

**KRAKOW**

**Vatican Two and The Renewal of  
the Church**

# SESSION 3

## **Renewal of the Theology of the Church**

# BEGINNINGS BEFORE THE COUNCIL

1. Two major works by a Belgian theologian,  
Émile Mersch, sj (1890 - 1940)

*Le corps mystique du Christ* (1933)

Eng. Trans. *The Whole Christ* (1938)

*La théologie du Corps mystique* (1944)

2. Encyclical: Pius XII *Mediator Dei* (1947)

Obvious that a renewal of the Church requires a renewal of the theology of the Church (ecclesiology)

So central text of Vatican Two became **Lumen Gentium**, the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church

# Schemata

Second Draft	1963	Final Document	1964
		I: The Mystery of	The Church
I:	Mystery of Church	II: The People of	God
II: Hierarchy &	Partic. Episcopate	III: The Church is	Hierarchical
		IV: The Laity	
III: People of God &	Partic. Laity	V: The Universal	Call to Holiness
IV: Call to Holiness	In the Church	VI: Religious	
		VII: The Pilgrim	Church
		VIII: Our Lady	

# MORE BIBLICAL ECCLESIOLOGY

1. Ch. 1 gives biblical images of the Church.
2. People of God roots Church in Israel.
3. Ch. 3 introduces diocese as particular church.
4. Laity: mission and role based on baptism.
5. All, not just priests and religious, called to be holy.
6. Church on way from Pentecost to Parousia.

# Ecumenism at Vatican Two

There is a major development in Catholic ecclesiology concerning other Christian churches and ecclesial communities (clearer in UR than in LG 15).

“The one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church subsists in the Catholic Church” (LG, 8). Does not repeat identification of *Mystici Corporis* (1943).

They have significance as communities in the mystery of salvation (UR 3).

# Ecclesia Semper Reformanda

“Every renewal of the church essentially consists in an increase of fidelity to her own calling. ... Christ summons the church, as she goes her pilgrim way, to that continual reformation of which she always has need, insofar as she is a human institution here on earth.” (UR, 6).

No ecumenism without renewal.

No renewal without ecumenism.



# The Jews at Vatican Two

“those who have not yet accepted the Gospel are related to the people of God in various ways. There is, first, that people to whom the covenants and promises were made and from whom Christ was born in the flesh” (LG, 16).

“Sounding the depths of the mystery which is the church, this sacred council remembers the spiritual ties which link the people of the new covenant to the stock of Abraham.” (NA, 4).

# A GAP: THE TIME NOT RIPE

## Evangelization

Hardly mentioned at Council. Term used in AG to refer to establishment of Church in mission territories.

But the steps forward at Vatican Two opened the door to evangelization and made the call to evangelization inevitable:

# Why?

- Emphasis on the Word of God and a biblical theology
- Emphasis on active participation (how is this possible without proclamation of the Gospel?)
- Teaching in DH on faith as a free response to God's grace

# EVANGELIZATION

Synod of Bishops in 1974 followed by document of Bl. Paul VI *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (1975).

“The Church is born of the evangelizing activity of Jesus and the Twelve.” (EN, 15).

Profound link between Christ, the Church, and evangelization.” (EN, 16). At centre:

proclamation that in Jesus Christ, the Son of God made man, who died and rose from the dead, salvation is offered to all”

(EN, 27).

“Evangelization will never be possible without the action of the Holy Spirit. ... The Holy Spirit is the principal agent of evangelization.” (EN, 75).

But more needs to be said about the Holy Spirit: see Day Two!