



# AGGIORNAMENTO



## AN ANALYSIS OF THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE FOR CACINA TODAY

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*Ad Maiorem Dei Gloriam*

*Vatican II brought dramatic changes into the Roman Catholic Church. Aspects of liturgy and worship, clerical and religious life, the roles of theologians and of the laity, ecumenism, and the very mission of the Church were deeply impacted. This paper explores the nature of the changes launched by Vatican II and how these affect us today? We will explore the factors that led to and influenced the Council's agenda? Then we will discuss why Vatican II matters to CACINA, given the heritage left to us by our founder, Bishop Carlos Duarte Costa.*

When Christ uttered the words: “καὶ ἐπὶ ταύτῃ τῇ πέτρᾳ οἰκοδομήσω μου τὴν ἐκκλησίαν, καὶ πύλαι ᾗδου οὐ κατισχύσουσιν αὐτῆς· (Mat 16:18), “I tell you that YOU are Rock, and upon this rock I will establish my assembly (<“church”>), and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it,” He gave to Peter and his successors the responsibility to build, refresh, and perpetuate the Church, the assembly of God’s people, for as long as the earth exists.



In January 1959, the newly elected successor to Peter, a plump and jolly little man who took the name John XXIII, took on the Church of his day and began one of the great renewals in history. He announced his intention to call the assembly of the whole Church together to the Vatican, as well as many other leaders, both religious and lay, for a Council. When later asked why a Council? Why now? Pappa John said, “I want to throw open the windows of the Church so that we can see out and the people can see in.” It was a time for **Aggionamaneto!!** It was time for the Church to dialogue with the world she lived in, and thus to bring the Church up to date.

Unlike with past Councils, there was no prevailing heresy or crisis that needed magisterial correction. For Pope John rather, the Council’s scope was to include introspective issues like what the Church taught, how it worshiped, how it developed its ministers, how it managed its affairs, and how it related to its people. It also included outwardly facing issues such as how the Church related to other religions both Christian and non-Christian, to civil authorities and to the world at large. Nothing was untouched, and nothing has been the same since.

### **The Council’s Focus**

On October 20, 1962, the Council Fathers issued a “Message To Humanity” which laid out the agenda, focus and hope for Council. “The love of Christ impels us...” they said, to come together from all corners of the globe to renew the Church that she may be more faithful to the gospel message and find more effective ways to present it to the people of the age.

The rapid, exciting and yet disconcerting developments of the age were clearly on their minds, so much so that they expressed their hope that from this spiritual renewal “...will also flow a happy impulse on behalf of human values such as scientific discoveries, technological advances and a wider diffusion of knowledge.” In the eyes of Pappa John and the Council Fathers, although many scientific and technological advances were marvelous indeed, the moral implications of these were not being fully vetted.

They called out two issues of “Special Urgency” for the Church: world peace and increased social justice. For the Fathers, these two concerns are intrinsically connected. In their view, the social and economic inequalities that are evident across the world are the root causes of conflict, violence and war.

Relying then on the power of the Holy Spirit, the Fathers set out to better enunciate God’s plan and Christ’s message in terms intelligible to the people of the Age. In so doing, they sought to clarify the mission, governance, operations, and doctrines of the church; reach out to others who share in a similar vision of a just society and universal peace; and directly apply teachings of Christ to the issues of the day.

## The Sitz Im Lebem of the Church Fathers

### Papal Focus

Here is a brief synopsis of the Papacy From Vatican I to Vatican II:

- **Pius IX** (1846-1878) – Convened the First Vatican Council; lost the Papal States to Italy; define doctrines of papal infallibility and the Immaculate Conception; Issues the **Syllabus of Errors**
- **Leo XIII** (1878-1903) - Issued the encyclical **Rerum novarum**; supported Christian democracy against Communism. Promoted the rosary and the scapular and approved two new Marian scapulars; first Pope to fully embrace the concept of Mary as mediatrix.
- **St. Pius X** (1903-14) - Encouraged and expanded reception of the Eucharist. Combated Modernism and made clergy, professors religious etc take an oath against it. Advocated the Gregorian Chant and reformed the Roman Breviary.
- **Benedict XV** (1914-22) - Credited for intervening for peace during World War I. Issued the 1917 Code of Canon Law; supported the missionaries in **Maximum Illud**.
- **Pius XI** (1922-39) - Signed the Lateran Treaty with Italy (1929) establishing Vatican City as a sovereign state. Inaugurated Vatican Radio (1931). Re-founded the Pontifical Academy of Sciences (1936). Created the feast of Christ the King. Issued **Quadragesimo anno** that supported workers rights. Opposed Communism and Nazism.
- **Pius XII** (1939-58) - Invoked papal infallibility in the encyclical **Munificentissimus Deus** to define the dogma of the Assumption. Eliminated the Italian majority of cardinals. Credited with intervening for peace during World War II; controversial for his reactions to the Holocaust.

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- **St. John XXIII** (1958-63) – Opened the Second Vatican Council. Issued the encyclical *Pacem in terris* (1963) on peace and nuclear disarmament; intervened for peace during the Cuban Missile Crisis (1962).
  - **Paul VI** (1963-78) - Last pope to be crowned in a coronation with the triple tiara. First pope to travel to the United States and Australia; first pope since 1809 to travel outside Italy. Closed the Second Vatican Council. Issued the encyclical *Humanae vitae* (1968) condemning artificial contraception.

During the time up to John XXIII's reign, the world experienced events, upheavals and developments of tremendous scale and impact. Almost every aspect of human endeavor was touched: geo-politics, technology, social norms, beliefs, economics, and world peace itself. Yet a cursory review of papal accomplishments, with the exception of a few encyclicals concerning the status of workers and some involvement in the Great War, the Roman Church remained largely inwardly focused on dogma and papal authority and uninvolved with the world she lived in.

Monsignor Angelo Roncalli, as Pope John was known before his election, was not so disengaged. For him, preaching the gospel was not enough. The Church needed to actively live it regardless of the risk. There is a story about him that gives credence to this.

While serving as Apostolic Nuncio in Turkey, Monsignor Roncalli, met Ira Hirschmann, the American delegate to the War Refugee Board. Together they hatched what became known as "Baptism Operation," a plan to issue baptismal certificates to Hungarian Jews. As "Christians" they would avoid being sent to the concentration camps. According to the testimonies given to the Nuremberg tribunals, this action saved 24,000 Jews, though Catholic sources state that 80,000 certificates were granted.

For this Pope, the Church needed to get off the sidelines. For John XXIII, there was already sufficient doctrine, dogma and clarity about the teaching of the Faith. The emphasis of the council should thus not be doctrinal but pastoral. He wanted the Council to consider how best to convey and live the truth of Christ to the modern world.

### **The Unfinished Business of The First Vatican Council**

The First Vatican Council had been held nearly a century before, but had been cut short when the Italian Army entered the city of Rome at the end of Italian unification. Little was accomplished as a result, with many issues left unaddressed or addressed incompletely. There was a concentration on three areas: 1) various discussions about enhancements to Marian theology, 2) a clarification of the distinct roles played by faith

and reason, and 3) the more significant issue, the Doctrine of Papal Infallibility. This doctrine defined that when speaking on issues of faith and morals “ex cathedra” (i.e. from the chair of Peter), the Roman Pontiff was protected by the Holy Spirit from speaking in error. This doctrine caused much controversy including breakaway movements such as the Old Catholic Church in Germany and Holland. In the 60’s the issue of Papal infallibility still lingered and as an obstacle to faith and to Christian unity in particular.

### **The Impact of Industrialization, Socialism and Communism**

The Church was slow to react to the growing industrialization and impoverishment of workers across the world. Several encyclicals (e.g. Leo XIII’s *Rerum novarum* in 1891 and Pius XI’s *Quadragesimo anno* in 1931) rejected socialism, but advocated the regulation of working conditions such as the establishment of a living wage, the right of workers to form trade unions, and called out the dangers to human freedom and dignity arising from unrestrained capitalism and totalitarian communism. Pope Pius XII repeated these teachings, and applied them in greater detail not only to workers and owners of capital, but also to other professions such as politicians, educators, housewives, farmers, bookkeepers, international organizations, and all aspects of life including the military.

By the 1960’s, the world was still in tension over worker’s rights across the world but nowhere more prominently than in developing Latin countries where worker exploitation was rampant. There, arising principally as a moral reaction to the poverty and social injustice in the region, many in the Church began to act in overtly political ways. A major player was the Latin American Episcopal Conference (CELAM) that was created in 1955 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. CELAM pushed the Second Vatican Council toward a more socially oriented stance and offering an important basis for what would become known as liberation theology. More or less at the same time as the initial publications of Latin American “Liberation Theology,” we also find voices of Black liberation theology and feminist liberation theology as well. The Cold War between the socialism and capitalism was threatening the world’s stability and it was dragging the Church far beyond merely issuing papal bulls and encyclicals into activism and protest.



### **The Rise of Anti-Clericalism and Atheism**

The 20th century saw the rise of many various politically radical, anti-clerical and expressly atheistic governments across the planet: in Mexico, Cuba, and much of Central and South America; Russia, its Soviet Union and other countries in the Eastern bloc such as Poland, Hungary, Romania, Czechoslovakia; China, North Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and North Korea in Asia; Uganda, Congo and other countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. Even for a while Spain and France had chilled relations with the Church. The Church of John XXIII

not only had lost much political and social influence, but also now had powerful enemies like never before. The rise of atheistic communism was stunning to many in the Church and she seemed powerless to fight against it. To this point, there are some who speculate that one reason Pope John's predecessor, Eugenio Pacelli, later Pius XII, was largely silent (at least publicly) during the Nazi's rise to power, was that as a German Jesuit educated scholar and former Papal Nuncio to various versions of the German state from 1917 to 1929, Pacelli saw Hitler and Nazism as a counter-force to Russian atheistic communism. Unfortunately, not only was his theory wrong, but his silence against Hitler, the carnage of World War II, and the Holocaust, damaged the Church's moral credibility even more.

### The Rise of the Dictators

Since 1878, the Papacy had been preoccupied with the loss of its former Papal States. For some reason, the Roman Pontiffs from Julius II to Pius XI could not conceive of a vision for God's Kingdom on earth, without themselves being rulers of territory – and of course being benefactors of the taxes therein. And so in 1929, when Benito Mussolini offered sovereignty to Vatican City as an independent nation in return for the Vatican relinquishing its claim to the former territories of the Papal States, Pius XI jumped at the chance. Pius again became a head of state with his own territory, army, radio station, and diplomatic representation. The Concordat of 1929 made Catholicism the sole



religion of Italy and provided many benefits to the Church (e.g. the government paid salaries to priests and bishops and paid today's equivalent of \$100 million for the lost Papal states). In turn, the bishops swore allegiance to the Italian state, which had a veto power over their selection. Essentially, Mussolini had the power to pick who would be the heads of the Church in Italy. The Church was not officially obligated to support the Fascist regime; the strong differences remained but the seething hostility ended – at least for a while. As Fascists ruthlessness in Ethiopia, and their Nazi-influenced anti-Semitism emerged domestically, many in the Church began to regret having cozied up to Il Duce.

Pius XI was prepared to negotiate concordats with any country that was willing to do so, thinking that written treaties were the best way to protect the Church's rights against governments increasingly inclined to interfere in such matters. Twelve concordats were signed during his reign with various types of governments, including some German state governments. When Adolf Hitler became Chancellor of Germany on 30



January 1933 and asked for a concordat, Pius XI accepted. The Concordat of 1933 included guarantees of liberty for the Church in Nazi Germany, independence for Catholic organizations and youth groups, and religious teaching in schools. However, Nazi ideology was spearheaded by Heinrich Himmler and the SS, who were determined to have total control over German minds and bodies. Soon the SS anti-religious agenda emerged which saw the German Catholic Church was a serious threat to its hegemony and while it was too strong to be abolished, it was partly stripped of its influence. For example, by the mid 30's German youth clubs and publications were closed which went against the Concordat.

It seems doing deals with the devil is never a good idea. Yet in the 1960's there were no shortages of dictators. The USSR, the Balkans, China, Cuba, many states in Africa, the Americas and Asia were ruled by the autocrats who were as bad as, if not worse than Mussolini and Hitler. For the Bishops of the Catholic Church heading to the Papal city-state, there were lingering questions about how the Church should deal with the authoritarian forces of their day.

### **The Devastation of War**

A Google search will show that the world is almost always at war somewhere. But in the immediate memory of the Council Fathers, were amazing conflicts that wrought massive devastation and loss of life to hundreds-of-millions of people.

**1914-1918 World War I:** also known as "The Great War," or the "War to End All Wars," was a global war originating in Europe. More than 70 million military personnel, including 60 million Europeans, were mobilized in one of the largest wars in history. Over nine million combatants and seven million civilians died as a result of the war (including the victims of a number of genocides), a casualty rate exacerbated by the belligerents' technological and industrial sophistication, and the tactical stalemate caused by grueling trench warfare. It was one of the deadliest conflicts in history to that point and precipitated major political change, including revolutions in many of the nations involved. Unresolved rivalries at the end of the conflict contributed to the start of the Second World War twenty-one years later.

**1939 – 1945 World War II:** The Second World War was a global war that involved the vast majority of the world's countries which eventually formed into two opposing military alliances: the Allies and the Axis. It was the most global war in history; it directly involved more than 100 million people from over 30 countries. In a state of total war, the major participants threw their entire economic, industrial, and scientific capabilities behind the war effort, blurring the distinction between civilian and military resources. World War II was the deadliest conflict in human history, marked by 50 to 85 million fatalities, most of which were civilians in the Soviet Union and China. It included massacres, the genocide of the Holocaust, strategic bombing including carpet and incendiary bombing, starvation, disease, and the first use of nuclear weapons in history.

Other major conflagrations were the **Arab-Israeli Conflict** (1948-1949 - ~20,000 dead) and **The Korean War** (1950-1953, ~2,850,000 dead).

But in the region once known as Indochina, a hot war had been raging since 1945. Burma, French Indochina (aka Vietnam), Cambodia and Laos were in a constant state of bloodshed and war. Whether due to a desire to overthrow old colonial domination, or internal civil strife and power struggles, or due to inter-nation conflict, the aggregate death toll was staggering and, as America would soon learn in Vietnam, with no end in sight.

Then from October 16-28, 1962, just as the Council Fathers were issuing their “Message to Humanity” (Oct 20th), the world experienced a near total nuclear conflagration in what came to be known as the **Cuban Missile Crisis**. The confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union concerning American ballistic missile deployment in Italy and Turkey with consequent Soviet ballistic missile deployment in Cuba. The confrontation is often considered the closest the Cold War came to escalating into a full-scale nuclear war and to complete end of life as we know it.

No wonder the Fathers saw peace as having “Special Urgency.” How could the Church explain the carnage of two world wars among largely “Christian nations?” What responsibility did the Church bear for a world whose only hope for peace was “mutually assured destruction (MAD)?” God promised Noah that he would never again destroy the world by water, but fire was another matter. With nuclear weapons, was God preparing for Armageddon? What wisdom would they have for a world gone mad?

### **Gender, Sexual and Racial Liberation Movements**

The sexual revolution of the 1960s brought challenging issues for the Church. From the suffrage movements of the turn of the century now, women across the world were demanding to be on a full equal footing with men. What would they want next? To be priests?

Starting after the war, but picking up steam in the 50’s and 60’s people of color around the world began to demand an end of being treated as sub-human. After having confronted the Apartheid in South Africa, *The Mahatma* led a billion Indians to take back their own country from white British control. Meanwhile in the US, the Reverend Martin Luther King had a “dream” that laid out a vision when all children could reach their fullest potential regardless of their skin color.



1960s Counterculture Movement, USA





And then in 1964, what became known as the Stonewall Riots occurred in New York when a dozen “drag queens” finally said, “enough is enough” to police abuse of gays and lesbians. The “sin that dared not speak its name” was now “out of the closet.” What was once simple and obvious moral teaching that homosexuality is a grave sin was suddenly being questioned given human experience, political pressure and new science. If the Church’s “every

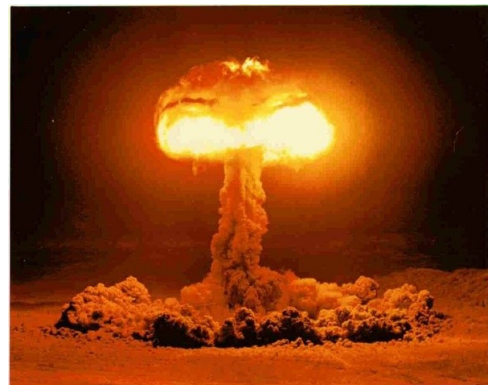
sperm is sacred” theology falls, the whole sexual ethics house of cards will soon follow. Where was all this going?

### **The Age of Science**

Advances in science had wrought changes, not only in every aspect of life, but also in the ways humans thought about life. There are so many scientific developments emerging after World War II and well into the 60’s, that we have no ability to mention them all here. Suffice it to say that the pace and nature of these advances, in so many scientific fields weighed heavily on the minds of the Council Fathers as they gathered to ponder how these things were affecting the faith and humanity itself. Let us take a moment to consider some of the more significant developments and why the Fathers may have been so concerned:

**The Atom:** Quantum theory revolutionized physics at the beginning of the 20th century, when Max Planck and Albert Einstein postulated that light energy is emitted or absorbed in discrete amounts known as quanta (singular, quantum). “Fiat lux” (Gen 1:3) suddenly had a very new meaning. By the 1940’s, we had split the atom and looked for the first time, into the physical forces that brought the universe into existence. Several amazing developments emerged from atomic research.

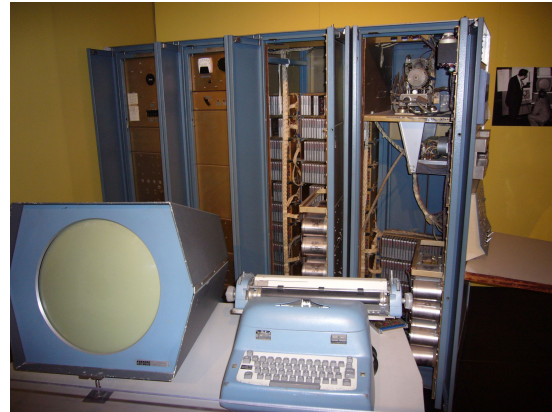
- **The Creation of Nuclear Weapons:** Nuclear weapons possess enormous destructive power from nuclear fission or combined fission and fusion reactions. Starting with scientific breakthroughs made during the 1930s, the United States, the United Kingdom and Canada collaborated during World War II in what was called the Manhattan Project to counter the suspected Nazi German atomic bomb project. In August 1945, two fission bombs were dropped on Japan, standing to date as the only use of nuclear weapons in combat. The Soviet Union started development shortly thereafter with their own atomic bomb project, and not long after that both countries developed even more powerful fusion weapons known as “hydrogen bombs”. By the 1960’s, the



world's nuclear arsenals had the capacity for the first time in history to completely destroy the planet many times over.

- **Atomic power:** On June 27, 1954, the USSR's Obninsk Nuclear Power Plant became the world's first nuclear power plant to generate electricity for a power grid, and produced around 5 megawatts of electric power. Soon, nuclear power plants were popping up all over the world offering relatively clean and almost unlimited sources of power. Bringing electric power to underdeveloped parts of the world would be a Godsend. But what if one of these plants had a problem and it's core reactor started to heat up out of control? Did mankind really know how to harness the underlying energy source of the stars?
- **Quantum Mechanics and Theoretical Physics:** From the turn of the century physicists had become very focused on the structure and operating principles of the atom. Atoms were comprised of a fixed number of electrons (depending on what element they made up) that encircled a nucleus which itself was comprised of protons and neutrons. Protons and neutrons further decomposed to sub-atomic particles called quarks that have no dimensions. Electrons were flickers of pure energy – light in fact – that engulfed the nucleus in an orbit that undulated in a field of play. So, is it that Mother Nature is actually just light forms surrounded by particles of nothingness? What does this mean about the nature of reality itself? Is God's creation real or is the universe merely a show made of pixels in some mega creature's computer simulation?

**The Computer:** Although Charles Babbage proposed the first general mechanical computer in 1837, the rapid development to programmable computers, digital computers, to the multi-program DEC PDP and IBM 360 series of the 1960's was stunningly fast. Humans had now developed a machine that could "think" in rudimentary ways but much faster than the human brain. Even in the 1960's it was clear where this technology was going. As God had made mankind in His image, had mankind now created a "mind" and perhaps one day a "soul" in his own image? If machines that can think at the speed of light begin to evolve faster than humans. is there still a reason for humans to exist?



**Space Exploration:** In October 1957, Russia launched the first artificial satellite into orbit, Sputnik 1. People all over the world tuned into their radios to hear its "beep... beep...beep..." signal as it traversed the sky above. In 1958, a US satellite detected the Van Allen radiation belts. The following year we detected the solar wind for the first time. Then we took our first photograph of Mother Earth from space and first photos of the far-side of the Moon. In April 1961, the first human entered outer space when Yuri

Gagarin completed a full orbit of Earth, followed a month later by the US's Alan Shepard. By the time of the Council's start, human spacecraft twice visited Venus.



Then in May 1961, President John F. Kennedy went before the Congress of the United States and declared "this nation should commit itself to achieving the goal, before this decade is out, of landing a man on the Moon and returning him safely to the Earth." Two hundred million Americans looked up at the night sky and thought, "Go to the moon eh? Yeah, we can do that!" And while people gazed at the moon, Frank Drake at Cornell gazed

even further when he launched the first serious SETI project – The Search For Extraterrestrial Intelligence. EXTRATERRESTRAL!! Humans on the moon? Then on other planets? Then finding other life forms? How does our anthropomorphic and earth-bound church deal with that?

**Microbiology:** The discovery in 1953 of the double helix, the twisted-ladder structure of deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA), by James Watson and Francis Crick marked a milestone in the history of science and gave rise to modern molecular biology, which is largely concerned with understanding how genes control the chemical processes within all living things down to the smallest single cell entity. If all the characteristics and many behaviors of living things – including humans – are programmed by chemical processes guided by a molecular code that has been passed on genetically for generations, are we humans truly creatures with "free will"? And if we can map what the various genes do, can we modify them and create a new human? If so, is God still the author of life? Or are we?



**Mass Communications and The Internet:** TV, radio and publications had expanded in almost every market of the world in the 1950's. The democratization of information was ubiquitous and expanding. Information was not as controllable as before, at least in the West.

Meanwhile In the US, scientists and military experts were especially concerned about what might happen in the event of a Soviet attack on the nation's telephone system. Just one missile, they feared, could destroy the whole network of lines and wires that made efficient long-distance communication possible. In 1962, a scientist from M.I.T named J.C.R. Licklider proposed a solution to this problem: a "galactic network" of computers that could talk to one another. Such a network would enable government leaders to communicate even if the Soviets destroyed the telephone system. Soon came "packet switching" and ARPAnet was born. Initially the network was limited to

Government computers freely sharing information. But the visionaries heading into the Council saw the power of massive amounts of information at the fingertips of ordinary people. Good heavens! Will they really start to think for themselves? There goes the Roman Index of Forbidden Books!

## **The Council Convenes**

### **The Sessions and Attendees**

The Second Vatican Council met in four sessions, all held in the fall of four successive years from 1962–1965. After the conclusions of a session, special commissions met to review and collate the work of the bishops and to prepare for the next period. The meetings themselves were held in Latin, the official language of the Church, in Saint Peter's Basilica. The privacy of participants was kept as a primary consideration although plenty of stories emerged about the squabbling and antic of many of the attendees. Among them is this tidbit:

*On October 30, the day after his seventy-second birthday, Cardinal Ottaviani addressed the council to protest against the drastic changes which were being suggested in the Mass. "Are we seeking to stir up wonder, or perhaps scandal, among the Christian people, by introducing changes in so venerable a rite, that has been approved for so many centuries and is now so familiar? The rite of Holy Mass should not be treated as if it were a piece of cloth to be refashioned according to the whim of each generation." Speaking without a text, because of his partial blindness, he exceeded the ten-minute time limit which all had been requested to observe. Cardinal Tisserant, Dean of the Council Presidents, showed his watch to Cardinal Alfrink, who was presiding that morning. When Cardinal Ottaviani reached fifteen minutes, Cardinal Alfrink rang the warning bell. But the speaker was so engrossed in his topic that he did not notice the bell, or purposely ignored it. At a signal from Cardinal Alfrink, a technician switched off the microphone. After confirming the fact by tapping the instrument, Cardinal Ottaviani stumbled back to his seat in humiliation. The most powerful cardinal in the Roman Curia had been silenced, and the Council Fathers clapped with glee.*

There were clearly battles being waged between those more progressive thinkers and those who sought to protect the status quo.



Though these formalized discussions and debates were the centerpiece of the Council, much of the work was also accomplished in a variety of other commission meetings, as well as through diverse informal meetings and social contacts outside of the Council proper.

Initially, 2,908 men, referred to as "Council Fathers," were entitled to seats at the Council. Their number included all Roman Catholic bishops, as well as the superiors of male religious orders. Over twenty-five hundred of the invited took part in the opening session, making it the largest gathering in any council in church history. In addition to the direct participants, a varying number of "experts" were present as theological consultants who turned out to have a major influence on the proceedings of the Council. More than three dozen representatives of other Christian communities, including seventeen Orthodox Churches and Protestant denominations were present at the opening session, and the number grew to nearly 100 by the end of the 4th Council Session.

At the end of the second period, Joseph Cardinal Suenens of Belgium had asked his colleagues, "*Why are we even discussing the reality of the church when half of the church is not even represented here?*" referring to women. In response, 15 women were appointed as auditors in September 1964. Eventually 23 women were auditors at the Second Vatican Council, including 10 women Religious. The auditors had no official role in the deliberations, although they attended the meetings of subcommittees working on Council documents, particularly texts that dealt with the laity. They also met together on a weekly basis to read draft documents and comment on them.

Here is a brief history of the Council's events

Jan 25, 1959 - Announcement of the Council

- Purposes: Renewal, Adaptation ("*Aggiornamento*"), Christian Unity

May 1959 - Nov 1960 – Ante-Preparatory Period

- Worldwide Consultation Structure of the Preparation

Nov 1960 - July 1962 - Preparatory Period

- Preparation of Documents for Council's Discussion
- Conciliar Regulations Drafted
- *Veterum sapientia* - Hopes and Fears on the Eve of the Council

Oct 11, 1962 - Dec 8, 1962 - First Session

- Opening Speech of John XXIII – key concepts:
  - Against the "prophets of doom"
  - Preserving the Catholic heritage and presenting more effectively it today
  - Emphasize the substance of faith and change its mode of presentation
  - Emphasize mercy over severity and dictum
  - The pastoral exercise of the teaching office
- Election of Conciliar Commissions
- Debate on the Liturgy (97.6% vote Yes; 46 No-votes out of 2,215)

- Debate on the Sources of Revelation (61% vote against draft)
- Debate on the Church
- Appointment of Coordinating Commission
- “Second Preparation”

Sep 29, 1963 - Dec 4, 1963 - Second Session

- Debate on the Church
- Votes on Blessed Virgin (Oct. 29, 1963: 1114-1074)
- Debate on collegiality (Oct. 30, 1963: 80+% in favor)
- Debate on Ecumenism
- Dogmatic Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy Decree on Communications-Media

June 3, 1963 - Death of John XXIII June 21, 1963 - Election of Paul VI

Sep 14, 1964 - Nov 21, 1964 - Third Session

- Debates on Church and on Bishops
- Debate on Religious Freedom
- Debate on Church in the Modern World
- “Black Week” (“*Nota praevia*,” ecumenism; postponed vote on religious freedom; title “Mother of the Church”)
- Dogmatic Constitution on the Church Decree on Ecumenism
- Decree on Oriental Churches

Sep 14, 1965 - Dec 8, 1965 - Fourth Session

- Establishment of Synod of Bishops
- Debate on Religious Freedom
- Debate on Church in the Modern World Debate on Divine Revelation
- Debates on Other Texts
- Decree on Pastoral Office of Bishops
- Decree on Renewal of Religious Life
- Decree on Formation of Priests
- Declaration on Christian Education
- Declaration on Church’s Relation to Non-Christian Religions Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation
- Decree on the Lay Apostolate
- Declaration on Religious Freedom
- Decree on the Church’s Missionary Activity
- Decree on Ministry and Life of Priests
- Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World

Finally, on December 8<sup>th</sup>, 1965 Pope Paul VI formally closed the Council. At the closing ceremony the Pope, aided by several of the Council Fathers, read specific messages to

many of the segments of humanity that were of concern to the Fathers throughout the past four years. Among these were messages to...

- The Council Fathers themselves
- To Rulers
- To Men and Women of Science
- To Artists
- To Women
- To the Poor, the Sick and the Suffering
- To Workers
- To the Youth

The Pope Concluded, *“At last all which regards the holy ecumenical council has, with the help of God, been accomplished and all the constitutions, decrees, declarations and votes have been approved by the deliberation of the synod and promulgated by us. Therefore, we decided to close for all intents and purposes, with our apostolic authority, this same ecumenical council called by our predecessor, Pope John XXIII, which opened October 11, 1962, and which was continued by us after his death.*



*We decided moreover that all that has been established synodally is to be religiously observed by all the faithful, for the glory of God and the dignity of the Church and for the tranquility and peace of all men. We have approved and established these things, decreeing that the present letters are and remain stable and valid, and are to have legal effectiveness, so that they be disseminated and obtain full and complete effect, and so that they may be fully convalidated by those whom they concern or may concern now and in the future; and so that, as it be judged and described, all efforts contrary to these things by whomever or whatever authority, knowingly or in ignorance to be invalid and worthless from now on.*

*Given in Rome at St. Peter's, under the [seal of the] ring of the fisherman, Dec. 8, on the feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the year 1965, the third year of our pontificate.”*

### **The Council Decrees**

The far-reaching reforms enacted by the Council impacted virtually every element of Catholic life, as they included a new vision of the role of the Church in modern life, a (then) radical focus on ecumenism stressing, to an extent, the shared religious vision of all Christians, and a reinterpretation of the liturgy with a focus on encouraging lay participation. Though these developments were not without their critics, few could deny that these developments were central in maintaining a dialogue between the Church and modern social realities.

**Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy** "*Sacrosanctum Concilium*," Dec. 4, 1963: Ordered an extensive revision of worship so that there ought to be lay participation in the liturgy which means they "take part fully aware of what they are doing, actively engaged in the rite, and enriched by its effects." (SC 11). This decree had the most immediate and visible effect on the lives of individual Catholics around the world. Some of the major changes to the liturgy included:

- Using the vernacular instead of Latin
- The priest facing the people during the Eucharistic prayer
- The call to "active participation" of the entire congregation.
- Call to catechize more about the liturgy to help the congregation grow in understanding of the action of the liturgy and therefore faith in Christ.
- Greater use of Scripture at Mass.



**Decree on the Instruments of Social Communication** "*Inter Mirifica*," Dec. 4, 1963: Called on members of the church, especially the laity, to instill "a human and Christian spirit" into newspapers, magazines, books, films, radio and television.

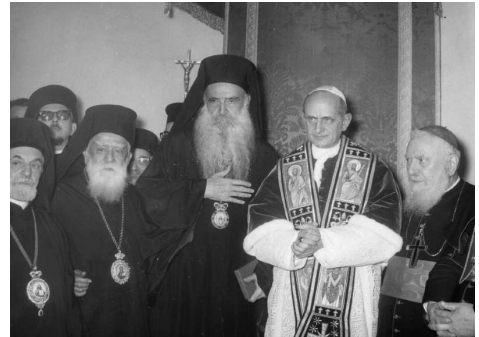
**Dogmatic Constitution on the Church** "*Lumen Gentium*," Nov. 21, 1964: Presented the church as a mystery, as a communion of baptized believers, as the people of God, as the body of Christ and as a pilgrim moving toward fulfillment in heaven but marked on earth with "a sanctity that is real, although imperfect." In its first chapter of *Lumen Gentium*, titled "The Mystery of the Church," is the famous statement that, "... the sole Church of Christ which in the Creed we profess to be one, holy, catholic and apostolic, which our Savior, after His Resurrection, commissioned Peter to shepherd, and him and the other apostles to extend and direct with authority, which He erected for all ages as 'the pillar and mainstay of the truth.' This Church, constituted and organized as a society in the present world, subsists in the Catholic Church, which is governed by the successor of Peter and by the bishops in communion with him." (LG 8). The document immediately adds, "Nevertheless, many elements of sanctification and of truth are found outside its visible confines." According to Pope Paul VI, "the most characteristic and ultimate purpose of the teachings of the Council" is the universal call to holiness whereby all the faithful of Christ of whatever rank or status, are called to the fullness of the Christian life and to the perfection of charity; by this holiness as such a more human manner of living is promoted in this earthly society." (LG 40)

**Decree on Ecumenism** "*Unitatis Redintegratio*," Nov. 21, 1964: Declared that ecumenism should be everyone's concern and that genuine ecumenism involves a continual personal and institutional renewal. Non-Catholic Christians were now referred to as "our separated brethren," a far cry from the condemnations of the past. Although



there was an invitation to find common ground for working to bring about the Kingdom of God, it remained very clear that Rome saw itself still as the only true authority on the complete and true Gospel message.

**Decree on Eastern Catholic Churches** *“Orientalium Ecclesiarum,”* Nov. 21, 1964: Stated that variety within the church does not harm its unity and that Eastern Catholic churches should retain their own traditions. As a first step in making the Decree real, in January 1964, the Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras and Pope Paul VI met and embraced after 500 years of enmity.



**Decree on the Bishops’ Pastoral Office in the Church** *“Christus Dominus,”* Oct. 28, 1965: Declared each bishop has full ordinary power in his own diocese and is expected to present Christian doctrine in ways adapted to the times. It urged conferences of bishops to exercise pastoral direction jointly. It also made it very clear that it was only through membership in the “college of bishops” in lock-step union with the Roman Pontiff could a bishop claim his legitimacy.

**Decree on Priestly Formation** *“Optatam Totius,”* Oct. 28, 1965: Recommended that seminaries pay attention to the spiritual, intellectual and disciplinary formation necessary to prepare priesthood students to become good pastors.

**Decree on the Appropriate Renewal of the Religious Life** *“Perfectae Caritatis,”* Oct. 28, 1965: Provided guidelines for the personal and institutional renewal of the lives of nuns, brothers, and priests belonging to religious orders.

**Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to Non-Christian Religions** *“Nostra Aetate,”* Oct. 28, 1965: Said the Catholic Church rejects nothing that is true and holy in non-Christian religions, called for an end to anti-Semitism (which had been rampant in the Church throughout its history) and said any discrimination based on race, color, religion, or condition of life is foreign to the mind of Christ.

**Declaration on Christian Education** *“Gravissimum Educationis,”* Oct. 28, 1965: Affirmed the right of parents to choose the type of education they want for their children, upheld the importance of Catholic schools and defended freedom of inquiry in Catholic colleges and universities.

**Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation** *“Dei Verbum,”* Nov. 18, 1965: Said the church depends on Scripture and tradition as the one deposit of God’s word and commended the use of modern scientific scholarship in studying Scripture. The Second Vatican Council encouraged the scriptural reading of the Bible rather than relying solely on devotional writings, booklets and the lives of the Catholic saints. The council sought

to revive the central role of Scripture in the theological and devotional life of the Church, building upon the work of earlier popes in crafting a modern approach to Scriptural analysis and interpretation. This was a significant departure from prior Church practice. In the 1950s, theological and biblical studies in the Catholic Church had begun to move away from the neo-scholasticism and biblical literalism that had been enforced since the First Vatican Council as a reaction to Catholic modernism. This shift could be seen in theologians such as Karl Rahner, Michael Herbert, and John Courtney Murray who looked to integrate modern human experience with church principles based on Jesus Christ. A parallel school of thought emerged from others such as Yves Congar, Joseph Ratzinger and Henri de Lubac, who looked to an accurate understanding of scripture and the early Church Fathers as a source of renewal. This latter movement became known as **Ressourcement** or a “return to the sources.” The Council Fathers balanced the updating with a retrieval of some of the lost practices of the early Church.

**Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity** “*Apostolicam Actuositatem*,” Nov. 18, 1965: Said the laity should influence their surroundings with Christ’s teachings and lead the way to “reform the temporal order.”

**Declaration on Religious Freedom** “*Dignitatis Humanae*,” Dec. 7, 1965: Said that religious liberty is a right found in the dignity of each person and that no one should be forced to act in a way contrary to his or her own beliefs.

**Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests** “*Presbyterorum Ordinis*,” Dec. 7, 1965: Said the primary duty of priests is to proclaim the Gospel to all, approved and encouraged celibacy as a gift and recommended fair salaries.

**Decree on the Church’s Missionary Activity** “*Ad Gentes*,” Dec. 7, 1965: Said missionary activity should help the social and economic welfare of people and not force anyone to accept the faith.

**Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World** “*Gaudium et Spes*,” Dec. 7, 1965: Said the church must talk to atheists, a continual campaign must be waged for peace, nuclear war is unthinkable and aid to underdeveloped nations is urgent. It said marriage was not just for procreation and urged science to find an acceptable means of birth regulation. In a direct reference to the carpet bombing and incendiary attacks on cities by both sides in the World Wars, and in particular the atom bomb attacks in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the Council decreed that “Any act of war aimed indiscriminately at the destruction of entire cities of extensive areas along with their population is a crime against God and man himself. It merits unequivocal and unhesitating condemnation.” It called for a total outlawing of war in any form.

### **Summary**

With Vatican II, the Catholic Church sent out the message that it was part of the modern world, said Thomas Ryan, director of the Loyola Institute for Ministry. “Not against, not

above, not apart, but in the modern world," he said. "The church sought to engage, not condemn."

In contradiction to many Catholics' claims that it marked the beginning of a "new springtime" for the Church, critics see the Council as a major cause of a tremendous decline in vocations and the erosion of Catholic belief and the influence of the Church in the Western world. They further argue that it changed the focus of the Church from seeking the salvation of souls to improving mankind's earthly situation (cf. Liberation theology). Further, some argue that the disjunction between theological opinion and papal decree, as manifested in the Church's contentious teachings on contraception, has led to an erosion of the pontiff's power and authority.

### **How Would Carlos Duarte Costa React to Vatican II**

To answer that question, it would be helpful to examine Bishop Costa's story and look there for connections and triggers to the Council's pronouncements. To do so, this section borrows heavily from Wikipedia and other documents about Bishop Costa that I could find.

#### **Bishop Costa's Life**

To say that the founder of The Catholic Apostolic Church was an activist would be an understatement. He was deeply involved in the social and political changes taking place in Brazil in his day. In 1929 Brazil's economy suffered a collapse along with the entire world, which in turn, created an opportunity for a populist military regime led by Getúlio Vargas to seize power in 1930. The new government had an erratic policy record in its early years, sometimes anti-clerical and anti-aristocratic, sometimes swinging the opposite direction.



In 1932, Duarte Costa became a leading spokesman for the Catholic Electoral League, which was organized by the church to lobby for Christian principles in the laws and acts of the government. He was also involved in the Constitutionalist Revolution, a failed attempt to restore constitutional government to Brazil. Duarte Costa formed a "Battalion of the Bishop" to fight on the side of the Constitutionalist troops and helped finance the rebellion by selling off most of the diocese's assets along with his own personal possessions. Duarte Costa's support for the Constitutionalist Revolution earned him the animosity of President Vargas, signaling the beginning of a long period of difficult relations between Duarte Costa and the Brazilian government.

In 1936, when Dom Carlos Duarte Costa made his second "ad-limina" visit to Rome, to visit Pope Pius XI where he presented the Pope with various requests for the clergy of his diocese and, consequently, for the clergy of Brazil. He requested permission for the maintenance of the largest seminary in his diocese, the celebration of the Holy Mass and administration of the sacraments in the vernacular language, permission for clergy to marry, replacing individual confession with general absolution, distribution of the Holy Communion to the laity under both species of the consecrated Bread and Wine, the institution of the Permanent Diaconate for the married laypeople, the celebration of the Holy Mass facing the people, the establishment of a Council of Advisor made up of Bishops to govern the Church together with the Pope, the participation of the laypersons in the administration of the Word, of the Eucharistic and the Evangelization. These requests were rejected forthwith by the Pope of course.

Duarte Costa's relationship with the Roman Church became increasingly strained for both parties. And so on in September of 1937, he resigned from his Episcopal post and was appointed titular bishop of Maura. He remained in Rio de Janeiro as Bishop Emeritus of Botucatu and titular Bishop of Maura, living simply and away from any official diocesan residence. At this time, he established the magazine *Nossos* ("Ours") as a vehicle to spread devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Soon, however, Duarte Costa resumed his vocal criticism of the government and the national church administration, which he saw as an accessory to the mistreatment of the poor in Brazil. He openly criticized certain papal periodicals and encyclicals, including **Rerum novarum** (Leo XIII), **Quadragesimo anno** (Pius XI), and **Divini Redemptoris** (Pius XI).

In 1942, Duarte Costa called on all German and Italian clergy to resign after several priests and nuns of German and Italian ethnicity were arrested in Brazil for operating clandestine radio transmitters, presumably passing information to the German and Italian governments. Duarte Costa went on to accuse most German and Italian clergy in Brazil as being agents of the German Nazi and Italian Fascist regimes. In 1944 he gained further notoriety by writing a glowing preface to the Brazilian translation of *The Soviet Power* by the Very Reverend Hewlett Johnson, the Anglican Dean of Canterbury known as "The Red Dean" for his uncompromising support of the Soviet Union.

Duarte Costa was soon formally accused by the Brazilian government of being a communist sympathizer. He was arrested on June 6, 1944 and imprisoned in Belo Horizonte. The following month the Ecclesiastical Chamber forbade him from preaching or hearing confessions, as punishment for his undisciplined outspokenness. He remained imprisoned until September 6, 1944, when he was released in response to pressure from the embassies of Mexico and the United States on his behalf.

After his release, Carlos Duarte Costa soon found himself in trouble again. This time it was a result of his accusations that the Vatican Secretariat of State had issued Vatican

passports to some high-ranking German Nazis, so that they could sneak out of Europe into South America – including Brazil. In May 1945, Duarte Costa gave newspaper interviews accusing Brazil's papal nuncio of Nazi-Fascist spying, and accused Rome of having aided and abetted Adolf Hitler.

In response to Duarte Costa's continued insubordination, the Vatican finally excommunicated him July 2, 1945. Upon being informed of his excommunication, Duarte Costa responded by saying, "I consider today one of the happiest days of my life." He immediately titled himself "Archbishop of Rio de Janeiro" and told the press that he would start his own church and had hoped soon to ordain ten married lawyers and professional men as priests in his new church.

### **Founding of ICAB**

A few days after learning of his excommunication, Duarte Costa established the Brazilian Catholic Apostolic Church (ICAB). In August of 1945, he published a "Manifesto to the Nation," in which he again criticized the Roman Catholic Church and promoted his new national church. Although he had already been excommunicated, on July 24, 1946, he was now declared "excommunicado vitando" which was designed to discourage other Catholics from associating with him.

With the formation of ICAB, Duarte Costa implemented a number of reforms of what he saw as problems in the Roman Catholic Church. Clerical celibacy was abolished. Rules for the reconciliation of divorced persons were implemented. The liturgy was translated into the vernacular and in emulation of a short-lived experiment in France clergy were expected to live and work amongst the people and support themselves and their ministries by holding secular employment. According to Randolph A. Brown, within a short time ICAB began to be identified as "The Church of the Poor."

Shortly after founding the church, Duarte Costa consecrated two more bishops, Salomão Barbosa Ferraz (August 15, 1945) and Luis Fernando Castillo Mendez (May 3, 1948). These three bishops went on to establish similar autonomous Catholic national churches in several other Latin American countries. Duarte Costa served as consecrator or co-consecrator of eleven additional bishops, each of whom took on a leadership role in either the Brazilian church or one of the other national churches.



Duarte Costa served as leader of the Brazilian Catholic Apostolic Church and its international affiliates for sixteen years until his death in 1961, by which time the church in Brazil is said to have grown to 60,000 members.

### **His Legacy**

Duarte Costa died quietly in his sleep on March 26, 1961 (Palm Sunday) in Rio de Janeiro at 72 years of age. At that time, ICAB had 50 priests and 37 bishops, with many of the congregations meeting in private homes. Duarte Costa was accredited and praised by the Church for his acts of charity for the poor and his strong devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Eucharist.

### **His Likely Reaction to Vatican II**

Given his life's priorities, I believe Dom Carlos's reaction to Vatican II would be that it is a step in the right direction, but fell short of real reform. Much of what he asked Pius XI to consider, was adopted by Vatican II.

Our Patron would have heartily approved of the changes to the liturgy: the use of the vernacular instead of Latin, the priest facing the people during the Eucharistic prayer, "active participation" by the entire congregation and the greater use of Scripture at Mass.

He also would have supported an increased role of the laity in the life of the Church:

*"...enlightened by Christian wisdom and giving close attention to the teaching authority of the Church, let the layman take on his own distinct role.... Since they have an active role to play in the whole life of the Church laymen are not only bound to penetrate with world with a Christian spirit. They are also called to be witnesses to Christ in all things in the midst of human society." (GS 43)*

His call for a "Council of Advisors" comprised of Bishops and headed by the Pope came to reality with the establishment in 1965 of the Synod of Bishops; and his call for a permanent, married Diaconate, although not officially established until 1967 by Pope Paul VI in his Apostolic Letter, ***Sacrum Diaconatus Ordinem***, was framed and encouraged by the Council in ***Lumen Gentium***.

But as Dom Carlos was so very dedicated to bettering life for the poor and exploited, I believe he would have been most heartened by the Council's unabashed statements in ***Gaudium et Spes*** concerning the use of one's possessions, its support for the poor and workers rights:

- *"Among the basic rights of the human person must be counted the right of freely founding labor unions" (GS 68)*
- *"...That created things are for the benefit of all humanity for ...in using them therefore a man should regard his lawful possessions not merely as his own but also as common property in the sense that they should accrue to the benefit not only of himself but of others...that men are obliged to come to the relief of the*

*poor.... If a person is in extreme necessity, he has the right to take from the riches of others, what he himself needs" (GS 69).*

He would also have most likely agreed that although the seemingly limitless expenditure for the weapons of war, although evil in itself, had its most dire impact on the most lowly and powerless in our world:

*"Therefore, it must be said again: the arms race is an utterly treacherous trap for humanity, and one which injures the poor to an intolerable degree. It is much to be feared that if this race persists, it will inevitably spawn all the lethal ruin whose path it is now making ready." (GS 81)*

For a man who was so socialistic in his economic and political philosophy, so much so that he was accused and persecuted as a "communist sympathizer," these statements and many others like them, enunciated in writing by his fellow bishops, and decreed infallibly by the reigning Pontiff as the Church's teachings, would have been long deserved vindication.

I think however, he would be less enthusiastic about the Council continued heavy reliance on a celibate clergy and overbearing clerical authority.

*"The order of bishops is the successor to the college of the apostles in teaching and pastoral direction, or rather, in the episcopal order, the apostolic body continues without a break. Together with its head, the Roman pontiff, and never without this head it exists as the subject of supreme, plenary power over the universal Church. But this power cannot be exercised except with the agreement of the Roman pontiff." (CD 4)*

I believe he would have seen a close connection to this need for authoritarian power on the part of Church hierarchs and their utter inability to find any complicity in their own action across history and the current situation in the world. Dom Carlos on the other hand, knowing how he suffered at the hands of his Church brothers and knowing how, in his mind, the Church was so culpable in not acting in the spirit of love, especially regarding the poor, would have been most disappointed in the almost total absence of any sort of admission of wrong-doing, let alone contrition, on the part of the Church. It is only in the Document on Ecumenism that we see any prayer for forgiveness:

*"The words of St. John hold good about sins against unity: "If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us." So, we humbly beg pardon of God and of our separated brethren, just as we forgive them that trespass against us." (UR 7)*

So, the 'big sin' in the Church needing forgiveness according to Vatican II is that they let squabbles over doctrine and Church authority break up the Body of Christ. Dom

Carlos may have been tempted to say “Correct – and you’ve just done it again to me and my followers. Isn’t a condition of Penance the sincere resolve to sin no more?”

To receive absolution in the sacrament of Penance, is not the penitent required to enumerate his sins? Where is that coming from the Council Fathers Dom Carlos may have asked? Dom Carlos therefore, may have liked to have seen an Council document like this...

“Bless us our Brothers and Sisters for we as a Church have sinned. It has been centuries – correction forever – since our last confession. We feel the need to seek forgiveness and resolve to make amends before we can legitimately preach to others about how to attain holiness. These our sins...” And then to see the laundry list covering 2,000 years of wrong doing emerge...

- We lied when we said we spoke for Him who said, *“Foxes have dens and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.”* (Luke 9:58), while we built palaces and homes of comfort...
- We denied our calling when we preached Jesus’ words, *“Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the Kingdom of God.”*(Matthew 19:24), as we amassed fortunes...
- We knowingly were hypocrites when we proclaimed, *“Whoever wants to be first must take last place and be the servant of everyone else.”* (Mark 9:35), while we’ve sat on high thrones demanding obedience and submission and punishing any who would not acquiesce to us...
- We are aware of Christ’s admonishment that, *“If anyone causes one of these little ones--those who believe in me--to stumble, it would be better for them to have a large millstone hung around their neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea. (Matthew 18:6),* yet over the centuries, such as in the era of the Borgias and the antipopes, when we were the source of much scandal and public shame...
- We heard Christ’s warning that, *“Those who use the sword will die by the sword. (Matthew 26:52,)* yet throughout the centuries we led wars and Crusades killing millions...

....and so it would go on and on confessing wrongness over inquisitions and Church led or Church sanctioned persecutions of the Jews, Muslims, Gays, Protestants, etc., etc ... for killing thousands who were mentally ill but who we saw as “possessed” or as “witches” ... for burning at the stake anyone who disagreed with us as heretics...for outright errors in teaching like the fact that



the earth is NOT the center of the universe...for the selling indulgences and other divine favors...for the agony inflicted on countless people trapped in bad and abusive marriages while denying other committed couples the right to marry at all...for being too closely aligned to the powers of this world and being complicit in wars and oppression.... and so on and so on...and once having confessed, I wonder what saintly prophets like Dom Carlos would assign as the Church's penance before granting absolution?

### What we in CACINA can learn and DO



Vatican II for its faults did lay down some principles that needed to be re-affirmed and set a new course for improving the relevancy of the Christian message. We in CACINA should consider their guidance as we plot out own path to salvation.

- **Dogmatic Constitution on the Church “*Lumen Gentium*”** - Perhaps we should reshape our identity as the authentic Catholic Church who is committed to reforming the Roman Church in the true spirit if Vatican II.
- **Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity “*Apostolicam Actuositatem*”** – We should continue to develop our theology of the lay apostolate and empower our laity to take even deeper roles in church governance and ministry.
- **Decree on the Instruments of Social Communication “*Inter Mirifica*”** – We should increase our own efforts at evangelization by taking advantages of the power of new media and means to reach the masses of disaffected Christians who are seeking a new home within which they can find peace and fellowship.
- **Decree on Ecumenism “*Unitatis Redintegratio*”** - We should increase our efforts to create mergers and alliances with our “separated brethren” of all types. We could be at the vanguard of creating a new unity among Christians.
- **Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World “*Gaudium et Spes*”** – Perhaps it is time for us to issue our own encyclicals on matters affecting the spiritual health of all Christians especially on matters of social justice. Perhaps we should canonize our own saints who are examples of Dom Carlos’s commitment to justice and peace.

### Final words

We may be independent Catholics but we ARE Catholics nonetheless. I pray that the spirit of Vatican II will infuse us as it still attempts to do with our separated brethren in the Roman Church. As Good Pope John said: “Do not walk through time without leaving worthy evidence of your passage.” Good advice for us in CACINA.

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