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## Question 6

# What are Catholics to think of Vatican II?

The Second Vatican Council was a meeting of the world's bishops for four sessions between October 11, 1962 and December 8, 1965.



Second Vatican Council in session

Pope John XXIII, in his opening speech to the Council (November 11, 1962), declared its aims to be the following:

- that the Catholic Faith should be kept and taught,
- but taught in the language of modern man by a magisterium "which is predominantly pastoral in character,"
- and this without resorting to any condemnations,
- thus appealing to all peoples (this Council was to be ecumenical, not only in the sense of being a general council of the Church, but also in that of appealing to the religiosity of all people of whatever religion).

Pope Paul VI agreed with his predecessor:

[Vatican II] was the most important [event] because... above all it sought to meet pastoral needs and, nourishing the flame of charity, it has made a great effort to reach not only the Christians still separated from communion with the Holy See, but also the whole human family. (Closing Brief, December 8, 1965)

With such ideals, it is little wonder to find Catholic teaching presented:

- weakly (no definitions or condemnations),
- confusedly (no technical, scholastic terminology),
- and one-sidedly (so as to attract non-Catholics).

All such vague and ambiguous teaching, already liberal in its method, would be interpreted in its true liberal sense after the Council. Consider, for example:

Conciliar teaching	How interpreted by Rome[1]
The liturgy of the word is stressed ( <i>Sacrosanctum Concilium</i> , §9),[2] and the banquet aspect (§10), as well as active participation (§§11,14), and therefore the vernacular (§§36,54).	The New Mass ( <i>cf. question 5</i> ).
Catholics should pray with Protestants ( <i>Unitatis Redintegratio</i> , §§4,8).	Eucharistic hospitality ( <i>cf. question 8</i> ).
The Church of Christ subsists in (not is) the Catholic Church ( <i>Lumen Gentium</i> , §8).	It is also in "separated Churches" ( <i>Ut Unum Sint</i> , §11),[3]
which has separated brethren in separated "Churches" ( <i>Unitatis Redintegratio</i> , §3),	All the baptized are in Christ's Church ( <i>Ut Unum Sint</i> , §42).
which ought to be as sisters ( <i>Unitatis Redintegratio</i> , §14).	And so there is no need to convert, e.g., the Orthodox.[4]
Seminarians should take into account modern philosophy, progress in science ( <i>Optatam Totius</i> , §15),	Secular university studies and abandoning Thomism.
psychology, and sociology (§20).	Open spirituality and subjective morality.
Marriage and married love equated ( <i>Gaudium et Spes</i> , §§48,50).	Annulments fiasco ( <i>cf. question 8</i> ).
The Church renounces privileges civil authorities grant her (§76).	Catholic religion no longer to be the religion of any States.
Wish for a world authority (§82).	Full support for UN
Rite and formula of penance are to be revised ( <i>Sacrosanctum Concilium</i> §72).	Face to face confessions and General Absolutions.[5]
Extreme Unction should be an Anointing of the Sick (§§73,75).	New matter, form and subject ( <i>i.e.</i> , the sick, not just those in danger of death).

Table footnotes

1 How Rome's guidelines are further interpreted as seen in the parishes is a whole other story.

2 The documents of Vatican II are referred to by their introductory Latin words, or by the initials of these.

3 *Ut Unum Sint*, Pope John Paul II, May 25, 1995.

4 *Cf.*, The Joint International Commission for the Theological Dialogue between the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church, which forbade mutual "proselytizing." Balmain, Lebanon, June 17-24, 1993.

5 Does this affect the "substance of the sacraments" over which the Church has no power? (*Cf.*, Pius XII, quoted in [principle 5](#))

More gravely, the Council was hijacked by the liberal elements within the Church, who from the very beginning schemed to have rejected the pre-conciliar preparatory schemas and replaced by progressive ones prepared by their own "experts." The liberals were also able to get their members onto the Council Commissions. The new schemas, passed as the Council's decrees, constitutions, and declarations, contain, more or less explicitly, some of the same doctrinal errors for which liberals in the past had been condemned. Let us take by way of example the following passages:

Vatican II teaching	Catholic teaching
"Man is the only creature on earth that God has wanted for its own sake" ( <i>Gaudium et Spes</i> , §24),	"The Lord hath made all things for Himself" (Prov. 16),
and "all things on earth should be ordained to man" (§12).	...to help him save his soul.
Moreover, "by His incarnation the Son of God has in a certain way united Himself with each man" (§22),	God assumed an individual nature (e.g., Dz. 114),
so "Human nature... has been raised in us also to a dignity beyond compare" (§22),	"...a little less than the angels..." (Ps. 8:6)
and because of "sublime dignity of the human person" (§26),	Only he who lives well is worthy (Apoc. 3:4).
his "rights and duties are universal and inviolate" (§26); including:	He who buries his talent will be stripped of it
"The Vatican Council declares that the human person has a right to religious freedom..." ( <i>Dignitatis Humanae</i> , §2),	<b>Contrary condemned statement:</b> "Liberty of conscience and of worship is the proper right of every man..." (Pius IX, <i>Quanta Cura</i> )
"...all men should be immune from coercion on the part of ...every human power so that, within due limits, nobody is forced to act against his convictions nor is anyone to be restrained from acting in accordance with his convictions..." (§2),	<b>Contrary condemned statement:</b> "...the best condition of society is the one in which there is no acknowledgment by the government of the duty of restraining... offenders of the Catholic religion, except insofar as the public peace demands" (Pius IX, <i>Quanta Cura</i> ).
"This right of the human person to religious freedom must be given such recognition in the constitutional order of society as will make it a civil right" (§2),	<b>Contrary condemned statement:</b> "...should be proclaimed and asserted by law in every correctly established society..." (Pius IX, <i>Quanta Cura</i> )
"...the Spirit of Christ has not refrained from using (separated churches) as means of salvation" ( <i>Unitatis Redintegratio</i> , §3), and so,	<a href="#">principle 2</a>
"ecumenical action should be encouraged so that ... Catholics might cooperate with their separated brethren ... by a common profession before the nations of faith in God and in Jesus Christ..." ( <i>Ad Gentes</i> , §115).	<a href="#">principle 7</a>
Why, even concerning non-Christian religions: "The Catholic Church rejects nothing of what is good and holy in these religions. She has a high regard for the manner of life and conduct..." ( <i>Nostra Aetate</i> , §2),	"All the gods of the Gentiles are devils." Ps. 95. "... beware lest thou have a mind to imitate the abominations of those nations" (Dt. 18:9).
"Now, episcopal consecration confers, together with the office of sanctifying, the duty also of teaching and ruling..." (§21).	"This (episcopal) dignity, in fact, depends immediately on God as to the power of orders, and on the Apostolic See as to the power of jurisdiction..." ( <i>Deesemus Nos</i> , Pius VI).

The Council itself both encouraged liberal trends (and its encouragement became post-conciliar Vatican policy) and departed from traditional Catholic teaching, but it has no authority for either ([principle 5](#)).

Our position must be:

...we refuse ...to follow the Rome of neo-Modernist and neo-Protestant tendencies which became clearly manifest during the Second Vatican Council and, after the Council, in all the reforms which issued from it. (*1924 Declaration of Archbishop Lefebvre*)

And it is neo-Modernist tendencies that the Council is all about ("...Pope John Paul II makes not Holy Scripture, but rather Assisi, the shibboleth for the current understanding of the Council." *Pope John Paul II's Theological Journey to the Prayer Meeting of Religions in Assisi, Part I*, p. 46 [\[appendix 2\]](#)).

**But wasn't the Council infallible?**

- Not by reason of the extraordinary magisterium, for it refused to define anything. Pope Paul VI himself, in an audience on January 12, 1966, said that it "had avoided proclaiming in an extraordinary manner dogmas affected by the void of infallibility." (*cf. the declaration of the Theological Commission of March 6, 1964*, and repeated by the Council's General Secretary on November 16, 1964: "In view of conciliar practice and the pastoral purpose of the present Council, this sacred Synod defines matters of faith or morals as binding on the Church only when the Synod itself openly declares so." It never did.)
- Nor by reason of the ordinary universal magisterium, because this is not a defining power, but one of passing on what was always believed. The "universality" in question is not just one of place (all bishops) but also of time (always) (*cf.*, Vatican I and [principle 5](#)).
- Nor even by reason of the simply authentic magisterium, because the object of all magisterium is the deposit of faith to be guarded sacredly and expounded faithfully (Vatican I, Dz 1836), and not to adopt as Catholic doctrine the "best expressed values of two centuries of liberal culture," even if they are "purified" (Cardinal Ratzinger, *Gesu*, November 1984, p. 72; *cf. Gaudium et Spes*, §§11, 44).

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