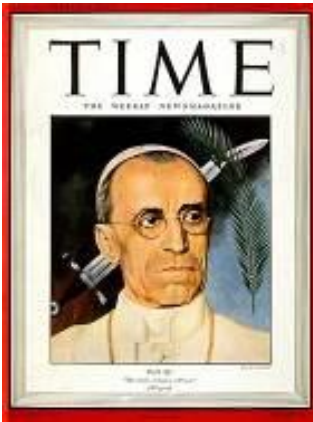


Pius XII (1939-58) and the Holocaust

The **Holocaust** is of course the adoption and carrying out of the plan of the violently anti-semitic Nazi German leadership to physically eliminate all Jewish people from the European continent. As soon as war broke out in September 1939 the German government began measures to persecute and murder as many Jews as they could get their hands on. It was only however in the infamous meeting at **Wannsee in January 1942** that the Nazi leadership made the decision to carry out the policy in an organized and efficient fashion. Its execution was given to the SS under the command of Heinrich Himmler; the SS then built death camps with gas chambers to kill the prisoners and ovens to get rid of the bodies; something like 6,000,000 Jews were murdered by the Nazis before the end of the war.

Eugenio Pacelli

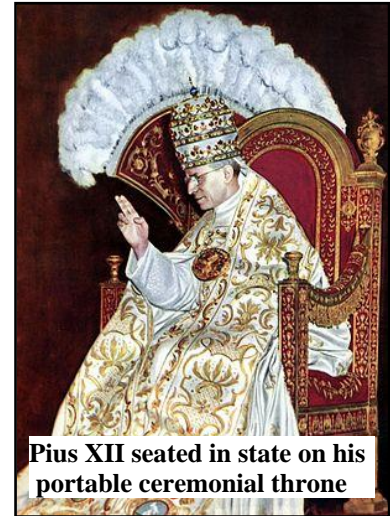
Eugenio Pacelli was a member of the “**black aristocracy**,” the noble Roman families who traditionally supplied civil servants for the Vatican. A priest, he was “born to be pope,” never serving in a parish but destined for the Vatican diplomatic service; he never had the person-to-person contact with ordinary human beings that one has as pastor in a parish. As Secretary of State in the 1930s, he helped negotiate the **Lateran Treaty with Mussolini** in 1929 (regularize the situation of the Church in Italy after the occupation of Rome by the Italian army in 1870). He also negotiated the **Concordat with Hitler in 1933**, which at the time that Hitler was consolidating his power in Germany attempted to provide a firm base for the independent existence of the German Catholic Church in a time of dictatorship. The Concordat was quite favorable to the German Church, providing for continual state subsidies, guaranteeing the existence and independence of Catholic schools, and providing for religious instruction in public schools “in accord with the principles of the Catholic Church”. The negotiation of the Concordat with Hitler does not necessarily imply that Pacelli sympathized with the Nazi regime.



Pope Pius XII He had a hand in Pius XI’s denunciation of Hitler and Nazi ideology, “**Mit brennender Sorge**,” published in 1937; the latter document denounced the anti-Catholic, pagan doctrine of the Nazi state, stating that “whoever exalts race, or the people, or the State,... whoever raises these notions above their standard value and divinizes them to an idolatrous level, distorts and perverts an order of the world planned and created by God.” Although he had extensive personal contacts with Germany (he spoke German fluently, admired German culture, and had lived at least ten years in Germany in the 1920s), he was known to be anti-Nazi when he was elected pope in 1939. Like most Catholics, he was **anti-Communist** in the 1930s, and even more so after World War II during the Cold War; he would tend to believe that the Stalinist regime in Russia was a greater threat to the Catholic Church than the Fascist regimes (however distasteful they were).

His was a **reserved, shy, aloof** personality; he did not have the “human,” personal touch of Pius IX, John XXIII (who was from a poor peasant background and who would stop his car on the side of the road to talk with the common people), and John Paul II. He did not like to confront people; he was a loner who almost always dined alone. He had no one in his entourage to advise him frankly or disagree with him; they were mostly yes men. He was intensely spiritual with an “**ethereal**” quality; in 2005 he is under active consideration for sainthood. He was scholarly and cerebral; he would rather be reading, writing, or praying than spending time in company. He was by temperament and by training a **diplomat**, whose

job was not to say things directly or to confront, but to express himself obliquely with the intention of soothing the feelings of his interlocutor, of eventually coming to a compromise agreement with him, etc. In general, during the war he expressed himself much more directly with the Allies (Britain and the USA) than with the Germans; with the latter, he was very (too?) cautious, because he was afraid strong protests would make things worse for the groups – German Catholics, Poles, and Jews – he was trying to protect.



Pius XII seated in state on his portable ceremonial throne

As pope, his job was twofold: 1) as the **Vicar of Christ**, he was to defend the interests of all humanity, to be the conscience of the world, presumably to teach, to speak out, when needed; 2) as **Supreme Pontiff** (high priest), he was to defend the interests of the Catholic Church and of Catholics throughout the world (in this instance, of Catholics in Germany and in the occupied areas of Europe). His conclusion of the Concordat with Hitler in 1933, his desire to “bury the hatchet” with the Germans right after he became pope in 1939, were good examples of the latter point; he might not like the Nazis, but it was his job to make do with the situation that politics gave him.

What the Pope Knew

It is difficult to know exactly **what the Pope knew**. The pope had diplomatic representatives in most parts of Europe (Poland was an exception), who reported back to him on information they had access to, but one must remember that the Pope had no espionage service, and that all diplomatic business had to be conducted by a staff of 31 in the papal Secretariat of State (one of their main sources of information was said to be listening to BBC broadcasts). Compare that with the tens of thousands of people who work in the American State Department, the CIA, the National Security Agency, etc.

Early in the war, reports were sketchy, although it was apparent that the Germans were guilty of serious atrocities. The Germans decided on the “final solution” in **Wannsee in January 1942** to exterminate all Jews in Europe. The pope knew that the German anti-Semitic policy had taken a more virulent turn by March 1942. Like Allied leaders, he and his entourage were probably inclined to discount the more extreme reports and rumors; it was indeed difficult to believe that any European nation was guilty of such crimes. On the other hand, there are plenty of indications that the pope was aware that the Germans were committing extraordinary war crimes against the Jews.



SS Chief Heinrich Himmler

What the Pope Said

Although he was **not quite “silent,”** Pius XII was quite reticent in dealing with Nazi atrocities during World War II. Many of his statements critical of wartime behavior did not single out the Nazis for criticism, but stressed the obligation of the Church to remain impartial (he was concerned that he be in a position to mediate an agreement between belligerents). In 1942 he wrote of “Our absolute impartiality towards all the belligerents and our equal affection for all peoples without exception.” (Sanchez, 56) In his public pronouncements he generally **did not “name names,”** but stuck to diplomatic generalities. Partial exceptions were his 1942 Christmas message, where he referred fairly clearly to the persecution of the Jews without mentioning the names of either victims or the perpetrators:

...mankind owes that vow [to reestablish a just society at the end of the war] to the hundreds of thousands of persons who, without any fault on their part, sometimes only because of their nationality or race, have been consigned to death or to a slow decline. (Sanchez 57)

In his June 1943 message he criticized Nazi policy toward subject peoples, although this statement appears to have been directed mainly to the Nazi treatment of the Poles:

They are those who, because of their nationality or descent, are pursued by mounting misfortune and increasing suffering. Sometimes, through no fault of theirs, they are subjected to measures which threaten them with extermination.... We do not forget a single one of the suffering peoples...even if at the present moment We wish to direct your compassion in a special manner to the Polish people. (Sanchez 58)



Map of the 109 acre Vatican City

In June 1945 he denounced “the ruinous and inexorable application of National-Socialist [Nazi] teaching, which even went so far as to use the most exquisite scientific methods to torture or eliminate people who were often [!] innocent.” (Sanchez 61) But of course he said this after the fall of Germany in the previous month.

His media organs, **Vatican Radio and the *Osservatore romano*** newspaper, were more direct in their criticism of the Germans, as in January 1940 when Vatican Radio asserted that the methods used by the Germans in occupied countries like Poland were even worse than those used by the Soviets! (Sanchez, 62) In 1942 the pope instructed them to exercise more caution, but even after that date they were more direct in their statements than the pope; they were often the object of

German protests. For a diplomat as well trained and careful in his statements as was Pius XII, the statements of the newspaper and radio station must have represented the point of view of the pope.

Why so Reticent?

Reasons for his vagueness and reticence were various. In ascending order of importance.

1) Pius was concerned about the security and independence of the Vatican, since it was surrounded by states that could at any moment turn off the water and the electricity. This point however applied to the Vatican only during the German occupation of Rome from September 1943 to June 1944, when Pius XII was genuinely concerned about the aggressive intentions of the German authorities. Before then, Italy was run by Mussolini's Fascist regime, which posed no threat to the independence of the Vatican or the Pope; in fact, the Pope might have posed a threat to the unpopular Mussolini if had acted more forcefully.

2) In imitation of the policy of Benedict XV in World War I, Pius XII wanted to preserve his impartiality/neutrality so that he could serve as **mediator** between the two sides in the war and thus play a role in bringing the war to an end. The general consequence of this attitude was that he was much less frank and much less critical of the German government than he might have been, in fact than he should have been. Mediation was surely an unrealistic goal given the nature of Nazism, Soviet Communism, and the oft-repeated resolve of the western allies to accept only unconditional surrender from the Germans.

3) He was concerned about the status of the **German Catholic Church** and of German Catholics under the Nazi regime. Since he did not want to give Hitler an excuse to abrogate the Concordat of 1933 and thus deprive the German Church of its one remaining legal bulwark against Nazi authority, he always

refused to confront the German government. When in 1943 the Bishop of Berlin, Konrad von Preysing, asked Pius for an appeal in favor of the fate of German Jews, Pius refused, saying he would rather leave it up to individual bishops to judge what sort of approach was best; he insisted that he was doing his best to help the Jews, but that “Unhappily, in the present circumstances, We cannot offer them effective help other than through Our prayers.” [!] (Sanchez, 166, 167) Pius’s reputation was not helped by the message he sent to Hitler in July 1944 expressing his “deep satisfaction” at Hitler’s escaping the assassination attempt of that summer.



Bishop Preysing of Berlin, 1935-1950

He did not want to place German Catholics in a position where they would have to choose between their loyalty to the German state and to the papacy; he feared that if forced to they would choose the state, and there would ensue a **schism** between the German Church and the papacy. Given the patriotism and subservience to authority characteristic of Germans, Pius was probably justified in his caution. The Pope’s nuncio (representative) in Berlin confirmed this when he wrote to Pius in 1940 that “unless the [Catholic] clergy appeased the regime and relieved members of the church of a conflict of conscience to which they were not equal,” he feared a mass apostasy (leaving the church) of German Catholics. (Sanchez, 101)

4) He said on many occasions that **he did not want to make things worse**, and it seems that this was the pope’s main reason for not speaking out. He feared that if he protested volubly against Nazi abuses, that the condition of the persecuted people would only be made worse; if, for example, he protested against the persecution of the Jews, the Nazis would increase their bullying or turn their guns against Jews who had converted to Catholicism (there were many in countries like Holland and Croatia). A reliable source reports the following response from Pius XII when he was asked to make a public statement about Nazi policy in Poland:

...a protest from me would not only not help anyone, but would arouse the most ferocious anger against the Jews and multiply acts of cruelty because they are undefended. Perhaps my solemn protest would win some praise from the civilized world, but would bring down on the poor Jews an even more implacable persecution than the one they are already enduring. (Sanchez 116)



St. Peter’s Square Rome

Supporters of Pius’ policy point out that the **Protests by Dutch bishops** against the deportation of Jews from Holland did result in the Nazis’ decision to arrest and deport converted Jews in that country (it is true that there were only 100-200 converted Jews involved). On the other hand, Dutch Jews who had converted to Protestant faiths were not disturbed, due to the decision of Dutch Protestant authorities to remain quiet. Critics of Pius’ policy could reply, however, that similar **protests by French bishops** in the same period did not result in further reprisals by the Nazi authorities.

This self-restraint was probably not sensible after **the middle of the war**. One can understand it earlier in the war, when one could imagine things getting worse; but beginning perhaps in 1942, the situation was desperate, the “Final Solution” was well known, Nazi Germany was processing toward defeat; in this period more extreme measures were required. How could things have gotten any worse for the Jews, the Polish Catholics, and the Croatian Serbs?

Case Studies: Rome, 1943; Croatia, 1941-43; Poland

Rome: Rome, the capital of Italy, was **occupied by the Germans** in September 1943 after the overthrow of Mussolini and the defection of the Italian government from the German side. Pius XII, who maintained his autonomy in the tiny Vatican City, was very concerned about the fate of the city of Rome in the conflict between the Germans and the Allies. There were numerous instances before the German occupation in which he expressed his concern for the fate of the Italian Jews.

The case of the **Roman Jews** during the German occupation (September 1943 to June 1944) is perhaps the scenario most favorable to Pius XII. It appears that German sources had informed the pope ahead of time about the SS roundup of Roman Jews before it happened (October 15-16); but Pius did nothing about it and did not warn the Roman Jews. His defenders suggest that he may not have believed such reports right after the Jews had paid the ransom of 50 kilos of gold the Germans had exacted (the pope had agreed to help pay the ransom, although papal money was never needed).

When the roundup occurred on October 16 (about 1000 Jews of the approximately 8000 Jews living in Rome were arrested and subsequently transported to German death camps), the Vatican did protest through diplomatic channels to **Weizsäcker**, the German ambassador, and in a meeting in the Vatican the Vatican Secretary of State, **Cardinal Maglione**, suggested to him that if Germany continued with the arrests, the Vatican might have to make a public statement. Some authors are critical of Maglione for not pressing the Germans further by threatening more clearly, for example, to make a public protest.



**Basilica of St. John
Lateran Rome**

But that was as far as the Vatican acted. **Fr. Hudal**, a Nazi-sympathizing German priest in Rome, sent a request to stop the arrests through the German commandant in Rome up the SS hierarchy to Heinrich Himmler himself; it does not appear that the Vatican had anything directly to do with Hudal’s initiative.

Ambassador Weizsäcker subsequently sent a **reassuring letter to Berlin** trying to soothe the nerves of the Nazi leadership and to convince them to discontinue the policy in order not to precipitate a break with the Vatican (it was in this letter that Weizsäcker reported that the arrests “took place, in a manner of speaking, **under the Pope’s own windows**”) (Sanchez 144). As a result, the roundups were discontinued and no further Jews were transported for the duration of the occupation (the Germans were expelled from Rome in June of the following year). The Vatican played a subordinate role in this apparent policy reversal, which was initiated mostly by German authorities concerned not to precipitate a dramatic break with the pope. It is clear however that the German restraint owes much to the knowledge that the Pope was upset about the removal of the Roman Jews and that he might make a public statement about it.

Some critics however assert that this result was unsatisfactory. They say that Pius should have appeared in his formal papal robes with his full retinue at the **Rome train station** where the Jews were being embarked; the Germans would not have dared to defy Italian and world opinion by defying the pope!

After the crisis died down, the Vatican appears to have taken further measures (or perhaps just approved them tacitly?) to protect Roman Jews. It negotiated an agreement with the Germans whereby they were to treat many **Church buildings in Rome as extraterritorial**. As a result, as many as 5000 Jews were hidden in these building for the remainder of the occupation (including many in St. John Lateran Basilica, located only about 100 meters from the headquarters of the SS in Rome!). In many other areas in Italy, Jews were hidden by local Italian clergy and laity until the disappearance of the Germans. Although there is no clear evidence that the Vatican ordered or even encouraged these acts of mercy, it is hard to believe that the local clergy would have taken these initiatives without the knowledge and approval of the Vatican. About **83% of Italian Jews were saved** from Nazi extermination, one of the highest percentages in occupied Europe. (It is true that the Germans occupied only a part of Italy and only for about a year and a half.)

In the Roman scenario, Pius acted with his usual circumspection, but this appears to be an instance where a cautious policy worked.

Croatia: The pope's treatment of the self-proclaimed Catholic Fascist regime in **Croatia** after 1941 was strikingly **weak and timid**, relying exclusively on behind-the-scenes encouragement and private assistance to small numbers of Jews rather than public statements or energetic diplomatic intervention.

The new Croatian government, established with the help of Nazi Germany in 1941 and headed by the enthusiastically genocidal fascist **Ustasha Party** under the terrorist Ante Pavolic, pursued a reign of terror in 1941-43. Its purpose was to eliminate all the Jews in Croatia (by either murdering them or cooperating with the Germans to deport them to death camps) and to kill a large percentage of the Orthodox Serbs living in Croatia and convert the rest to Catholicism. It is estimated that between 1941 and 1943 about 50,000 Jews and about 400,000 Orthodox Serbs died in Croatia. The most infamous example of genocide was the **Jansenovac concentration camp** run by a Franciscan priest Miroslav Filipovic-Majstorovic: 40,000 Jewish and Serbian prisoners were murdered there; there were 24,000 child captives, of whom about half were murdered (Phayer, 38).



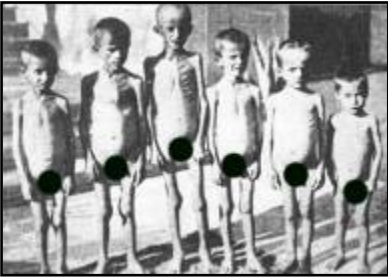
Poster advertising Pavolic's Catholic fascist state

The Vatican was delighted that a Catholic government had come to power in Croatia, although the pope was not happy about the reports of mass terror that were filtering in through his diplomatic contacts. He repeatedly instructed Croatian bishops under **Archbishop Stepinac** to lobby against the government's policy of forcible conversion of Orthodox Serbs living in Croatia and to oppose its policy of cooperating with the Germans to remove the Jewish population; but he told them to do it quietly, not to make public statements, and not force any break with the Ustasha government. The Vatican Secretary of State Maglione wrote Stepinac in late 1941

...if your eminence can find a suitable occasion, he should recommend [to Pavelic] in a discreet manner, that would not be interpreted as an official appeal, that moderation be employed with regard to Jews on Croatian territory. Your Eminence should see to it that ... the impression of loyal cooperation with the civil authorities be always preserved. (Phayer, *Catholic Church and the Holocaust*, 37)

When Vatican officials were confronted with reports about Ustasha atrocities, they often reacted with skepticism; e.g., Undersecretary Montini (the future Pope Paul VI) told the Ustasha representative in 1942

in Rome that he had viewed such accusations with “considerable reserve”. Stepinac did approach the Croatian government on several occasions, but often later than he should have and always expressing himself with correct diplomatic reserve.



Children Rescued from an Ustasha Concentration Camp

The complaisant attitude of the Catholic Church in Croatia contrasts dramatically with the attitude of the **Italian Army**, which, often in disobedience to the intentions of Mussolini, saved tens of thousands of Serb and Jewish lives by accepting them as refugees along the Croatian coast.

Pius XII received the Croatian head of state Pavelic in Rome in 1941, although the pope insisted on receiving him only as a “private citizen” and not officially as a head of state. And he **never spoke out publicly**

against the regime and its policies, perhaps hoping that the Church’s dream of reunion with the Orthodox Church would somehow be realized.

The pope’s policy of speaking quietly through channels so as “not to make things worse” and destabilize the new Catholic state in Croatia was completely ineffective in that county; it is impossible to imagine how things could have been worse there.

Some Other Countries: Poland was occupied by German forces from September 1939 until the “liberation” of the country in 1944-45. Pius XII was equally ineffective in dealing with the Nazi persecution of both Jews and Poles in **Poland** in this period. Despite the murder of almost all Polish Jews and drastic action taken against priests and the Polish intelligentsia (millions of Poles died and others, including priests and intellectuals, were sent to concentration camps in the Nazi campaign to “decapitate” the Polish nation), Pius issued only weak protests against these actions; he did not follow up on **Bishop Radonski**’s impassioned 1942 plea to say something encouraging for the unfortunate Polish population. He wrote in 1943

‘When such [Nazi] crimes cry to heaven for vengeance, the inexplicable silence of the highest teacher in the Church is an occasion of spiritual ruin to those – and the number is legion – who do not know the reason.’ (v. Sanchez, p. 157)

In his low-profile policy Pius XII was totally ineffective in relieving the suffering of the Polish nation. It is difficult to understand how he could stand idly by while the Nazis brutalized and decapitated the Polish nation and that he did essentially nothing to succor this Catholic population, who were extraordinarily loyal members of his own church.



Warsaw Ghetto: Dead Man in Street

In considering the issue of the Church and the Holocaust, one must make a distinction between the actions of the pope and the actions of **other members of the Church**. Some priests and lay members were active fascists and supporters of the Holocaust (**Mgr. Tiso in Slovakia** who generally collaborated in the Germans’ deportation of Jews to death camps), but it seems that local Catholics (bishops, priests and lay people) were more likely to take action to protect Jews during the Holocaust. For example, in Catholic countries occupied by the Germans during the war, between 69% (Belgium), 74% (France), and 83% (Italy) of the Jews survived the war; many of these were saved by the action of lay Catholics, with undoubtedly the connivance of the hierarchy and in many cases also the pope.

The judgment of István **Deák** is sensible. Pius XII was reasonably well-intentioned and he did what he thought was prudent and safe: he “did help the Jews, but too little and too late...”

But could not this Pope have made a single, historic public gesture? If he had, he would likely have saved more Jews, Poles, Serbs, and others than he did through his diplomatic skills. Unfortunately, he proved weak and fallible. He demonstrated no personal courage; he gave no example of the *Imitatio Christi* [the imitation of Christ], which is what the world expects from the head of a church that traces its authority back to the apostles. (Deák)

The British historian Owen **Chadwick** made essentially the same point, “There may be moments...when wisdom is not the first quality in demand, when what a moral situation needs is an explosion and let wisdom be damned.” (Sanchez, 123)

Transition of the Catholic Church to the Second Vatican Council

The “**Tridentine**” Church is a term referring to the nature of the Catholic Church since the Council of Trent in the 16th century. It implies 1) a definition of the Church as a structure/bureaucracy that became increasingly authoritarian as the 19th century progressed; 2) a rather rigid division of the Church into a “teaching” clergy and an “obeying” or “learning” laity; 3) a view of “truth” as eternal, unchanging and unhistorical and in the care of the Church; 4) and intimately connected with the last point, the “bastion mentality” that assumed the Church as the repository of truth and goodness, and rejected the outside (secular, Protestant, etc.) as irrelevant or dangerous; 5) salvation outside of the Catholic Church is impossible and therefore the purpose of reaching out to other faith communities is primarily to convert them to “the one true Faith”.

The remainder of the pontificate of Pius XII (d.1958) was unmistakably Tridentine. The pope was a dedicated anti-Communist warrior, who in contrast to his behavior toward Germany in World War II spoke out strongly against the anti-Catholic policies of the Communist regimes in Eastern Europe (Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia) and encouraged resistance to Communist authority. He also echoed Pius IX’s Marian devotion by proclaiming the doctrine of the **Assumption in 1950**, the complement to Pius IX’s Immaculate Conception of 1854.

The winds of change were perhaps blowing strongly, but they were blowing behind the scenes; all appeared serene in the Church of Pius XII.

When he died in 1958, he was succeeded by **John XXIII (1958-63)**, an elderly and little known archbishop, who was a compromise candidate since the Conclave of Cardinals could not decide on a more permanent candidate. In dramatic contrast to the aristocratic origins of Pius XII, he was born to a poor peasant family in North Italy. He was a warm, gregarious, simple man, who had a keen appreciation of the worth of other Christian churches because of his prior diplomatic service in Turkey and the Balkans where he dealt extensively with the Orthodox Church. He also manifested an appreciation of the modern world outside the Church all around him. No one suspected that he had plans to call a plenary council that would revolutionize the life of the Church.



John XXIII, 1958-63

In the early years of his pontificate he broke with tradition by establishing contacts with the Soviet regime, and publishing an encyclical, *Pacem in Terris*, that called for an end to the arms race and

cooperation of all nations to establish world peace. Because of his personal warmth and the dramatic contrast with his predecessor, Pius XII, he was an instant celebrity throughout the world.

The Second Vatican Council, 1962-65

To the surprise of almost everyone, he announced in 1962 an ecumenical (general) council that would bring, as he put it, an “**aggiornamento**” (updating) of the Church. The first months of the **Second Vatican Council (1962-65)** were filled with dramatic moments that were to determine whether the council would continue to take negative Tridentine attitudes toward “the modern world” or adopt a more positive tone to reform. The conservatives in the Roman curia were determined to maintain the status quo (conservative leaders like Tisserant and Ottaviani controlled the agenda and procedures of the Council), whereas a majority of the some 2500 bishops attending were reform oriented, although they had no effective leadership.

The real crisis came in **November 1962**, when John XXIII broke a deadlock pushing the deliberations on the reform road, and when Cardinal Suenens of Belgium gave a speech that gave the reformers an agenda – he said that Vatican II would be the “council of the Church” whereas Vatican I had been the “council of the pope.” When John died in spring 1963, he was succeeded by a moderate reformer, Paul VI, who then pushed the council toward a satisfactory conclusion in 1965.

An analysis of some of the decrees of the Second Vatican Council demonstrates that the legacy of the Council represents a major break with the Church’s Tridentine past.

1) The **liturgy** of the mass was thoroughly reformed (**Sacrosanctum Concilium**), including use of the **vernacular**, the position of the celebrant facing the congregation, contact among the members of the congregation as in the “kiss of peace”, the ability of the lay people to receive communion in both species (bread and wine), and lay persons taking the Eucharist in their own hand rather than having it placed directly on their tongue as had been the practice in previous centuries.

2) *The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (Gaudium et Spes)* was one of the key documents. It emphasized the important role to be played by lay people in the life of the Church, and urged in general terms that lay people not rely on the clergy to take initiatives but to be searching and active – “Let the layman not imagine that his pastors are always such experts....”



The Bishops Assembled at the Beginning of the Council

It called upon the Church to establish a **dialogue** with the modern world instead of rejecting it out of hand as had the Tridentine Church. It admitted that the leaders of the Church had had defects and **failings in the past**, that like all other human institutions the Catholic Church had made mistakes – “it does not escape the Church how great a distance lies between the message she offers and the human failings of those to whom the Gospel is entrusted.” It emphasized that the **secular culture of the West** (philosophy, science, history) had much to offer the Church, and should not be rejected out of hand as it had in previous centuries.

The document is in dramatic contrast to documents from the reigns of Pius IX and Pius XII that had assumed and asserted the separation of the Church from the world around it and its superiority to it.

3) **The Decree on Religious Freedom (Dignitatis Humanae)** was a major departure breaking with the *Syllabus of Errors* that had defined the ideal world as one in which everyone was Catholic and everyone attended Catholic schools, etc.

This document said that every individual has the obligation to seek the moral truth without external coercion, that the **conscience** of every individual is inviolable, and that every person has the right and duty to find his own personal way to God – “The truth cannot impose itself [on the individual] except by virtue of its own truth, as it makes its entrance into the mind at once quietly and with power.” “The exercise of religion consists before all else in those internal, voluntary, and free acts whereby man sets the course of his life directly toward God.” The Council explicitly rejects the prospect of any authority imposing itself on the individual person in his/her search for personal (religious) truth.

The document endorsed the reality of civil liberties in every state; no one should be forced or pressured to adhere to an official religion or any belief that violates his conscience – “Injury therefore is done to the human person...if the free exercise of religion is denied in society...” This declaration was an obvious **contradiction of the view of Pius IX**, who held that in the real world a Catholic state should at least favor the one true faith (Catholic Church), and that in an ideal world the Catholic faith would be the only one permitted in a well-ordered state (remember “error has no rights”).

It is less clear whether the endorsement of religious liberty also applied to **individual Catholics living within the Church**. It does seem to say that Catholics have an obligation like everyone else to come to their spiritual truth through the same independent, individual process; they are however obligated to consult the official teachings (the *magisterium*) of the Church in their own discernment. Perhaps Catholics may believe what their conscience dictates, but that as long as they remain inside the Church, their right to public dissent is limited. If they disagree with the core teachings of the Church, they should probably leave.

Of course this freedom applies more to laity than clergy. The clergy (priests, nuns, brothers, etc.) are held to a stricter standard of orthodoxy than the laity. If a clerical person disagrees publicly with the Church’s magisterium (teachings), then he/she is subject to dismissal.

4) The **Dogmatic Constitution of the Church (Lumen Gentium)** constructed a new model of the Church. Instead of the bureaucratic, Roman idea of the Tridentine Church that sees the Church as a papal monarchy, it defined the Church as “**the people of God**,” a people – lay and clerical – progressing in a **pilgrimage** toward salvation. The clergy have authority, but the people have their own “divine priesthood” (Hebrews) that participates in the mystery of the Eucharist during the mass, and that even plays a role in the development of dogma (“The body of the faithful...cannot err in matters of belief”). The implications of the idea are not spelled out, but it is clear that the document builds up the dignity and role of the laity in the life and governance of the Church.

The document, which shows evidence of compromise and cutting and pasting, also endorses the idea of the **bishops’ collegiality**, i.e. their important role, or co-responsibility, in the governance of the Church. The pope retains his directing power as the “infallible” head of the Church and the document reiterates that the bishops must have the collaboration of the pope in all they do, but the bishops play an important role. They meet periodically in general ecumenical councils, they may hold **bishops’ synods** to deal with specific issues, and in many parts of the world they hold **national conferences** to deal with issues specific to certain countries (e.g., social justice in Latin America, the role of the laity and the policy of dealing



John Paul II Visits Israel in 2000

with priests' sexual abuse of children in the U.S.). Although reserving the primacy of the pope, the document strongly endorses the **role of the bishops as a collective body collaborating with the pope** in the governance of the Church.



Pope Benedict XVI concelebrates with the (Anglican) Archbishop of Canterbury

5) The **Decree on Ecumenism (Unitatis Redintegratio)** strongly endorsed the idea and practice of dialogue with churches and other religious bodies outside the Catholic tradition. (*Lumen gentium* also includes an endorsement of ecumenism.) The document recognizes the spiritual dignity and significance of Christian churches (Anglican, Lutheran and Orthodox were generally favored), and states that the Church “accepts them with respect and affection as **brothers**”.

“...these Christians are indeed in some real way joined to us in the Holy Spirit for...his sanctifying power is also active in them and he has strengthened some of them even to the shedding of their blood.”

The document strongly promotes mutual dialogue and cooperation in dealing with issues of common concern. It states unity as the ultimate goal, but it usually makes it clear that the objective is the entry of the other faiths into the Church, since the conviction that the Catholic Church is the one true church remains strong (“...it is through Christ’s Catholic Church alone...that the fullness of the means of salvation can be obtained.”).

It is even more striking that *Lumen gentium* includes a statement of solidarity with **non-Christian** faiths. It asserts the special status of the Jews in the eyes of God and that the “plan of salvation” includes Muslims. It goes further: “Those who...do not know the Gospel of Christ or his Church but who nevertheless seek God with a sincere heart, and, moved by grace, try in their actions to do his will as they know it through the dictates of their conscience – those too may achieve eternal salvation.” Such statements reflected the attitude of John XXIII, and were at the root of the aggressive ecumenical activity of John Paul II.

The main emphasis is on **dialogue**, mutual understanding and movement toward greater cooperation. There had been very little evidence of this in pronouncements of previous popes, who simply waited for other Christian faiths to find their way back to the one true, Church..

The actual impact of the Council on the Catholic Church would of course depend on the efforts of subsequent popes to implement it; but there can no doubt that it caused a **seismic shift** in the history of the Church.

The Catholic Church since the Second Vatican Council – “The Bark of Peter in Stormy Seas”

The Catholic Church has undergone a period of **storm and stress** since the end of the Vatican Council in 1965. The first period under the moderate and often indecisive **Paul VI (1963-78)** was a time of some confusion and adjustment. When **John Paul II (1978-2005)** succeeded him, he set out on a policy of “**restoration**” that sought to reestablish stability and tradition in the Church; while making it clear that the Council was the basis of his theology and his social policy, he worked to rein back the most liberal interpretations of the Council.

1) **The Liturgy:** The changes in **Church liturgy** were quickly implemented and generally accepted. The changes generally raised the **status of the laity** in the liturgical celebrations, and sought to involve the lay people in a more active role in the mass. Few Catholics find fault with the vernacular mass, the distribution of communion in both species, and the “Kiss of Peace.” Traditionalists find comfort in John Paul II’s permission in the 1990s to hold some church services in Latin and the intention of Benedict XVI to promote Latin further.



A post-Vatican II mass.

2) **Church Governance:** The trend toward **Co-responsibility** indicated in the Vatican Council proceeded at an erratic and inconsistent pace. Local initiatives were often met with opposition by the Vatican.

The aftermath of the Council brought a great crisis in **clerical vocations**. Nuns all but disappeared over the next decades, and the **number of priests** declined precipitously, especially in the USA; many parishes now had to do without priests; the number of priests ordained in France in 2004 was 90, compared to 566 in 1965.

The result was that women and lay people were needed to play a greater role in church life, especially in the parishes. Women were even more than before the backbone of the Church, often serving for example as Eucharistic ministers and parish and diocesan administrators. (Male) lay deacons were ordained to assist priests in the parishes in counseling and administering the sacraments of Baptism and marriage. However, the Vatican refused to allow **married priests** (asserting that celibacy was the will of Christ despite evidence that his apostles were married), and refused to countenance discussion of **ordaining women**, claiming that Jesus set an example by choosing only men as his disciples.

Bishops generally were allowed to exercise their **collegial rights** laid down by the Council. **National conferences of bishops** were active in the USA and in Latin America, where they considered issues such as nuclear weapons, the philosophy of life, social justice, and the clergy’s sexual abuse of children. The Latin American Council of Bishops (CELAM) was particularly active in the late 1960s and 1970s in promoting movements for social reform (the famous “preferential option for the poor”) in Latin America. Under John Paul II these national conferences were more closely supervised by the Vatican; **Cardinal Ratzinger** (the future Benedict XVI known in his pre-papal days as Cardinal “Rotweiler”), as John Paul II’s right-hand man since the early 1980s in enforcing doctrinal orthodoxy, was particularly active in reining back the independent action of national conferences of bishops, which according to his view threatened the administrative and doctrinal integrity of the Church.

3) **The Magisterium:** Partly as a result of the Council’s decrees, the **teaching authority** of the pope (the ‘magisterium’) was challenged, especially in the 1970s. Priests, who as theology professors in Catholic universities challenged key Vatican teachings, were silenced and deprived of their posts.

Hans Küng of Tübingen University wrote that Catholic dogmas such as the doctrine of infallibility were historically conditioned and thus subject to renunciation; he insisted that there was no basis in the Bible, tradition, or theology for **papal infallibility** and that it should be frankly rejected. The Vatican was not amused; Küng refused however to go to Rome for a “trial” and was then forbidden to teach in Catholic universities. He continued teaching in the secular faculties of Tübingen University. He recently however had a friendly conversation with Benedict XVI, John Paul’s successor and Küng’s old adversary.

Also in the 1970s **Charles Curran** of Catholic University in Washington, D.C. published dissenting opinions on sexual morality that cost him his position at the university. Dissent by lay people was usually tolerated in the post-conciliar Church, but open dissent by the clergy, especially those who were members of Catholic universities, was considered unacceptable. There was certainly more diversity of theological opinion in the Catholic Church than there had been before the Vatican Council, but the authorities in Rome made it clear that there were finite limits to challenging the teaching authority of the Vatican.



John Paul II in 1978

Catholic couples should be allowed to decide for themselves whether to use them. The pope however rejected its findings, and in his *Humanae Vitae* (1968) he forbade the use of any sort of artificial birth control.

His rather anachronistic pronouncement caused a crisis of authority in the Church. Cardinal Suenens of Belgium and theologians Karl Rahner, Hans Küng, and Charles Curran all objected to the pope's decision and claimed that Catholics should rely on their individual consciences (*vide* Vatican II's 'Declaration on Religious Freedom') in deciding whether to use birth control. Many Catholics (including the great majority in the USA) ignored the pope's teachings on the subject and practiced artificial methods of birth control.

John Paul II was outspoken on issues of sexual morality. His *Evangelium Vitae* (1995) aggressively reaffirmed traditional Church teachings on the subject. Official Catholic doctrine was a **philosophy of life** that rejected the "culture of death" that the pope saw prevalent in the modern world and that chose "life" at every key opportunity – opposition to birth control, abortion, euthanasia, and the death penalty were all part and parcel of this philosophy.

The Church's teachings on birth control have excited **great criticism of the Vatican**. It seems to have created a sort of crisis of authority in the USA, where lay Catholics are attached to their parishes and their parish priests, but increasingly bemused by what is often seen as the authoritarian antics of the Church hierarchy. People promoting social justice in Third World countries are also upset by the Vatican's role in opposing the spread of birth control in Catholic countries (Latin America and Africa); they feel that by inhibiting the use of artificial methods of birth control the Church is missing the opportunity to fight Third World poverty

The Catholic Church and Social Justice: Liberation Theology in Latin America

The Council also encouraged Catholics to take seriously the responsibility of tackling the problem of poverty in the world.

Background: the Origins of Catholic Social Doctrine. A positive and original Catholic teaching on social issues dates back to the end of the 19th century during the pontificate of Leo XIII (1878-1903).



Pope Leo XIII as a Scholar

Leo XIII began to elaborate a distinctive **Catholic social doctrine** with the publication of his renowned encyclical (a lengthy teaching letter) **Rerum Novarum** in 1891. Pius XI followed with his **Quadragesimo Anno** in 1931 that built on Leo's encyclical. In these two documents the Church for the first time recognized the enormous impact that the Industrial Revolution and urbanization had had on European society. These encyclicals introduced the concept of **social justice** into the Catholic vocabulary, and stated in effect that from now on Catholics had to think of doing something about poverty and not limiting themselves to just succoring the poor (charity). Relying on **natural law** (God created the moral universe in a certain way that is binding on us all), the Church adopted a

position midway between socialism and capitalism. On the one hand, these popes rejected socialism and particularly Communism (after 1917 when the Bolsheviks came to power in Russia), which they condemned for its materialism and focus on class struggle and violence.

...the notion that class is naturally hostile to class, and that the wealthy and the working men are intended by nature to live in mutual conflict [is a great mistake.] Each needs the other: capital cannot do without labor, nor labor without capital. (*Rerum novarum*)

They held that the possession and enjoyment of **private property** was a natural right that could not be taken away, and that the natural focus of human life was the family.

On the other hand, they rejected **unrestrained capitalism**, which the encyclicals saw as the accumulation of economic power in fewer and fewer hands (trusts, monopolies, large corporations, etc.). The two encyclicals discarded the idea of classical economics that economic laws were inviolate and should not be touched:

...the right ordering of economic life cannot be left to a free competition of forces. For from this source, as from a poisoned spring, have originated and spread all the errors of individualist economic teaching. Destroying through forgetfulness or ignorance the social and moral character of economic life... (*Quadragesimo Anno*)

They insisted that there was a **natural order of justice** that constrained employers in their relations with their employees. "His [the employer's] great and principal duty is to give everyone what is just."

Leo XIII introduced the idea of the "**just wage**," which he defined as enough to support the worker and his entire family in a decent standard of living including savings; mothers should not be forced to work because of the low wages of their husbands.

...there underlies a dictate of natural justice more imperious and ancient than any bargain between man and man, namely, that wages ought not to be insufficient to support a frugal and well-behaved wage-earner. If through necessity or fear of a worse evil the workman accepts harder conditions because an employer or contractor will afford him no better, he is made the victim of force and injustice. (*RN*)

Catholic authorities were generally **favorable to state action** that would increase the security of workers (social security legislation), and they generally encouraged workers to join trade unions, so long as they were not associated with the 'godless' Socialists or Communists.

While remaining firmly anti-Communist after World War II, papal leadership generally favored the passage of social security legislation in European countries; and they promoted economic justice and social reform in Catholic Third World Countries.

The Council and Social Reform. Proponents of Church social activism at the Council built on these teachings. They pointed to biblical passages such as Luke 4:18 (“The Spirit of the Lord...has sent me to announce good news to the poor...”), Leviticus 25, 35-38 (“When your brother Israelite is reduced to poverty and cannot support himself..., you shall assist him as you would an alien or a stranger, and he shall live with you.”), and the famous Acts passage, Acts 4, 32-35:



Children in a Brazilian Favela (Slum)

“The whole body of believers was united in heart and soul. Not a man of them claimed any of his possessions as his own, but everything was held in common, while the apostles bore witness

with great power to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus....they had never a needy person among them, because all who had property

in land or houses sold it, brought the proceeds of the sale, and laid the money at the feet of the apostles; it was then distributed to any who stood in need.”

Catholic activists also cited Chapter I of the Council document *Lumen gentium*:

“...the Church, although she needs human resources to carry out her mission, is not set up to seek earthly glory, but to proclaim, and this by her own example, humility and self-denial. the Church encompasses with her love all those who are afflicted by human misery and she recognizes in those who are poor and who suffer, the image of her poor and suffering founder. She does all in her power to relieve their need and in them she strives to serve Christ.”

The Latin American bishops, exercising their right to meet as a regional conference of bishops, met in **Medellín in 1968** to develop a Catholic doctrine on poverty in Latin America. The conference’s seminal text was entitled “A Theology of Liberation”. They described the condition of Latin America as one of misery and injustice and they referred to it as a “**sinful situation...a rejection of the Lord.**” The bishops asserted that the wealthy countries of North America and Europe had enriched themselves at the expense of Latin America. In their famous statement they proclaimed it a duty of the Church to bring social justice to the poor in this world; they put forth “**a preferential option for the poor.**” The bishops urged Latin American Christians to be more involved in seeking social justice, preferably through activities such as education rather than the use of violence.

Liberation Theology. Theologians like Gustavo Gutierrez (Chile), Luis Segundo (Uruguay), and **Leonardo Boff** (Brazil) developed a theology of poverty and how to deal with it.

The “**kingdom**” that Jesus spoke of in the gospel was not just in the afterlife (traditional Christianity) or in the individual soul (19th century liberal Protestants), but also “in relationships among human beings” and in the pursuit of social justice in this world. Although the kingdom of God will never be fully realized in this world, it is the moral duty of Christians to push conditions in this world closer to the perfection of Christ. The real problem of Latin American theology lies



Leonardo Boff in the 1990s

in the slums, in the miserable neighborhoods of the destitute, in the factories, on the plantations – wherever an oppressed people live, suffer, struggle, and die.

Boff wrote that the Church in Latin America should be based on the values and needs of the common people and not on the structures and interests of the rich. The need for change can be understood “only by those who hunger for bread, and by those who hunger for justice in solidarity with those hungering for bread.” Theology should be written from the mindset of the poor; action should be based on the needs of the poor.



Colonial Jesuit church in Santiago, Chile

The Church should not deal just with the spiritual (otherworldly) needs of the people, but should **act (do)** to bring change toward an ideal of social justice. Sitting, talking and theorizing about theology is not enough; **praxis** matters – we must act. He insisted that there is a social and political dimension of faith, which is “action on behalf of justice, and participation in the transformation of the world.” He quoted the statement of the Medellín bishops:

We stand on the threshold of a new age in the history of our continent – an age burning with a desire for total emancipation, for liberation from all manner of servitude....

He felt that much of the misery of the poor in Latin America was due to the institutions of capitalism and private property. He said that indeed the mechanisms of poverty amount to a “**social sin**” that violates the dignity of the labor of millions of human beings. The rich and powerful are morally guilty of these sins. The Church must separate itself from the oppressive policies of the Latin American ruling classes and put itself in the forefront of the **political struggle** to change the system in favor of the poor. This effort might take the form of revolutionary political and social change, although he did not apparently call for a violent revolution.

The most immediate duty of the Church was the creation of **ecclesial base communities** – Church sponsored communities in poor areas that brought together the humble people for discussion and helped them organize their lives in their struggle for personal dignity. Aside from promoting their life of faith (often in the absence of priests who are spread very thin in Latin America), the base communities might organize cooperative projects to help one another. Boff and others emphasized that because Jesus himself was an uneducated carpenter, the interpretation of his message by peasants and workers is just as valid as that of professional theologians.

Such beliefs could hardly please the hierarchy of the Church. Boff had predictable conflicts with the conservatives around John Paul II, in part because he and other Liberation theologians derived some of their ideas from Marxist analysis (others such as Gustavo Gutierrez had a greater debt to Marxian ideas than Boff). After meeting with the pope’s “doctrinal watchdog” in 1985, **Cardinal Ratzinger**, he was for a short time forbidden to write, but it seems that the pope intervened to have him



Former Bishop Francis Quinn of Sacramento embodied the preferential option for the poor.

restored. Boff left the priesthood in the early 1990s but is still a religious and theological leader in Brazil. Despite the opposition of the Church hierarchy, liberation theology and base communities are still very active in many parts of Latin America – estimates run as high as 80,000 of them in Brazil alone.

The Papal Response. John Paul II then issued his own moderate but favorable document on **social reform** – ‘The Instruction on Christian Freedom and Liberation’ – in which as usual he tread the line between unbridled capitalism and the Marxist penchant for class struggle and revolutionary upheaval. He reiterated the Church’s obligations to help the poor; he denounced the **excesses of the capitalist system** and the miseries of the factory worker. He criticized what he called “the mere accumulation of goods and services” that leads to evils within developed societies and to injustices between rich and poorer nations. He criticized the civilization of consumption and **consumerism** that is constantly replacing old (often



John Paul II’s funeral mass in St. Peter’s Square in April 2005

perfectly functional) goods with new ones without a thought for the lasting value in an object and without considering whether the process may leave some other human beings poorer. Human beings are not served by the mere possession of goods unless they somehow contribute to the maturing and dignity of those persons.

He asserted that private property should be subordinated to the **common good**; he emphasized the importance of **solidarity** and cooperation among the poor and the different classes of society; he said that everyone should have access to the goods and services needed for a personal and family life of dignity and that all workers

should have a wage that affords them a “**human**” **standard of living**.

He did however denounce the use of **violence and class warfare** in the social struggle – both Marxist concepts – and he insisted that it was not valid to apply the idea of sin to social and political structures (the “**social sin**” of the liberation theologians). In the 1980s he forbade priests and other clergy from being directly involved in politics; his distaste for political priests was famously illustrated when he shook his finger at a priest active in the leftist Sandinista government, when the pope stepped off the papal plane in Nicaragua. Critics find that John Paul’s statements on social justice sound good, but they lack specifics on how to change the system to benefit the poor.

The rise of **neo-liberalism** in Latin America in the 1990s (free trade, encouragement of foreign investment, leaving economic initiative to private businessmen and employment to the mechanism of supply and demand) and beyond only emphasized further the Catholic Church’s critique of capitalism.

John Paul II’s Impact: Summary

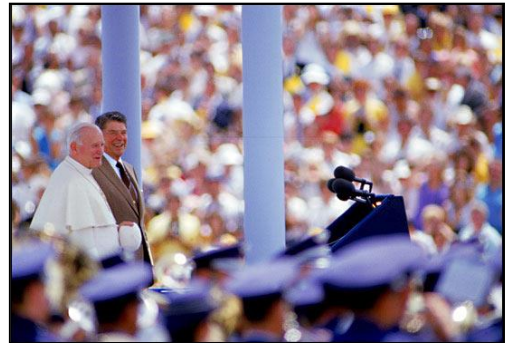
The **impact of John Paul II** (1979-2005) was to **stabilize the Church**, which is more settled and more united than it was in the 1970s, but also smaller. He was a moderate conservative, who valued the reforms of the Council (he had strongly advocated some of them!), but who wanted to avoid radical interpretations of them and to preserve the unity of the Catholic Church.

John Paul followed through on some of the initiatives of the Vatican Council – he **fought against political tyranny** (all commentators give him credit of playing a large role in the overthrow of communist regimes in central and eastern Europe) and he struggled for the dignity of the individual through his insistence on religious liberty.

He defended the liturgical reforms of Vatican II, including the vernacular liturgy.

He followed the Council directions in ‘Gaudium et Spes’ and he stepped out of the Vatican to engage the secular world and to dialogue extensively with other religions. He was a master of the **media** and an expert at presenting himself to the world in a favorable light. He **traveled** more than any other pope before him.

He reached out to other religious groups. He demonstrated his **ecumenism** by his meetings with orthodox and Anglican clergy and by his detailed and sincere apologies to the Jews for the anti-semitic past of the Church and to the Greek Orthodox for the sack of Constantinople (1204).



John Paul II and President Ronald Reagan in Miami in 1987

Those who are troubled by what they consider the Vatican’s overly zealous efforts to preserve a privileged status for Roman Catholicism among the world’s religions may temper their anxiety with pictures of him gathered with leaders of all the world’s great religions at Assisi, placing a prayer of atonement into a crack in Jerusalem’s Wailing Wall, visiting a mosque in Syria and kissing the Koran, welcoming the Dalai Lama at a private audience in the Vatican or enfolding the Chief Rabbi of Rome in his arms. (Stephen A. Privett, SJ)

He had a positive attitude toward **social reform** to benefit the poor and he refused to endorse unbridled capitalism. He militantly opposed atheistic Communism and denounced doctrines of violent revolution in Latin America and elsewhere. He squelched the clergy’s direct involvement in politics. Many think his opposition to birth control contradicted his commitment to a life of dignity for the poor.

He reined back many other “progressive” movements in the Church. He centralized the **authority** of the Church and he sometimes squelched non-conformity within the Church.

He rejected a more liberal attitude toward sexual morality – he insisted on the Church’s prohibition against abortion and euthanasia and he never took the ban on birth control off the books. On the other hand, he showed his Christian-humanitarian principles by consistently advocating a seamless ethic of life that included opposition to abortion and euthanasia, but also to capital punishment and both Iraq Wars.

He refused to allow married men or women serve in the priesthood. The Catholic Church is still run by men.

John Paul involved the Catholic Church in a **dialogue with the modern world** preached by the Council document “Gaudium et Spes”. The decree had urged the Church to “establish dialogue with the world and with men of all shades of opinion” (John Paul’s visits to dozens of countries during his pontificate, his seriousness about social justice, etc.) and to be willing to admit that through her leaders the Church had made serious errors (the rehabilitation of Galileo, his apologies to Jews and others). Some conservatives think that his ideas and action was too “human-centered” and not enough “Christ-centered”. His approach was quite different from that of Pius XII, who seemed to take his role as Vicar of Christ much less seriously than John Paul II.

Throughout his long reign, he was a media darling, and he hoped that his charisma and popularity would bring a return to the practice of Catholicism in **Europe**; this however did not happen, since attendance at

mass was far below the level of the 50s and still getting worse. Europe seems to have embraced a secularist ethic of mass consumption, leisure, and promotion of humanitarianism to the exclusion of religious faith and enthusiasm.

Benedict XVI

The new pope, **Benedict XVI** (Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger), seems to be a more conservative and less charismatic pope than his predecessor. He does not appear to have the sophisticated understanding of the media of his predecessor; he is prone to media gaffes such as his insults to Islam and his decision to reinstate an anti-semitic separatist bishop to communion in the Church. He seems more isolated than his predecessor and less prone to take proactive measure when confronted with crises such the sexual abuse of children by the clergy. He is reported to believe that the way to reinvent Catholicism in Europe is to emphasize uniformity and tradition, settle for a smaller, leaner Church of true believers, and wait for the masses to return. Since he is 80 years old, his pontificate will probably be short, but expect the direction of development in the Church to move further toward the conservative side. Stay tuned.



Benedict XVI in 2006