

## Are you willing to take the Vatican II Challenge?

Pope John Paul II called the Second Vatican Council “the great grace bestowed on the Church in the twentieth century” (*Novo Millennio Ineunte*, 57). Yet there are so few who are familiar with what the conciliar documents actually say.

Now that Pope Benedict XVI has declared October 11, 2012 – November 24, 2013 to be the *Year of Faith*, the Holy Father has reiterated his predecessor’s call for the whole Church to become more familiar with these “important and normative texts” (ibid.).

To aid in this effort, this reading plan has been crafted for exploring the sixteen documents of Vatican II in one year for less than ten minutes a day. It would be most fitting to undertake this exercise during the *Year of Faith*; however, this is an exercise that can be undertaken at any time during the *Year of Faith* and beyond.

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*"[The documents of Vatican II] need to be read correctly, to be widely known and taken to heart as important and normative texts of the Magisterium, within the Church's Tradition. . . . I feel more than ever in duty bound to point to the Council as the great grace bestowed on the Church in the twentieth century: there we find a sure compass by which to take our bearings. . . ."*

- John Paul II, *Novo Millennio Ineunte* 57

## The 16 Documents of the Second Vatican Council

### CONSTITUTIONS

- *Dei Verbum* — Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation (Nov. 18, 1965)
- *Lumen Gentium* — Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (Nov. 21, 1964)
- *Sacrosanctum Concilium* — Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (Dec. 4, 1963)
- *Gaudium et Spes* — Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (Dec. 7, 1965)

### DECLARATIONS

- *Gravissimum Educationis* — Declaration on Christian Education (Oct. 28, 1965)
- *Nostra Aetate* — Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions (Oct. 28, 1965)
- *Dignitatis Humanae* — Declaration on Religious Freedom (Dec. 7, 1965)

### DECREES

- *Ad Gentes* — Decree on the Mission Activity of the Church (Dec. 7, 1965)
- *Presbyterorum Ordinis* — Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests (Dec. 7, 1965)
- *Apostolicam Actuositatem* — Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity (Nov. 18, 1965)
- *Optatam Totius* — Decree on Priestly Training (Oct. 28, 1965)
- *Perfectae Caritatis* — Decree on the Adaptation and Renewal of Religious Life (Oct. 28, 1965)
- *Christus Dominus* — Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church (Oct. 28, 1965)
- *Unitatis Redintegratio* — Decree on Ecumenism (Nov. 21, 1964)
- *Orientalium Ecclesiarum* — Decree on Catholic Churches of the Eastern Rite (Nov. 21, 1964)
- *Inter Mirifica* — Decree on the Media of Social Communication (Dec. 4, 1963)

These documents are all available online at:

[http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist\\_councils/ii\\_vatican\\_council/index.htm](http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/index.htm)

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Vatican II in one year for  
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