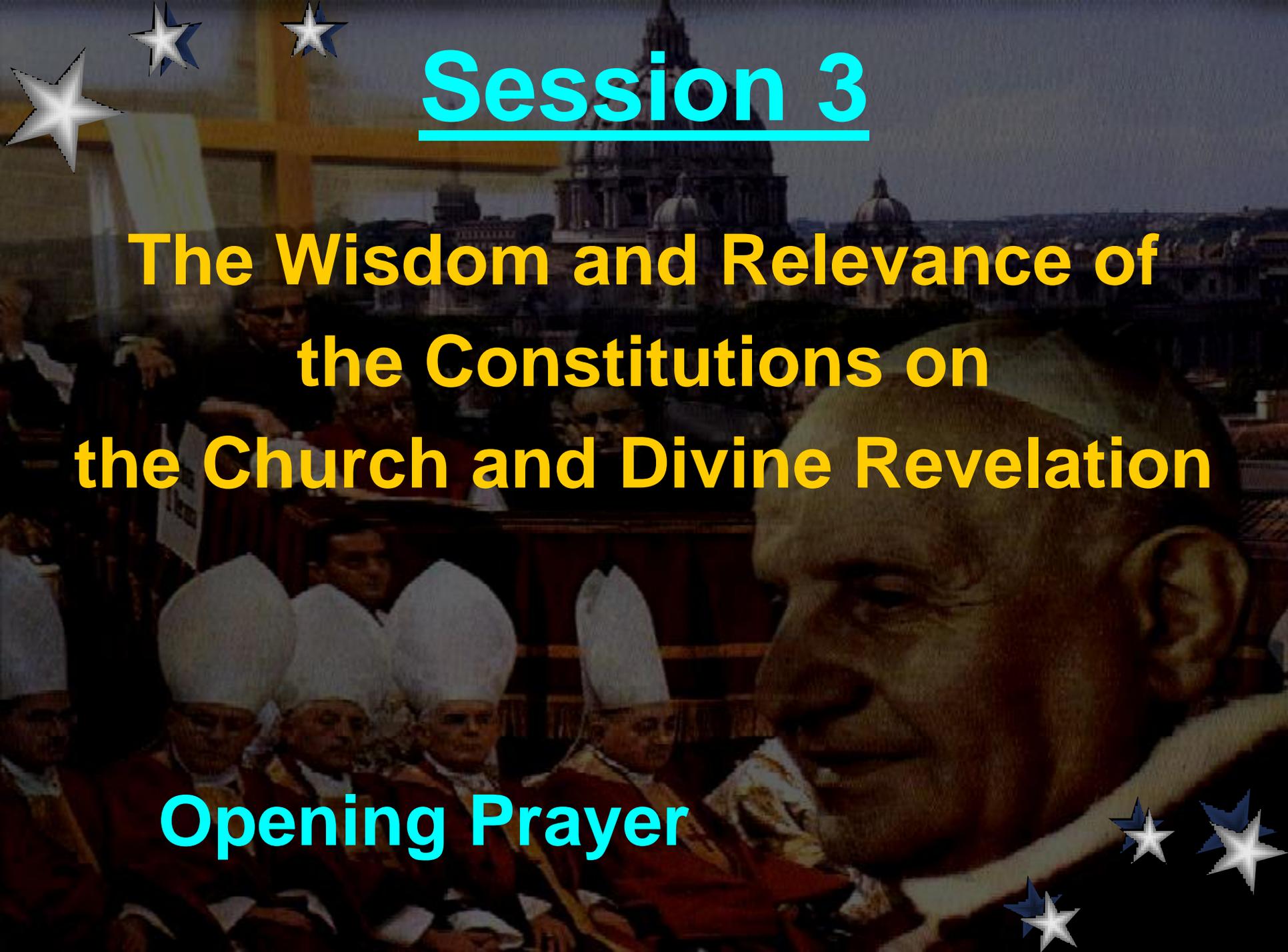
ITS STORY AND MEANING
FOR TODAY





Session Topics

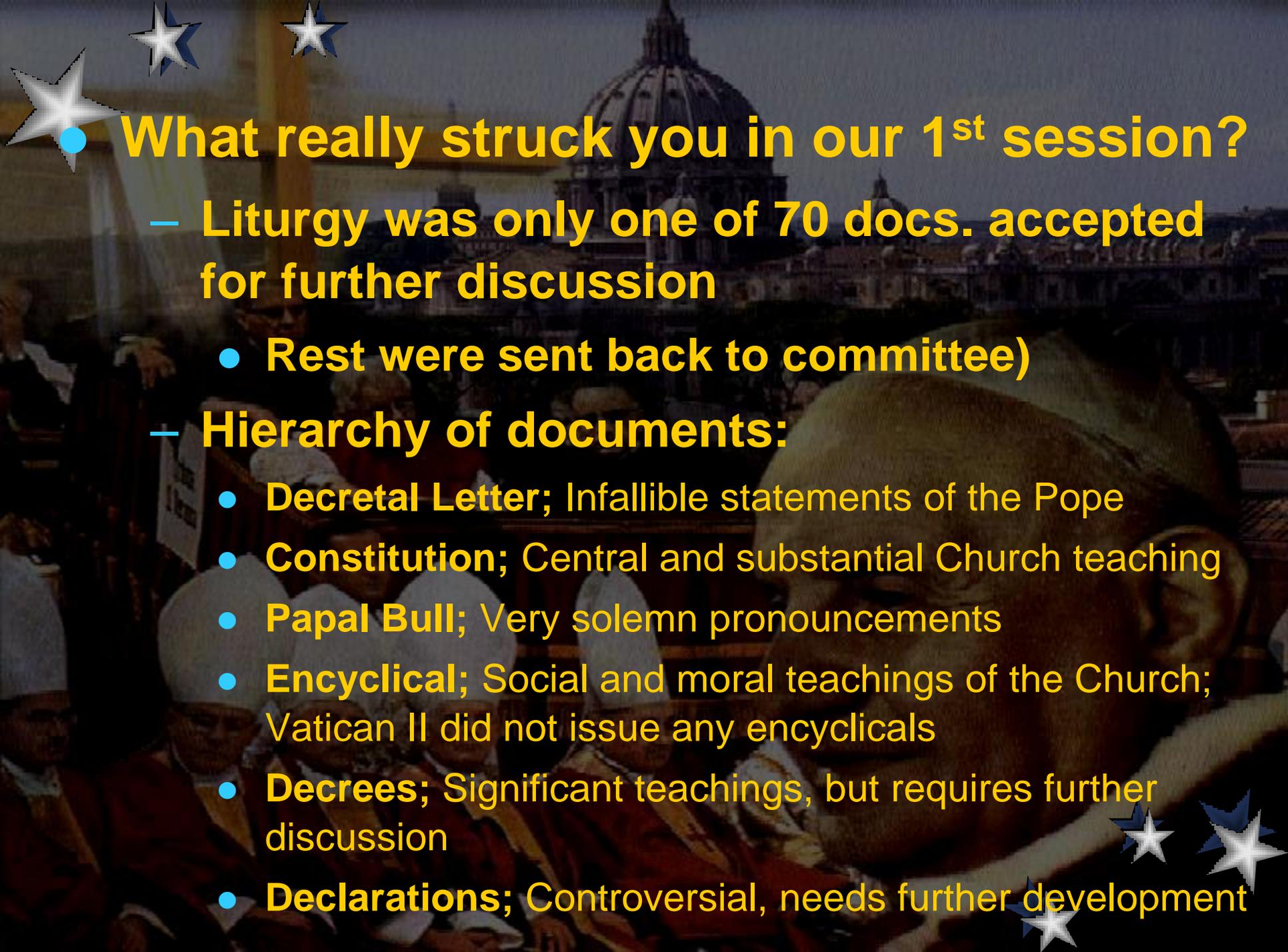
- **The Story of the Second Vatican Council**
- **Exploring the Reform of Our Liturgy**
- **The Wisdom and Relevance of the Constitutions on the Church and Divine Revelation**
- **The Calling and Mission of the Laity and the Church in the Modern World**



Session 3

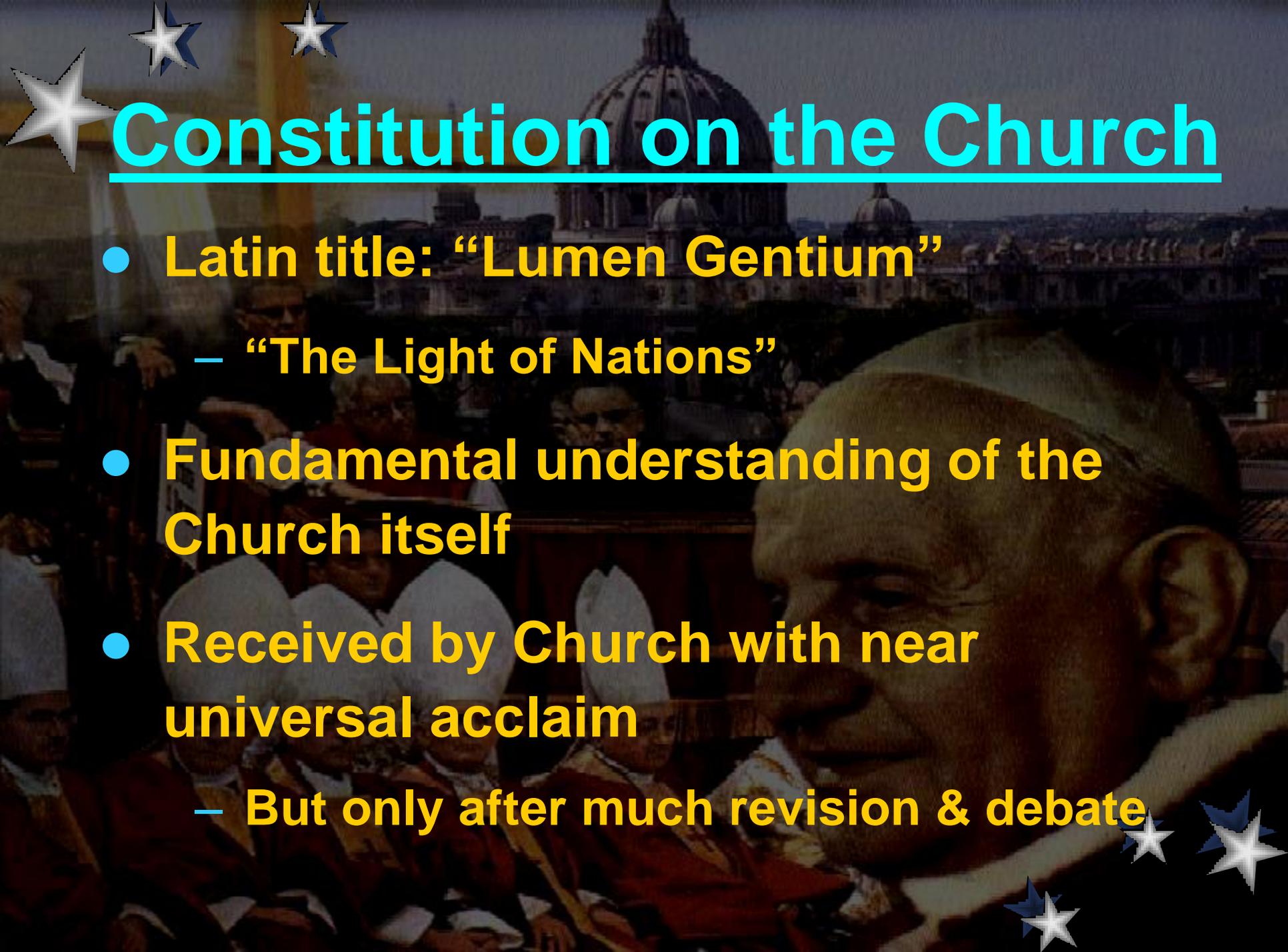
The Wisdom and Relevance of the Constitutions on the Church and Divine Revelation

Opening Prayer



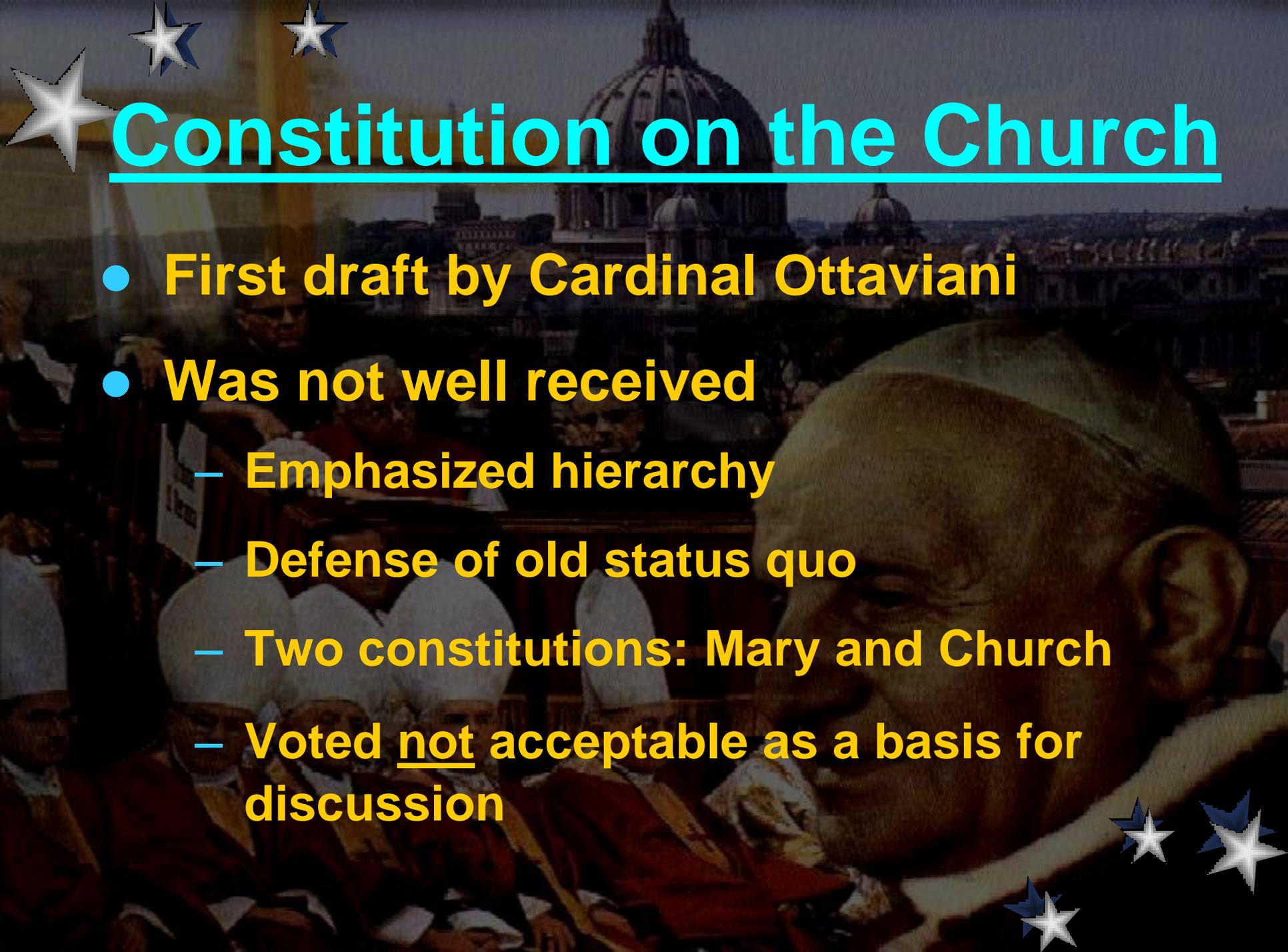
What really struck you in our 1st session?

- Liturgy was only one of 70 docs. accepted for further discussion
 - Rest were sent back to committee)
- Hierarchy of documents:
 - **Decretal Letter**; Infallible statements of the Pope
 - **Constitution**; Central and substantial Church teaching
 - **Papal Bull**; Very solemn pronouncements
 - **Encyclical**; Social and moral teachings of the Church; Vatican II did not issue any encyclicals
 - **Decrees**; Significant teachings, but requires further discussion
 - **Declarations**; Controversial, needs further development



Constitution on the Church

- **Latin title: “Lumen Gentium”**
 - **“The Light of Nations”**
- **Fundamental understanding of the Church itself**
- **Received by Church with near universal acclaim**
 - **But only after much revision & debate**



Constitution on the Church

- **First draft by Cardinal Ottaviani**
- **Was not well received**
 - **Emphasized hierarchy**
 - **Defense of old status quo**
 - **Two constitutions: Mary and Church**
 - **Voted not acceptable as a basis for discussion**



Constitution on the Church

- **Wanted a more progressive document:**
 - **Church as the People of God**
 - **More open view of Church membership**
 - **Include all people of goodwill, even if not in full communion with Rome**
 - **Define relationships of bishops, priests, deacons, laypeople**
 - **Fuller treatment of how authority shared**
 - **Collegiality**
 - **May not be a separate document**



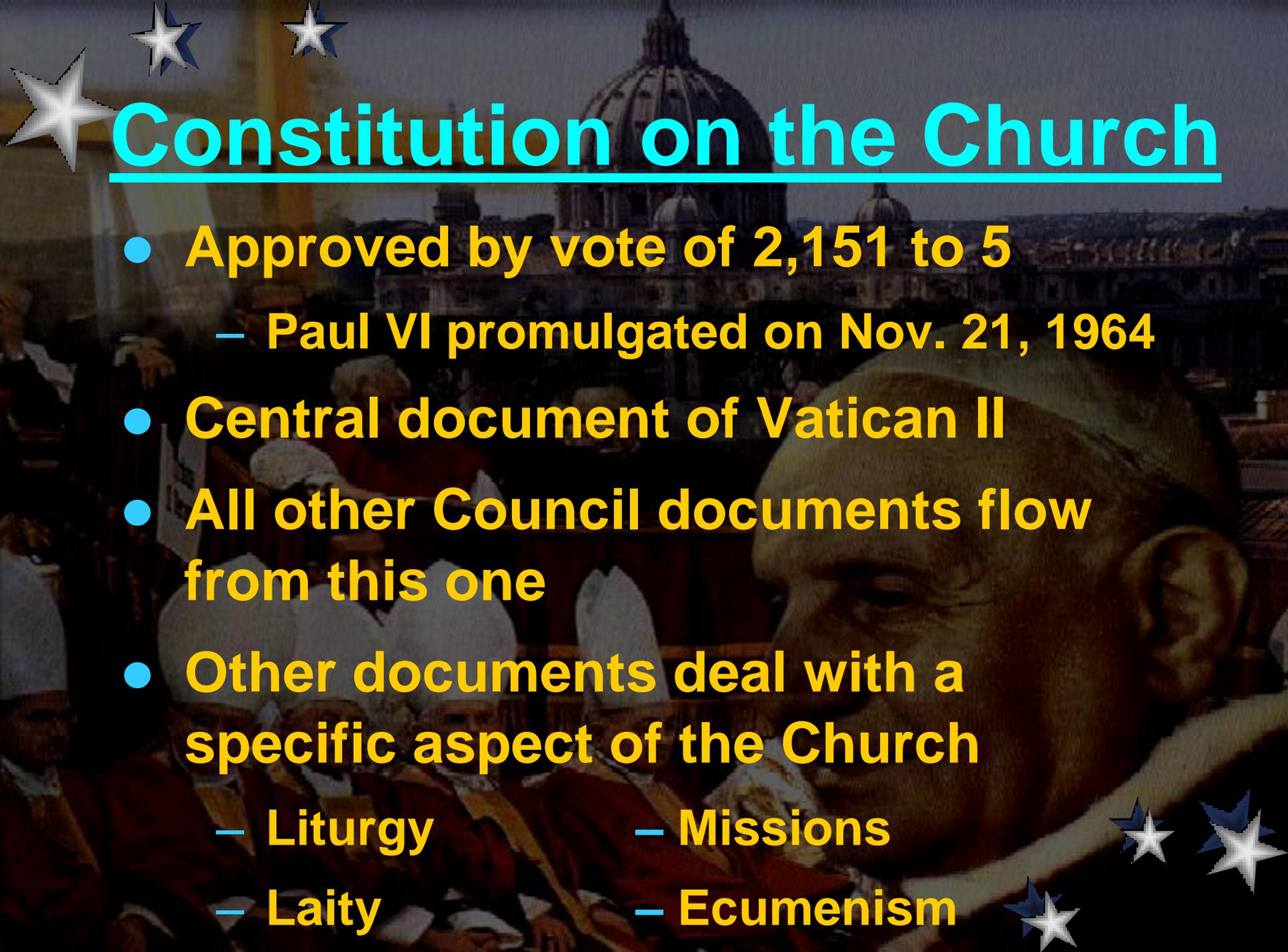
Constitution on the Church

- **Four substitute first drafts prepared:**
 - **Monsignor Parente: incomplete**
 - **German theologians: too heavy**
 - **Brazilian Cardinal Silva: like original**
 - **French and Belgian theologians:**
 - **Church as People of God**
 - **Universal call to holiness**
 - **Accepted! (as basis for further discussion)**



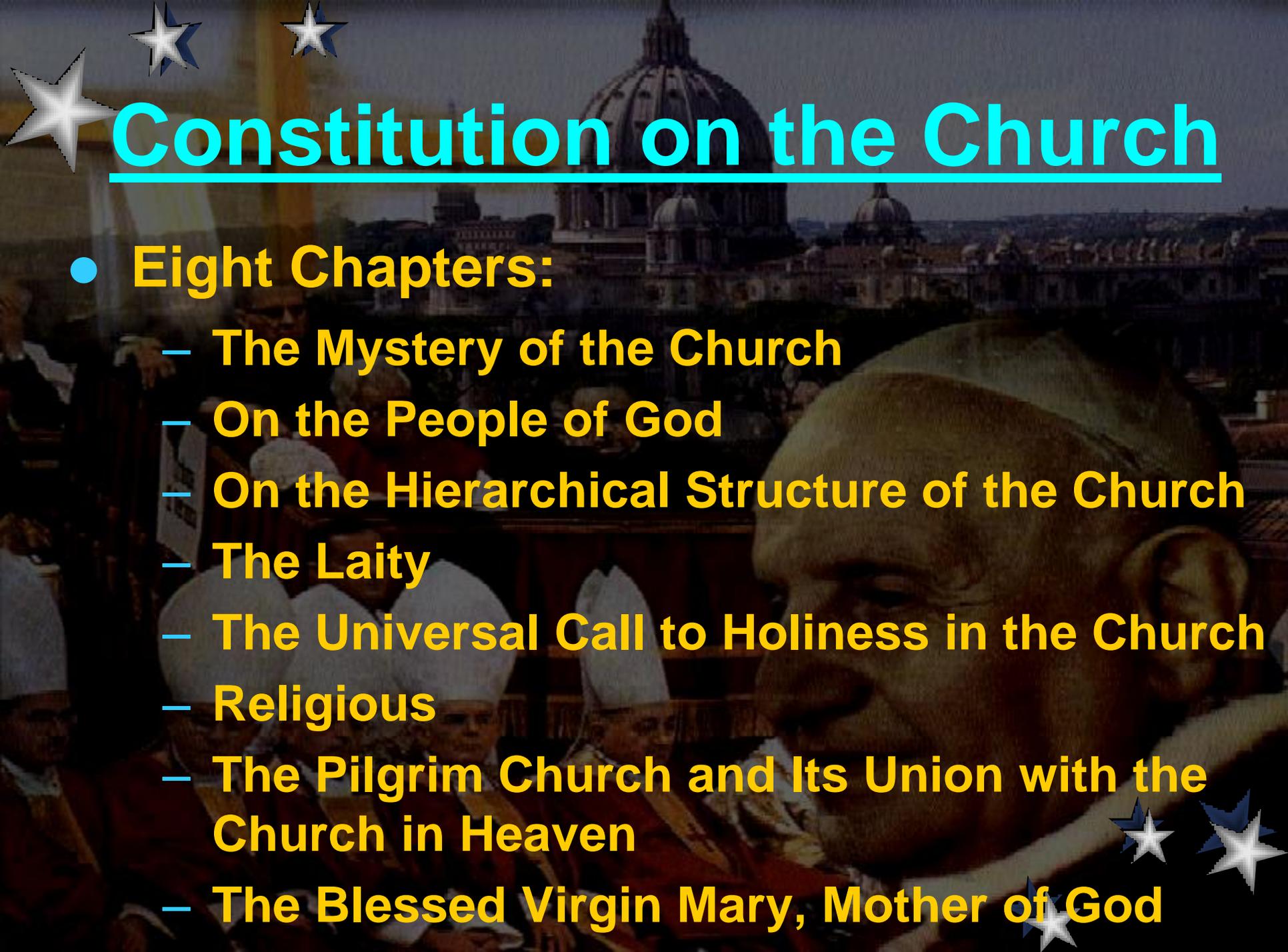
Constitution on the Church

- **Debates focused on:**
 - Church as the People of God
 - Priestly, prophetic, royal roles of faithful
 - Role of bishops in relation to Pope
 - Shared authority
 - Re-establishment of permanent diaconate
 - Not celibate
 - Add chapter on Mary



Constitution on the Church

- Approved by vote of 2,151 to 5
 - Paul VI promulgated on Nov. 21, 1964
- Central document of Vatican II
- All other Council documents flow from this one
- Other documents deal with a specific aspect of the Church
 - Liturgy
 - Missions
 - Laity
 - Ecumenism

The background of the slide features a composite image. The upper portion shows a wide-angle view of St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, with its iconic dome and surrounding architecture under a clear sky. The lower portion is a close-up profile of a Pope, likely Pope Francis, wearing his white zucchetto and looking downwards. The overall image has a slightly desaturated, historical feel.

Constitution on the Church

- **Eight Chapters:**

- **The Mystery of the Church**
- **On the People of God**
- **On the Hierarchical Structure of the Church**
- **The Laity**
- **The Universal Call to Holiness in the Church**
- **Religious**
- **The Pilgrim Church and Its Union with the Church in Heaven**
- **The Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God**



Constitution on Church

From the **Introduction** ...

“Christ is... *Lumen Gentium* ..., [and] we bishops of the world ... eagerly desire to bring this Light **to people everywhere...**

[The Church] is a **sacrament of Christ**, a **mystery of depth...** both a sign and an **instrument of intimate union with God**

and of the total union of humans to one another...





Constitution on Church

therefore, the Church now wants to **share with the whole world** its own inner nature and mission...

In doing so it **remains faithful** to previous councils and while at the same time taking stock of these times.”



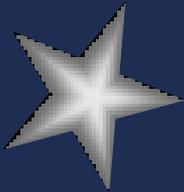


Constitution on Church

From the **Mystery of the Church** ...

“With a most profound wisdom and goodness,
God created the whole world
and from among all of creation
God chose humans to share in the divine life,
to have an eternal walk with God
arm in arm
heart to heart.”





Constitution on Church

**“And although we have stumbled along
and at times have even lost our way,
God has not abandoned us.
Instead, God remained radically present,
eventually expressing the depth of his love
through Jesus Christ.”**





Constitution on Church

“By Christ’s obedience and love,

our relationship with God was restored.

Thus, too, Christ’s realm here on earth,

which is fully present but seldom recognized,

grows brighter and more visible

as God’s power unfolds.”





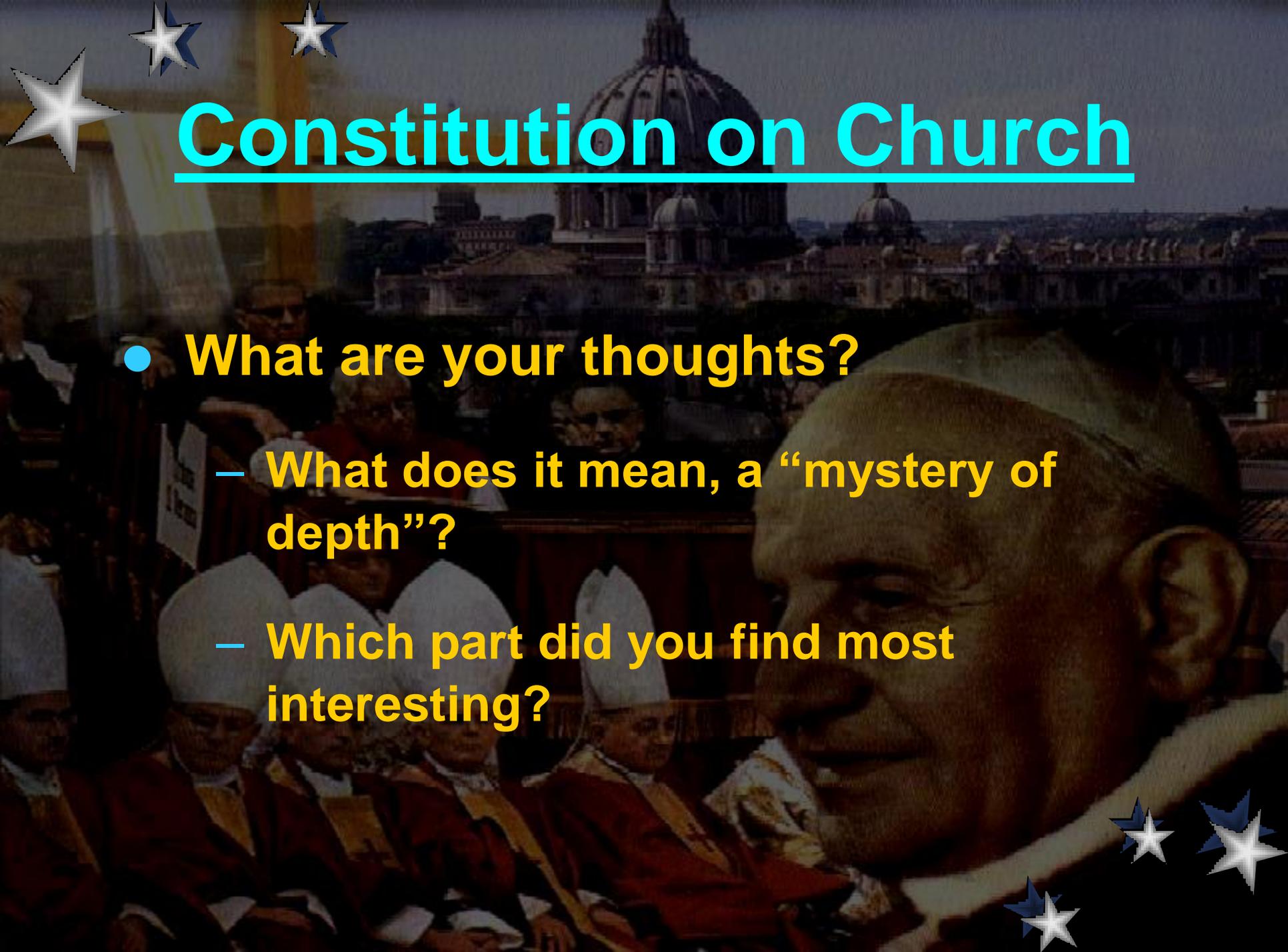
Constitution on Church

“Celebrating Eucharist over and over
allows this power to unfold in the world
and brings about our salvation.

Celebrating Eucharist over and over
forms the Body of Christ,
a unity into which all on earth are welcome,
a unity in Christ
who is Light of the World.

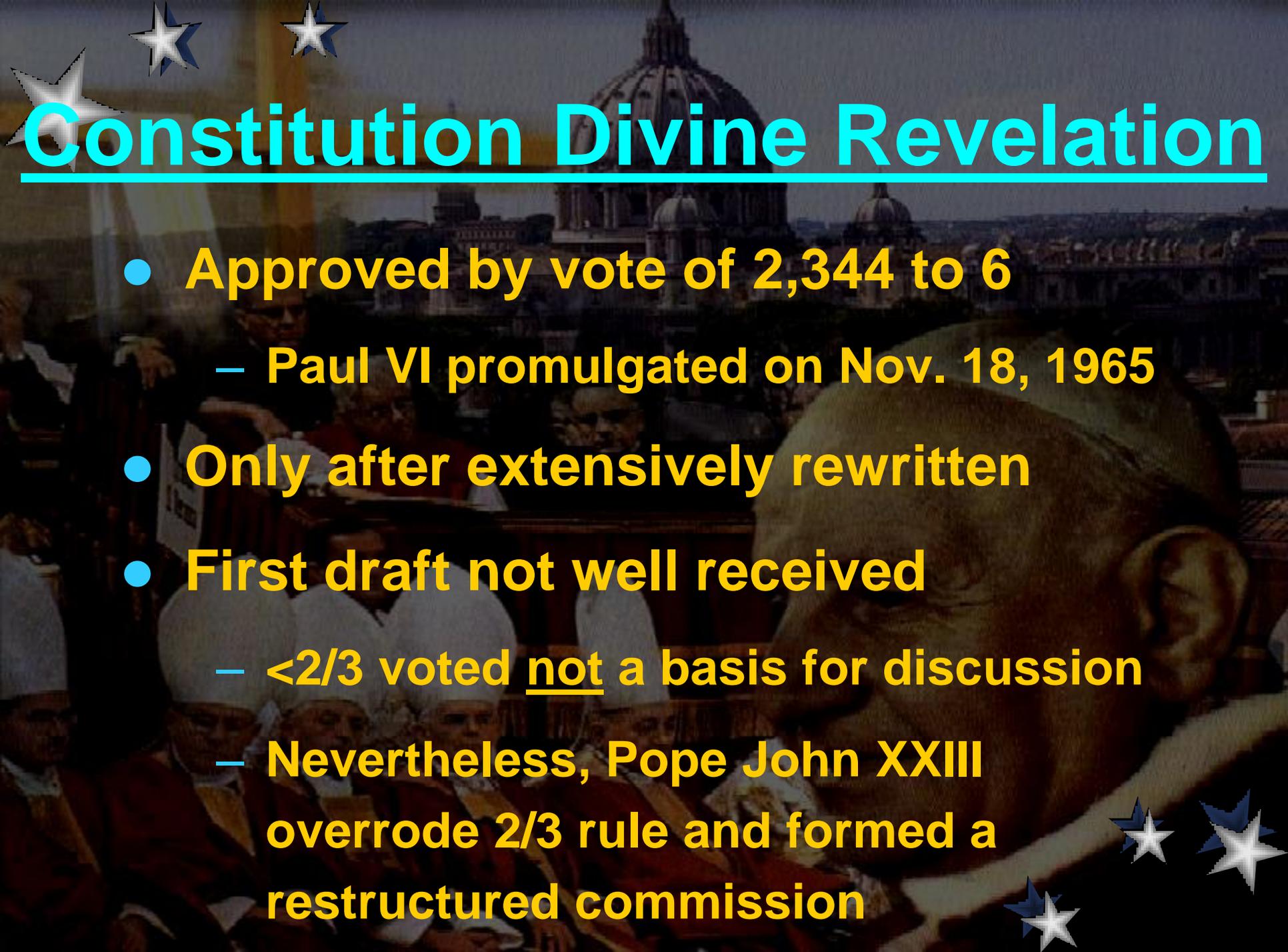
Lumen Gentium!”





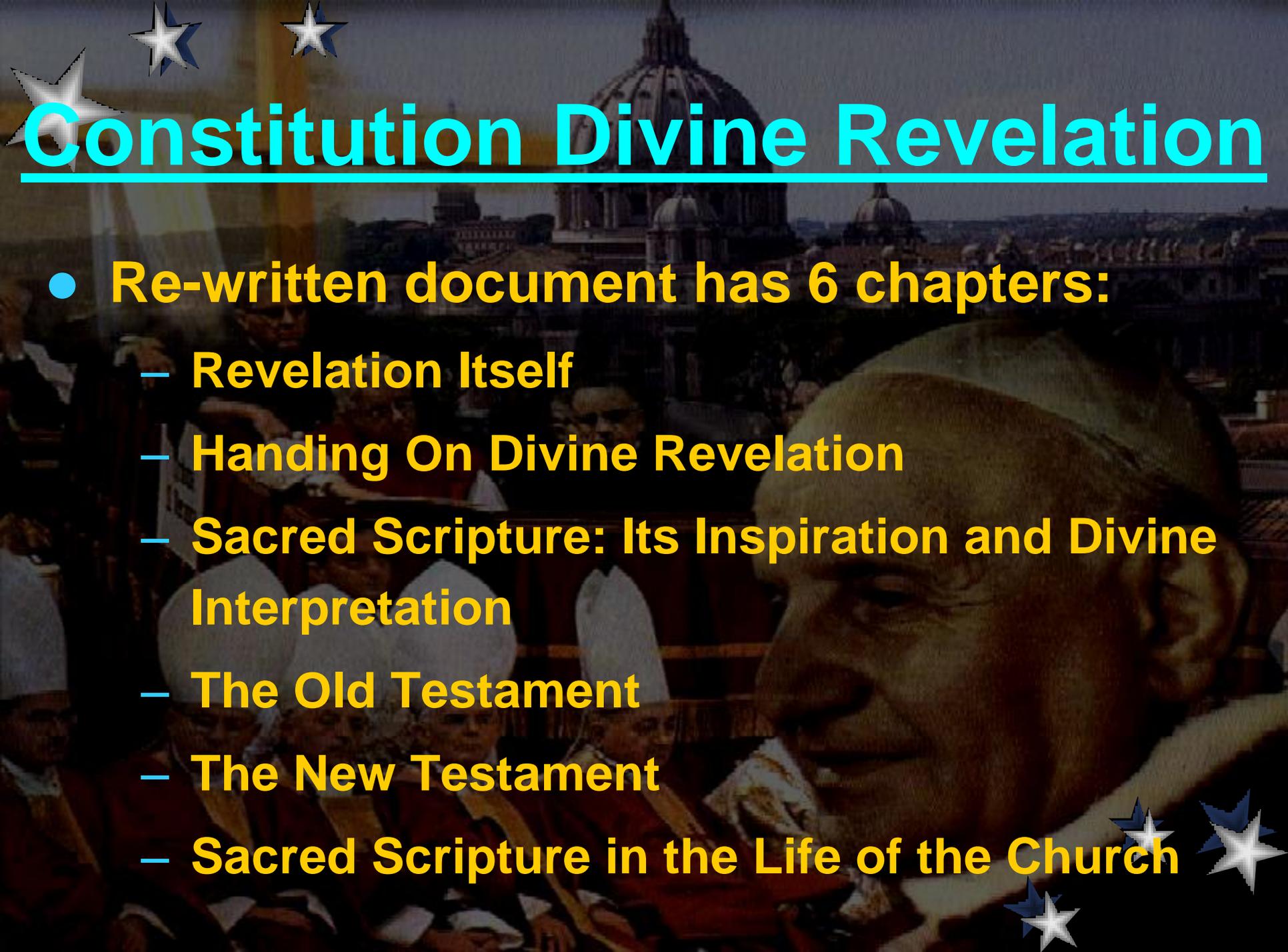
Constitution on Church

- **What are your thoughts?**
 - **What does it mean, a “mystery of depth”?**
 - **Which part did you find most interesting?**



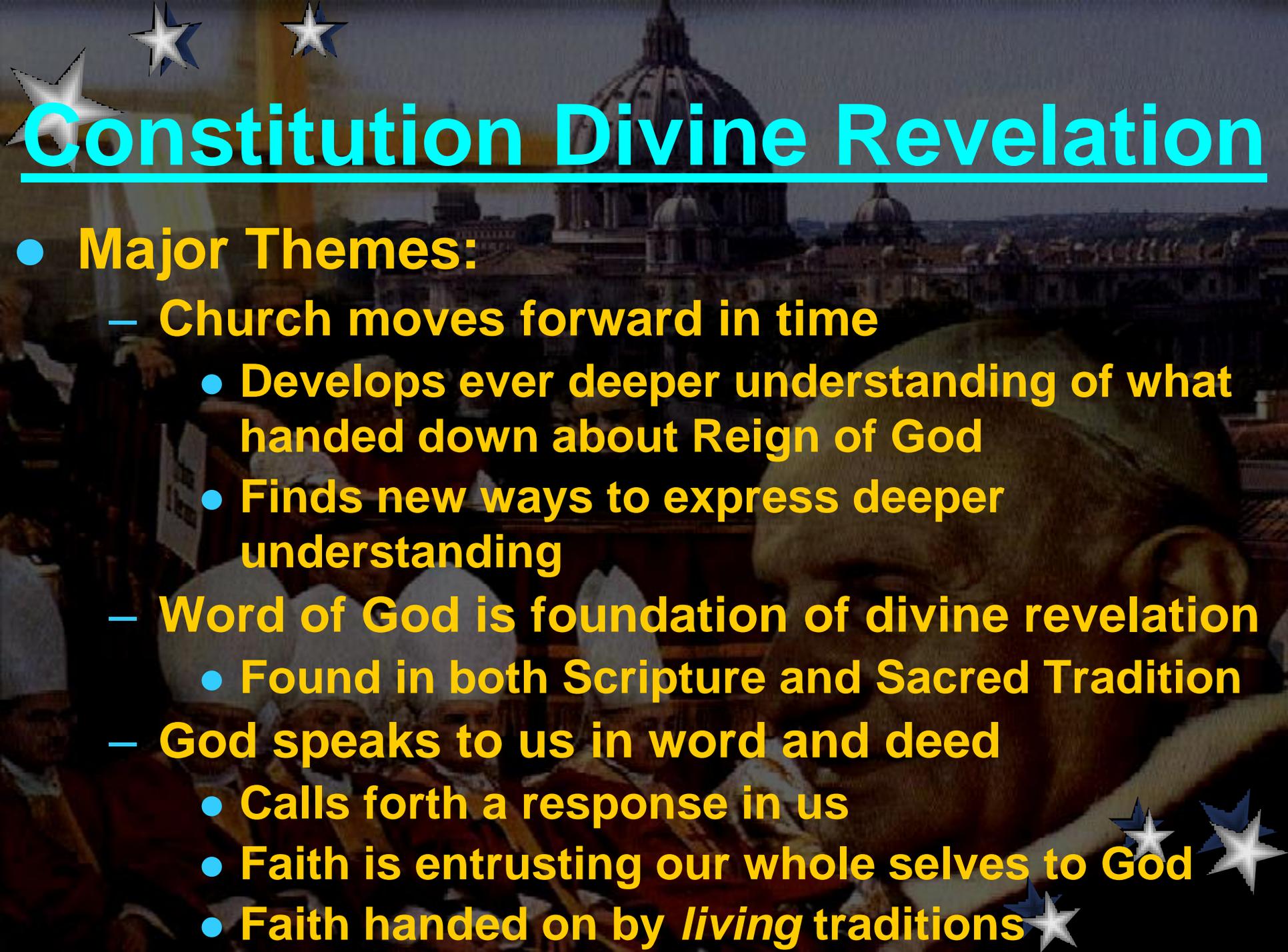
Constitution Divine Revelation

- **Approved by vote of 2,344 to 6**
 - **Paul VI promulgated on Nov. 18, 1965**
- **Only after extensively rewritten**
- **First draft not well received**
 - **<2/3 voted not a basis for discussion**
 - **Nevertheless, Pope John XXIII overrode 2/3 rule and formed a restructured commission**



Constitution Divine Revelation

- **Re-written document has 6 chapters:**
 - **Revelation Itself**
 - **Handing On Divine Revelation**
 - **Sacred Scripture: Its Inspiration and Divine Interpretation**
 - **The Old Testament**
 - **The New Testament**
 - **Sacred Scripture in the Life of the Church**



Constitution Divine Revelation

- **Major Themes:**
 - **Church moves forward in time**
 - Develops ever deeper understanding of what handed down about Reign of God
 - Finds new ways to express deeper understanding
 - **Word of God is foundation of divine revelation**
 - Found in both Scripture and Sacred Tradition
 - **God speaks to us in word and deed**
 - Calls forth a response in us
 - Faith is entrusting our whole selves to God
 - Faith handed on by *living* traditions



Constitution Divine Revelation

“This council now wishes to address the matter
of **how God reveals himself** to humankind
and **how humans respond** to the voice of God.

God wants nothing less

than that we come to know God fully:

to know God’s constant love,

to understand God’s unfathomable faithfulness,

to experience God right down to our marrow.”





Constitution Divine Revelation

“This is what we mean when we speak of revelation:
that the realities of God,
who is so far above and beyond us,
yet closer than our best friend
be made plain and evident.

God does not merely reveal information
about the divine life,
but invites us into closer **companionship**.

God actually shares with us the divine nature.”





Constitution Divine Revelation

“From the beginning, God has been with us,
conscious of our human nature.

God continually promised us healing,
by caring for us ceaselessly.

God was **first manifest in creation**,
being known in wonder,

power,

majesty,

and goodness

through the created world.”





Constitution Divine Revelation

“Thus all people have access to God
and all people can, on some level,
come to know God’s existence and inner self.
Over the course of history, though,
it has become more and more clear to us
that God wishes to **speak** to us as friends,
to **live** among us,
and **invite** us into close union.”





Constitution on Divine Revelation

- **As you hear these words ...what are your thoughts/feelings on:**
 - **Definition of ‘revelation’: From creation to incarnation**
 - **How God reveals himself Vs how humans respond**
 - **Invites us into closer companionship**
 - **All people have access to God**
- **Let’s read some more...**



Constitution Divine Revelation

“Jesus proclaimed through his life and death
through his rising and remaining among us,
that God is indeed with us,
to free us from the darkness of sin
and to raise us up to life eternal.

Everything that God wanted to say to us
was made known in Jesus Christ.”





Constitution Divine Revelation

**“This was the perfect moment of divine revelation,
and we await nothing further:**

no hidden secrets,

no sleight of hand,

no fine print.

Jesus Christ: today and for all eternity.

Nothing more,

Nothing less.”





Constitution Divine Revelation

“Nor are we left here all alone.

The **Holy Spirit brings** all this

to completion in us

by deepening our interior lives

so that this revelation might take root there.

Thus we are able to give free assent to these truths,

our hearts moved and turned toward God,

the **eyes of our minds opened**

by the Spirit.”





Constitution Divine Revelation

“We believe that God has made it possible for the **revealed truths** about our lives to be fully and faithfully **handed on forever**.

Jesus, therefore, sent his followers to announce this Good News, which they did in two ways.

First, they preached and **taught orally** and observed a way of life based on Christ’s teaching.”





Constitution Divine Revelation

“Second, they eventually **wrote down the message**,
under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Then they handed on the authority to teach
to the first bishops who took their place.

The role of those early bishops
was to keep the entire message of Christ
together,
complete,
and intact

for all generations to know and understand.”



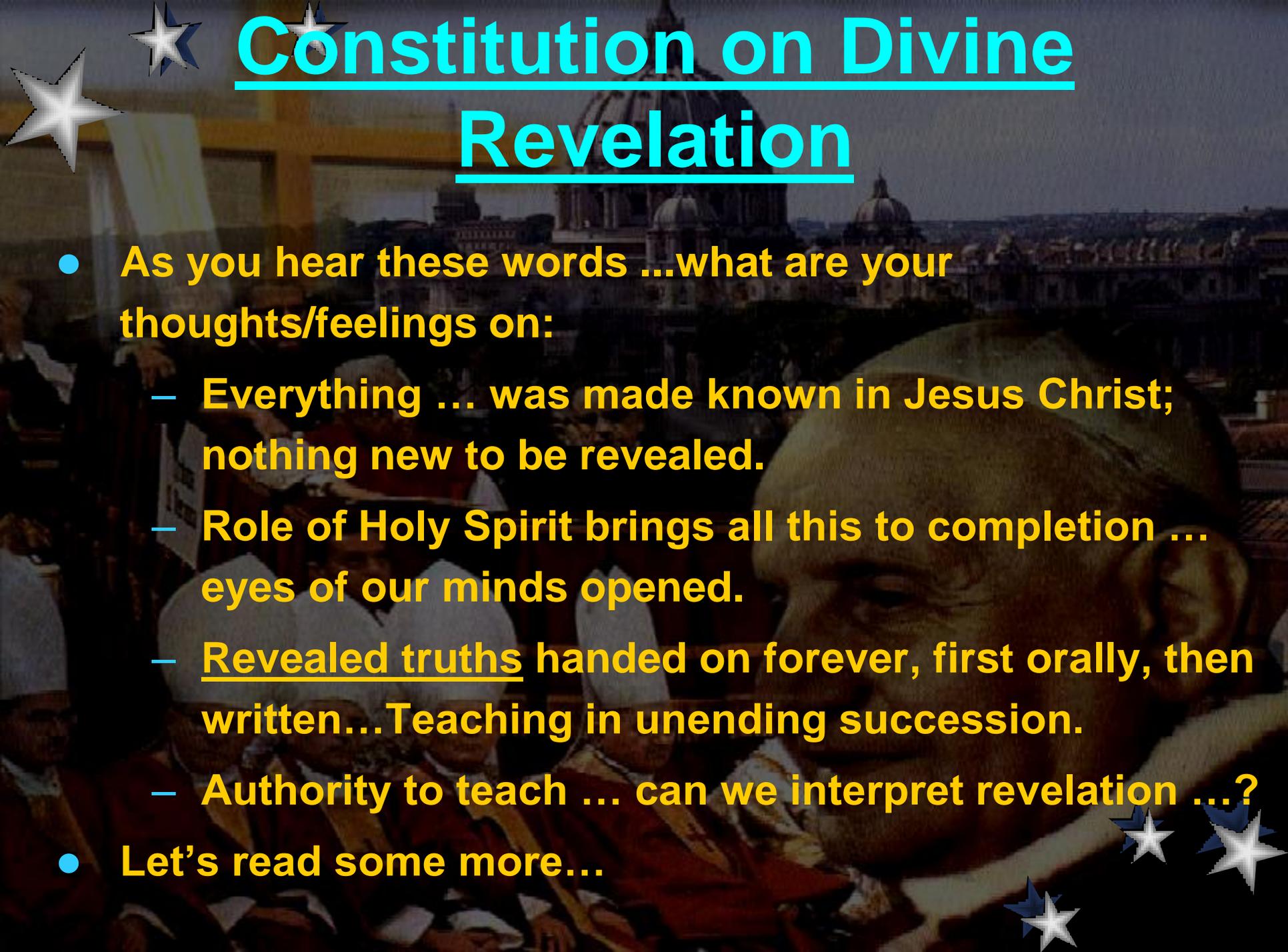


Constitution Divine Revelation

“We believe it is God’s plan, then,
that succeeding generations
have access to the Word of God
through an **unending succession of preaching,**
and witnessing
until the end of time.

The message passed along in this way
contains everything needed to live a holy life,
and calls us to respond;
we refer to our response as “faith.”





Constitution on Divine Revelation

- As you hear these words ...what are your thoughts/feelings on:
 - Everything ... was made known in Jesus Christ; nothing new to be revealed.
 - Role of Holy Spirit brings all this to completion ... eyes of our minds opened.
 - Revealed truths handed on forever, first orally, then written...Teaching in unending succession.
 - Authority to teach ... can we interpret revelation ...?
- Let's read some more...



Constitution Divine Revelation

“Indeed, this ‘Deposit of Faith,’ this **tradition**,
the Good News given by God,
develops in the Church
through the Holy Spirit.

Our faith is not a static reality,
lifeless and dead.

Rather, over time, there is **growth**
in understanding
and **development in doctrine.**”





Constitution Divine Revelation

“Even the Scriptures themselves
are more fully understood over time,
each age hearing it as a living voice
for that particular time.

Hence, there is a very close connection
between **Scripture**, on one hand,
and **Church tradition**, on the other.

They both flow from the **same divine well**
and tend toward the **same goal.**”





Constitution Divine Revelation

“**Scripture** is written component of the Word of God,
of which we have two volumes:

Old Testament and New Testament.

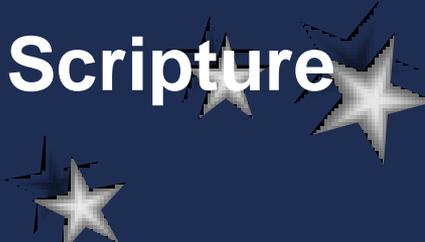
Sacred Tradition is the Word of God
passed on to us in a variety of forms:

Liturgy,

prayers,

teachings of the apostles,

and truths not fully explained in the Scripture
but equally important.”





Constitution Divine Revelation

“We, therefore, honor both sources of knowledge:
sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition.

Both Scripture and tradition **are essential components** of the Word of God.

Everyone who is baptized is empowered
to understand the Word of God
and to find meaning for their lives
in this Word.”





Constitution Divine Revelation

“Those who wrote down the words of Scripture were **inspired by the Holy Spirit.**

The Holy Spirit guided the writers

so that they recorded God’s revelation to us.

At the same time, these writers,

had full use of their intelligence,

their hearts,

their insights,

and access to their everyday experiences.”





Constitution Divine Revelation

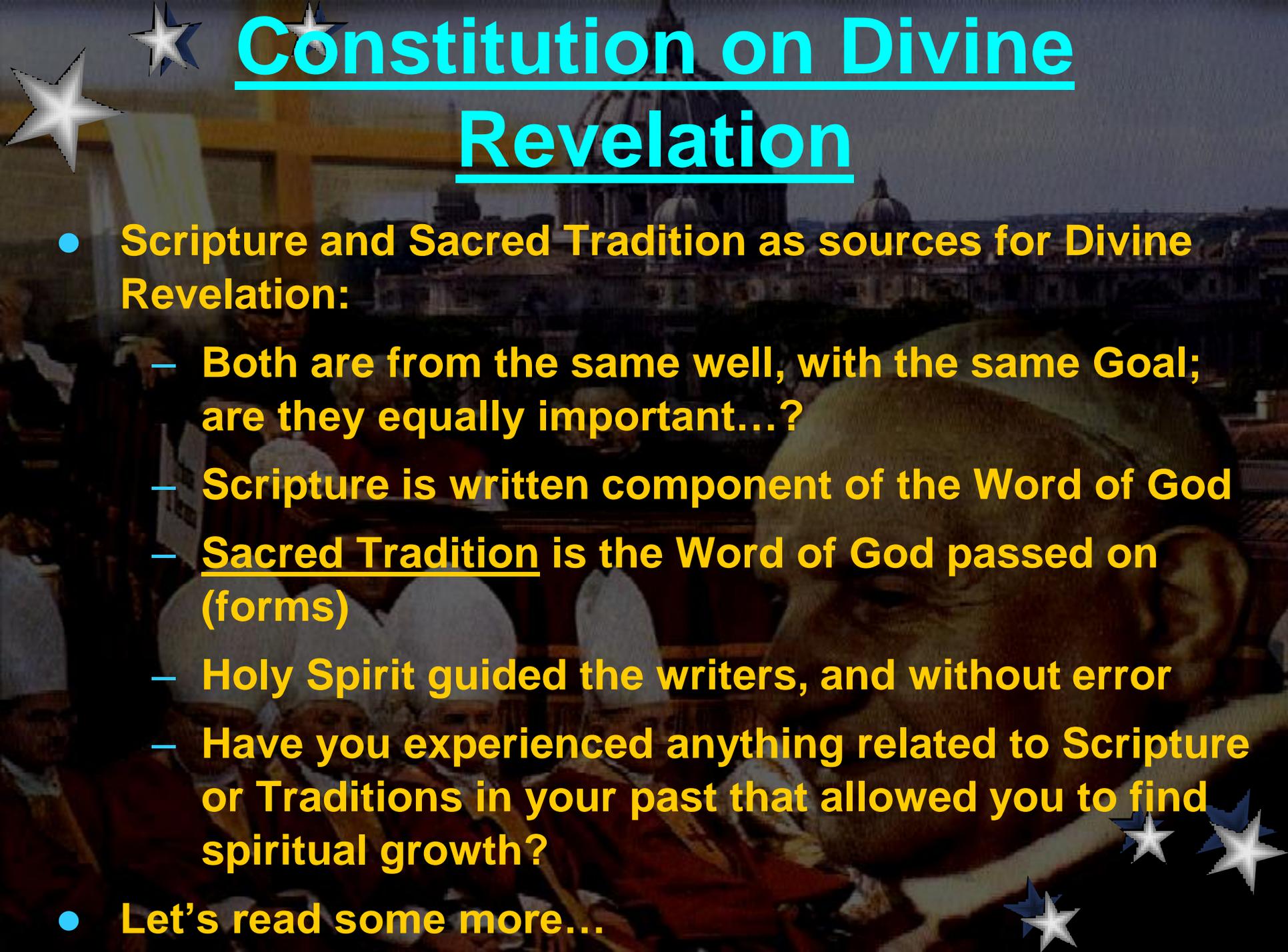
“They were not mindless scribes,
unaware of what they were writing.

It’s as though they were so **in tune with the Spirit**
that **everything they chose to write**
was **exactly what needed to be written.**

Therefore, we believe that the books of Scripture
teach solidly,
faithfully,
and **without error**

everything that God wants them to teach.”





Constitution on Divine Revelation

- **Scripture and Sacred Tradition as sources for Divine Revelation:**
 - Both are from the same well, with the same Goal; are they equally important...?
 - Scripture is written component of the Word of God
 - Sacred Tradition is the Word of God passed on (forms)
 - Holy Spirit guided the writers, and without error
 - Have you experienced anything related to Scripture or Traditions in your past that allowed you to find spiritual growth?
- **Let's read some more...**



Constitution Divine Revelation

“However, those who read these words today
must study them carefully
in order to understand the
original message of God.

It is, therefore, necessary for today’s readers
to **investigate** what the writers
intended to say.”





Constitution Divine Revelation

“There are, for example, **various forms** of literature used in the Scriptures:

historical,
prophetic,
poetic,
and others.

In addition, there were **circumstances** in the days of the writers that **differ** from those in today’s world.”





Constitution Divine Revelation

“In order to understand the words of Scripture,
one must understand these factors
and how they influenced the text.

Not only that, we must also be careful
to consider

Scripture as a whole,

not in fractions and broken parts.”





Constitution Divine Revelation

“The words of Scripture, after all,
are human words
imbued with the truth and holiness of God,
and we must scrutinize them carefully
to understand them fully.

In Scripture, **God meets us and speaks to us**
with great love.”





Constitution Divine Revelation

**“The force and power of the Word of God
is so great that it stands
as the support and energy of the whole Church,
the strength of faith for its members,
the food of the soul,
the pure source of the spiritual life.**

**Because this is true,
easy access to Scripture should be provided
to all the faithful.”**





Constitution Divine Revelation

**“The faithful should know Scripture,
for through the words of these texts
they meet Christ.**

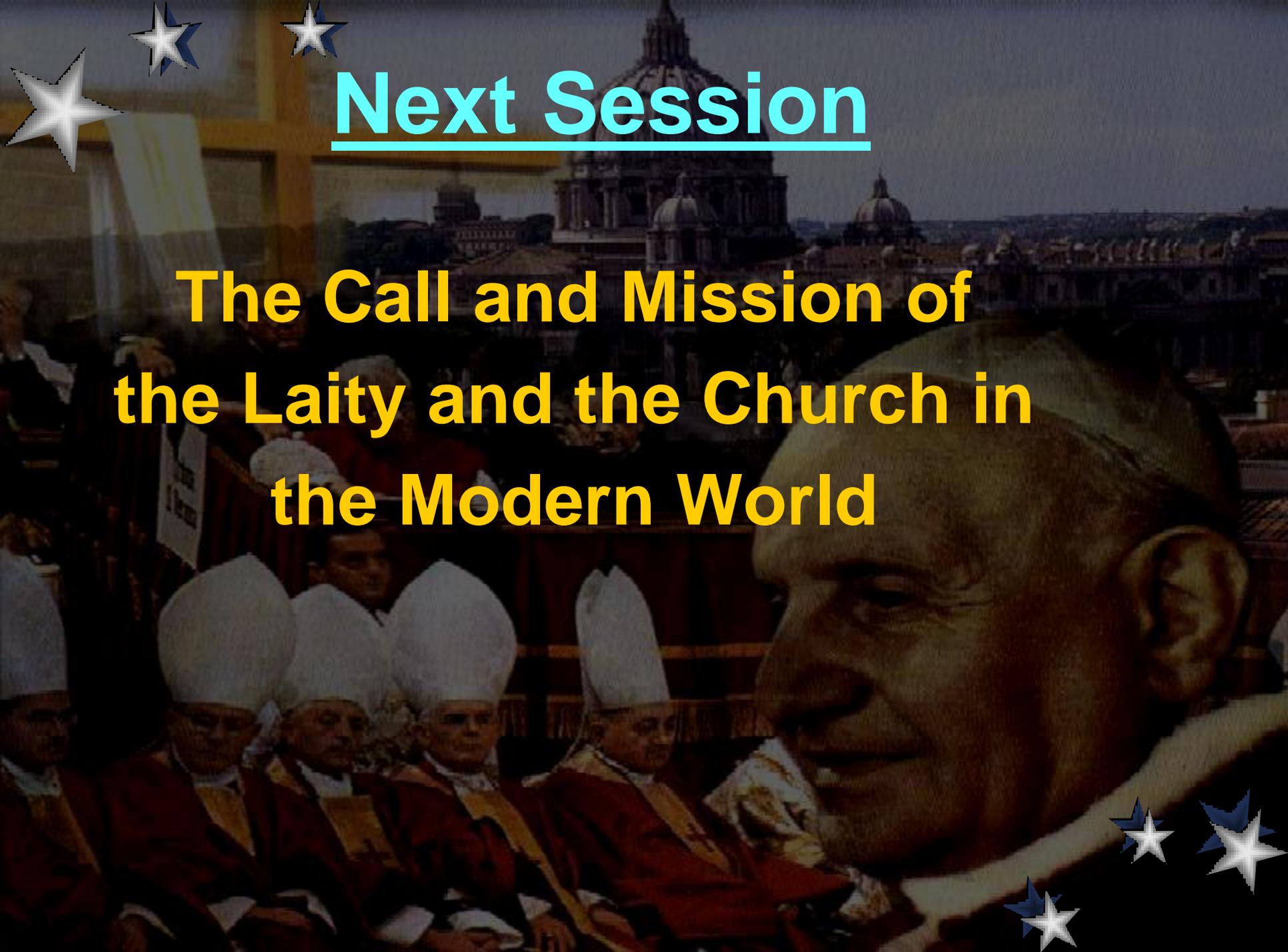
*Just as the life of the Church is strengthened
through more frequent
celebration of the Eucharist,
so it will be more stimulated
by a growing reverence for the Word of God
which lasts forever.”*





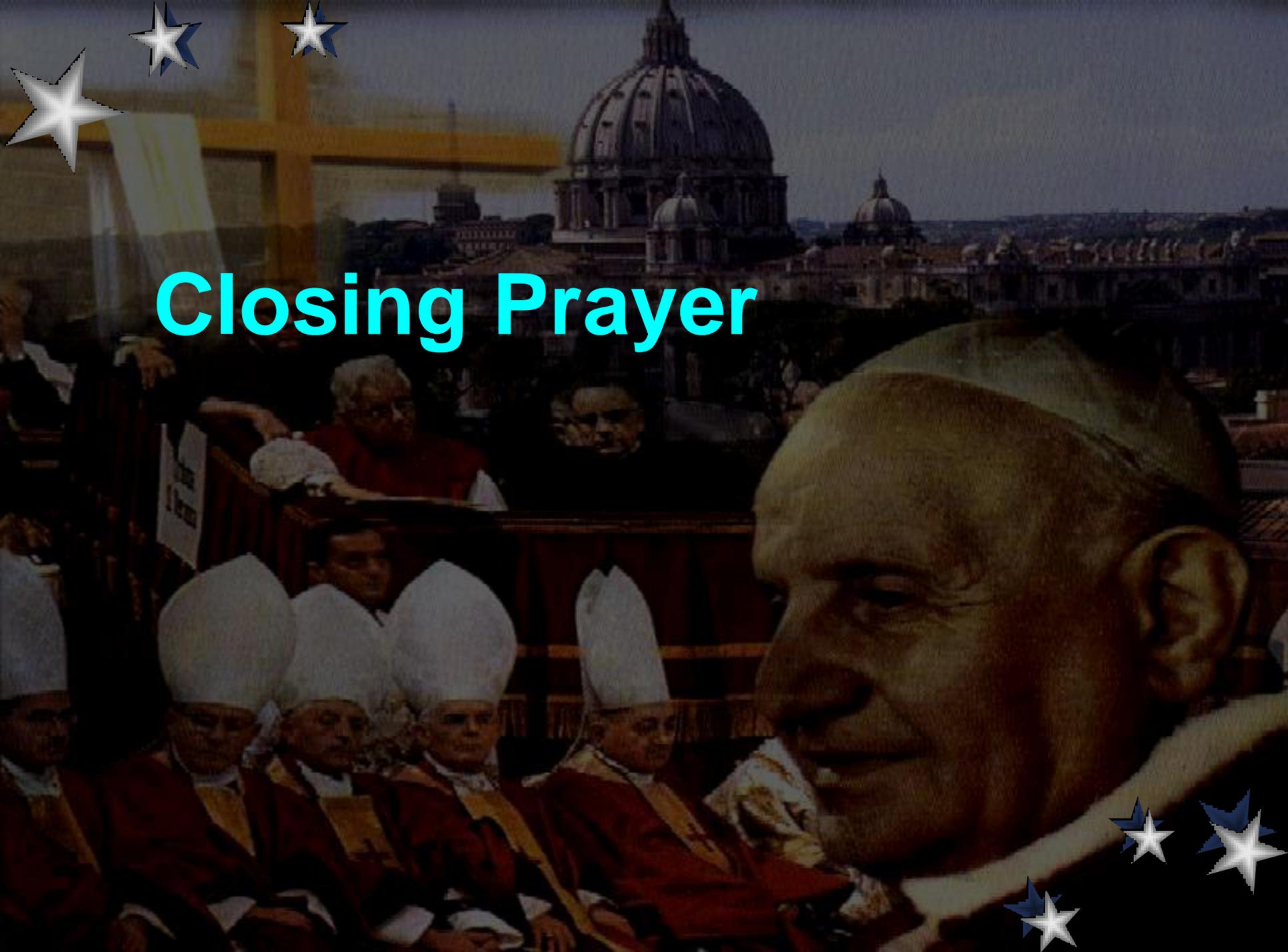
Constitution Divine Revelation

- **In the study of Scripture:**
 - Reading various forms of Scripture?
 - Scripture as a whole...What constitutes “Out of context”?
 - In scripture, “God meets us and speaks to us” ... Divine revelation?
 - “...easy access to Scripture should be provided to all the faithful.” Was it limited before Vatican II? Why could this statement be important?



Next Session

**The Call and Mission of
the Laity and the Church in
the Modern World**



Closing Prayer



VATICAN II AND YOU

ITS STORY AND MEANING
FOR TODAY