

**Mt. St. Michael  
CATHOLIC DOCTRINE CLASS**

**“A Study of *Tumultuous Times* – Part II”  
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**November 14, 2017**

***Part B – The Heresies of Vatican II, Part B – Ecumenism, Dialogue, Universal Salvation,*  
pp. 358-364**

**A. New concepts and definitions of “The Church”**

1. The Decree on Ecumenism *Unitatis Redintegratio*, by making no mention of the word “conversion” or “heresy,” effectively wiped out and replaced the Church’s past teaching on what constitutes membership in the Catholic Church.

Pope Pius XII, *Mystici Corporis Christi* (1943) (emphasis supplied)

22. Actually only those are to be included as members of the Church who have been baptized and profess the true faith, and who have not been so unfortunate as to separate themselves from the unity of the Body, or been excluded by legitimate authority for grave faults committed. “For in one spirit,” says the Apostle, “were we all baptized into one Body, whether Jews or Gentiles, whether bond or free (1 Cor. 12:13).” As therefore in the true Christian community there is only one Body, one Spirit, one Lord, and one Baptism, so there can be only one faith (Ephesians 4:5). And therefore if a man refuse to hear the Church let him be considered – so the Lord commands – as a heathen and a publican (Matthew 18:17). It follows that those are divided in faith or government cannot be living in the unity of such a Body, nor can they be living the life of its one Divine Spirit.

23. Nor must one imagine that the Body of the Church, just because it bears the name of Christ, is made up during the days of its earthly pilgrimage only of members conspicuous for their holiness, or that it consists only of those whom God has predestined to eternal happiness. It is owing to the Savior’s infinite mercy that place is allowed in His Mystical Body here below for those whom, of old, He did not exclude from the banquet. For not every sin, however grave it may be, is such as of its own nature to sever a man from the Body of the Church, as does schism or heresy or apostasy. Men may lose charity and divine grace through sin, thus becoming incapable of supernatural merit, and yet not be deprived of all life if they hold fast to faith and Christian hope, and if, illumined from above, they are spurred on by the interior promptings of the Holy Spirit to salutary fear and are moved to prayer and penance for their sins.

2. The Modernists knew they had to come up with a new way of defining “membership,” to placate the conservative bishops and to avoid looking too heretical themselves. They achieved this by:
  - a. Using the word “subsist” in defining the Catholic Church:  
*This Church constituted and organized in the world as a society, subsists in the Catholic Church, which is governed by the successor of Peter and by the Bishops in communion with him, although many elements of sanctification and of truth are found outside of its visible structure. These elements, as gifts belonging to the Church of Christ, are forces impelling*

toward catholic unity (Dogmatic Constitution Lumen Gentium, on the Church). Why not say, clearly and unequivocally, "The Church of Christ IS the Catholic Church"?

- b. Inventing "partial membership" and "full membership" (also known as "partial communion" and "full communion")

## **B. Dialogue with other religions**

1. Decree on Non-Christian Religions

2. Decree on Ecumenism:

*The brethren divided from us also use many liturgical actions of the Christian religion. These most certainly can truly engender a life of grace in ways that vary according to the condition of each church or community. These liturgical actions must be regarded as capable of giving access to the community of salvation.*

*It follows that the separated churches and communities as such, though we believe them to be deficient in some respects, have been by no means deprived of significance and importance in the mystery of salvation. For the spirit of Christ has not refrained from using them as means of salvation which derive their efficacy from the very fullness of grace and truth entrusted to the Catholic Church.*

*Specifics:*

- a. *first, every effort to avoid expressions, judgments and actions which do not represent the condition of our separated brethren with truth and fairness and so make mutual relations with them more difficult;*
- b. *then, "dialogue" between competent experts from different Churches and Communities. At these meetings, which are organized in a religious spirit, each explains the teaching of his Communion in greater depth and brings out clearly its distinctive features. In such dialogue, everyone gains a truer knowledge and more just appreciation of the teaching and religious life of both Communions. In addition, the way is prepared for cooperation between them in the duties for the common good of humanity which are demanded by every Christian conscience; and,*
- c. *wherever this is allowed, there is prayer in common.*
- d. *Finally, all are led to examine their own faithfulness to Christ's will for the Church and accordingly to undertake with vigor the task of renewal and reform.*

## **C. Universal Salvation**

1. Dr. Albert Outler
2. Yves Congar's "anonymous Christian"
3. Fr. Richard McBrien
4. John Paul II – many statements using the phrase "universal salvation". Here is one from *Pastores Gregis*, Oct. 16, 2003:

*In his zeal for mission, the Bishop should be seen as the servant and witness of hope. Mission is the sure index of our faith in Christ and his love for us: men and women of all times are thereby inspired to a new life motivated by hope. In proclaiming the Risen Lord, Christians present the One who inaugurates a new era of history and announce to the world the good news of a complete and universal salvation which contains in itself the pledge of a new world in which pain and injustice will give way to joy and beauty. At the beginning of a new millennium marked by a clearer awareness of the universality of salvation and a realization that the Gospel daily needs to be proclaimed anew, the Synodal Assembly raised an appeal that our commitment to mission should not be lessened but rather expanded, through ever more profound missionary cooperation.*