



# 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**

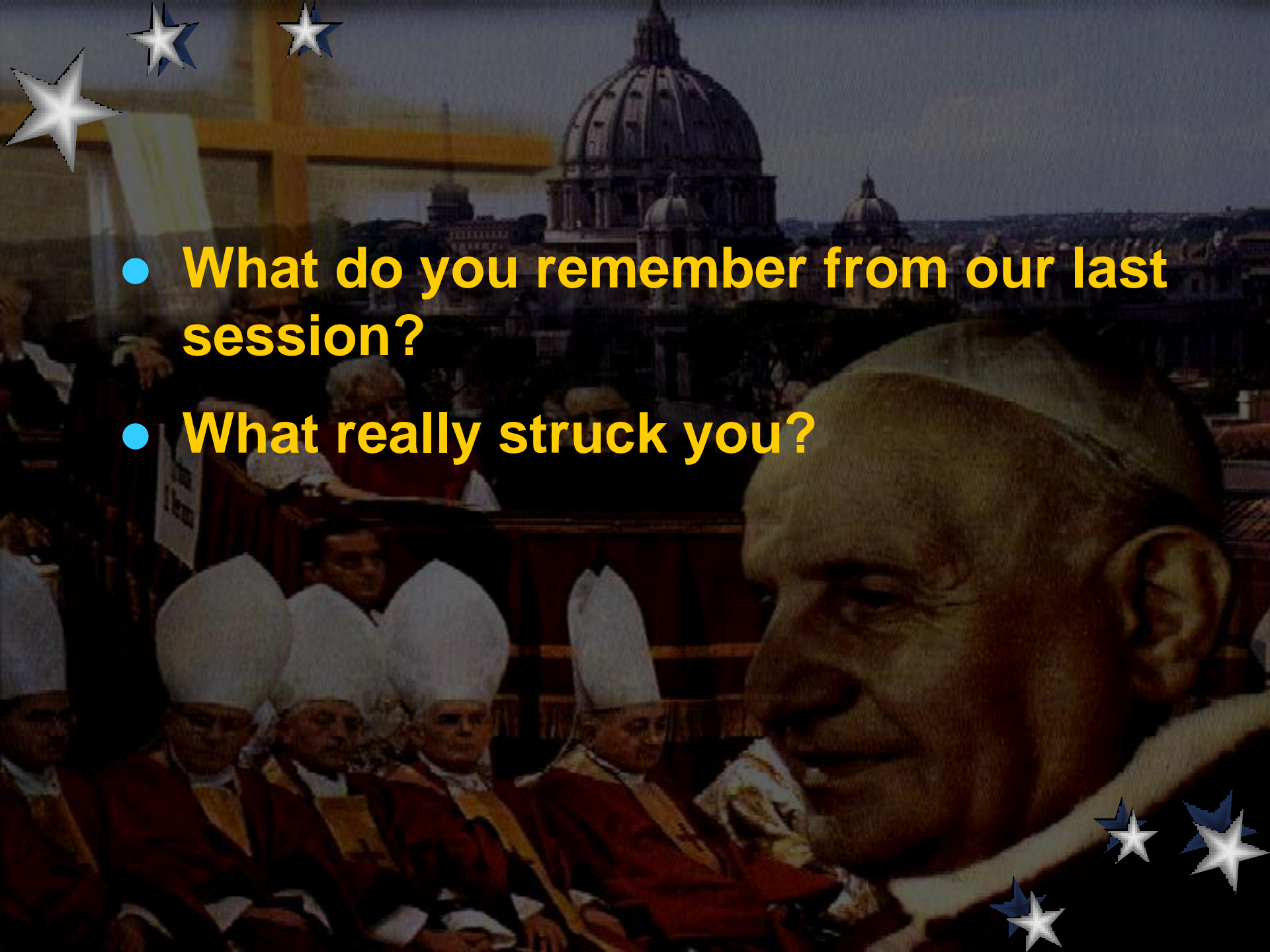




# Session 4

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

Opening Prayer



- **What do you remember from our last session?**
- **What really struck you?**





# Vocation of the Laity

- **“Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity”**
  - Issued Nov. 18, 1965, vote 2305 to 2
  - First Council document to address other than clergy
- **By virtue of baptism, laity have their own calling, mission, ministry**
  - Not just sharing in ministry of ordained



# Vocation of the Laity

- **“Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity”**
- **7 Chapters:**
  - **The Layperson’s Call to the Apostolate**
  - **Objectives**
  - **Various Fields of the Apostolate**
  - **Various Methods of the Apostolate**
  - **Preservation of Good Order**
  - **Formation for the Apostolate**
  - **Exhortation**




# Vocation of the Laity

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**“We have already spoken of the important role of the laity in the Constitution on the Church, but now we wish to expand on that here because the laity are so essential!**

**In our day and age,  
the laity are needed as never before,  
and the Church would scarcely be present  
in certain places  
without them.”**





# Vocation of the Laity

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**“Laypeople are the leaven of the world!**

**Christians have one goal:**

**to spread the word about Christ**


**so that all people**

**might share in his redemption**

**and be brought into relationship**

**with God.**

**The ‘apostolate’ is defined as all activity  
directed to the attainment of that goal.”**








# Vocation of the Laity

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**“All the members of the Body of Christ -  
lay, religious and ordained –  
share in that apostolate.**

**Every single member in the Body has a role,  
each according to his or her place,  
and fulfilling it is very important  
both to that person  
and to the Church itself.”**





# Vocation of the Laity

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**“The temporal activity of laypeople,  
when animated by the Spirit of Christ,  
promotes the salvation of all people.**

**Here is the key point:**

**the laity derive their right and duty  
to work in this apostolate**

**directly from Christ himself,  
not from the Church or its clergy.”**






# Vocation of the Laity

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**“Through baptism and confirmation,  
laypeople are consecrated into  
that royal priesthood, that holy people,  
which is Christ’s own.**

**The Holy Spirit gives each baptized person gifts  
which, when used properly,  
build up the Body of Christ.”**








# Vocation of the Laity

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**“The lay life is to be lived both in Christ  
and in the culture and society of the world,  
not disassociating one from the other.**

**Everything - family, business, and social lives -  
are to be incorporated into this.**

**The Laity therefore have a two-level ministry:  
in the Church itself  
as well as in the everyday world  
in which they live.”**





# Vocation of the Laity

- **What is “The Apostolate”?**
- **Why and how are lay people to be involved in The Apostolate?**



# Vocation of the Laity

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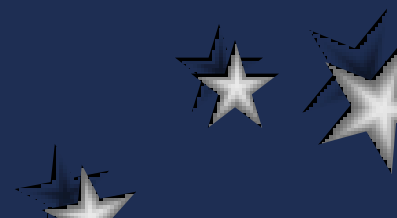
**“All of this leads to a life of faith, hope, and charity**

**By living in faith,**

**Christian people see Christ in all,  
whether neighbors or strangers,  
and make accurate assessments  
about meaning and value in life.**

**This leads to hope**

**because we are free from enslavement to wealth  
and able to choose those riches  
that lead to God’s Reign.”**







# Vocation of the Laity

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**“And the pinnacle of the Christian life is charity,  
by which Christians choose to do good to all  
and harm to none.**

**By living the true spirit of the beatitudes,  
laypeople grow in a true sense of poverty:  
which is neither sumptuousness nor destitution.”**






# Vocation of the Laity

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**“Everything Christians do should be motivated by love, but certain activities are especially loving: pity for the needy, care of the sick, and other works of charity.**

**Christians should seek those in need, search for and find them wherever they are, and offer them solace and comfort.”**





# Vocation of the Laity

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**“And here are the key principles to follow  
in this ministry:**

**Pay attention to the image of God  
in the ones who are needy.**

**Preserve their freedom and dignity  
even as they are fed and clothed.**

**Maintain pure motive as the helper:  
not to dominate but to serve.”**







# Vocation of the Laity

- In what ways can lay people witness a life of faith, hope and love?
- What are some key principles we should follow, especially when helping the poor and needy?




# Vocation of the Laity

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**“There are various ways in which the laity carry out their apostolic work, and we wish to mention each of them.**

**We also wish to point out that women have an ever increasing role in this, and it is important that they be encouraged in all the Church’s work.”**





# Vocation of the Laity

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**“First, the parish is the obvious place  
where laypeople work in the apostolate,  
exercising their priestly, or prayerful;  
prophetic, or teaching;  
and royal, or servant, share in ministry.”**








# Vocation of the Laity

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**“Second, marriage and family life  
is another obvious place where laypeople  
live out their apostolate as Christian ministers.  
The home is where faith begins for children.  
It is where fidelity is experienced  
and love developed.  
The household is the domestic sanctuary of  
the Church.”**





# Vocation of the Laity


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**“Third, another place where the apostolate works is among young people.**

**Young people are challenged today by fast-moving lifestyles.**

**But youthful energy and fresh ideas abound, and young people can minister to each other and help the whole Church.**

**A strong and vital relationship should exist between youth and adults, providing both with benefits.”**






# Vocation of the Laity

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**“Fourth, the social lives of Christians  
provide yet another opportunity  
to develop the apostolate.**

**This is done by infusing and animating the world  
with the spirit of Christ  
in the workplace,  
home life,  
recreation and leisure life,  
and among our companions.”**








# Vocation of the Laity

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**“If Christians live lives that are in harmony  
with the values of the Gospel -  
honesty,  
charity,  
and fidelity -  
others will see them  
and be affected.**

**Little by little, through their lifestyles,  
Christians will penetrate the world  
and announce the Gospel.”**





# Vocation of the Laity

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**“And fifth, by promoting the common good on a regional, national, and international level, Christians touch the whole world.**

**We applaud the increasing sense of solidarity among people of the world and hope it will become genuine love.**

**Wherever they go, Christians announce Christ by their lives and witness.”**





# Vocation of the Laity

- What are the various areas of involvement of the laity in the Apostolate since Vatican II?
- Should the laity become more involved in the life of the parish or in the work of the world?
- What can we do to more fully carry out our “apostolic work” today?



# Vocation of the Laity

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**“We want to see lay ministry strengthened today.**

**Bishops and pastors are to work closely**

**with laypeople**

**in building up the Church.**

**In particular, priests should be carefully chosen**

**who are willing and able to promote lay ministry**

**and nourish those who step forward.”**








# Vocation of the Laity

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**“Through ongoing dialogue and consultation, priests should be on the lookout for new forms of fruitful apostolic work.**

**Overall, we are saying that lay ministry is to be encouraged, supported, and carefully coordinated.”**






# Vocation of the Laity

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**“Toward this end,  
dioceses should establish councils  
through which apostolic work and ministry  
can be fostered and coordinated.**

**Such councils should exist at all levels  
of the Church**

**within parishes  
among parishes  
among dioceses  
and among nations.”**






# Vocation of the Laity

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**“Laypeople who take up ministerial work  
should be well trained and prepared  
both in understanding doctrine  
and in adapting to the needs  
of the particular circumstance  
in which they are working.”**





# Vocation of the Laity

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**“Everyone should, therefore,  
painstakingly ready himself or herself  
for apostolic work in adulthood,  
because as we grow older  
we can contribute more.”**







# Vocation of the Laity

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**“We urge all laypeople**

**who are moved by the Holy Spirit**

**to gladly and promptly accept their calling**

**to minister in the Church and the world.**

**This calling comes, after all,**

**from God through Christ**

**so that we might move closer to the divine heart**

**and prepare the way of the Lord!”**





# Vocation of the Laity

- **Since Vatican II, what has been done to help lay people more effectively participate in The Apostolate?**
- **What more still needs to be done?**
- **What more can we do?**



# Church in Modern World

- “Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World”
  - Latin title: *Gaudium et Spes*
- Never before had a council
  - Addressed all humankind
    - Without insisting
      - Be baptized
      - Give allegiance to Rome





# Church in Modern World

- **Seeks to befriend and engage all people of goodwill in dialogue**
  - **To make human life more dignified**
  - **Closer to God's plan for us humans**
    - **Richer relationships**
    - **More economic justice**
    - **More humane use of technology**
    - **More noble lifestyle**



# Church in Modern World

- **Not originally planned**
- **Idea arose from Council floor**
  - **Speech on Dec. 4, 1962 by Belgian Cardinal Leon-Josef Suenens**
    - **Sustained applause cut off by president**
      - **“Such boisterous response not in order”**
    - **“As Vatican I was council of papacy,”**
    - **“Let Vatican II be council of the Church of Christ who is Light of the Nations!”**





# Church in Modern World

- **Cardinal Suenens's Speech:**
  - Proposed draft Constitution on Church be divided into two
    - Inner nature of Church
    - Church's mission in the world
  - Called for dialogue with world on:
    - Dignity of human person
    - Social justice
    - Private property
    - The poor
    - Peace and international relations



# Church in Modern World

- Many others spoke in support
- Including Cardinal Giovanni Battista Montini of Milan
  - Only house guest of Pope John XXIII
  - Spoke only twice in first session
  - Approved of Suenens's remarks
    - Confirming that Suenens had indeed been speaking the mind of the Pope
  - Cardinal Montini elected Pope Paul VI





# Church in Modern World

- **First draft presented Oct. 20, 1964**
  - Too “unchurchy”
  - Too “social”
  - Debate convinced of worthiness
- **Two subcommittees**
  - Doctrinal soundness
  - Address the “signs of the times”
    - across the planet
    - not only Western world
  - Many worked 18-hour days



# Church in Modern World

- **Final vote on December 7, 1965**
  - 2,309 to 75
- **Main themes:**
  - human person is dignified, still suffer
  - importance of conscience
  - live in global community of persons
    - everything be available for truly human life
  - overcome discrimination
  - science does not conflict with faith





# Church in Modern World

- **Nine chapters**
  - **Dignity of the Human Person**
  - **Community of Humankind**
  - **Humans' Activity Throughout World**
  - **Role of Church in Modern World**
  - **Fostering Nobility of Marriage and Family**
  - **Proper Development of Culture**
  - **Economic and Social Life**
  - **Life of the Political Community**
  - **Fostering Peace & Community of Nations**





# Church in Modern World

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**“The joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties  
of the people of this age,  
especially those who are poor  
or in any way afflicted,  
these are the joys and hopes,  
the griefs and anxieties,  
of the followers of Christ.”**





# Church in Modern World

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**“The Christian vision is that the world was created  
and is sustained  
by God.**

**It was freed from the slavery of sin by Christ.**

**It is now being re-created and brought to its destiny  
under the Holy Spirit.**

**We now offer to the world**

**the honest assistance of the Church**

**in fostering human harmony that is our destiny.”**





# Church in Modern World

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“People today are troubled and perplexed by questions about their lives in the world, about their place in the universe, about the meaning of individual & collective work, and about the purpose and nature of being human.

We now wish to enter into **dialogue** with the **whole human family** about this.”



The background of the slide features a composite image. The upper portion shows a panoramic view of St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, Italy, with its large dome and surrounding architecture. The lower portion shows a group of cardinals in red and white vestments, with a large, close-up profile of a cardinal's face on the right side. The overall image is dimly lit, serving as a backdrop for the text and stars.

# Church in Modern World

- How does this view of the world differ from the Church's position for the previous several hundred years?



# Church in Modern World

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“In order to proceed here,  
we must understand the world in which we live,  
its expectations,  
its longings,  
and its often dramatic ways.

We must, in other words, **read the  
signs of the times.**”





# Church in Modern World

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“One of those signs

is the **profound and rapid change**  
that is everywhere.

As we might expect,

this transformation has also brought  
serious difficulties.

Never has the human race enjoyed more wealth,  
yet a huge number of people are tormented  
by poverty, illiteracy, and want.”








# Church in Modern World

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“Never has there been such human freedom,  
yet new forms of social and psychological slavery  
also make their appearance alongside it.  
Never before has the drive for a better world  
been more on the minds of men and women,  
yet there is **not a corresponding  
spiritual advancement**  
to give it meaning and purpose.”





# Church in Modern World

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“Ideas and social conditions that have lasted for centuries are quickly being replaced in our time by new concepts of social organization.

So much change **calls traditional values into question.**

Religion is also affected, of course, by this new world movement.”






# Church in Modern World

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“Growing numbers of people  
are **abandoning religion**  
in favor of science or humanism.  
One’s intellect may be thoroughly modern,  
while one’s theory of meaning is  
more traditional,  
and no joining of the two seems possible.  
Or one’s concern for practicality and efficiency  
is in tension with one’s moral conscience.”





# Church in Modern World

- What was happening in the world politically, economically, technologically, socially, etc. before and after the Council?
- How can we maintain our faith during times of economic growth and rapid change?




# Church in Modern World

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**“For the first time in history,  
many believe it is possible and desirable  
that the benefits of modern culture  
can be extended to everyone.**

**Especially those who do not yet have these benefits  
the world’s starving people,  
women,  
workers,  
and farmers.”**





# Church in Modern World

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“The modern world is both powerful and weak,  
capable of noble deeds or foul ones,  
in the path of freedom or that of slavery.

Modern **people seek new levels of meaning today**  
precisely because of the unleashed powers  
of modern life,  
which can either serve us or destroy us.

Some believe there is no meaning in life  
to begin with.”








# Church in Modern World

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**“Yet there are those, increasing in number, who ask:  
What is the human person?  
What is this sense of sorrow,  
of evil,  
of death,  
which continues to exist despite our progress?  
What can we expect from life,  
what can we offer to it?  
What follows our earthly life?”**





# Church in Modern World

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“We in the Church firmly believe

that **the Light of Christ can illumine our search.**

Beneath these many changes and developments

is an unchanging and loving God,

and we now speak of these matters

in order to cooperate in finding the solution

to the outstanding problems of our age.”





# Church in Modern World

- **What answers does the Church offer to peoples' questions about life:**
  - **Origin: Where did we come from?**
  - **Meaning: Why are we here?**
  - **Morality: How should we live?**
  - **Destiny: Where are we going?**



# How Implement Council Here?

- **Today's theme:**  
**“The Call and Mission of  
the Laity and the Church in  
the Modern World”**
- **Brainstorm ways we can implement  
the Council in our own lives and  
local situations?**





# Closing Prayer





# VATICAN II AND YOU

ITS STORY AND MEANING  
FOR TODAY