



Institute For Theological Encounter With Science and Technology

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Vatican II Celebrates 60 Years

Today we celebrate the great feast of Our Lady of Fatima. In 1917, Our Lady from Heaven appeared to three children. She told the children not to be afraid of her, that she came from Heaven. Forty-five years after the apparitions at Fatima, Pope John XXIII opened the Second Vatican Council in 1962. A future pope would remark, "This holy old boy doesn't realize what a hornet's nest he's stirring up." You can find who said this by reading this edition of the *ITEST Bulletin*. In 1965, Pope Paul VI would conclude Vatican Council II which produced 16 documents.

As the Church continues the celebration of the 60th anniversary of Vatican II, we dedicate this *ITEST Bulletin* to the writings of the Council. In this issue, Sister Carla Mae Streeter, OP, discusses Pope Francis as a Bridge-BUILDER. We reprint Fr. Brungs' relevant article which was written 25 years after Vatican II. Also included in this issue is my review of George Weigel's new book, *To Sanctify the World: The Vital Legacy of Vatican II*. Reflecting on Weigel's book, Sister Marianne Postiglione, RSM, describes her experience living as a young woman religious at the time of Vatican II.

Both John Paul II and Benedict XVI attended the Vatican II sessions. Karol Wojtyla (later Pope John Paul II) was consecrated a bishop in 1958. At the time, he would be the youngest bishop in Poland. Joseph Ratzinger (later Pope Benedict XVI) was a young theologian. Both would not only attend the Council, but they would be instrumental in explaining and carrying out the teachings of the Council, especially *Gaudium et Spes*.

Vatican Council II would produce 16 documents; four were major documents termed constitutions, nine were decrees, and three were declarations. This bulletin contains a great deal of information on *Gaudium et Spes*, which is translated *Joy and Hope: The Church in the Modern World*. It is our desire that you learn more about *Gaudium et Spes* through the writers of this bulletin.

Returning to the extraordinary events at Fatima, Our Lady said the faith in Portugal would always be preserved. She also said that Jacinta and Francisco would soon be taken to Heaven, while Lucia would remain on earth. Sister Lucia would not die until 2005. Three secrets were given to Lucia. She wrote down the third secret to be released in 1960, however, Pope John Paul II did not release it until 2000. Our Lady said that her Son, Jesus, wanted her Immaculate Heart to triumph.

Just as Our Lady's message at Fatima brought hope, so too does *Gaudium et Spes* for today's world. I hope you enjoy reading this *ITEST Bulletin*.

Ralph Olliges, Ph.D.
Editor, *ITEST Bulletin*

In This Issue...

Announcements	2
Letter to the Editor	3
<i>Pope Francis: the Bridge-BUILDER</i> by Sister Carla Mae Streeter, OP, ThD	3
<i>The Church and Scientists Synod '77</i> Summary by Sister Marianne Postiglione, RSM	6
Abstract: <i>Gaudium et Spes and Biological Advance</i> by Father Robert A. Brungs, SJ	7
<i>A Refresher from the Past: The Church & Scientists Synod '77</i> reprinted with permission from <i>Origins</i>	8
Review of <i>To Sanctify the World: The Vital Legacy of Vatican II</i> by Ralph Olliges, PhD	10
Reflection on <i>To Sanctify the World: The Vital Legacy of Vatican II</i> by Sister Marianne Postiglione, RSM	11

Announcements

ITEST Webinars

Watch our most recent webinars on demand.

Evangelizing the Real Presence: Miracles, Scripture, and Quantum Physics with presenters: David Keys, Ph.D. and Raymond C. Gerard, Esq. and Q&A Moderator, Dr. Cynthia Toolin-Wilson
www.faithscience.org/eucharistic-miracles/

Preaching with the Sciences with presenters: Rev. Edward Foley, Capuchin, Rev. Gerald C. Liu, Ph.D., and Dr. Grace Wolf-Chase
www.faithscience.org/preaching/

Finding God in Space Exploration & Extraterrestrial Life with presenters Paul Segura and Ted Peters
www.faithscience.org/apollo-8/

Register now for these ITEST webinars.

Saturday, May 27, 2023

Medical Ethics with presenters: Kevin Powell, M.D. Ph.D., Rev. Nicanor Austriaco, OP, and Rev. Kevin FitzGerald, SJ, Ph.D.
www.faithscience.org/medical-ethics

Saturday, June 24, 2023

Treating Human Embryos as Human Patients with presenters Dr. Elizabeth Rex & George Mychaskiw, D.O.
www.faithscience.org/human-embryos

Registration coming soon for these webinars.

Thursday, July 13, 2023

Missionary work in Pakistan and Afghanistan with presenters: Aqif Shahzad and Mary Kloska

Saturday, August TBD, 2023

Osteopathic Health Services and a New Hospital with presenter: George Mychaskiw, D.O.

Saturday September 2, 2023

A Crucial Choice of World Views for the Future with presenter: Rev. Joseph Bracken, SJ

Saturday, October 21, 2023

Surviving Abortion: Inside and Out with presenters: Dr. Patrick Castle and Dr. Cynthia Toolin-Wilson

Saturday, November TBD, 2023

Theology and Teaching in Light of ChatGPT

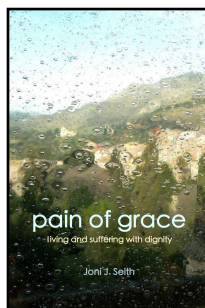
Saturday, December 16, 2023

Bridging the Chasm: How Quantum Mechanics brings together the Physical and Spiritual Worlds with presenter: Terrence Lagerlund, MD, Ph.D.

Book Recommendation

Pain of Grace: Living and Suffering with Dignity

by Joni J. Seith



Walking her readers through her conversion from a culturally Jewish background to Catholicism, Joni J. Seith relates her struggle to live with a chronic, painful, and progressive debilitating genetic condition called Ehlers Danlos Syndrome. Written with candor, in an up-beat and uplifting humorous style, *Pain of Grace: Living and Suffering with Dignity* escorts the reader on an amazing journey of faith as shown in Joni's dizzying, remarkable life. Her story gives unforgettable testimony of God's love in suffering to a world in great need of this truth, providing hope to many who question life's purpose. This heartfelt and honest memoir is for all those struggling with depression, despair, and chronic pain—and for all who need to be reminded of life's true meaning. Purchase at www.enroutebooksandmedia.com/painofgrace/.

In Memoriam

We ask your prayers for the following ITEST member who recently died and entered Eternal Life.

Professor Peter Molnar, MD, Ph.D.

We also ask your prayers for ITEST members who are ill. May they feel the restoring hand of the Lord.

Did You Know?

On June 24, the one-year anniversary of the overturning of Roe vs. Wade, ITEST will hold a webinar, *Treating Human Embryos as Human Patients*. Read some statistics concerning *In Vitro* Fertilization.

“Based on CDC’s 2020 Fertility Clinic Success Rates Report, there were 326,468* ART¹ cycles performed at 449 reporting clinics in the United States during 2020, resulting in ... 79,942 live born infants.”²

That leaves 246,546 embryos that were either unsuccessfully implanted, intentionally harvested/killed, or left in a freezer.

1. Assisted Reproductive Technology
2. www.cdc.gov/art/artdata/index.html



Institute for Theological Encounter with Science and Technology
Cardinal Rigali Center • 20 Archbishop May Drive • St. Louis, Missouri 63119 • USA
314.792.7220 • www.faithscience.org • E-mail: ITEST@archstl.org

ITEST Bulletin - Ralph Olliges, Ph.D., Editor, Sister Marianne Postiglione, RSM, Senior Editor
Sheila Roth, Managing Editor ISSN 1073-5976 • Copyright © 2023

Letter to the Editor

Dear Ralph,

As regards feedback on the top 50 Catholic theologians, I find it hard to understand that the apostles Paul and John (the Theologian!) are not on the list. And the two that could then be removed for me are Teilhard de Chardin and Chesterton. I'm no fan at all of the former, and although I'm a big fan of the latter, I find it hard to see him as a theologian.

And I would really love to see the Inkling Charles Walter Stansby Williams on the list, but I'm afraid that he's quite unknown. Moreover, people will say he's neither a real Catholic nor a real theologian, unfortunately...

Matthé Uijtewaal, ITEST Member

Response from the Editor

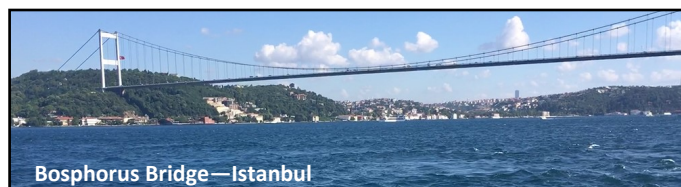
Thank you for your feedback on our list of Catholic theologians. You are certainly correct that St. Paul and St. John were great theologians. We focused on those people that came after the apostles.

We welcome your feedback regarding this issue of the *ITEST Bulletin* or any ITEST activity. Write a letter to the editor at ITEST@archstl.org or mail to ITEST, Cardinal Rigali Center, 20 Archbishop May Drive, Saint Louis, MO 63119.

Pope Francis: The Bridge-BUILDER

By Carla Mae Streeter, OP, ThD

For many years the term “Pontifex” has been used as a title for the Pope of the Catholic Church. From this word comes the term “pontifical.” People generally understand this term to mean “coming from the Chair of Peter,” or a form of communication distinctly papal. A more exact meaning of *Pontifex*, however, is *bridge-builder*. A closer look would reveal that this title for the Holy Father is not surprising. A bridge, and therefore its builder, could have several purposes. The bridge might be an escape route from this to that. It might link two distinct territories. Or it might unite two distinct geographic regions that would otherwise be separate, such as Istanbul. The Bosphorus Bridge unites East Istanbul (Asia) with West Istanbul (Europe) into one city.



This reflection will take the position that the present pope, Francis, is indeed a “pontifex.” Not as a bridge-builder geographically, but as one theologically and pastorally. Francis, by his leadership, vision, and teaching is building a bridge between the Second Vatican Council (1962-65) and the present reality of the Church. It should not be surprising then, that he is getting a varied response from Catholics, both clerical and lay, who stand at different places along this theological bridge.

Vatican II closed 58 years ago. It issued a Dogmatic Constitution on the Church in 1964. Other documents followed, but its statement on the Church was thought to be finished. But was it? As the Council prepared to close in December of 1965, the bishops made an embarrassing discovery. They had dealt with the Church *in itself*, but they had not dealt with the Church and *its relation to the world*. That fall, respected theologians were gathered, and work began on a *second* document on the Church. Its title was to be *Joy and Hope: The Church in the Modern World*. In Latin, it would be *Gaudium et Spes*. Promulgated on December 7, 1965, it would receive the rank of Pastoral Constitution. The Council closed, and the Church focused on *Lumen Gentium*, the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, for the next 60 years. Many Catholics, including clerics, have not read the second document on the Church from Vatican II. ITEST, in its September 2008 Conference Proceedings, dealt with this neglect briefly. See “Gaudium et Spes: Joy and Hope – The Church in the Modern World 43 Years Later,” by Carla Mae Streeter, OP.

<https://faithscience.org/gaudium-et-spes-joy-and-hope-the-church-in-the-modern-world-43-years-later/>

The First Side of the Bridge:

Vatican II and the Second Document on the Church

What was in this second document on the Church in 1965 that the Church did not have time to address? I would suggest that even a mere noting of the issues

Continues on page 4

mentioned in this second document would sound familiar. They are many of the very issues that Francis has been addressing.

Joy and Hope has two parts. Part I focuses on the human being, and the human's place in the Modern World. The Preface of the Constitution addresses all of humanity, the human situation, the changes in science and technology, the changes in social structures, and the fact that humans have passed from a static to a dynamic concept of reality. These changes in human structures now call many accepted values into question, including God and religion. Contradictions and imbalances intensify. Conviction grows that the human should control creation; a social order is needed which will affirm the human dignity of everyone. Indeed, the imbalances revealed expose the most basic imbalance rooted in the human heart. Written in 1965, yet this sounds strangely familiar, as familiar as last night's news.

The Preface opens: "The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the men (sic) of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ." With this opening statement, the Church identifies with struggling humanity. The Church firmly believes that Christ, through His Spirit, offers humanity the light and the strength to measure up to a supreme destiny. In Christ can be found the key, focal point, and goal of humanity as well as of all human history.

With this basic vision established, Part I then develops the following themes: The Church and the Calling of Humanity, the Dignity of the Human Person, Conscience, Atheism, the Human Community, Human Activity, and finally, the specific Role of the Church in the Modern World today. In this final theme, the document makes clear that "... in human history the earthly and heavenly city penetrate each other."

Then Part II gets up-close and personal. It zeroes in on "Some Problems of Special Urgency." These include Marriage and Family, the Proper Development of Culture, Economic and Social Life, the Political Community, and finally, Peace and the Forming of a Community of Nations.

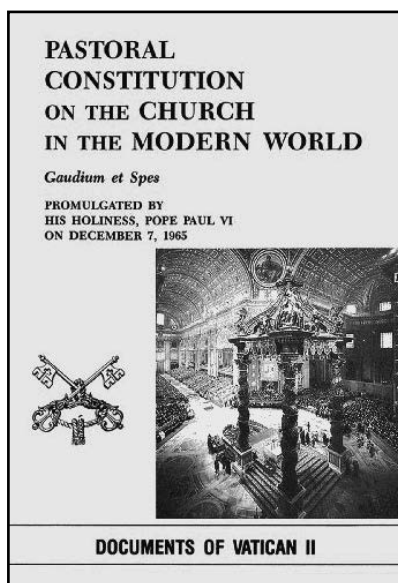
This document is nearly 60 years old, yet we hear many of the issues front and center today on our evening news. Who has picked up the themes we have named from this Pastoral Constitution? The popes following the Council carefully addressed *Lumen Gentium*, the first document on the Church. Paul VI closed the Council after the death of John XXIII. John Paul I's brief papacy followed, and then the long papacy of John Paul II. Benedict XVI followed, and then the surprising election of Francis. The second Vatican II document on the Church was waiting ... like a blinking light.

The Second Side of the Bridge The Pastoral Constitution on the Church and Francis

I have proposed that with the election of Francis to the papacy, we have been given a leader that has indeed read *both* documents of Vatican II on the Church: *Lumen Gentium*, the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, and *Gaudium et Spes*, the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World. Building with the solid wisdom of those who preceded him after 1965, Francis is now constructing a pastoral bridge into the future. The bridge must connect, it must join what has been to what is to be. What has been is the naming of what the Church saw in 1965. What is to be is what we will do about what we see.

A study of Francis from the start reveals a different construction plan for this bridge. From the moment of his presentation as the newly elected pope, we knew things would be different. Quietly putting aside the signs of hierarchal office, he appeared on the balcony dressed simply. He introduced himself as needing the blessing of the faithful before he in turn would bless them. He chose to live in the Guest House, not the Papal Apartment. He eats daily with the people who work with him. He washes the feet of prisoners. He makes no big announcement about what he will do or not do. He simply lives into a new way of being pope. But it is carefully noted. He is at the wheel of the Bark of Peter, slowly turning it in a new direction. He has his eye on a new shore. He has materials to deliver to build a bridge to that new shore. And, he has invited everyone to get on board with him to do the job.

Continues on page 5



The clergy will be on hand to organize the crowds, but he has been creating a Synodal Model of the Church from day one. He calls us all to listen ... to listen to the Spirit speaking in the entire Church. The clergy will always be there, but they will learn to wash feet as he does. The feudal trappings will be laid aside, and the basin and towel will be taken up. The Gifts of the Spirit will be cultivated wherever they appear, and rules will bend to compassion and care. Love will again guide the law as Jesus insisted so long ago.

What has Francis taught, preached, and written to give evidence of this new construction bridge-building? We begin with the most powerful teaching of all ... walking the talk. His example has spoken volumes. From his prison visits to his daily living choices, he is teaching us that he understands his office as a ministry. Early, when asked who he was, he replied, "I am Francis, the sinner." This is not the language of one maintaining a time-worn class system.

What has Francis taught, preached, and written to give evidence of this new construction bridge-building?

We begin with the most powerful teaching of all ... walking the talk.

He offers Mass daily for all those who wish to come, his staff, visitors, and other clerics. He preaches from the readings of the day, revealing his intimate relationship with the Word of God. Chapter Three of *The Joy of the Gospel* is a preacher's treasure trove. His insights on preaching there have delighted Dominicans all over the world. A visit to the Vatican website, www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en.html, will reveal all his writings by date. He begins, feet on the ground, by attending to the reorganization of how Vatican City is to function.

His actual encyclicals reveal his attention to the unaddressed issues of the Pastoral Constitution:

- *Lumen fidei* (29 June 2013) which deals with the key role of faith for the human being. This addresses the Pastoral Constitution's concern with atheism.
- *Laudato si* (24 May 2015) which addresses the global cultural need of climate change and its cultural causes.
- *Fratelli tutti* (3 October 2020) which, in the midst

of the COVID pandemic, addresses the humanness of all of us and the care for one another that will be the foundation of a Synodal Church. The title in Italian captures his thought well: "Brothers (and Sisters) All." These last two encyclicals are addressed to all the peoples of the world.

The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World also made reference in its Preface to the critical issue of *conscience*. It is nothing new in the teaching of the Catholic Church to regard conscience as the final arbiter for the free human being. The ideal is to have an *informed* conscience. But even if not fully formed in the truth, the conscience is to be followed for human freedom to be intact.

In certain cultural circumstances, it is not difficult to see why moral guidance by clergy can become dominant over a poorly educated laity. For many years the educated clergy have been the spokespersons for the moral directives meant to help form the consciences of the laity. Francis, keenly aware of the highly educated laity in today's Church, reminds us that the role of the clergy is to *inform* the conscience, not to *replace* it. This refocusing of responsibility on the baptized Christian for forming his or her own conscience has raised not a few eyebrows. Not only has it clarified the role of moral responsibility where it really rests, it paves the way for a truly participative rather than hierarchical Church.

It is clear that the educated clergy have formed the hierarchical emphasis in the institutional structure of the Church. It is only since the scriptural renewal in the Church after the modernist crisis (1940's) that a servant priesthood has come to the fore. The sacrament of Orders will never disappear from the Church, for it is a sign of the unending sacrificial priesthood of the Incarnate Word. But the scriptural image of that Christ in the servant posture of washing feet can no longer be replaced by the feudal influence that ruled in the Church for many years. The clergy are charged with guarding the tradition of the Church and keeping "order" in the structure of the Church which needs to travel through time. But the time has come to acknowledge and encourage the Gifts of the Spirit waiting in the heart of all the baptized. Shifting from a hierarchical to a synodal way of being Church is not an either/or. It is a both/and, and its time has culturally come.

Francis: A Sign of Contradiction?

These are familiar words. They were spoken to the

Continues on page 6

mother of Jesus long ago. He would be such a sign, and the sword of suffering would pierce her heart. If this is true of the Christ, surely it cannot be surprising that the present Pope makes some within the Church uncomfortable. It is good to remind ourselves that Catholicity means not only geographical universality but *wholeness*. There is the wholeness of truth and the wholeness of the community. There is the wholeness of diverse ethnicities, of genders, of resources. There is the wholeness of inclusion.

Francis ... has set his face to the other side of the bridge. He has been called to the office of Pontifex. He is leading the flock over the bridge to the next chapter in the life of the Church.

Returning to our image of Francis as the Bridge-Builder, there are some of us who just see no need for a bridge at all. It would be safer and more secure to go back to when we knew just what the Church was and who made the decisions. Why do we need to worry about all those other people over there? They're different; that's just the way it is. Bridges can be dangerous. If they're not built well, those traveling on

them can be lost. They can drown. This is all too true. Catholics come in various sizes and shapes. They vary in their openness, in their willingness to risk. Catholics differ in the way they manage the tension between mission and maintenance, between proclaiming the Word in season and out, or just fitting in with everyone else, just not rocking the boat. If we are honest, all of us wrestle between faith and fear daily.

Francis does too. But he has set his face to the other side of the bridge. He has been called to the office of Pontifex. He is leading the flock over the bridge to the next chapter in the life of the Church. Long ago the first pope was in a similar situation. Peter chose to walk across the water, and he did fine until he looked down. So, it is wise for us to remember that we are in that flock crossing the bridge to the other side. Safe, sink, or swim, we are all in this together. Frightened or excited, it might be wise for all of us to remember... not to look down.



The Church and Scientists Synod '77*

An Intervention/Document addressed to the Bishops

Summary by Sister Marianne Postiglione, RSM

While doing research in an attempt to summarize the document titled above, I came across a portion of an article by Father Robert Brungs, SJ, "The Faith Science Interface," reprinted in the book "Written in Our Flesh: Eyes toward Jerusalem," pp. 299-300, 2008. It led me to reflect on Brungs' insights on the document rather than my own.

In that article, "The Faith Science Interface," - which ties in closely with the Synod of Bishops' document - Fr. Brungs mentions a meeting he had in the 1990's with young college students at a large Midwestern university. They were majoring in science yet at the same time had an intense hunger for an integration of their career in science with their Christian faith. Unfortunately for many, knowledge of their faith was rather sketchy despite the fact that most of them had received 12 years of Catholic primary and secondary education.

Following that meeting, Fr. Brungs remarked, noting

the importance of solid faith formation "... this type of 'evangelical work' [solid faith formation] is extremely important in any faith/science dialogue simply because these young Christians in science will be the only evangelists we will have in the scientific/technical community. A great deal of effort must be put into fostering the faith in this very important group of people. In this regard I would simply point to part of the intervention of the American Bishops at the Fifth Synod in Rome in 1977." Then Fr. Brungs cites that portion of the intervention most neuralgic to the faith/science interface:

"... evangelization and catechesis by scientists who are men and women of faith are extremely important. They should be encouraged by the Church. They constitute one of those small groups which will be responsible for so much of the mission of the Church in the years to come. Scientists who acknowledge the reign of God should be encouraged to form communi-

Continues on page 7

ties where they may grow in their own understanding, experience and response to their Catholic faith, and where they show their insights into how the mysteries of redemption can be presented to their brothers and sisters who are seeking answers to the dilemmas posed by their scientific research.” (#3 Synod of Bishops - www.inters.org/Bishops-Church-Scientific)

... this type of “evangelical work” [solid faith formation] is extremely important in any faith/science dialogue simply because these young Christians in science will be the only evangelists we will have in the scientific/technical community.

— Fr. Robert Brungs, SJ

We suspect that Fr. Brungs had some input in writing the “intervention” since the paragraph above certainly corresponds not only with his style of writing but his “dream” of forming communities like that of ITEST and others. ITEST was already almost ten years old at the time of this Synod of Bishops in 1977. There are a

number of references in the synod document to *Gaudium et Spes* which Father Brungs had studied carefully, applying many of the statements in that document to his fledgling institute, ITEST. (See abstract of Brungs’ article on *Gaudium et Spes* below.)

Synod Intervention ’77 contains many suggestions and proposals for the Church of the 70’s when dealing with the biological, technological, and chemical developments which were fast advancing in the scientific world. If the Church were to be in the forefront of understanding these developments, it must be prepared to ... “offer to these scientists the guidance of the wisdom entrusted to it concerning the dignity and vocation of the human person and to collaborate with them in evaluating the impact which these discoveries have on human life.” (lines 2, 3, 4, 5 *Synod* ’77).

For more detailed information on this short but powerful statement, read the article, *A Refresher from the Past: The Church & Scientists Synod ’77**, on page 8 of this *ITEST Bulletin*.

*Originally published in *Origins* November 1977, Vol. 7, No. 21

Abstract for *Gaudium et Spes* and Biological Advance

By Father Robert A. Brungs, SJ

The full article may be found at www.faithscience.org/gaudium-et-spes-and-biological-advance/

The special interest of *Gaudium et Spes* (GS) is particularly culture. It examines science and technology as one of the most important aspects of this culture. Actually, if it does not do it in detailed fashion, GS is nevertheless an important declaration from the Magisterium, for it is essentially open to scientific progress and to technological development. The Council document, although avoiding detailed treatment of science, particularly biology, takes specifically into consideration scientific endeavors as a good in itself and at the same time as a crucial element of cultural maturation. Avoiding specific discussion offers little assistance in judging cultural effects of scientific progress; on the other hand, it protects the Constitution from rapid obsolescence.

Opened a dozen years after Watson and Crick discovered the double helix structure of deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA), the Council most likely underestimated the speed and extent of biological developments. But

it was not alone in this miscalculation: Political leaders too understood only very slowly the revolution about to happen. On the other hand, the Council Fathers knew prophetically how to see in the family a central element of culture. It is actually the family, together with an understanding and appreciation of sexuality, which was seen as a privileged object of biological discoveries and biotechnological applications.

Moral theology (and bioethics) is perhaps still inadequate in keeping abreast of such progress, while marvelous discoveries and their utilization properly demand a common effort by scientists and theologians. Moral questions will only find satisfactory solutions when theologians develop a theology more focused on the body. This requires the involvement of the whole Church, in cooperation with the scientists. One may forgive the Council for a lack of foresight, but, as for us, we cannot escape responsibility.

A Refresher from the Past The Church & Scientists Synod '77

Reprinted with permission: *Origins* November 1977, Vol. 7, No. 21

The relationship between the church and the scientific community was explored in a message submitted to the Synod of Bishops by the U.S. delegation. There is at present a real "opportunity for the church to offer to these scientists the guidance of the wisdom entrusted to it concerning the dignity and vocation of the human person and to collaborate with them in evaluating the impact which these discoveries have on human life," the paper states. The church ought to demonstrate to scientists its willingness to work with them in a partnership for the benefit of humanity, it adds. The paper takes up questions concerning the catechesis of scientists, the relationship between Christian and non-Christian scientists, dialogue concerning the goals and limits of science, recognition of the rightful independence of science and the role Catholic colleges might play in promoting dialogue of the church with the scientific community. The text of the message follows.

Contemporary culture in many parts of the world is characterized, among other things, by a scientific and technological revolution which evangelization and catechesis must take into account (cf. *Gaudium et Spes*, 54). Part of the church's response to the opportunities and challenges posed by this cultural situation should be directed at those men and women responsible for scientific research and the application of its discoveries. If the gospel is indeed to penetrate "into all the strata of humanity" and bring about a transformation of humanity's "criteria of judgment, determining values, points of interest, lines of thought, sources of inspiration and models of life" (*Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 18, 19), the world of science and technology cannot be ignored.

Contemporary culture in many parts of the world is characterized, among other things, by a scientific and technological revolution which evangelization and catechesis must take into account.

Of particular urgency today are the questions posed by advances in the so-called life sciences. These appear to make possible the identification, dismantling, rearrangement and reassembly of the basic components of living organisms, including deliberately modifying the human organism. Humanity stands at

the threshold of being able to direct its own biological future consciously and deliberately. Nor is it only a question of biological technology; it is also a matter of a kind of biological industrialization, that is, the integration of such fields as solid-state physics, genetics and neurophysiology. For example, scientists are talking about joining electronic circuitry to human brain function. These and other developments and possibilities raise serious questions about personal human integrity which are of enormous import to humanity and therefore to the church, which shares "the joys and hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the people of this age" (*Gaudium et Spes*, 1).

Moreover, the scientific community is very far from monolithic in its opinions concerning the significance of these discoveries. There is at present a real -- and, we would say, providential -- opportunity for the church to offer to these scientists the guidance of the wisdom entrusted to it concerning the dignity, and vocation of the human person and to collaborate with them in evaluating the impact which these discoveries have on human life. The Catholic Church has now a providential opportunity to demonstrate to scientists its willingness to work with them in a partnership for the benefit of humanity. It is opportune to recall the closing message addressed by the Second Vatican Council to the men and women of thought and science: "Our paths could not fail to cross. Your road is ours. Your paths are never foreign to ours. We are friends of your vocation as searchers, companions in your fatigue, admirers of your successes, and, if necessary, consolers in your discouragement and your failures. Without troubling your efforts, without dazzling brilliance, we come to offer you the light of our mysterious lamp which is faith. Never perhaps, thank God, has there been so clear a possibility as today of a deep understanding between real science and real faith, mutual servants of one another in the one truth. Do not stand in the way of this important meeting."

Admittedly this effort involves a very precise and specialized form of catechesis, but it is one which cannot be ignored. Some of the fundamental components of such a catechesis are the following:

1. The recognition of the rightful independence of science. The faith of the church is not threatened by scientific discoveries. "If methodical investigation within every branch of learning is carried out in a genuinely

Continues on page 9

scientific manner and in accord with moral norms, it never truly conflicts with faith. For earthly matters and the concerns of faith derive from the same God. Indeed, whoever labors to penetrate the secrets of reality with a humble and steady mind is, if even unawares, being led by the hand of God, who holds all things in existence and gives them their identity” (*Gaudium et Spes*, 36).

2. The most important area of dialogue between the church and the scientific community does not concern the discoveries of science as such, but the uses to which these discoveries are put. It is precisely in this area that the most important concerns and questions raised by recent discoveries in the life sciences lie. The fundamental conviction which the Catholic Church offers to the scientific community is this: all problems regarding human life are “to be considered - beyond partial perspectives - whether of the biological or psychological, demographic or sociological order - in the light of an integral vision of man and of his vocation, not only his natural and earthly, but also his supernatural and eternal vocation” (*Humanae Vitae*, 7).

The new biological technology, for example, requires the direct, immediate and systematic intervention into the human composite. This means that for biomedical procedures to be used successfully, in order to create new norms of physical, intellectual and psychological health, they must produce results which are both predictable and repeatable. Such considerations, however, are proper only to a controlled or closed system. Therefore, they cannot provide the ultimate criteria for the construction of a society that is truly human. They represent a threat to human spontaneity. They can only result in a society which is essentially static. Creativity is thus threatened. The human spirit, which is always open to a transcendent dimension which cannot be controlled, is stilled. Unless the values of human integrity and a respect for human freedom motivate scientific research and technological practice, we will arrive at a world in which nothing is independent, nothing is moved by its own vitality, a society in which even our children are not our progeny, but our creation. Partisans of large-scale eugenics planning are often motivated by noble humanitarian sentiments. Yet it cannot be the values of science which alone determine what human life ought to be like.

The Catholic Church believes that salvation cannot be obtained without the grace of God which is a gift. Human self-fulfillment, therefore, will not be brought about entirely by human planning. The ultimate resolution of the drama of human life lies in a divine intervention which transcends the limitations of space

and time: the lordship of Jesus Christ. Hence the teaching of the Second Vatican Council: “the independence of human affairs (cannot) be taken to mean that created things do not depend on God and that man can use them without any reference to their creator” (*Gaudium et Spes*, 36).

3. Admittedly, it is not easy to speak of God the creator and of the lordship of Jesus Christ to those scientists who are agnostics or atheists. Nevertheless, the Catholic Church has never despaired of the capacity of the human mind and the human heart to respond to the secret impulses of divine providence, even if their origin is not explicitly recognized. Moreover, many scientists today recognize the precise limitations of their methodology. They have become aware that dogmatism and ideology have not been absent from the history of scientific research itself. The use of the secret of the atom in weapons capable of massive destruction has been a humbling experience for them. In this connection, evangelization and catechesis by scientists who are men and women of faith are extremely important. They should be encouraged by the church. They constitute one of those small groups which will be responsible for so much of the mission of the church in the years to come. Scientists who acknowledge the reign of God should be encouraged to form communities where they may grow in their own understanding, experience and response to their Catholic faith, and where they show their insights into how the mysteries of redemption can be presented to their brothers and sisters who are seeking answers to the dilemmas posed by their scientific research.

4. Catholic institutions of higher learning should be encouraged to promote programs of this kind, especially since they are equipped to offer the opportunity for an interdisciplinary dialogue in which theology and philosophy can make an invaluable contribution (cf. *Gravissimum Educationis*, 10).

5. Finally, all the faithful should be made aware of the implications to the faith of what is taking place in these scientific investigations. They should be helped to become more familiar with the teaching of the church concerning the proper role of scientific research; the limitations of scientific discoveries; the positive and negative aspects of technological progress; the sanctity of life; the respect due the human person regardless of physical, intellectual or psychological characteristics; the supremacy of grace and the need to respond to unwarranted use of scientific discoveries with a resistance which may sometimes have to be heroic.

In keeping with the central theme of this *ITEST Bulletin*, here we present two reviews of George Weigel's new book, *To Sanctify the World: The Vital Legacy of Vatican II*.

To Sanctify the World

Review by Ralph Olliges, PhD

Weigel states Pope John XXIII's reasons for convening the Second Vatican Council. Further, Weigel provides the Council's seminal teachings as well as the two men who would provide the keys to Vatican II. Before we discuss this, let me provide a brief background to Weigel's book, *To Sanctify the World*.

Around 1875, 86 years prior to the announcement of a Second Vatican Council, John Henry Newman identified a crisis that an assembly of Catholic leaders would have to address. Newman said that the key issue that needed to be discussed was the challenge of proclaiming the Gospel amid the civilizational crisis of modernity.

Starting with Pope Pius IX and subsequent popes, Catholicism had become more centralized. It was "focused on the person and the teaching authority of the pope, who came to embody the 'Church' in a historically unprecedented way." (page 63 of the book)

Angelo Roncalli, who was thought to be a compromise, was elected as Pope John XXIII. Instead of being a caretaker for a few years, Pope John XXIII stunned the church when he announced that he would summon an ecumenical council. It would include not only all of the world's Catholic bishops, but also "observers" from other denominations. The guests would not just observe but were participants in various ways in Vatican II. Approximately 64% of the bishops attending Vatican Council II would come from outside of Europe. They would come from 116 different countries. The presence of religious and intellectual leaders from outside the Catholic Church would have real effects. It would not be a continuation of Vatican I, but truly a new Council. Cardinal Giovanni Montini (who would become Pope Paul VI) remarked to a colleague, Fr. Bevilacqua, "This holy old boy doesn't realize what a hornet's nest he's stirring up."

The Second Vatican Council had the most dramatic impact and has been the most contentious since the Council of Trent. It was not an invitation to re-invent

Catholicism. Rather it was a way of celebrating Mass so that the worship enriches lives and empowers the people for mission. John XXIII understood the purposes of Vatican II as Christocentric. It should be evangelical, soteriological, and salvific. The primary purpose would be to enrich and intensify the salvation won for humanity by Jesus Christ. Christ yesterday, today, and forever! It should breathe in holiness and stir up joy! It should "radicalize the faith," not weaken it by making concessions.

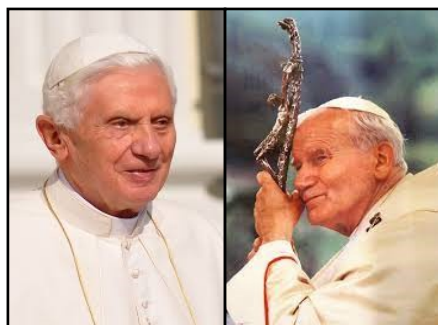
Both Pope John Paul II (then Bishop Karol Wojtyla) and Pope Benedict XVI (then Father Joseph Ratzinger) were very much involved in the Second Vatican Council. They were both just beginning their careers and would settle the debate over what the Council taught and how that teaching should be embodied. In Wojtyla's judgment, the modern world was suffocating from materialism - materialism that was scientific, positivistic, and dialectical. John XXIII said that the world awaited a "new Pentecost." Ratzinger concurred and would be a driving force within the Council. The two of them would give the Church the authoritative keys in their two pontificates marked by a richness of papal teaching. The master key to Vatican II and to the Catholic future would be that the Church lived fully the truth about itself as a communion of disciples in mission.

The Council would produce sixteen documents overwhelmingly approved by the bishops. Weigel's book lists all sixteen documents and how they shaped the church. I will mention four of them.

Lumen Gentium taught that the Church's bishops are the true heirs of the apostles and that the Bishop of Rome has "Supreme and full power over the universal Church." It would go on to reorient the focus of religious life from individual perfection toward the sanctification of the Church.

Sacrosanctum Concilium would position the liturgy at the very center of Catholic life. Christ is always

Continues on page 11



present in his Church. This is especially true in her liturgical celebrations. The people should not be silent spectators! Hence, a richer menu of biblical readings was mandated in both the Mass and the Divine Office. The Council would go on to recommend that the Divine Office should be prayed by all people of the Church.

Dei Verbum succinctly addresses the Catholic Church's beliefs about Sacred Scripture. The document states that Scripture is truly Divine Revelation. Jesus Christ was the fullness of revelation. It was revealed 2,000 years ago, and there is no new revelation. Any further understanding is a further maturity of what was revealed.

Gaudium et Spes specified that the Church does not exist alongside or apart from the world. The Church's mission is to serve the entire human family.

The Council would also state that science cannot conflict with the faith, because all things of the world and the things of faith derive from the same God! This is certainly the position that ITEST has held for over 50 years.

Weigel's book is a very thorough undertaking. He lays out the reasons for calling Vatican Council II, the sixteen major documents, and the two men responsible for laying out the authoritative keys to follow in order to implement Vatican Council II.

In the next article, read the retrospective of a young woman religious as she relays personal recollection of living as a young religious through the 60's and early 70's. She recounts some of the reaction and responses from media and ordinary Catholic laypeople as they relate to Weigel's portrayal of the Council.

To Sanctify the World

Review and Retrospective by Sister Marianne Postiglione, RSM

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times." With apologies to Charles Dickens, those words come to mind when I think of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965). It was an exciting time to be alive. The United States had a young president, and a Catholic at that; in turn the Catholics had John XXIII, the loveable pope, convener of the Council, who added a congeniality to an otherwise reserved and often unapproachable Vatican. Yet there were many problems to solve and many challenges to meet, both in the secular world as well as in the church.

Vatican II shared the stage with many notables and world events, among them, the Hippies at Woodstock, The Beatles, Joan Baez, Bob Dylan, Ed Sullivan, Fulton J. Sheen of TV fame, John F. Kennedy's assassination, "women's lib," and accompanying protests against the war in Vietnam. As a newly minted woman religious and young teacher, I witnessed much of Vatican II unfold during those often chaotic and turbulent years.

Weigel, in his latest book, *To Sanctify the World*, which I highly recommend, notes the many conflicts and power struggles among the 2,800 bishops attending the Council which cost in excess of \$7 million. Alliances were made and broken, friendships strengthened or weakened, yet through it all, Vatican II whose goal was "To Sanctify the World," produced 16 documents, among them, *Lumen Gentium* (The

Dogmatic Constitution on the Church) and *Gaudium et Spes*, (The Pastoral Constitution on The Church in the Modern World.) Study groups formed in homes, parishes, and universities to read and study the documents concentrating primarily on the two mentioned above.

Now to the review: Weigel, a Catholic, and one of my favorite authors on Catholic issues, opens with these questions which, as a good teacher, he answers quite competently in the 350 pages of the book. Also, as a good teacher, he often employs irony rather than sarcasm to make his point.

"Was Vatican II necessary, and if so, why? What exactly did Vatican II teach and how do those teachings reflect the Council's purposes in renewing the Church and sanctifying the world?" And probably most importantly, "What keys unlock the full meaning of the Council's teaching and define its legacy for the future?"

Because a number of excellent reviews already exist, some critical of Weigel's stance and others quite complimentary, I have chosen to concentrate on two things: first, the response and reaction of media (print and electronic) to this new openness of the church and subsequently, how the media interpreted the message of the Council; and, secondly, a summary of the keys that unlock the meaning of the Council---

Continues on page 12

according to Weigel -- especially those keys found in the writings of JP II and Benedict XVI and confirmed by the bishops at the 1985 Extraordinary Synod.

Members of the media experienced a “field day” with this new openness from the Vatican on the topics discussed at the Council meetings. Also, a reporter or commentator could corner a bishop during breaks in the Council meetings and possibly obtain an “exclusive” on what was happening. Always looking for something that would uncover conflict or controversy within the Council or make the news, the media latched onto a number of items: non-Catholic observers allowed at the meetings, a change from Latin at Mass to the language of the people, the movement from “Mystical Body of Christ” to describe the church and the people in it, to “The People of God,” signaling at least to some extent the sign of a quiet revolution. And this from bishops!

But it was not just secular media figures or bishops who enjoyed the spotlight. A soon-to-be prominent figure appeared as an essayist/columnist with the *New Yorker Magazine* reporting weekly on the “happenings” at the Council. Francis X. Murphy, the Redemptorist priest, known only by his pseudonym, Xavier Rynne, was a qualified theologian and writer who was able to explain the finer points of doctrine and theology to the average reader. Rynne became somewhat of a celebrity whose columns stirred up strong interest in the Council’s proceedings not only from Catholic readers but from the general public as well.

Weigel gives a more expanded account of the positive and negative aspects of the media regarding Vatican II, providing information on Rynne’s influence on public opinion.

In all fairness, the media can’t be blamed entirely for creating some of the subconscious “angst” surrounding news from the Vatican. A likely headline would contain news leaks of internal feuds between bishops who almost came to blows over disagreements on theology or doctrine. The media made good use of the “differences of opinion” within the Council highlighting those differences in their reports.

“Out with the old; in with the new!” became the rallying cry of those in the Catholic population seeking reform. This seemed to be the common feeling

among many of the faithful, mostly the young, when news of the Council reached the public. A new spirit was breathing, but was it the Holy Spirit?

Weigel analyzes the writings of the popes who provided keys for discerning the message of Vatican II. The Master Key, he notes may be found in the final deliberations of the Extraordinary Synod of bishops in 1985, 20 years after the closing of Vatican II. In that summation, Vatican II bishops thanked God “... for the greatest grace of this century, that is the Second Vatican Council.” Finally, they prayed that there may come “in our time ‘that New Pentecost’ of which John XXIII had ... spoken.”

Ultimately the Master Key of Vatican II unlocked all the beauties and mysteries of the Council and remains today as a simple yet powerful mandate: That *New Pentecost* -- the unlocking of the treasures of Vatican

II -- would be achieved when the people of God -- the church - understood themselves as “a communion of disciples in mission.” I might add here, *with Christ as the Center (italics mine)*. “That understanding, Weigel notes, “is the master key to Vatican II and to the Catholic future.”

This essay/review opened with a quote from Dickens, “It was the best of times, it was the worst of times.” In retrospect, the years following Vatican II exhibited both the best and the worst: “The best of times,” the Mass in the language of the people opened up new avenues of understanding and deepening of spirituality in the congregations around the world. I witnessed that change as a young woman religious and saw it bring people closer together “as disciples in communion for mission with Christ as the Center.” Of course, there were “the worst of times” such as aberrations in celebrations of the Mass: “Balloon Masses” with clowns in all their paraphernalia and others, but those were mostly passing fads and soon died out.

As we stand here toward the end of the first quarter of the 21st century, how do we assess our response -- not someone else’s -- to the powerful mandate of the Second Vatican Council: **to become a communion of disciples in mission, with Christ as the Center.**

Find Weigel’s book at www.ignatius.com/to-sanctify-the-world-tswlh/.

