

Chapter 32

The Popes of the Twentieth Century

The personalities and styles of the popes of the 20th century range from cold, austere, conservative and monarchial to warm, outgoing, open and collegial and combinations in between. And given the strong central role of the papacy after Vatican I, each individual pope marked the life of the Church in a very distinctive way, as we shall see.

Pope Pius X (1903-14)

Perhaps best known as the “anti-Modernist” pope (as discussed in Ch. 29), he was of peasant stock, born in a small village in northern Italy. He was ordained in 1858 and had experience as a parish priest, seminary spiritual director, bishop of Mantua (1884-93) and later promoted to Cardinal Patriarch of Venice (1893-1903).

The fact that he was elected pope is often attributed to a quirk of fate. When Leo XIII died (age 94), the cardinals met and the first two ballots favored Leo’s Secretary of State, Cardinal Rampolla. He seemed sure to be elected on the following ballot, but fate stepped in. Before the third ballot was cast, it was announced that Emperor Francis Joseph wished to exercise the ancient privilege of the Hapsburg kings and cast a veto against Rampolla. The cardinals refused to accept the veto, however, in the succeeding ballots Rampolla’s support dwindled and the relatively unknown Giuseppe Sarto was elected pope.

Those who admired him stressed his positive side. He was described as a man of prayer and a man of the people, a warm friendly person. As a priest and bishop he focused his efforts on the inward, spiritual life of the Church - prayer, teaching, the sacraments. As pope he spoke in the simple direct language of the “little people” of Rome. He often ate his meals with simple priests, contrary to established protocol. He saw himself as pastor of Catholics all over the world. He also saw himself as a reformer of the inner structure and life of the Church. His motto, as stated in his first encyclical, was “to restore all things in Christ, so that Christ may be all in all”.

His reforms efforts included a massive, successful and long overdue codification of Canon Law. This reform clarified the law and made it easier to understand, even for the layman.

He reorganized the curia and streamlined the central administration of the Church. Ironically, he abolished the ancient custom of veto in the election of the pope and imposed absolute secrecy on the process of papal election under pain of excommunication.

He also revolutionized Christian piety in several important and lasting ways: 1) He encouraged frequent, even daily, reception of the Holy Eucharist and taught that the Eucharist was not a reward, but rather a necessary means for living the Christian life. He stressed that children should be able to receive the Eucharist at the “age of discretion”,

about age seven. 2) He also stressed catechetical instruction for all, especially the young. To accomplish this, he established the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (CCD) in every parish and included the laity as teachers. 3) He reformed sacred music and designated Gregorian Chant and “the true and only lawful code of sacred music”. However, women were excluded from choirs and only organ music was allowed.

Following on Leo XIII’s encyclical *Providentissimus Deus* concerning the study of Sacred Scripture, Pius X ordered a correction of the Vulgate, the approved Catholic edition of the Bible, then mandated the study of Scripture in all seminaries and finally set up the Pontifical Biblical Institute of Rome to be run by the Jesuits as a graduate-level institution of teaching, research and publication.

Pius X encouraged the involvement of the laity, not only in the CCD, but also in a movement he called “Catholic Action”. This was a call for inner renewal and an active life in the world, including politics, to aid the clergy in “restoring all things to Christ” i.e., to return society back to its Christian foundations. In the U. S. this movement spawned such lay organizations as the Christian Family Movement, The Catholic Worker, Catholic Interracial Councils, the Legion of Decency, The National Councils of Catholic Men and Women and the Serra International. All worked under approval of the bishops.

While recognizing all these positives about Pius X, critics also point to some important negatives. He came under the greatest criticism for his severe, unscholarly and totalitarian handling of the Modernist Crisis, as discussed in our treatment of Chapter 29. Special criticism was incurred for his system of “secret police” who used high-handed and personally injurious methods to protect the Church against real and imagined heresies.

It is also pointed out that Pius X had a public image of prejudice and negation, with little inclination or ability as a statesman. He was convinced that modern forms of culture were intrinsically irreconcilable with Catholicism. He exhibited a stark hostility toward the developing democracies in the U.S. and Italy and independent Christian Democratic lay political movements were often suppressed. His main political focus was to secure political rights for the Church, especially in Italy. However, he did win some points with critics when he encouraged French bishops to refuse state subsidies from the government, lest financial dependence on the state would compromise their authority and mission.

Pius X was also criticized for his rigid opposition to the process of inculturation in the missions. And while he spoke often of the plight of the poor, he gave little or no support to organized labor.

Given his plusses and minuses, history has judged him as a successful reformer of internal structures and life of the Church, but unsuccessful in responding to the larger issues of the relationship of the Church to the modern world of academics, economics, politics and the process of inculturation in the missions.

Pope Benedict XV (1914-22)

Benedict XV was born in Genoa in 1854. He earned a doctorate in civil law in 1875 and was ordained in 1878. He was immediately taken into the curia and trained in the Leo XIII's school of diplomacy. The skills learned there he later used quite well. In 1883 he became an aide to Cardinal Rampolla in the office of the Vatican Secretary of State. From 1907-14 he served as Bishop of Bologna and belatedly was made cardinal by Pius X.

Many have judged that Benedict XV was the right pope at the right time and in many ways the most underrated pope of the 20th century. He was seen as a peacemaker - both within the Church and among the nations - at a time of great conflict on both fronts. His great diplomatic skills, his personal acts of charity and his dedication to peace and conciliation served the Church well.

His first act of peacemaking in the Church was to immediately end the reign of terror against the Modernists. He shut down Msgr. Benigni's international network of spies and informers seeking to discredit suspected theologians. (Benigni later became an agent for Mussolini)

Benedict XV also put much effort into an attempt to stop W.W.I. He condemned the war, while maintaining a position of neutrality, as Catholics were on both side of the conflict. His analysis of the causes of unrest between nations included: 1) contempt for authority, 2) lack of mutual love among people, 3) social injustice and 4) economic greed.

In 1917, he offered a seven point peace plan which was rejected by both sides. Because he would not take sides, he was accused by both sides as complicit with the other and later was excluded from the Versailles Peace Conference. Following the war he gave full support the League of Nations and called for systems of justice and charity among nations.

He did have diplomatic success with France and resumed diplomatic relations in 1920. This was due, in part, by his canonization of Joan of Arc in 1920. Through his efforts, Great Britain set a representative to the Vatican for the first time in three hundred years. He also began the process of settling the "Roman Question" which concerned the ownership of the Vatican territory, since the seizure of the Papal States and the fall of Rome in 1870. The question was to reach final solution with the Lateran Treaty in 1929.

As noted in Chapter 30, Benedict XV issued the encyclical *Maximum Illud*, which called for adequate training of missionaries and the formation of a native clergy. It became known as the charter of modern missionary efforts. In 1917, he set up the Pontifical Oriental Institute in Rome. He also was also responsible for publishing the Code of Canon Law, in 1918.

Pope Pius XI (1922-39)

Pius XI was born in 1857 in a small town near Milan. His father was the manager of a

silk factory. His extensive education included three doctoral degrees from the Gregorian University. He taught dogmatic theology for five years at the seminary of Milan. In 1907, he was appointed prefect of the Ambrosian Library of Milan and in 1911 he began a seven year tenure at the Vatican Library. In 1921 he was made Cardinal-Archbishop of Milan.

Historians give Pius XI mixed reviews, but most agree that his positive accomplishments outweigh the negative. He is credited with four major accomplishments:

First, the promotion of the laity in the work of the Church. He was a strong advocate of the Catholic Action Movement, while continuing to view them as simply an extension of the hierarchy. He also promoted strong lay participation in the missions.

Second, the promotion of social justice through publication of his great social encyclical, *Quadragesimo Anno* published in 1931 on the fortieth anniversary of Leo's *Rerum Novarum*. In this encyclical he reiterated the right of the Church to speak on social issues. He expanded the idea of a just wage to include a family wage. He rejected socialism and introduced the idea of "subsidiarity" and spoke of the natural right to property, as preventive measure to protect the individual from being absorbed by the collective state.

Third, he promoted the missions. He promoted the idea of a native clergy and native women's religious orders. He doubled the number of missionaries by requiring every religious order to engage in missionary work. He encouraged the establishment of schools and hospitals as an integral part of the missionary apostolate.

His encyclical *Rerum Ecclesiae* published in 1926 called for 1) disassociating the faith from European culture, 2) disassociating the faith from white men, 3) development of a native clergy, 4) development of a native lay apostolate, and 5) the inculturation of dogma and worship to the native cultures.

Fourth, he promoted science and scholarship. In 1925, he founded the Pontifical Institute of Christian Archaeology (a personal scholarly interest of his) and in 1936 he founded the Pontifical Academy of Sciences. Also, in 1931 he installed a radio station in the Vatican and was the first pope to use the radio for pastoral purposes.

A major part of his time was dedicated to politics and here historians give praise, but also criticisms. To put his actions and the response of later critics in proper focus two things need to be stressed: his near pathological fear of communism and his singular focus of obtaining the best possible political situation for the Church in whatever nation and with whatever form of government he encountered. He signed some eighteen concordats with sovereign nations to protect the rights of Catholics and the Church.

First, the Italian situation. Pius XI negotiated the final solution to the "Roman Question" with the signing the Lateran Treaty in 1929. It was acknowledged that Italy had incorporated the Papal States, including the city of Rome, into the Italian State. The Treaty gave the Church a small territory (108.7 acres) and political freedom from the

authority of the Italian state. This issue had been at the heart of the “Roman Question”. It was now settled with the Vatican as an independent political entity. The Treaty further recognized Catholicism as the religion of Italy (revoked in 1985) and provided a huge financial compensation for the loss of the Papal States.

The signing of the Lateran Treaty came at a cost - Pius XI had to deal with the notorious Fascist, Mussolini. Fearing Communism more than Fascism, Pius XI helped Mussolini come to power by failing to support the Catholic Popular Party, which opposed Mussolini, and, in fact, facilitated the resignation of and deportation of the party’s leader, Fr. Don Sturzo. Furthermore, he raised no objection to Mussolini’s invasion of Ethiopia or his intervention in the Spanish Civil War.

Pius XI also dealt with another Fascist, Hitler, and again negotiated a concordat for the protection of the Church at the cost of the demise of the Catholic Center Party which had been established to protect the rights of Catholics in Germany. The German bishops had earlier condemned Hitler’s National Socialist Party, however, the pope accepted in good faith Hitler’s pledge to protect Catholics and the rights of the Church and signed a concordat negotiated by Eugenio Pacilli, the future Pope Pius XII.

Later, as Hitler failed to live up to his promises, Pius XI published his encyclical *Mit brennender Sorge* (With Burning Concern) in 1937. He denounced Hitler personally and his failure to live up to the concordat. He was preparing an even stronger encyclical when he died in 1939.

Pope Pius XII (1939-58)

Born in 1876 of a respected Roman family who had given years of service to the Vatican, Pius XII was ordained in 1899. He never served as a pastor, but entered papal service in 1901. He first helped with the further codification of canon law and taught international law at the school for papal diplomats in Rome. He was the consummate bureaucrat. His demeanor was described as aloof, cold and autocratic.

He was appointed nuncio (messenger) to Bavaria in 1917 and to the new German Republic in 1920. In 1929 he was made cardinal and was named secretary of state by Pius XI. As papal secretary of state he traveled to the U.S. where he met President Roosevelt. His duties included negotiating concordats with various European countries, e.g., Austria and Germany where he spent a great deal of time.

Upon the death of Pius XI, he was quickly elected pope in 1939. He dedicated his pontificate to the cause of peace and called on European nations to settle their differences and avoid war.

He did not publish a social encyclical, but in a 1941 radio address he declared the right of private property, while maintaining that such ownership is always subordinate to the common good. This provided the future basis for South American bishops to call for land reform.

He gave aid to modern biblical studies in his encyclical *Divina Afflante Spiritu* in 1943. He approved the limited use of the historical-critical method for biblical studies as a scholarly tool to investigate the sources and literary forms of biblical writing in order to discover “what the writer intended to express”.

The encyclical *Mediator Dei*, gave a start to the liturgical movement and *Mystici Corporis* spoke of the Church as the Body of Christ. However, “real” membership in the Church was defined as consisting of those who are baptized, profess the true faith and are in union with the pope. Vatican II would widen this definition somewhat.

He did not involve himself in the field of ecumenism or any new theologies not based on neo-Scholasticism. He also declared the dogma of The Assumption in 1950.

The modern controversies about an evaluation of Pius XII center around the question of his “silence” about the Holocaust. It is a wide ranging issue and the constant flood of books and studies attest to the fact that a final judgment on the matter of his silence cannot be made at this time. The observable facts are that he was aware, but basically silent about the Nazi atrocities against the Jews, at least in public. The question is why?

Supporters claim that he felt greater evils, especially against Catholics, would result from public condemnations. They also point out that while remaining neutral, he spoke out for peace and came to the aid of refugees. In 1943 when Rome was occupied by the Nazis, Vatican City opened to a flood of refugees, including Jews. In order for Roman Jews to pay a heavy fine imposed by the Nazis, Pius XII ordered sacred vessels to be melted to help pay the fine. In all, over 5,000 Jews were given asylum in the convents and monasteries of Rome. Some 15,000 Jews were reported to have taken refuge at Castel Gandolfo - the summer home of the pope, eighteen miles southeast of Rome. After the war, a former Israeli counsel credited the Vatican with saving some four hundred thousand Jewish lives.

On the other hand, critics note that his only near mention of the Jewish plight was in the vague terms “unfortunate people” suffering because of their race. They also noted that he never mentioned the word “Jew” in public, not did he ever condemn anti-Semitism. He made no mention of the Nuremberg race laws of 1935 or the Nazi invasion of Poland. After the war while he excommunicated all members of the Communist party throughout the world, he made no mention of the Catholics Hitler, Himmler, Goebbels or Bormann. For these reasons and others, critics see this as both a political failure and a moral failure.

When John Paul II apologized for the sins of Catholics against the Jews at the Holocaust memorial, Yad Vashem, no mention was made about any failures of the institutional Church and/or its leaders. Traditionally, the official Church finds it difficult, if not impossible, to acknowledge its past failures. Pope John Paul II has apologized many times to many groups for the failures of individual members or groups within the Church, but concerning popes and the institutional Church, there is only silence.

Pope John XXIII (1958-63)

Angelo Roncalli was born in 1881 of a peasant family of farmers near Bergamo, Italy. He entered the seminary at age fourteen and studied at the seminaries of Bergamo and the St. Apollinaire Institute in Rome. He was ordained in 1904 and immediately appointed secretary to the Bishop of Bergamo and taught Church history at the local seminary.

He served as a chaplain in W.W.I and after the war was appointed by Benedict XV as national director of the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith. While conducting research in the Ambrosian Library he made the acquaintance of Achille Ratti, the future Pope Pius XI, who in 1925 made him apostolic delegate to Bulgaria and later to Turkey and Greece. In these assignments he gained an excellent reputation for his dealings with Orthodox Christians.

In 1944, he was made nuncio to France. There he was confronted with a demand from the government to remove some thirty-three bishops for collaborating with the Germans. Roncalli investigated and convinced the bishops to resign. He successfully negotiated with the French for the humane treatment of German prisoners.

In 1952, he became the permanent observer for the Holy See at UNESCO. The next year Pius XII made him a cardinal and patriarch of Venice. He was extremely popular in Venice and was appreciated for his friendliness, sense of humor, his approachable pastoral style and commonsense approach to problems - nearly the opposite of Pius XII.

On the death of Pius XII in 1958, this unlikely papal candidate surprisingly became the compromise candidate for pope and was elected on the twelfth ballot at the age of seventy-seven. Those who elected him assumed that he would simply keep the papal chair warm for the next pope, however, surprises were in store for the Church and the whole world.

Unknowingly, the cardinals had elected the most important pope of the twentieth century and perhaps the most beloved pope of all time, both inside and outside the Church. The days of the cold, withdrawn, autocratic Pius XII, were gone, the Church was in for a breath of fresh, warm air. Change was in the air and not everyone was ready for that - certainly not the curia, perhaps his only enemies.

Roncalli's first, but not last, surprise was his selection of a name - John XXIII. He did this to settle an old dispute. During the Great Western Schism of the fifteenth century, one of the three competing popes had taken the name John XXIII. He called the Council of Constance in 1414, but withdrew when it became evident that the Council would call for his own resignation. For years canon lawyers had disagreed about the legitimacy of his papacy. Roncalli settled the argument by himself taking the name John XXIII.

The new pope became immediately visible. He strolled the Vatican Gardens and the

streets of Rome. He visited the Regina Coeli prison and conversed with prisoners, humorously recalling the arrest of one of his many relatives. He approached traditional enemies like the Communists and disarmed them with his friendliness and wit.

He spoke of the workings of the Holy Spirit in the world and noted the “signs of the times”. He saw the workings of the Holy Spirit in the ending of colonialism, the emancipation of the working class and the promotion of equality for women in society. He spoke of a time for change - “a new Pentecost” - and taught that we are not born to be “museum-keepers, but to cultivate a flourishing garden of life.”

One of his first official acts was to expand and internationalize the College of Cardinals. The College of Cardinals was predominately Italian and the number of cardinals had been set at seventy for nearly 400 years. He expanded it to eighty-seven. He then set out his agenda, stating three goals: 1) a diocesan synod of bishops, 2) a revision of canon law and 3) (to the shock of all) an ecumenical council.

John XIII published two encyclicals: *Mater et Magistra* (1961) and *Pacem in Terris* (1963). In these, he summarized and endorsed the social principles of Leo XIII, Pius XI and Pius XII.

In *Mater et Magistra*, the pope called for a balance between rugged individualism and socialism. He called for the state to intervene to balance individual and group freedoms. Conservative critics (Wm. Buckley) saw this as an attack on the notion of subsidiarity and a partial endorsement of socialism. He noted that the principle of the right to own private property was often used to support social injustice.

Pacem in Terris was the first papal encyclical addressed to “all people of good will”. He supported the United Nations. He spoke of individual rights - opportunity to work without coercion, a just wage, the right to hold private property and a share in productive goods for workers.

He spoke also of the “right to life”, but in a much broader sense than used now. For the pope, the “right to life” also included adequate food, clothing, shelter, rest, medical care, necessary social services and, in the case of sickness, inability to work, widowhood or unemployment, some form of security which the state might rightly provide when necessary.

Lastly, he condemned the arms race. He warned that there can be no peace without justice. If you want peace, work for justice.

The next Chapter will focus on his greatest gift to the Church - the Second Vatican Council.

Chapter 33

The Second Vatican Council

To say that the John XXIII's announcement of an Ecumenical Council came as a shock to the conservative element in the Church - especially the Curia - is the understatement of the century. Vatican I had been interrupted after it had approved of only two dogmatic constitutions: 1) *De Filius* - on the relationship of reason and faith and 2) *Pastor Aeternus* on the papacy's juridical primacy and on the infallibility of the pope. The role of the bishops and their relationship to the pope were to be considered next. However, because of the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian War, Pius IX adjourned the Council for an indefinite time. It was never reconvened and the discussion of the role of the bishops had to wait until the Second Vatican Council, nearly one hundred years later.

In the years following the Council, many conservatives, especially in the curia, developed an exaggerated interpretation of *Pastor Aeternus* and concluded that, for all practical purposes, another ecumenical council would never be needed. The pope could speak for and define the faith of the Church.

Because of the unique personage of John XXIII, Vatican II itself was unique in so many ways. Most former councils were called in the midst of a crisis, often to condemn heresies. The noted church historian Philip Hughes' book on the councils is entitled: *The Church in Crisis: Twenty Great Councils*. And he states in his preface:

Each of the twenty councils is an individual reality, each has its own special personality. This is partly due to the fact that each had its origin in a particular crisis of Church affairs.....(p. 1)

John XXIII announced that this council would be different. It was not called to condemn errors. Errors there always were, but "nowadays men are condemning them of their own accord" he said, these errors "vanish like mist in the morning sun". In these times the Church needed the medicine of mercy, more than severity. This would be a pastoral council to renew the life of the Church and give a vision for the future.

The Church needed to enter into dialogue with the people and the cultures of the world in which it lived. The Church needed to learn as much as it needed to teach. The Church is a people, not a static institution, a people on a journey of faith. It was itself a mystery, always unfolding, always needing to change and adapt so that it could engage in its mission - to spread the Kingdom of God. To do so the Church would need to express the substance of the faith in a new language. In his famous opening address to the Council, he made this clear:

The substance of the ancient doctrines of the deposit of faith is one thing, and the way in which it is presented is another.

Since the Council of Trent in the 16th century, the Church had maintained a rather static view of itself and its teachings. Its attitude toward the world outside the Church was basically defensive. New discoveries in science, new methods in biblical studies and new schools of philosophy were often viewed with suspicion. Developing democratic political systems advocating freedom of religion and separation of Church and State were typically condemned. Pius IX's *Syllabus of Errors* pretty well summed it up.

Of course, there were also positive developments and positive papal contributions. The major positive reactions to the secular world began in the 19th century with a series of powerful papal encyclicals - liberal even by today's standards - and finally a condemnation of slavery. In another positive development, several popes facilitated the much needed process of "inculturation" in the missions.

The history of Vatican II is not only the history of the development of new approaches to old questions, but also a history of a substantial victory of liberal voices over conservative voices within the Church. If the extreme liberal voices of the Modernist movement had contained a good deal of error, the moderately liberal voices of the majority at Vatican II contained a good deal of truth. In this victory the Catholic Church received a new understanding of what it meant to be Church and a new approach to those outside the Church and the modern world in general. It changed the Church forever.

(For our purposes, the near violent battle between the curia and the bishops of the Council who supported reforms is well demonstrated on our text - Chapter 33. pp. 356-64. If you have not read it, I encourage you to do so. What follows is a partial attempt to summarize the most important teachings of Vatican II.)

Before considering the important teachings of Vatican II, it is well to note that for the laity the first important results of the Council were the changes in the liturgy. The use of the vernacular, the turning of the altar toward the people, reception of communion under both species, musical instruments other than the organ and the new canons of the Mass were a welcome or unwelcome surprise depending on a person's liberal or conservative bent. Few Catholics under the age of fifty have any memory of participating in a Latin Mass.

I have selected the following teachings or insights from the Vatican II documents in part because they contrast sharply with some common beliefs that were almost taken for granted prior to the Vatican II era. The list is hardly exhaustive. (Obviously, each of these points could be the subject of a lifetime of study, research and meditation)

1. The Church is seen primarily as a mystery, not an organization. This was made quite clear in Pope Paul VI's opening address to the second session of the Council following the death of John XXIII. He said:

"The Church is a *mystery*. It is a reality imbued with the hidden presence of God. It lies, therefore within the very nature of the Church to be always open to new and greater exploration."

By definition, a mystery is something that cannot be totally grasped by the human mind, but can unfold and generate new insights from now to eternity.

2. The Church is best understood as the whole People of God. We are Church through our baptism. When we speak of the Church, we do not limit it to just the hierarchy, clergy and religious. In the teachings of Jesus those in authority are to be as servants (slaves) to all. Neither religious vows, ordinations, appointments as bishops, or elections to the papacy confer greater Christian dignity or privilege than that dignity conferred by baptism.

3. The essence of the Church and its mission is to be the ongoing historical sacrament of God's salvific act in Jesus for the world. The mission of the Church is not to spread the Church as a goal in itself, but to be "Christ to the world". Therefore, the mission of the Church is not limited to the preaching of the Word and the celebration of the sacraments. These are not ends in themselves, but means to help the Church carry out its true mission - to support, make present and spread the Kingdom of God.

The Church is called to social action in the promotion of justice and peace, for these are the marks of the presence of the Kingdom. There is always the temptation to make the Church an "idol", and end in itself, rather than the sacrament of Christ to the world.

4. Properly speaking, the visible, historical Church (People of God) includes all baptized Christians and is not limited exclusively to the Catholic Church. The Council noted that there are "many elements of sanctification and of truth...outside of her (the Church) visible structure". In other words, the People of God is larger than the Catholic Church and not simply coextensive with it.

In Chapter One of the Constitution on the Church (*Lumen Gentium*), there is a discussion of Christ establishing and sustaining His holy Church as a visible structure, then in article 8 we find this statement:

This Church, constituted and organized in the world as a society, *subsists in* (italics mine) the Catholic Church, which is governed by the successor of Peter and by his bishops in union with that successor, although many elements of sanctification and of truth can be found outside of her visible structure.

An uninformed reading of this text could very well seem to suggest that the phrase "subsists in" implies an *identity* of the Church established by Christ with the Catholic Church. However, the Council intended to make a subtle distinction with the words "subsists in". Before Vatican II, Pope Pius XII, in his encyclical *Mystici Corporis* had, in fact, identified the Body of Christ with the Church, however, the Fathers of Vatican II were reluctant to do so.

The truth is that "subsists in" was not in the original draft of the Constitution on the Church. The original draft, made by the curia and submitted to the Council fathers, had

echoed Pius XII identification of the Church with the Catholic Church by using the word “is” in connecting the Church with the Catholic Church. The phrase “subsists in” was inserted in place of “is” as found in the original draft. In this one change, the Council Fathers had subtly, but significantly altered the teaching of Pius XII. This is a true development of doctrine which no longer simply identifies the Catholic Church and the Body of Christ or the People of God.

5. The Church is truly present in the local churches. The Church is best understood and treated as a communion or college of local churches. These local churches are not simply juridical subdivisions of the universal Church. The Holy See does not define the Church. Bishops are not “employees” of the papacy. Bishops may be appointed by Rome, but they are consecrated as bishops, not by the pope, but by their fellow bishops. The concentration of juridical power and the efforts to maximize minute control of the local churches by Rome is a historical aberration rather than an ideal.

6. The Church is not identical with the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom is defined as the rule of God over the hearts of His people. The Kingdom is only partially present on earth (like a mustard seed), it waits for its fulfillment at the end of time.

In our human history, the Spirit moves where it will and the Kingdom exists wherever people respond to the creative call of God to love themselves, others and the world they live in. As the old Latin adage states: *Ubi caritas, Deus ibi est* (where there is love, God is there).

God wills the salvation of all people, and His will is not totally dependent on the ability of the organized Church to make itself present and believable to each and every human being. Augustine said something like this: “God has many who the Church does not have and the Church has many that God does not have.” It is the mission of the Church to support and spread the Kingdom, but the Kingdom is not totally dependent on the successful mission of the Church.

7. The lay apostolate is a direct participation in the mission of the Church. For all the good the Catholic Action movement accomplished, it was always seen as an extension of the mission of the hierarchy. We receive our missionary mandate from Jesus, in and through our baptism. It is not a privilege or duty given or imposed by the hierarchy.

8. The Church is called not simply to tolerate other Christians or other religions, but to respect and promote the religious liberty of all. This is based on the dignity of each human person and a recognition of the radical freedom of the act of faith. These are the foundations of religious liberty and the old adage “error has no rights” is itself an error of the past. Chapter One on the *Declaration on Religious Freedom* states:

This Vatican Synod declares that the human person has a right to religious freedom....The Synod further declares that the right to religious freedom has its foundation in the very dignity of the human person, as this dignity

is known through the revealed World of God and by reason itself. This right of the human person to religious freedom is to be recognized in the constitutional law whereby society is governed. Thus it is to become a civil right. (article 2)

This is, of course, in direct opposition to long held Church teaching and practice as summed up in the *Syllabus of Errors* of Pius IX.

9. Salvation is not limited the membership in the Church, nor an explicit belief in God. Not only can people from Christians Churches separated from Rome find salvation, those of other religions or no religion can also be saved. In the words of the *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church*:

Those also can attain to everlasting salvation who through no fault of their own do not know the gospel of Christ or His Church, yet sincerely seek God and, moved by grace strive by their deeds to do His will as it is known to them through the dictates of conscience.

Nor does divine Providence deny the help necessary for salvation to those who, without blame on their part, have not yet arrived at an explicit knowledge of God, but who strive to live a good life, thanks to His grace. Whatever goodness or truth is found among them is looked upon by the Church as a preparation for the gospel. (article 16)

Also in the *Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to Non-Christian Religions* the Council states:

Likewise, other religions to be found everywhere strive variously to answer the restless searchings of the human heart by proposing “ways”, which consist of teachings, rules of life, and sacred ceremonies.

The Catholic Church rejects nothing which is true and holy in these religions. She looks with sincere respect upon those ways of conduct and of life, those rules and teachings which, though differing in many particulars from what she hold and sets forth, nevertheless often reflect a ray of that Truth which enlightens all men. (article 2)

Again in the *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World* we find:

All this holds true not only for Christians, but for all men of good will in whose hearts grace works in an unseen way. For, since Christ died for all

men, and since the ultimate vocation of man is in fact one, and divine, we ought to believe that the Holy Spirit in a manner known only to God offers to every man the possibility of being associated with this paschal mystery. (article 22)

The Council also later notes that much of the atheism in the world can be blamed on the failure of Christians to live out or give effective witness to the Gospel in their lives.

10. Anti-semitism is to be rejected. The crimes of hatred and persecution of Jews by Christians throughout the history of Christianity are enough to make the angels weep. The Council repudiates such hatred in its *Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to Non-Christian Religions* in these words:

True, authorities of the Jews and those who followed their lead pressed for the death of Christ...what happened in His passion cannot be blamed upon all the Jews then living, without distinction, nor upon the Jews of today. Although the Church is the new people of God, the Jews should not be presented as repudiated or cursed by God, as if such a view followed from the holy Scriptures....

The Church repudiates all persecutions against any man. Moreover, mindful of her common patrimony with the Jews, and motivated by the gospel's spiritual love and by no political considerations, she deplores the hatred, persecutions, and displays of anti-Semitism directed against the Jews at any time and from any source.

11. In Catholic teaching there is a hierarchy of truths. Some teaching are more foundational and thus more important than others. For example, all your answers to today's crossword puzzle may be true, but they pale in comparison to the truth that all human beings are created and loved by God. Something may be true, but it is not necessarily important.

This is important for ecumenical dialogue and the hope for the eventual reunion of Christians. In Chapter 2 on the *Decree on Ecumenism* the Council stated:

Furthermore, Catholic theologians engaged in ecumenical dialogue, while standing fast by the teaching of the Church and searching together with separated brethren into the divine mysteries, should act with love for truth, which charity and with humility. When comparing doctrines, they should remember that in Catholic teaching there exists an order or "hierarchy" of truths, since they vary in their relationship to the foundation of the Christian faith. (article 11)

If, for example, in the ongoing Catholic-Lutheran dialogue, they would reach a point where there was substantial doctrinal agreement on all issues that have historically separated us, say, with the exception of the dogmas of the Assumption and/or Immaculate

Conception, most scholars agree that while these dogmas are held as true (infallibly true) by the Church, they are nevertheless not foundational to Christian faith and thus could be set aside for further consideration, but full communion of the Church could still take place.