

Word on Worship

Newsletter of the Office of Divine Worship, Archdiocese of Newark, Volume 30, No. 3, 2013

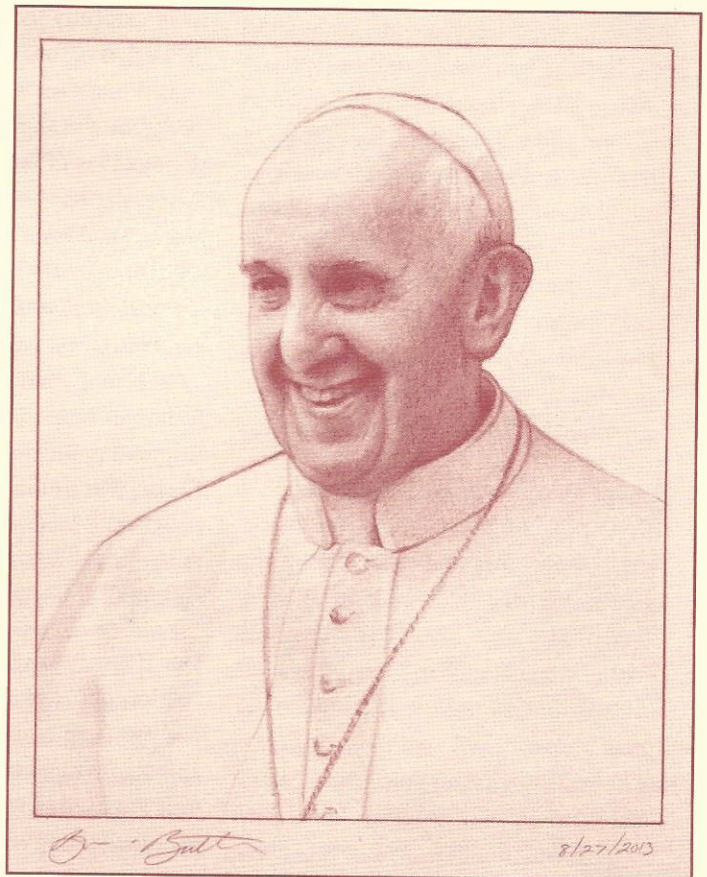


YEAR OF FAITH 2012 - 2013

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF VATICAN II

I begin my apostolic ministry during this year which my venerable predecessor Benedict XVI, with truly inspired intuition, proclaimed for the Catholic Church as a Year of Faith. With this initiative, which I wish to continue and which I trust will prove a stimulus for our common journey of faith, he wanted to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the beginning of the Second Vatican Council by proposing a sort of pilgrimage towards what all Christians consider essential: the personal, transforming encounter with Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who died and rose for our salvation. The core message of the Council is found precisely in the desire to proclaim this perennially valid treasure of faith to the men and women of our time.

Pope Francis



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In this issue: The Reform of Ordained Ministries in the Documents of Vatican II • Vatican II and the Role of the Laity • An Active Presence: The Liturgical Vision of Vatican II 50 Years Later • Naming of Bishops in the Eucharistic Prayer • RCIA Dates

THE REFORM OF ORDAINED MINISTRIES IN THE DOCUMENTS OF VATICAN II

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When Pope John XXIII declared his intention to summon an ecumenical council, he gave as one of his motives the need for *aggiornamento* in the Church. *Aggiornamento* is an Italian word meaning “up-dating.” In this article, we consider how that council “updated” the traditional triumvirate of ordained ministries, the offices of bishop, presbyter and deacon as they are described in the New Testament’s so-called Pastoral Epistles, that is, First and Second Timothy and Titus.

As for the office of bishop, there were at least two reforms at Vatican II. The first reform or updating here was to define more carefully the power of bishops. In the period before the council, some had argued that ever since Vatican I’s declaration of the powers and prerogatives of the papacy, the bishop of Rome, the power and authority of local bishops had been inadvertently undermined. So in Vatican II’s *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (Lumen gentium, 27)* it was made clear that the local bishop, though appointed by the bishop of Rome, is no mere vicar of the Roman Pontiff but is in himself a Vicar of Christ, that is, a true pastor to his own flock. The second reform of episcopacy at Vatican II was to recover the notion of episcopal collegiality.

Our English words “college,” “colleague,” and “collegiality” are all derived from two Latin root words *com* and *legare* meaning to tie together, and thus are used to refer to two or more people working together at a common purpose. “Collegiality” is not a biblical term; instead it comes from the republican period of ancient Roman history. Republican Rome had worked hard to insure that all forms of leadership, in public and religious life, avoided one-man rule and instead was a corporate effort. In republican Rome, the head of state was never one man but two men who bore equal titles. There were the two consuls, who were meant to work

alongside each other for the welfare of the people of Rome. So too the pagan priesthoods of Rome were organized into colleges. But, more importantly, there are several New Testament passages that witness to the phenomenon of corporate leadership not just in the Roman state but in the early Church. Jesus sent out his disciples not alone but in pairs (Mk 6:7, Lk 10:1.), and in Acts 15:6, we read how “the apostles and presbyters met together to see about this matter.” In Acts 20:17, Paul has all the presbyters of the Church at Ephesus assembled together. Acts 21:18 provides us with a description of the corporate leadership of the Church at Jerusalem: “the next day Paul accompanied us on a visit to James, and all the presbyters were present.” And in First Peter 5:1, Peter, “the prince of the apostles,” when addressing presbyters, instead of insisting upon his authority over them, strikes an egalitarian tone saying: “I exhort the presbyters among you, as a fellow presbyter.”

Early Church literature outside the Bible witnesses to the fact that corporate assemblies of bishops, synodal assemblies, from early on in the Church’s history became a common form of decision making, an early form of Church leadership. And so, some of Vatican II’s “updating” was to encourage bishops to return to such collegial forms of Church leadership as meetings of regional bishops, what we today call national episcopal conferences (see *Lumen Gentium 22*, and the council’s decree on the pastoral office of bishops, *Christus Dominus*, Chapter 3). Moreover, the council, in its *Decree On the Ministry and Life of Priests (PO, 7)*, set forth the idea that even in his own diocese a bishop should not work alone but with the advice of a presbyteral council.

As for the ordained ministry of presbyter which we commonly call “priest,” here too there was a significant reform at Vatican II. No doubt in the New Testament the three principal titles of formal Church ministries had been

A good priest can be recognized by the way his people are anointed... When our people are anointed with the oil of gladness, it is obvious: for example, when they leave Mass looking as if they have heard good news. Our people like to hear the Gospel preached with “unction”, they like it when the Gospel we preach touches their daily lives, when it runs down like the oil of Aaron to the edges of reality, when it brings light to moments of extreme darkness...

Pope Francis

bishop, presbyter, deacon, Greek words from the secular work-place which translate literally as over-seer, elder and servant. Nevertheless, from early on, in the NT itself, certain expressions strongly suggested not only the priestly character of Jesus but also of those who preside at the Eucharist. The most obvious example of this is the Epistle to the Hebrews which argues that Jesus Himself was a priest, not a Jewish priest but the priest of a new cult whose model was the OT figure of Melchizedek, a Canaanite priest and king who offered not an animal sacrifice but bread and wine. But even more importantly, Jesus employed cultic language at the last supper with his disciples, language that strongly suggests he has introduced a new cult, “this cup is the new covenant in my blood” (1 Cor. 11:24). The old covenant was celebrated with the blood of sheep and goats.

In John’s Gospel chapter 17 there is Jesus’ consecratory prayer over the twelve that suggests this was a formal ordination. But the Second Vatican Council chose to avoid the title priest and instead employ that of presbyter. This can be seen in the very title of the document which is called *Presbyterorum Ordinis* (PO), the order of presbyters, and the process that went into its creation. This first rough draft of this

document had been entitled *De Sacerdotibus*, the second *De Clericis* and finally *Presbyterorum Ordinis*. Vatican II in preferring the New Testament terminology of presbyter rather than *sacerdos* did not mean to deny the priestly character of the presbyteral office but instead wanted to shift from an all too exclusive identification of the presbyteral office with its cultic functions. That is, they wanted to emphasize that in the Christian understanding of ministerial priesthood, the Christian priest presides not just over an altar but also over a people. In this way Vatican II wanted to make clear that the people have a right to expect from their local parish priest preaching and teaching and pastoral ministry as well as liturgical services. This was to get away from some medieval inventions such as the concept of the *chantry priest* or a *simplex priest* who was allowed to celebrate Mass but was not granted the faculties to preach or to hear confessions.

Arguably Vatican II’s most “revolutionary” or innovative reform of ordained ministries was its creation of the concept of the pastoral deacon (*Lumen Gentium*, 29). The office of deacon in the Church has a long and varied history. Some people see the origin of diaconal

ministry in the narrative of Acts 6, the account of the action of the apostles at Jerusalem by which they ordained seven men for charitable service in the Christian community. No doubt, later on, in the narrative of the Acts of the Apostles, we find two of those deacons functioning not in charitable ministry but as a preacher (Stephen in Acts 7) and even as a missionary (Philip in Acts 8). Nevertheless, the office of deacon in the early Church quickly became that of an administrative assistant to the bishop especially in the handling of financial funds. Moreover, once again modeling on the foundational narrative in Acts 6, there were never more than seven deacons in any diocese. This office however soon became an irritant in the early Church as deacons bullied not only priests but also bishops (see the strictures of the Council of Nicea against deacons who presumed to give communion to bishops and priests) and so a reaction set in led by such “sacerdotalists” as the biblical scholar Jerome and the bishop/patriarch of Constantinople, John Chrysostom who argued that diaconal ministry must be seen as merely a step to the priesthood. And so, indeed, that is what happened.

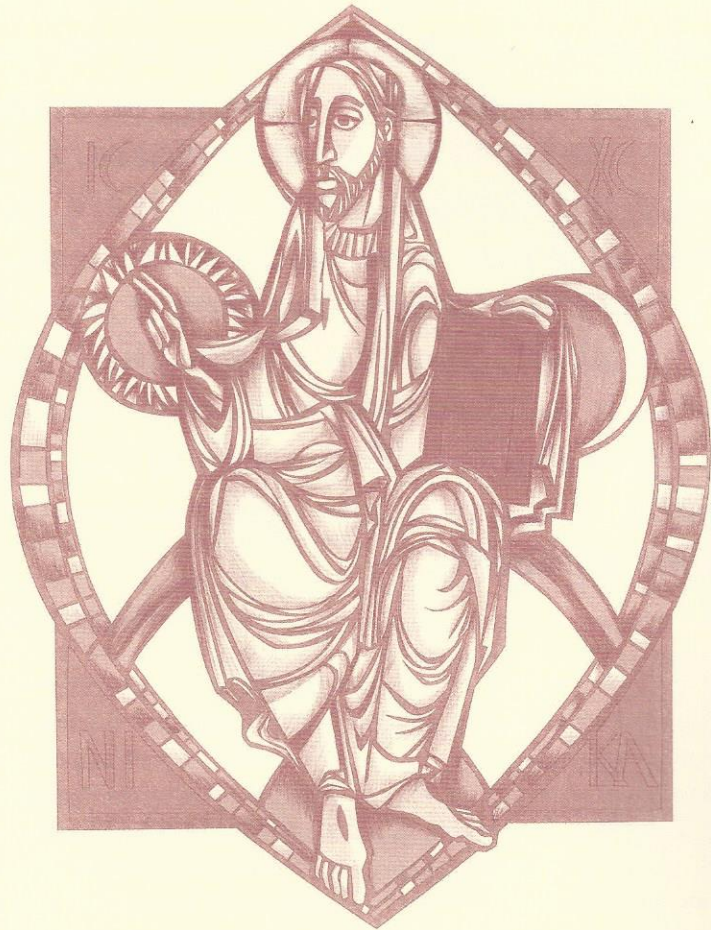
The permanent diaconate disappeared for almost a thousand years, replaced by the transitional diaconate as a step on the way to the priesthood. The only permanent deacon in the Middle Ages was Saint Francis of Assisi whom Rome wanted to see ordained as a priest because of his preaching abilities. But Francis’s humility led to his refusing priestly ordination and instead he conceded to being ordained a deacon so that he could legitimately preach from the pulpit on Sundays.

The Protestant Reformers, in their emphatic Biblicism, restored the diaconate according to Acts 6, that is, as a purely charitable ministry. But in the Roman Catholic Church it was not until Vatican II that the permanent ministry of deacon was restored. What must be noted is that Vatican II did not revive the classical early Church ministry of seven

deacons who act as administrative assistants to the bishop, rather they invented a whole new role: the pastoral deacon who, as it says in *Lumen Gentium* 29, is “at the service of the people of God in the ministry of the liturgy, the word and charity” and not just in service to the bishop but “in communion with the bishop and his presbyterium.” And thus we have here in the USA the pastoral deacon who is assigned to a parish and assists the pastor in both the liturgy and pastoral ministry more often sacramental than charitable.

Since the close of Vatican II in 1965 several things have happened to the reforms mandated by that council. First the authority of episcopal conferences soon became a problem. For example, in the 1980’s the French and US episcopal conferences issued statements on war that are not easily reconcilable. Pope John Paul II, in his encyclical letter *Apostolos Suos* of May 21, 1998, was moved to pronounce on the limited doctrinal authority of episcopal conferences. The second problem with Vatican II’s reform of the office of bishop is that while both Vatican II and the new code of canon law insist upon the importance of the principle of collegiality by mandating that every diocese have a presbyteral council that advises its bishop, in practice all too often the presbyteral council is a nominal body with little or no significant input.

Taken in light of Vatican II’s “presbyterianism,” that is, its understanding of the priest as a genuine pastor, not just presiding at an altar but providing for and guiding a congregation as a shepherd for his flock, the steep decline of priestly vocations after Vatican II, has in some places resulted in a certain irony. Now some priests have the pastoral responsibility for two or three parishes, and thus those priests are often reduced to the role of a sacramental supply agent, running from parish to parish on Sunday to provide liturgically for several congregations.



As for Vatican II’s creation of the ministry of pastoral deacon, almost all the dioceses here in the United States have taken that mandate to heart, and so it is not uncommon to find some parishes that have not one but many deacons on staff. On the other hand, there are many episcopal conferences in the world that have chosen to pass over Vatican II’s invitation to diaconal ministry. For example, the permanent diaconate is unknown in both Poland and the Philippines. Another potential problem is that there are dioceses where permanent deacons not only assist in a parish but are now assigned to positions of diocesan administration. That is, with the diminishing number of priests, increasingly priests are taken out of diocesan administrative posts to function as pastors, and those administrative positions are assigned to deacons. No doubt, some will wonder if this is not an ominous sign of the return of the early Church’s episcopal deacon especially when the presbyteral council is only

nominal.

In the end we must be aware of the fact that the effect of all ecumenical councils takes time and in that time there is the possibility of reconsideration or adjustment. Joseph Ratzinger, who served as a theological expert at Vatican II (and later as pope) said of the Second Vatican Council, in his *Principles of Catholic Theology*, p. 369: “While the council formulated its pronouncements with the fullness of power that resides in it, its historical significance will be determined by the process of clarification and elimination that takes place subsequently in the life of the Church. In this way, the whole Church participates in the Council; it does not come to an end in the assembly of bishops.”

VATICAN II AND THE ROLE OF THE LAITY

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Apostolicam Actuositatem, the Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity (AA), was promulgated by Pope Paul VI on Nov. 18, 1965, just a few weeks before the close of the Second Vatican Council. The document received an overwhelmingly positive vote from the Fathers, 2,340 to 2. This decree, along with the teachings of *Lumen Gentium*, gives the first ever official teaching on the role of the laity in the church. The story of this document: what it teaches, why these teachings were promulgated at this point in the history of the Church and the impact it has had on the life of the Church, both within itself and in its relationship with the world, will be explored here.

THE LARGER CONTEXT

Certainly, the laity, as we understand the term today, has existed throughout the history of the Church. However, for about the first two hundred years, there was not a sharp demarcation between lay and clerical. Rather, the emphasis was on the new chosen people, a collective term referring to all those who followed Jesus. What was central was an understanding of the Church as a communion of persons, a *koinonia*. In the New Testament period, particularly in the writings of Paul we find references to many important figures who were lay, including house church leaders such as Aquila and Priscilla, the apostle Junia (the oldest manuscripts use this feminine name), the widows, prophets (among many references we find one to the daughters of Philip as prophets) and teachers. Key leadership roles of presiding over communities, preaching, teaching, and celebrating rituals of prayer were exercised by lay persons. After this very early period the theologian and teacher Origen exercised great influence; only slowly did those who were ordained alone become primary figures in our history.

This brief sketch highlights some aspects of our story that were rediscovered in modern times. In the period before the Second Vatican Council, beginning at the end of the 19th century and throughout the first half of the 20th century, Biblical scholarship and historical study of the origins of Christianity flourished.

Theologians began to see with new eyes. They emphasized the importance of *ressourcement*, a return to the sources – including Scripture and our early history.

From a standpoint of the understanding of the place of laity in the life of the Church, the most notable of these was the historian and theologian, Dominican Yves Congar. His *Lay People in the Church*, first published in 1953 (in English in 1957) expressed his understanding of the laity in language which would be adapted by the Council Fathers – that they have a secular character, orienting their role as Christians toward “the world” and that they share in the three-fold *munera* of Christ, as priest, prophet and king.

There was a second important source for the emergence of the teachings of the Council, the experience of the Church community, its lived life. While most councils did not intentionally engage in reflection on the life of the community, Vatican II – often referred to as a pastoral council – did so. Its approach often began with the human experience, proceeding inductively rather than deductively, as is seen most notably in the *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World*.

Since most of the bishops were from Europe, it was developments there that had the greatest influence, especially the vibrant apostolate of the laity, generally called Catholic Action. This movement focused both on personal spirituality and on action for the transformation of the world. Although developments in the United States did not exercise the same influence, it is important to note that the 20th century brought forth many movements that deeply engaged laity here, also. For example, a Maryknoll priest, James Keller, founded The Christophers, considered the most influential lay Catholic movement of the 20th century. They published the widely read *Christopher News Notes* which emphasized the spiritual dimensions of everyday life. Terrence Sheily, SJ, began a lay retreat movement; the central meditation was on the kingdom of God, and hence a call for social reform. It began in 1909 with six retreatants, all men. By 1939, 87 retreats were offered for 131,000, and by 1964 over 65,000 women were involved as well.

The Benedictine Virgil Michel brought the liturgical movement to the United States, linking an emphasis on the liturgy and justice for the poor. Dorothy Day with

Peter Maurin, both lay people, founded the Catholic Worker, with its strong link between a quest for personal holiness and service of those most in need, while the layman Michael Williams founded the Catholic journal of opinion, *Commonweal*. In all of these developments there are common threads: a response to the movement of the Spirit drawing individuals toward personal holiness and service of the needs of society. It is also notable that these movements originated with the work of lay men and women and vowed religious men from various communities – attesting to the way in which they sprang forth from the life of the whole Church.

One further aspect of life in the 20th century can be seen as having an impact on the emergence of a consideration of the laity as part of the agenda of the Council, though this is a more implicit influence. For most of history, what has been recorded and reflected upon has been the story of elites – kings and emperors, popes and bishops, generals and artistic giants. But, in the 20th century, historians began to focus on the lives of common people, searching for evidence of the less immediately evident ways they impacted history. And within this larger effort, there has been a search for the stories of the less dominant groups in society, women and those not of the dominant culture. Testimony to this is found, for example, in the museums created at the homes of Thomas Jefferson at Monticello, and Jeanette and John Holme Ballantine in Newark, NJ. In each case, the story of the wealthy and influential landowners originally provided the only focus for the story told through the artifacts displayed. Today, however, the story has been expanded to include the slaves of Monticello and the immigrant house servants in Newark whose lives also impacted history. This process of “democratization” of our historical records provides part of the reason for the historical and theological significance now given to the Biblical figures Aquila, Prisca, Junia and others, and the interest in the place of the laity in the life of the Church.

Each of these three aspects of the 20th century, the historical and theological consideration of the early sources of our life as a Church, a focus on the spiritual movements that impacted the laity in the 20th

**Christ conferred on the Apostles and their successors
the duty of teaching, sanctifying, and ruling...
But the laity likewise share
in the priestly, prophetic, and royal office of Christ
and therefore have their own share
in the mission of the whole people of God in the
Church and in the world.**

Apostolicam Actuositatem, 2

century, and the impact of the larger culture in the “age of the common man” provide the larger context for the promulgation of a theology of the laity at the Council.

THE PROXIMATE CONTEXT

Because the *Decree on the Apostolate of The Laity* (AA) was promulgated so late in the Council’s life, it necessarily was impacted by the documents completed earlier. This is especially true of *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (Dec. 1963), and *Lumen Gentium*, The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (Nov. 1964). The theological framework for the *Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity* developed as these documents were debated and finalized.

The liturgy was the topic first considered, in part because it is so central to our life as a community of faith, in part because the liturgical movement had prepared the way for consideration of its central ideas. Most important for a renewed understanding of the laity is the emphasis on the role of everyone in liturgical celebrations, expressed in the phrase repeated fifteen times in this brief document: “full, conscious, and active participation.” Of note is the emphasis on the multiple roles performed by diverse persons at celebrations: “servers, readers, commentators, and members of the choir” as well as the assembly. Since, as the document declares, the liturgy is both the summit and font of the Church’s life, we bring to our celebrations all that we are, and go forth strengthened by them to bring Christ to the world. Furthermore, the liturgy “builds up those who are in the Church,” indicating that all of the Baptized are “a dwelling place for God in the Spirit,” a teaching that will be unfolded more fully in later documents.

Lumen Gentium was re-drafted three times; it is notable that even in the first draft, which the Council Fathers found unacceptable, the importance of the laity in the Church was addressed. In the second and third drafts, a shift of emphasis from the hierarchy and the institutional dimensions of the Church to one on the Church as the people of God, and as a mystery, emerged. Furthermore, because of Baptism the three-fold work of Christ as priest, prophet and king was seen as belonging to the whole Church, hierarchy and laity together. The secular activities of lay persons, their temporal involvement in family life, at work, in all aspects of society, are seen as part of the mission of the Church. All members of the Church are equally called to holiness, including married people, parents, widows, single people and those who suffer.

THE DECREE ON THE APOSTOLATE OF THE LAITY

As noted, above, much of the teaching about the laity was developed as the documents on the liturgy and the Church were discussed and voted upon. There was also considerable debate about the lay apostolate as such – do lay persons have an apostolate, or do they simply share in the apostolate of the bishops, operating as their helpers and under their direction? On the one hand, Cardinal Suenens celebrated lay men and women he observed who were “called by the Lord and endowed with various charisms of the Spirit.” On the other hand, Cardinal Ruffini insisted that the laity “do not share in the mission conferred by Christ on the apostles,” but do so only through the hierarchy. As the debate unfolded, the voting made clear that the latter viewpoint was that of the minority of bishops. The title of this document attests to the final resolution of the question.

This Decree builds on the teachings about the entire people of God: all are charged with carrying forth the mission Jesus began, as disciples all are called to holiness. In describing the spirituality of lay persons, their path to holiness, the Council Fathers emphasized maintaining an intimate union with Christ, helped "chiefly by active participation in the liturgy."

Significantly, this union with Christ is expressed in "the ordinary conditions of life ... through the very performance of their tasks, which are God's will for them." Therefore, "lay spirituality will take its particular character from the circumstances of one's state in life (married and family life, celibacy, widowhood), from one's state of health and from one's professional and social activity." (AA, 4)

This marks a significant shift from an understanding of spirituality that was prevalent for centuries, as a stepping away from the things of "the world," as maintaining a focus on heavenly rather than earthly life, as a devaluing of things of "the flesh." At times these emphases led to a devaluing of the material world, of women, of sexuality, of the earth. These teachings about lay spirituality have led to movements such as Marriage Encounter (with a positive view of the place of sexuality in marriage), green spirituality (with a reverencing of the world God has created) and Christian feminism (with its valuing of women and their roles in life).

Continuing this theme of lay spirituality, the Fathers of the Council call upon laity to "renew the temporal order and make it increasingly more perfect" in all of its parts - "personal and family values, culture, economic interests, the trades and professions, institutions of the political community, international relations, and so on." (AA, 7) Furthermore, drawing on the vision of Genesis, that "God saw all that he had made and found it very good" they stress that these ordinary aspects of everyday life "possess a value of their own, placed in them by God whether considered individually or as parts of the integral temporal structure." (AA, 7) Even while counseling that they are to be guided by the mind of the Church, lay people are charged to bring "their own special competence, and act on their own responsibility" as they "seek the justice of the

kingdom of God."

Because of these teachings, at every level of the Church, new groups have formed to work for the transformation of the social order (a conceptualization especially favored by Pope John Paul II). In the United States a great variety have sprung into life: parish social action groups; training programs such as Just Faith; diocesan professional organizations of groups of, for example, teachers and lawyers; national organizations including Catholic Charities USA and Network; and, international movement such as L'Arche, Opus Dei and the Community of Sant'Egidio. While the history of the Church testifies to its ongoing involvement in works of charity, this emphasis on social justice, on making the temporal order in itself more perfect, is a particular fruit of the Council, especially of the teachings of this Decree.

One aspect of this document that has not been given much attention is helpful for understanding another fruit of the Council's teachings on the laity. In a section titled "Special Commendation" we read: "Worthy of special respect and praise in the Church are the laity, single or married, who, in a definitive way or for a period, put their person and their professional competence at the service of institutions and their activities." (AA, 22) Pastors "are to welcome these lay persons with joy and gratitude" and see that the "requirements of justice, equity and charity, chiefly in the matter of resources necessary for the maintenance of themselves and their families" (AA, 22) are met.

Although the examples given stress work in the missions and with associations and works of the apostolate, the rise of lay ecclesial ministry in the United States could be viewed in this context. Today almost 40,000 lay ecclesial ministers serve in parishes in the United States. Uncounted more serve on diocesan staffs and in the Catholic institutional ministries of charities, education and health care.

The Decree emphasized the importance of training for apostolic work; the great majority of these new ministers hold masters degrees, diocesan certificates or both which have prepared them for their share in the work of the Church.

FROM THE MARGINS TO THE CENTER

It could be said that in recent centuries laity lived more at the margins of the Church's life than at its center, but the Council's teachings reawakened consciousness of the importance of their role in the mission and ministry of the Church. Their collaboration with the hierarchy and with vowed religious represents a constituent aspect of the Church's life. Their involvement at the Council symbolically represents this change in understanding. No lay persons were present at the first session of the Council. As the bishops worked on the schemas relative to the laity, especially that on the lay apostolate, they realized that they needed to include lay persons in their discussions. At the second session, thirteen lay men were invited as official observers. At later sessions, women, too, were included. And on the last day that the *Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity* was discussed, a lay man addressed the Council. Before it was even passed, the Decree had borne fruit.

The next part of the story of laity in the Church is even now being written as all members of the people of God seek to understand more fully and implement more faithfully the teachings of the Second Vatican Council.

AN ACTIVE PRESENCE

THE LITURGICAL VISION OF VATICAN II 50 YEARS LATER

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This article was published in *America Magazine* on May 27, 2013 and is reprinted with permission.

December 3, 2013, marks the 50th anniversary of the Second Vatican Council's "Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy" ("Sacrosanctum Concilium"). Arguably the most practical outcome of that extraordinary event in the life of the church, the reform and renewal of Catholic liturgy is something whose meaning is still debated, as a number of recent studies have shown. How has the church's worship fared in these past 50 years? The results since the council have been fairly mixed.

The many provisions of the constitution on the liturgy are directed toward three major goals: 1) full, conscious and active participation by all involved in the celebration of the liturgy (No. 14); 2) structural revision of liturgical rites (Nos. 21 and 23); 3) most important, recognition that the liturgy is the work of Christ himself and that the church itself is most fully realized when the Eucharist is celebrated (Nos. 5 to 10).

The first and third goals belong together, since the document affirms that full participation is integral to the liturgy because all the faithful participate by virtue of their baptism. A profound theology of the church based on baptism and the common priesthood of the faithful undergirds the whole document, one that the historian Massimo Faggioli has argued was not adequately embodied in the other constitutions and decrees of the council. The theological vision of Vatican II, which itself was the fruit of over a century of historical retrieval (*ressourcement*) and critical study of the liturgies of the past, is very much at the center of the debates about the liturgy today. One of the urgent issues that this theology raises is a better understanding of the relationship between the baptismal priesthood and the priesthood of the ordained.

The second goal, the structural revision of liturgical rites, is related to the other two. The framers of the constitution realized that the rites themselves needed revision so that their theological meaning could be appreciated anew. That process had been inspired by the first liturgical encyclical of the modern era, Pope Pius XII's "Mediator Dei" (1947), and by the establishment of a commission for liturgical reform the following year. Some results had already been realized by the time of

the council: the revision of the Holy Week ceremonies, the relaxation of fasting regulations, permission for evening Mass and the increase in so-called dialogue Masses, in which the people responded to the priest (in Latin) and sang parts of the Mass. But the council had in mind an even more radical reform that would clear away much of the debris that had (inevitably) accumulated over the centuries and would look to adapt the liturgy to contemporary culture—as long as organic continuity with the past was respected (No. 23). The actual shape of the subsequent reform and liturgical reformers' understanding of modernity were to become controversial.

THE REFORMS: A SCORECARD

Some council documents, like "Sacrosanctum Concilium," needed to be complemented by further legislation and pastoral implementation. The task of putting flesh on the structure provided by the constitution was given to the Consilium, a group of bishops and expert advisors who began work immediately. The sheer scope of their work, completed within only 10 years, is awesome. Here we can highlight four significant areas of change: the use of the vernacular, the reorientation of the church building, the expansion of ministerial participation and the restructuring of the liturgical year.

The most obvious consequence of the constitution was the permission to use the vernacular for certain parts of the eucharistic liturgy. The Consilium and Pope Paul VI himself quickly found that translating the entirety of the liturgy into the vernacular was desirable. If conscious participation was ever to come about, this move was inevitable. Part and parcel of translating the liturgy was the desire to open up the treasury of the Scriptures. The liturgical movement and the new Catholic appreciation of the Bible went hand in hand.

Recent years have seen a struggle to find appropriate language for liturgical celebration. In English we seem to have moved from a rather loose and somewhat uninspiring translation to a text that is stilted and filled with awkward archaisms (*consubstantial, chalice*). One can hope that a future translation will find a happy medium and expand the body of prayers

with original compositions, as the U.S. bishops and other episcopal conferences had proposed with the 1997 translation by the International Commission on English in the Liturgy.

If the use of the people's language was the most significant reform inspired by the council, the rearrangement of church space was a close second. Even before the council had ended, a first instruction implementing the reform mandated that the main altar of any church at which the Eucharist was celebrated needed to be free-standing so that the presiding priest could stand on the side facing the people. What resulted was a remarkable shift in the popular understanding of the liturgy. Now it became clear that the celebration was communal and called for active participation. The change did, however, bring with it a peril because of the possible focus on the personality of the priest instead of on the liturgy itself.

A vigorous debate, spurred on by a movement often referred to as the "reform of the reform," continues. As is the case with language, balance needs to be sought in church architecture and arrangement. Some of the newer church constructions clearly lack the beauty and elegance required for worship of a God who transcends our world while at the same time dwelling among us. Other church buildings that were designed with a very different liturgy in mind have suffered from weak and sometimes misguided renovations. Catholic communities deserve spaces that both inspire full, conscious and active participation and invite us to a deeper relationship with the God who is always beyond our grasp.

A third area of reform is the noteworthy expansion of liturgical ministries. Properly celebrated, the post-Vatican II liturgy requires a number of ministers: deacons, readers, acolytes, musicians, servers and extraordinary ministers of Communion. There were deacons at the old solemn high Masses before the council, but they were usually priests who simply dressed the part. The council reinstated the permanent diaconate, which made it possible for married men to be ordained in the Latin rite and, even if unintentionally, opened the door for what are now called lay ecclesial ministers, who may not minister at the altar but have

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become a significant part of the church landscape. The priest shortage as well as regularly offering Communion from the cup led to the need for more ministers and the institution of lay ministers of Communion. What official legislation still deems extraordinary—lay ministers are only called for when there are not enough priests available to distribute Communion—now seems normal in most parish celebrations. Lay ministers of Communion are an important symbolic element in the coordinated array of ministers that the liturgy requires.

Another aspect of the liturgy that was changed significantly after the Second Vatican Council is the rearrangement of the liturgical year. Sunday was restored to its pride of place in Christian celebration since it is our primary celebration of the passion, death and resurrection of the Lord (the paschal mystery). The integrity of the 50 days of Easter has been emphasized. The number and ranking of saints' days has been dramatically reduced. Lent now has a twofold focus: Christian initiation and the renewal of that initiation through penance. Along with the reform of the liturgical calendar came a much richer approach to the Lectionary, with a three-year cycle of readings for Sundays and major feasts (including much more of the Old Testament than had ever before been read in the Roman Rite) and proper readings for weekdays. Previously only Lent had a series of weekday readings. Of course, in contemporary society the liturgical calendar competes with all sorts of other calendars (educational, civic, seasonal), but it seems to be working, even if subtly, to form a generation of Catholics. Only time will tell.

CRITICS AND CHALLENGES

The post-Vatican II liturgical reform has not been without its critics and its challenges. The "reform of the reform" move-

ment had Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI as one of its champions. Pope Benedict encouraged both a rethinking of the disposition of church spaces (turning the priest's position once again to the "east"—that is, facing away from the people) and a revival of the pre-Vatican II Latin liturgy, which he named the "extraordinary form." What at first seemed to be an accommodation for a minority who wished to celebrate the old form now seems to have become a growing trend, with some seminaries actively training future priests to celebrate the older rite and some groups actively encouraging its spread. It is very difficult not to regard this development as somewhat divisive. No doubt some of the roots of the movement lie in a shoddy and devil-may-care implementation of the liturgical reform, an external reform that was not accompanied by an interior renewal.

On the other hand, the older liturgy is clearly symbolic of a vision of church, theology and the world that the Second Vatican Council consciously moved away from in some very important ways. It is not for nothing that the most recalcitrant followers of Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, founder of the St. Pius X Society, join their love of the Latin liturgy to a profound suspicion, if not denial, of the council's declaration on religious freedom and its general mood of welcoming conversation with the modern world. In other words, opting for the older liturgy often bespeaks a rejection of Vatican II and all that the council brought with it. As Massimo Faggioli has convincingly pointed out, to reject the liturgy that resulted from the Vatican II constitution is to reject the council itself.

The election of Pope Francis may well open a new chapter in the postconciliar debates on the liturgy. If the first liturgical celebrations of his pontificate are any

indication, he may at least temper the fervor of those who have been most critical of the reforms. His actions seem to show him in favor of the newer liturgy and its greater simplicity.

So the post-Vatican II reform will probably proceed apace. But with regard to the major goals of "Sacrosanctum Concilium," the reform is far from over. Surely there are a good number of Catholic communities where the council's renewed vision of the liturgy has been assimilated and celebrated, but there are far too many in which the message has been digested only halfheartedly or without a profoundly interiorized appreciation of that vision's implications.

The task going forward is twofold. First, every effort should be made to ensure that our liturgical celebrations are truly reverent. This does not require that liturgies be celebrated with medieval choreography and lots of lace; it does mean that they must be carefully prepared and prayerfully celebrated. The style of the liturgy is not of primary importance. The post-Vatican II liturgy can be celebrated in any number of cultural contexts, but their common denominator needs to be reverence.

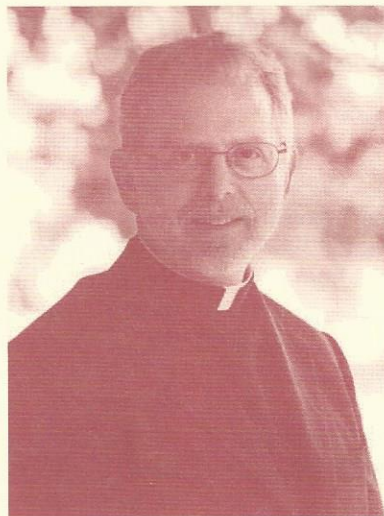
The second task is considerably more challenging. Catholics need to be helped to understand more deeply and more explicitly the connections between their lives and what they celebrate in church. As the great contemporary liturgical historian, Robert Taft, S.J., has said: "The liturgy is the Christian life in a nutshell." Nothing more—but nothing less. Our liturgies themselves, albeit in a ritualized fashion, play out the way we are called to live. They are the summit of Christian living as well as its source. As that reality enters more deeply into the Catholic consciousness, we will achieve by God's grace the full, conscious and active participation the council called for, and we will be on our way to celebrating more fully the baptismal priesthood we are called to live.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

THE OFFICE OF DIVINE WORSHIP PRESENTS

The Rites of the RCIA

A demonstration for Presiders and RCIA Coordinators



REV. PAUL TURNER, S.T.D.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2014

11:00 AM - 4:00 PM

**St. Peter the Apostle
River Edge**

RCIA Dates for 2013-2014

Please mark your calendars. Information on these and other events will be forthcoming.

Monday, Nov. 4, 2013 to Friday, Jan. 10, 2014 **RCIA Registration Database is open**

This is the time to register your candidates and catechumens for the Call to Continuing Conversion and the Rite of Election.

Remember to register only those anticipating the reception of Easter Sacraments in 2014.

Thursday, Feb. 27, 2014 **RCIA Winter Workshop**

Come and join Rev. Paul Turner, a well-known, published author on the RCIA, as he leads a day-long workshop on the rituals of the RCIA. This workshop is designed especially for Priest presiders, RCIA coordinators, and those who prepare the rites of the RCIA. 11 AM - 4 PM. St. Peter the Apostle, River Edge.

Saturday, Mar. 8, 2014 **Call to Continuing Conversion**

11:00 am for Bergen/Hudson Counties.
1:30 pm for Essex/Union Counties.

Sunday, Mar. 9, 2014 **Rite of Election**

2:30 pm for Bergen/Hudson Counties.
4:30 pm for Essex/Union Counties.

Saturday, Apr. 12, 2014 **RCIA Day of Reflection for Those Preparing for Easter Sacraments**

8:45 am to 2:00 pm at the Archdiocesan Youth Center in Kearny, NJ. English and Spanish tracks will be offered.

NAMING OF BISHOPS IN THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

It is permitted (although not required) to mention the Coadjutor Bishop and Auxiliary Bishops in the Eucharistic Prayer, but not other Bishops who happen to be present. When several are to be mentioned, this is done with the collective formula:

N. our Bishop and his assistant Bishops.
Cf. General Instruction of the Roman Missal, 149

Therefore, if named in the Eucharistic Prayer, Archbishop Hebda's name could be inserted after Archbishop Myers' as follows:

**. . . for John Joseph our Bishop and
Bernard his assistant Bishop . . .**
pronounced BheR-nerd

To mention the Coadjutor and Auxiliaries, the collective formula is used without inserting names:

**. . . for John Joseph our Bishop and his
assistant Bishops . . .**

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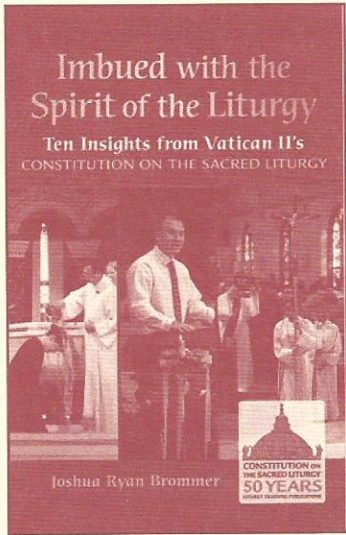
Cover Art: Bronna Butler

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