

VAIHARAI

(The Dawn)

A Theological Half-Yearly

Vol. 17, Nos.1&2

Jan.-Dec. 2012

Contents

Editorial	01
1. A New Vision of the Church according to Lumen Gentium - Dr. S. Devaraj	07
2. Gospel and Culture in and after the Second Vatican Council - Dr. Michael Amaladoss, S.J.	36
3. Vatican II and Interreligious Dialogue Dr. A. Pushparajan	49
4. Mary in the Second Vatican Council and After Dr. S. Santiago Raja	79
5. The Second Vatican Council and Biblical Renewal Dr. Lawrence Culas	102
6. The Role of Laity in the Indian Church after Fifty Years of Vat.II - Dr. A. Pushparajan	122
7. The Vision of Vatican II for the Renewal of the Life and Mission of the Church: Renewal of Religious Life Sr. Dr. Teresa Joseph, fma	155
8. Vatican II and the Theology of the Presbyterate Dr. Simon Sebastian	179
9. Vatican II and Liturgical Renewal Dr. Ayres Fernandes	197
10. Church: A Proclaiming Community - Church and her Mission according to Vatican II Dr. V. Gnanamuthu	225
11. Vatican II: An Epoch of Renewal in Moral Theology Dr. T. Victor	249

VAIHARAI

(The Dawn)

A Theological Half-Yearly

Vol. 17, Nos.1&2

Jan.-Dec. 2012

Editorial

I feel indeed very happy as I write this editorial to this special number of *Vaiharai*. The word “Vaiharai” means “the dawn” and it is very fitting that this theological journal has a special issue on Second Vatican Council, because it is that great Council which caused the luminous dawn in the Church which we are fortunate to experience. There can be no fitting time as this, just as the Church has elevated Pope John XXIII and John Paul II to the honours of the altars as Saints, John XXIII who convened Vatican II, and John Paul II who as the Polish Archbishop Karol Wojtyla made significant contributions to the Council and as Pope carried on the implementation of the Council’s vision and mission. The double canonization, first time ever in the 2000 year long history of the Church, is certainly a positive and appreciative seal on the new ways the Church has been treading on after the Council.¹ Another great Pope who is on the way to be beatified is Pope Paul VI who continued to preside over the Council after the demise of St. John XXIII and took up the implementation of the directives of the Council with faith-filled earnestness and Spirit filled courage.

The *Papa Buona* (the Good Pope) John XXIII surprised the world on 25 January 1959 when he announced during the Solemn Pontifical Mass on the Feast of St. Paul in the Basilica outside the walls of Rome that he would convene an Ecumenical Council. Elected as Pope in 1958 at the age of 77, he was supposedly thought to be only a “transition” Pope, whose reign would be short. But the announcement about the Council indicated that Pope

John XXIII would do something significantly important in the life of the Church. The actual preparations for the Council took more than two years, and included work by 10 specialized commissions, people for mass media and Christian Unity, and a Central Commission for overall coordination. With the Apostolic Constitution *Humanae Salutis*, dated 25 December 1961, St. John XXIII formally convened the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council.²

THREE REASONS FOR THE COUNCIL

John XXIII gave three reasons why he had decided to convoke Vatican II. In his memorable address to the opening session of the Council, *Gaudet Mater Ecclesia* (“the Mother Church Rejoices”),³ delivered on 11 October 1962, St. John XXIII declared, “The greatest concern of the ecumenical council is this: that the sacred deposit of Christian doctrine should be guarded and taught more efficaciously.”⁴ Therefore, “the primary reason”⁵ for calling the Council was doctrinal, i.e. to preserve and promote Church teaching more effectively and in effect it would mean to evangelize. Indeed the faith of the Church is not just to be preserved as a “deposit” but as something that is to be proclaimed. Later in this talk which was rather a well prepared “Key-Note Address,” the saintly Pope outlined briefly the ways of promoting Christian doctrine. He said the purpose was not just to repeat what has been defined in the Councils of Trent and Vatican I. “To have only such discussions there would have been no need to call an Ecumenical Council”, the Pope said.⁶ In the same paragraph, he calls for a fresh understanding in a new fervor ‘in an atmosphere of serenity’, understandable to the people of our times, for a teaching which should be primarily pastoral in character. The Pope makes a clear distinction between the doctrine and its expression and says, “For the deposit of faith, the truths contained in our venerable doctrine, are one thing; the fashion in which they are expressed, but with the same meaning and the same judgement, is another thing.”

St. Pope John XXIII's second reason for calling the Council was ecumenical, i.e. to launch a renewed effort to seek reunion with other Christians. He considered that the splits and divisions were not only a scandal to the world but also a hindrance to the very mission of the Church. Inspired by Christ's prayer for unity verbalized in the great parting prayer of Jesus, "that they may all be one" (Jn 17:20), the Council committed itself to the creation of a more salutary ecumenical spirit among the Christians. Spearheaded by the German Jesuit Biblical Scholar Cardinal Agustin Bea, who was the President of Secretariat of Christian Unity during the Council, the efforts for better understanding and unity among different Christian denominations became one of the significant hall-marks of Vatican II and undoubtedly one of the most enduring of its results. The Council aimed at achieving Christian unity not simply for a "churchy" sort of objective, rather, as an effort of the overall mission of the Church to seek the unity of the entire human family in Christ, which "is like a thread linking together all the documents of the Second Vatican Council".⁷

The third reason for convoking the Council was to adapt and update the Church's methods, practices and discipline in order to meet the challenges of modern times. *Aggiornamento* became the watchword of the Council. *Aggiornamento* is an Italian word meaning "updating" or "bringing up to date" and it set on cards vast changes in Church's life, reading the signs of the times. *Signs of the times* is a phrase strongly associated with Roman Catholicism in the era of the Second Vatican Council. It was taken to mean that the Church should listen to, and learn from, the world around it. In other words, it should learn to read the 'sign(s) of the times'. This phrase, taken from the Gospel of Matthew was used in a somewhat novel way by Pope John XXIII when he convoked the council. It came to signify a new understanding that the Church needed to attend more closely to the world if it was to remain faithful to its calling, and marked a significant shift in Church's theological methodology. John XXIII reminded everyone that as the bride of Christ, the Church has to be always young and full of vitality and

aggiornamento was the key. “This will be a demonstration of the Church, always living and always young, that feels the rhythm of time, that in every century beautifies herself with new splendor, radiates new light, achieves new conquests, all the while remaining identical to herself, faithful to the divine image impressed on her face by her divine Bridegroom, who loves her and protects her, Christ Jesus.”⁸

THE SIXTEEN DOCUMENTS

When St. John XXIII passed away and Cardinal Giovanni Battista Montini became Pope Paul VI, the latter too followed the aims and objectives of the Council as outlined by his predecessor. He presided over the remaining three sessions and approved and signed all the 16 Documents of the Church. The first aim was splendidly realized in the Council’s great Dogmatic Constitution of the Church, *Lumen Gentium*, in the equally outstanding Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, *Gaudium et Spes* and in the Decree on Evangelization of Peoples, *Ad Gentes*. In these documents the Church explains herself and her mission better than ever before and so the Second Vatican Council is sometimes called “the Council on the Church”.⁹

The epoch-making document, *Unitas Redintegratio*, was the answer to Pope John’s second aim, the promotion of unity in the Church. Since then the Centuries long skepticism within the Catholic Church about the protestant Churches has been replaced by a concrete commitment to the very call of Jesus Christ “That they all may be one”, expressed in the Church’s hands spread out in openness for dialogue.

The process of updating the practices and life of the Church, as called for by the third objective set before the Council, was initiated by the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium* and in many other pastoral documents such as *Presbyterorum Ordinis* (Ministry and Life of Priests), *Perfectae Caritatis* (Renewal of the Religious Life),

Optatam Totius (Priestly Training). In fact not only these, but all the four Constitutions¹⁰, all the nine Decrees¹¹ and all the three Declarations¹² were just in response to the demand set by all the three aims of the Council.

LET THE MOVEMENT GO ON

St. Paul's Seminary produced the first ever translation of the Documents in any Indian Language, when the documents were first published in Tamil in 1967. Now, after the year of Faith declared by Pope Benedict XVI and concluded by Pope Francis to Mark the 50 years of Vatican II, *Vaiharai* is proud to come out with this somewhat comprehensive special issue.

While I sincerely thank the authorities of *Vaiharai* who invited me to collect the articles and to edit them, I would ask the readers to join me in congratulating each and every one of the contributors who were all approached because of their expertise and contribution in the particular area. I should acknowledge that I have done mighty little by way of editorial, not only because of the greatness of the authors of the essays, but especially because the articles are all of good quality and have a sharp focus on the subject matter. It is therefore hoped that this special number will serve as a resource to anyone wishing to have in one volume all the main points of the teachings of second Vatican Council. I do hope that the readers will be happy with this volume. However, four other essays will be published at some time later on: *The Christology of Vatican II*, *Vatican II and Moral Theology*, *The Council's Call for Aggiornamento in Priestly Formation* and *Faith Formation Today*.

E. John Kulandai

John_kulandai@yahoo.com

(Endnotes)

¹Primo Piano, "I due papisanti: il sigillo del concilio al nuovocorsodellachiesa" in *Famiglia Christiana*, 17 (27 April 2014), 5

²Humanae Salutis, 25 December 1961 in AAS 52, 1962, 5-13

³Concilium Oecumenicum Vaticanum II Sollemniter Inchoatur, Allocutio Ioannis Pp. Xiii In Sollemni SS. Concilii Inauguratione, Die 11 Octobris mensis a. 1962, A.A.S., vol. LIV (1962), n. 14, pp. 786-796.

⁴*Gaudet Mater Ecclesia*, 11

⁵The original text has the subheading: "The Council's Principal Task: Defending and Promoting Doctrine"

⁶*Gaudet Mater Ecclesia*, 15

⁷Agustine Bea, "Church and Mankind" Geoffrey Chapman, 1967.

⁸Humanae Salutis, para 6 (of the English translation).

⁹ Kenneth D. Whitehead, "Fifty Years of Vatican II: Why the Council is as Relevant Today as Ever" in Catholic Answers Magazine, September October (2012), 34, Col 2.

¹⁰Four Constitutions: Dei Verbum (Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation), Lumen Gentium (Dogmatic Constitution on the Church), Gaudium et Spes (Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World), Sacrosanctum Concilium (Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy).

¹¹Nine Decrees: Ad Gentes (Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity), Optatam Totius (Decree on the Training of Priests), Orientalium Ecclesiarum (Decree on the Catholic Oriental Churches), Perfectae Caritatis (Decree on the Up-to-date Renewal of Religious Life), Presbyterorum Ordinis (Decree on the Life and Ministry of Priests), Unitatis Redintegratio (Decree on Ecumenism)

¹²Three Declarations: Dignitatis Humanae (Declaration on Religious Liberty), *Gravissimum Educationis* (Declaration on Christian Education), *Nostra Aetate* (Declaration on the Church's Relations with Non-Christian Religions)

Rev. F. E. John Kulandai is the guest editor of this double issue of *Vaiharai*. He belongs to the diocese of Kottar. At present he is the Secretary to National Commission for Vocations, Seminaries, Clergy & Religious at Conference of Catholic Bishops Of India (CCBI). We Appreciate and thank very much Rev. Fr. E. John Kulandai for this wonderful work. We wish him great success in all his endeavours.

Fr. V. Raphael

Editor