

Session 6

The Church in the Modern World

Gaudium et Spes

The Church is in solidarity with men

- The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the men 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.

Gaudium et Spes, §1

Gaudium et Spes

The paradox of modern man

- “Never has the human race enjoyed such an abundance of wealth, resources and economic power, and yet a huge proportion of the worlds citizens are still tormented by hunger and poverty, while countless numbers suffer from total illiteracy. ”

Gaudium et Spes, §4

Gaudium et Spes

The paradox of modern man

- “Moreover, man is becoming aware that it is his responsibility to guide aright the forces which he has unleashed and which can enslave him or minister to him. That is why he is putting questions to himself. ”

Gaudium et Spes, §9

Gaudium et Spes

God has been put aside

- “Unlike former days, the denial of God or of religion, or the abandonment of them, are no longer unusual and individual occurrences. For today it is not rare for such things to be presented as requirements of scientific progress or of a certain new humanism. In numerous places these views are voiced not only in the teachings of philosophers, but on every side they influence literature, the arts, the interpretation of the humanities and of history and civil laws themselves. As a consequence, many people are shaken.”

Gaudium et Spes, §7

Gaudium et Spes

The Church wants to offer the solution

- “Nevertheless, in the face of the modern development of the world, the number constantly swells of the people who raise the most basic questions of recognize them with a new sharpness: what is man? What is this sense of sorrow, of evil, of death, which continues to exist despite so much progress? What purpose have these victories purchased at so high a cost? What can man offer to society, what can he expect from it? What follows this earthly life? ”

Gaudium et Spes, §10

Gaudium et Spes

The Church wants to offer the solution

- “The Church firmly believes that Christ, who died and was raised up for all,(2) can through His Spirit offer man the light and the strength to measure up to his supreme destiny. Nor has any other name under the heaven been given to man by which it is fitting for him to be saved.(3) She likewise holds that in her most benign Lord and Master can be found the key, the focal point and the goal of man, as well as of all human history. The Church also maintains that beneath all changes there are many realities which do not change and which have their ultimate foundation in Christ, Who is the same yesterday and today, yes and forever.(4) Hence under the light of Christ, the image of the unseen God, the firstborn of every creature,(5) the council wishes to speak to all men in order to shed light on the mystery of man and to cooperate in finding the solution to the outstanding problems of our time.”

Gaudium et Spes, §10

Gaudium et Spes

The Church wants to offer the solution

- “ Man judges rightly that by his intellect he surpasses the material universe, for he shares in the light of the divine mind.”
Gaudium et Spes, §15
- “In the depths of his conscience, man detects a law which he does not impose upon himself, but which holds him to obedience. Always summoning him to love good and avoid evil, the voice of conscience when necessary speaks to his heart: do this, shun that. For man has in his heart a law written by God; to obey it is the very dignity of man; according to it he will be judged.(9) Conscience is the most secret core and sanctuary of a man. There he is alone with God”
Gaudium et Spes, §16

Gaudium et Spes

The Church wants to offer the solution

- “In our times a special obligation binds us to make ourselves the neighbor of every person without exception. and of actively helping him when he comes across our path, whether he be an old person abandoned by all, a foreign laborer unjustly looked down upon, a refugee, a child born of an unlawful union and wrongly suffering for a sin he did not commit, or a hungry person who disturbs our conscience by recalling the voice of the Lord, "As long as you did it for one of these the least of my brethren, you did it for me" (Matt. 25:40)”

Gaudium et Spes, §27

Gaudium et Spes

The response to evil

- “The teaching of Christ even requires that we forgive injuries,(12) and extends the law of love to include every enemy, according to the command of the New Law: "You have heard that it was said: Thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thy enemy. But I say to you: love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who persecute and calumniate you”

Gaudium et Spes, §28

Gaudium et Spes

The response to evil

- “Sacred Scripture teaches the human family what the experience of the ages confirms: that while human progress is a great advantage to man, it brings with it a strong temptation. For when the order of values is jumbled and bad is mixed with the good, individuals and groups pay heed solely to their own interests, and not to those of others. Thus it happens that the world ceases to be a place of true brotherhood. In our own day, the magnified power of humanity threatens to destroy the race itself”

Gaudium et Spes, §37

Gaudium et Spes

The response to evil

- “Hence if anyone wants to know how this unhappy situation can be overcome, Christians will tell him that all human activity, constantly imperiled by man's pride and deranged self-love, must be purified and perfected by the power of Christ's cross and resurrection. For redeemed by Christ and made a new creature in the Holy Spirit, man is able to love the things themselves created by God, and ought to do so.”

Gaudium et Spes, §37

Gaudium et Spes

Urgent problems - Marriage

- “The well-being of the individual person and of human and Christian society is intimately linked with the healthy condition of that community produced by marriage and family.”

Gaudium et Spes, §47

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Gaudium et Spes

Urgent problems - Marriage

- “Yet the excellence of this institution is not everywhere reflected with equal brilliance, since polygamy, the plague of divorce, so-called free love and other disfigurements have an obscuring effect. In addition, married love is too often profaned by excessive self-love, the worship of pleasure and illicit practices against human generation”

Gaudium et Spes, §47

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Gaudium et Spes

Urgent problems - Marriage

- “The intimate partnership of married life and love *has been established by the Creator and qualified by His laws*, and is rooted in the conjugal covenant of *irrevocable personal consent*.”

Gaudium et Spes, §48

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Gaudium et Spes

Urgent problems - Marriage

- “For the good of the spouses and their offspring as well as of society, the existence of the sacred bond no longer depends on human decisions alone. For, God Himself is the author of matrimony, endowed as it is with various benefits and purposes.”

Gaudium et Spes, §48

Gaudium et Spes

Urgent problems - Marriage

- “ By their very nature, the institution of matrimony itself and conjugal love are ordained for the procreation and education of children, and find in them their ultimate crown.”

Gaudium et Spes, §48

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Gaudium et Spes

Urgent problems - Marriage

- “Authentic married love is caught up into divine love and is governed and enriched by Christ's redeeming power and the saving activity of the Church, so that this love may lead the spouses to God with powerful effect and may aid and strengthen them in the sublime office of being a father or a mother. For this reason Christian spouses have a special sacrament by which they are fortified and receive a kind of consecration in the duties and dignity of their state”

Gaudium et Spes, §48

Gaudium et Spes

Urgent problems - Marriage

- “As a result, with their parents leading the way by example and family Prayer, children and indeed everyone gathered around the family hearth will find a readier path to human maturity, salvation and holiness. Graced with the dignity and office of fatherhood and motherhood, parents will energetically acquit themselves of a duty which devolves primarily on them, namely education and especially religious education.”

Gaudium et Spes, §48

Reminders

- Read Gaudium et Spes §1-11, Part II – Chapter I
- Documents can be found at
http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/
- Audio and handouts: www.newsfromgod.com