

Chapter 1 : Lumen gentium: excerpt

The eighth and final chapter of Lumen Gentium is "The Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God in the Mystery of Christ and the Church."

It has to be studied in terms of the conciliar action and documents that preceded and followed it. The first document approved at the end of the session was The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy. The centrality of sacred liturgy, especially eucharistic liturgy, as focal point and gathering place of the People of God, was reaffirmed. Henceforth, all conciliar discussion would be keenly aware of the liturgical changes involved for example, use of the vernacular and the goal to vivify and unite the Church in the liturgy. Article on Mary is the first official Vatican II statement on Mary and is quoted here in its entirety: In her the Church admires and exalts the most excellent fruit of redemption, and joyfully contemplates, as in a faultless image, that which she herself desires and hopes wholly to be. Mary is admired and exalted because she is the first of the redeemed. This statement places Mary among us, as one of us. The Church looks at Mary as an example of what it means to be a redeemed person. The document, however, speaks of the Church as a mother. The document asks the Church to be open to the world, show initiative in reaching the world, and see the value of media for proclaiming the Good News. The text indicates that the Church is separate from the world. Social communication is to help to break down the distance between the Church and the world. The Church must do all in her power to reach the world through liturgy, language, communication and evangelization. Simultaneous with Lumen Gentium, two additional documents were published at the end of the second session: Discussions on Mary paralleled the discussion on ecumenism. Both documents include Mary. Orientalium Ecclesiarum does so in the concluding article 30, in a pro forma manner: The council teaches appreciation for the heritage of the Christian East. To preserve this faith, these Churches have suffered, and still suffer much. Mother of God Theotokos and ever Virgin. The third Marian mention is in article 20; it articulates the ecumenical difficulties: The eight chapters of Lumen Gentium describes the Church as it exists and as it longs to be. By including her at this point in the documents, Mary is at the same time totally integrated into the mystery of Christ and the mystery of the Church. As Mary existed for Christ from the Incarnation, throughout his life, at his death, and for eternity, so Mary is the model of the Church as it hopes to be. Mary continues to assist the Church to fulfill its destiny. The Church has always venerated the apostles and martyrs "together with the Blessed Virgin Mary and the holy angels, with a special love, and has asked piously for the help of their intercession. LG 50 The chapter teaches, "Let the faithful be taught that our communion with these in heaven, provided that it is understood in the full light of faith, in no way diminishes the worship of adoration given to God the Father, through Christ, in the Spirit; on the contrary, it greatly enriches it. Mary is introduced as the woman Gal 4: Honor is due her because she "received the Word of God in her heart and in her body and gave Life [Christ] to the world. LG 54 She is a sign of comfort and of hope. LG 68 Chapter 8 incorporates the scriptural passages on Mary as the basis for Marian devotion. Introduction 52 - 54 II.

Chapter 2 : Commentary on Lumen Gentium

dogmatic constitution on the church lumen gentium solemnly promulgated by his holiness pope paul vi on november 21, chapter i. the mystery of the church.

An Examination of Subsistit in: A Profound Theological Perspective Fr. Karl Josef Becker, S. The last years have witnessed a deepening awareness among the faithful of the nature and universal mission of the Church. Various elements have contributed to this awareness: And subsequently, the Decree Unitatis Redintegratio offered directives for the ecumenical movement. These diverse elements have stimulated within Catholic thought a debate which has been both lively and enriching, but which has also been characterized by certain misunderstandings; most importantly, perhaps, regarding the meaning of the phrase subsistit in subsists in. In order to evaluate this contention we need to examine carefully the actual intention of the Council. The first paragraph begins with the expression Unicus Mediator Christus; while at the beginning of the second paragraph we find the expression unica Christi Ecclesia. The link between these two singularities is made manifest in a phrase from the first paragraph which states that Christ through his Church *veritatem et gratiam ad omnes diffundit*. The Council then expounds the constitution internal, the foundation and the perpetuation of the Church. Christ constituted the Church as a *realitas complexa* with two aspects, one visible and the other spiritual,⁷ giving it a hierarchical structure. This Church was founded upon Peter and the Apostles to whom has been entrusted its growth and guidance. This is the Church that we profess in the creed to be "one, holy, catholic and apostolic". This Church exists perpetually⁸ and subsists in the Catholic Church, governed by the Successor of Peter and the Bishops, "although many elements of sanctification and truth can be found outside her structure; such elements, as gifts properly belonging to the Church of Christ, are forces impelling towards Catholic unity" *Lumen Gentium*, n. That these descriptions of the Church of Christ indicate a single reality clear from the uniformity of the three expressions used in the text which each point to the same aspect: The unity of this reality is also indicated by the phrase *Haec Ecclesia* this Church, which is found twice in the second paragraph. What is being referred to here is the same reality referred to in the first paragraph, namely, the Church which we confess to be Catholic in the creed. It follows that each of these descriptions refers to the Church founded by Christ, the Church governed by the Pope and the Bishops, the Church which communicates grace and truth to all, the one Church of Christ which is the Catholic Church. The subordinate phrase, which begins *licet*, simply affirms that the presence of elements of sanctification and of truth outside the visible structure of the Catholic Church does not invalidate any of the previous statements. To understand why this term appeared in the text we need to examine the Acts of the Council. To interpret this Document correctly two points must be borne in mind. In the first place the schema states that the one Church of Christ is the Catholic Church: Secondly, the schema mentions the *elementa Ecclesiae* which reappear in *Lumen Gentium*, n. In chapter XI of the schema on ecumenism, *De Oecumenismo*, we find mention of *fratres separati*, *christiani separati* and *christiani dissidentes* always in the plural form, and also of *Communitates christianae*, either *seiunctae* or *separatae*, again always in the plural form, followed by the affirmation: And no one was of the opinion that the mention of the presence of these elements of the Church of Christ in other communities was a reason to change the term *est*. The process of development from *Aeternus Unigeniti* into *Lumen Gentium* was marked by a number of events, some of them quite surprising. In this context we are only able to describe those which touch upon and which are strictly necessary to our theme. Subsequently, in the first days of February he wrote another schema entitled *Lumen Gentium*. In this new schema, finished on 26 February and given to a subcommittee of the Doctrinal Commission as a basis for the work of the Council,¹³ the above-quoted sentence from *Aeternus Unigeniti*, n. But the *elementa Ecclesiae*, already mentioned in *Aeternus Unigeniti*, n. The import of the text is not, therefore, that the Church of Christ is to be found wherever there may be elements of the Church, and in the Catholic Church in a more profound way than elsewhere. Two numbers further on, the affirmation about the Holy Spirit working outside of the Catholic Church is repeated. This *textus emendatus* " which is decisive for us " was given back to the Fathers on 3 July and was again presented on the floor of the Council on the following 15 September, Number 8 previously

n. It is also necessary to quote four explanations from the Relatio Generalis on the individual numbers: The first refers to the title of the chapter and reads: The other explanations refer to n. Meeting of the Commission of 25 and 26 November Using information contained in the Relatio Generalis we are able to attempt an explanation for this surprising discrepancy. The Relatio Generalis shows that on 25 and 26 November the full Doctrinal Commission had once again been occupied with the text. At this meeting Mons. Philips explained the alteration: Curnam autem proponitur haec mutatio? Quia in Aula proposita est et etiam, quia Philips gives two reasons for the change of terminology from est to adest, both of which need to be examined. He justifies this new vocabulary, in the first place, with the words: Quia in Aula proposita est. In the discussions and in the animadversions scriptae, however, the term does not appear;³⁰ in fact, the whole discussion is around the word est, which is mentioned positively by some and is contradicted by no one. There is no discussion on this matter. Perhaps further study in the archives could throw more light on this point. In the second place Philips spoke to justify the phrase adest Ecclesia with a reference to adsunt alibi elementa, even though the text states elementa The report that was presented to the commission gave the same explanation in written form: Perhaps the term adsunt is used only to express the sense of the text and not what was actually written inveniantur. Following this discussion during the meeting of 26 November many of those present substituted adest with subsistit in their personal copies of the text, as is attested in their papers. The documentation in the secret Vatican Archives about this meeting and its subsequent discussion is rather limited. We have short summaries and also a tape recording of the discussion. The summaries tell us very little: Three points, however, are certain. Schauf wished to substitute adest with est, while S. Tromp responded by proposing subsistit in. It was Philips, the chairman of the discussion, who noted the acceptance of the term subsistit in. The change from adest to subsistit came, therefore, not from the Bishops but from members of the Commission, in the same way as the change from est to adest. It is not possible to identify the meaning that those present attributed to the term subsistit in. The tape recording is more informative. It shows that Schauf disagreed with the term adest because in his opinion it was imprecise. Returning to the Relatio Generalis of the meeting of 15 September we are now in a position to propose an explanation: The text of the Relatio Generalis still refers to the first modification from est to adest. In all likelihood, therefore, the redactor had not noticed that the last modification introduced by the Commission from adest, to subsistit should have required a revision of the text of the Relatio corresponding to the new terminology. This new terminology was introduced not because of the licet; it does not contradict it, but rather maintains it explicitly. Rather, it resulted from the opposition to adest which seemed too imprecise. The fact that the Relatio Generalis was not revisited has had the result that its explanation on this point no longer corresponds to the new formulation of the schema. In order to complete the picture we must briefly mention that in the meeting of 30 November the two most important amendments concerned subsistit and both were rejected. The Bishops never questioned the phrase "Ecclesia Christi est Ecclesia Catholica"; in other words, they clearly believed that the Church of Christ is identified with the Catholic Church. Attempts to explain or translate the term subsistit in which do not take into account this affirmation of faith cannot be justified from the Acts. From the very beginning S. Tromp had defended the full identity of the Church of Christ with the Catholic Church, maintaining and reinforcing this conviction in the Conciliar Schemas. It is unthinkable that, at the last moment, he changed his mind. Philips adjunct secretary to the Commission, wrote in his book " No explanation was ever given for the change from est to adest, and from adest to subsistit. It is possible that some saw in the term est the possibility of denying or of not giving sufficient attention to ecclesial elements in other Christian communities. But if this hypothesis is granted, then the justification for the change would be terminological and not doctrinal. We must now turn our attention to the Decree Unitatis Redintegratio in order to explain the above-mentioned conviction of the Bishops concerning the identity of the Church of Christ with the Catholic Church. It will be helpful to us, therefore, to investigate the Church vision which the Fathers expressed in Unitatis Redintegratio, both in the final text and in the preparatory discussions. After his death and glorious Resurrection the Lord Jesus sent the Spirit, whom he had promised, to call the Church the People of the New Covenant into the unity of faith, hope and charity. This Spirit is the principle of unity in the Church. In order to establish the Church, Christ entrusted to the College of the Apostles the munus docendi, regendi et sanctificandi. He chose Peter, among the Apostles, on

whom he would build his Church. Christ desires to make his Church grow and become perfect in unity by means of the Bishops, the successors of the Apostles, and the Successor of Peter. Thus, the *Ecclesia unicus Dei grex* makes its pilgrimage towards the heavenly Fatherland. After this description in paragraph 2, the third paragraph begins: It is very significant that the phrase *Dei Ecclesia* describes the Church which Christ entrusted to the Successors of Peter and the apostles. In paragraph 3 this Church is called *Ecclesia Catholica* five times. This one and only Church cf. The phrase *subsistere in* is the same as in *Lumen Gentium: Discussions According to the Acts* What emerges from the doctrinal part of *Unitatis Redintegratio* is confirmed by the discussions which are reported in the Acts. These discussions about *Unitatis Redintegratio* correspond in part with those concerning *Lumen Gentium*. But the response of the Doctrinal Commission to the changes adopted in the first chapter of *Unitatis Redintegratio* was distributed to the Fathers on 9 November and put to a vote the day after, thus after the discussions about *subsistit in*. To the numerous Bishops who thought that the Schema which had the same title as the final Document failed to give a sufficient exposition of Catholic doctrine, the secretary responded: *Unitatis Redintegratio* "final redaction" 2. Having spelled out in the first paragraph of n.

Chapter 3 : Vatican II on Mary and the Church

Magisterial Documents: Lumen Gentium 8 Dogmatic Constitution on the Church November 21, The full document is available on the internet. » ¿Brief History. The major Marian teaching of Vatican II, Lumen Gentium, chapter 8 does not stand alone.

Wishing in His supreme goodness and wisdom to effect the redemption of the world, "when the fullness of time came, God sent His Son, born of a woman Joined to Christ the Head and in the unity of fellowship with all His saints, the faithful must in the first place reverence the memory "of the glorious ever Virgin Mary, Mother of our God and Lord Jesus Christ". The Virgin Mary, who at the message of the angel received the Word of God in her heart and in her body and gave Life to the world, is acknowledged and honored as being truly the Mother of God and Mother of the Redeemer. Redeemed by reason of the merits of her Son and united to Him by a close and indissoluble tie, she is endowed with the high office and dignity of being the Mother of the Son of God, by which account she is also the beloved daughter of the Father and the temple of the Holy Spirit. Because of this gift of sublime grace she far surpasses all creatures, both in heaven and on earth. At the same time, however, because she belongs to the offspring of Adam she is one with all those who are to be saved. She is "the mother of the members of Christ. The Catholic Church, taught by the Holy Spirit, honors her with filial affection and piety as a most beloved mother. Wherefore this Holy Synod, in expounding the doctrine on the Church, in which the divine Redeemer works salvation, intends to describe with diligence both the role of the Blessed Virgin in the mystery of the Incarnate Word and the Mystical Body, and the duties of redeemed mankind toward the Mother of God, who is mother of Christ and mother of men, particularly of the faithful. It does not, however, have it in mind to give a complete doctrine on Mary, nor does it wish to decide those questions which the work of theologians has not yet fully clarified. Those opinions therefore may be lawfully retained which are propounded in Catholic schools concerning her, who occupies a place in the Church which is the highest after Christ and yet very close to us. The Sacred Scriptures of both the Old and the New Testament, as well as ancient Tradition show the role of the Mother of the Savior in the economy of salvation in an ever clearer light and draw attention to it. The books of the Old Testament describe the history of salvation, by which the coming of Christ into the world was slowly prepared. These earliest documents, as they are read in the Church and are understood in the light of a further and full revelation, bring the figure of the woman, Mother of the Redeemer, into a gradually clearer light. When it is looked at in this way, she is already prophetically foreshadowed in the promise of victory over the serpent which was given to our first parents after their fall into sin. With her, the exalted Daughter of Sion, and after a long expectation of the promise, the times are fulfilled and the new Economy established, when the Son of God took a human nature from her, that He might in the mysteries of His flesh free man from sin. The Father of mercies willed that the incarnation should be preceded by the acceptance of her who was predestined to be the mother of His Son, so that just as a woman contributed to death, so also a woman should contribute to life. That is true in outstanding fashion of the mother of Jesus, who gave to the world Him who is Life itself and who renews all things, and who was enriched by God with the gifts which befit such a role. It is no wonder therefore that the usage prevailed among the Fathers whereby they called the mother of God entirely holy and free from all stain of sin, as though fashioned by the Holy Spirit and formed as a new creature. Rightly therefore the holy Fathers see her as used by God not merely in a passive way, but as freely cooperating in the work of human salvation through faith and obedience. Irenaeus says, she "being obedient, became the cause of salvation for herself and for the whole human race. His Mother indeed kept these things to be pondered over in her heart. In the public life of Jesus, Mary makes significant appearances. This is so even at the very beginning, when at the marriage feast of Cana, moved with pity, she brought about by her intercession the beginning of miracles of Jesus the Messiah. Finally, she was given by the same Christ Jesus dying on the cross as a mother to His disciple with these words: But since it has pleased God not to manifest solemnly the mystery of the salvation of the human race before He would pour forth the Spirit promised by Christ, we see the apostles before the day of Pentecost "persevering with one mind in prayer with the women and Mary the Mother of Jesus, and with His brethren",

[24] and Mary by her prayers imploring the gift of the Spirit, who had already overshadowed her in the Annunciation. Finally, the Immaculate Virgin, preserved free from all guilt of original sin, [25] on the completion of her earthly sojourn, was taken up body and soul into heavenly glory, [26] and exalted by the Lord as Queen of the universe, that she might be the more fully conformed to her Son, the Lord of lords [27] and the conqueror of sin and death. On the Blessed Virgin and the Church There is but one Mediator as we know from the words of the apostle, "for there is one God and one mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a redemption for all". For all the salvific influence of the Blessed Virgin on men originates, not from some inner necessity, but from the divine pleasure. It flows forth from the superabundance of the merits of Christ, rests on His mediation, depends entirely on it and draws all its power from it. In no way does it impede, but rather does it foster the immediate union of the faithful with Christ. Predestined from eternity by that decree of divine providence which determined the incarnation of the Word to be the Mother of God, the Blessed Virgin was on this earth the virgin Mother of the Redeemer, and above all others and in a singular way the generous associate and humble handmaid of the Lord. She conceived, brought forth and nourished Christ. She presented Him to the Father in the temple, and was united with Him by compassion as He died on the Cross. In this singular way she cooperated by her obedience, faith, hope and burning charity in the work of the Savior in giving back supernatural life to souls. Wherefore she is our mother in the order of grace. This maternity of Mary in the order of grace began with the consent which she gave in faith at the Annunciation and which she sustained without wavering beneath the cross, and lasts until the eternal fulfillment of all the elect. Taken up to heaven she did not lay aside this salvific duty, but by her constant intercession continued to bring us the gifts of eternal salvation. Just as the priesthood of Christ is shared in various ways both by the ministers and by the faithful, and as the one goodness of God is really communicated in different ways to His creatures, so also the unique mediation of the Redeemer does not exclude but rather gives rise to a manifold cooperation which is but a sharing in this one source. The Church does not hesitate to profess this subordinate role of Mary. It knows it through unflinching experience of it and commends it to the hearts of the faithful, so that encouraged by this maternal help they may the more intimately adhere to the Mediator and Redeemer. By reason of the gift and role of divine maternity, by which she is united with her Son, the Redeemer, and with His singular graces and functions, the Blessed Virgin is also intimately united with the Church. Ambrose taught, the Mother of God is a type of the Church in the order of faith, charity and perfect union with Christ. The Son whom she brought forth is He whom God placed as the first-born among many brethren, [35] namely the faithful, in whose birth and education she cooperates with a maternal love. By her preaching she brings forth to a new and immortal life the sons who are born to her in baptism, conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of God. She herself is a virgin, who keeps the faith given to her by her Spouse whole and entire. Imitating the mother of her Lord, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, she keeps with virginal purity an entire faith, a firm hope and a sincere charity. But while in the most holy Virgin the Church has already reached that perfection whereby she is without spot or wrinkle, the followers of Christ still strive to increase in holiness by conquering sin. Piously meditating on her and contemplating her in the light of the Word made man, the Church with reverence enters more intimately into the great mystery of the Incarnation and becomes more and more like her Spouse. For Mary, who since her entry into salvation history unites in herself and re-echoes the greatest teachings of the faith as she is proclaimed and venerated, calls the faithful to her Son and His sacrifice and to the love of the Father. Seeking after the glory of Christ, the Church becomes more like her exalted Type, and continually progresses in faith, hope and charity, seeking and doing the will of God in all things. Hence the Church, in her apostolic work also, justly looks to her, who, conceived of the Holy Spirit, brought forth Christ, who was born of the Virgin that through the Church He may be born and may increase in the hearts of the faithful also. The Virgin in her own life lived an example of that maternal love, by which it behooves that all should be animated who cooperate in the apostolic mission of the Church for the regeneration of men. The Cult of the Blessed Virgin in the Church Clearly from earliest times the Blessed Virgin is honored under the title of Mother of God, under whose protection the faithful took refuge in all their dangers and necessities. The various forms of piety toward the Mother of God, which the Church within the limits of sound and orthodox doctrine, according to the conditions of time and place, and the nature

and ingenuity of the faithful has approved, bring it about that while the Mother is honored, the Son, through whom all things have their being [40] and in whom it has pleased the Father that all fullness should dwell, [41] is rightly known, loved and glorified and that all His commands are observed. This most Holy Synod deliberately teaches this Catholic doctrine and at the same time admonishes all the sons of the Church that the cult, especially the liturgical cult, of the Blessed Virgin, be generously fostered, and the practices and exercises of piety, recommended by the magisterium of the Church toward her in the course of centuries be made of great moment, and those decrees, which have been given in the early days regarding the cult of images of Christ, the Blessed Virgin and the saints, be religiously observed. Let them assiduously keep away from whatever, either by word or deed, could lead separated brethren or any other into error regarding the true doctrine of the Church. Let the faithful remember moreover that true devotion consists neither in sterile or transitory affection, nor in a certain vain credulity, but proceeds from true faith, by which we are led to know the excellence of the Mother of God, and we are moved to a filial love toward our mother and to the imitation of her virtues. Mary the sign of created hope and solace to the wandering people of God In the interim just as the Mother of Jesus, glorified in body and soul in heaven, is the image and beginning of the Church as it is to be perfected in the world to come, so too does she shine forth on earth, until the day of the Lord shall come, [44] as a sign of sure hope and solace to the people of God during its sojourn on earth. It gives great joy and comfort to this holy and general Synod that even among the separated brethren there are some who give due honor to the Mother of our Lord and Savior, especially among the Orientals, who with devout mind and fervent impulse give honor to the Mother of God, ever virgin. VI, allocutio in Concilio, die 4 dec. AAS 56 p. PG 98, A; In Dorm. PG 89, AB; Serm. PG 97, B. PG 87 3 , BD. PG 7, 9S9 A; Harvey, 2, PL 38, 33S; Serm. PG 33, AB. Lateranense anni , Can.

Chapter 4 : Lumen gentium - Wikipedia

Chapter 8, like other chapters of Lumen Gentium, is a compromise document. On October 29, , the vote was taken as to whether Mary should have her own document or should be included in the document on the Church.

Christ is the Light of nations. Because this is so, this Sacred Synod gathered together in the Holy Spirit eagerly desires, by proclaiming the Gospel to every creature, 1 to bring the light of Christ to all men, a light brightly visible on the countenance of the Church. Since the Church is in Christ like a sacrament or as a sign and instrument both of a very closely knit union with God and of the unity of the whole human race, it desires now to unfold more fully to the faithful of the Church and to the whole world its own inner nature and universal mission. This it intends to do following faithfully the teaching of previous councils. The present-day conditions of the world add greater urgency to this work of the Church so that all men, joined more closely today by various social, technical and cultural ties, might also attain fuller unity in Christ. The eternal Father, by a free and hidden plan of His own wisdom and goodness, created the whole world. His plan was to raise men to a participation of the divine life. Fallen in Adam, God the Father did not leave men to themselves, but ceaselessly offered helps to salvation, in view of Christ, the Redeemer "who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature". Already from the beginning of the world the foreshadowing of the Church took place. It was prepared in a remarkable way throughout the history of the people of Israel and by means of the Old Covenant. The Son, therefore, came, sent by the Father. It was in Him, before the foundation of the world, that the Father chose us and predestined us to become adopted sons, for in Him it pleased the Father to re-establish all things. By His obedience He brought about redemption. The Church, or, in other words, the kingdom of Christ now present in mystery, grows visibly through the power of God in the world. This inauguration and this growth are both symbolized by the blood and water which flowed from the open side of a crucified Jesus, 5 and are foretold in the words of the Lord referring to His death on the Cross: All men are called to this union with Christ, who is the light of the world, from whom we go forth, through whom we live, and toward whom our whole life strains. When the work which the Father gave the Son to do on earth 9 was accomplished, the Holy Spirit was sent on the day of Pentecost in order that He might continually sanctify the Church, and thus, all those who believe would have access through Christ in one Spirit to the Father. Uninterruptedly He renews it and leads it to perfect union with its Spouse. The mystery of the holy Church is manifest in its very foundation. The Lord Jesus set it on its course by preaching the Good News, that is, the coming of the Kingdom of God, which, for centuries, had been promised in the Scriptures: In the word, in the works, and in the presence of Christ, this kingdom was clearly open to the view of men. The Word of the Lord is compared to a seed which is sown in a field; 19 those who hear the Word with faith and become part of the little flock of Christ, 20 have received the Kingdom itself. Then, by its own power the seed sprouts and grows until harvest time. While it slowly grows, the Church strains toward the completed Kingdom and, with all its strength, hopes and desires to be united in glory with its King. In the old Testament the revelation of the Kingdom is often conveyed by means of metaphors. In the same way the inner nature of the Church is now made known to us in different images taken either from tending sheep or cultivating the land, from building or even from family life and betrothals, the images receive preparatory shaping in the books of the Prophets. The Church is a sheepfold whose one and indispensable door is Christ. This edifice has many names to describe it: As living stones we here on earth are built into it. It seeks and experiences those things which are above, where Christ is seated at the right-hand of God, where the life of the Church is hidden with Christ in God until it appears in glory with its Spouse. In the human nature united to Himself the Son of God, by overcoming death through His own death and resurrection, redeemed man and re-molded him into a new creation. In that Body the life of Christ is poured into the believers who, through the sacraments, are united in a hidden and real way to Christ who suffered and was glorified. There is only one Spirit who, according to His own richness and the needs of the ministries, gives His different gifts for the welfare of the Church. From all this it follows that if one member endures anything, all the members co-endure it, and if one member is honored, all the members together rejoice. He is the image of the invisible God and in Him all things came into being. He is

before all creatures and in Him all things hold together. He is the head of the Body which is the Church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He might have the first place. All the members ought to be molded in the likeness of Him, until Christ be formed in them. This He does in such a way that His work could be compared by the holy Fathers with the function which the principle of life, that is, the soul, fulfills in the human body. But, the society structured with hierarchical organs and the Mystical Body of Christ, are not to be considered as two realities, nor are the visible assembly and the spiritual community, nor the earthly Church and the Church enriched with heavenly things; rather they form one complex reality which coalesces from a divine and a human element. As the assumed nature inseparably united to Him, serves the divine Word as a living organ of salvation, so, in a similar way, does the visible social structure of the Church serve the Spirit of Christ, who vivifies it, in the building up of the body. These elements, as gifts belonging to the Church of Christ, are forces impelling toward catholic unity. Just as Christ carried out the work of redemption in poverty and persecution, so the Church is called to follow the same route that it might communicate the fruits of salvation to men. Christ Jesus, "though He was by nature God. Thus, the Church, although it needs human resources to carry out its mission, is not set up to seek earthly glory, but to proclaim, even by its own example, humility and self-sacrifice. Christ was sent by the Father "to bring good news to the poor, to heal the contrite of heart", 79 "to seek and to save what was lost". It does all it can to relieve their need and in them it strives to serve Christ. While Christ, holy, innocent and undefiled 81 knew nothing of sin, 82 but came to expiate only the sins of the people, 83 the Church, embracing in its bosom sinners, at the same time holy and always in need of being purified, always follows the way of penance and renewal. At all times and in every race God has given welcome to whosoever fears Him and does what is right. Rather has it pleased Him to bring men together as one people, a people which acknowledges Him in truth and serves Him in holiness. He therefore chose the race of Israel as a people unto Himself. With it He set up a covenant. Step by step He taught and prepared this people, making known in its history both Himself and the decree of His will and making it holy unto Himself. All these things, however, were done by way of preparation and as a figure of that new and perfect covenant, which was to be ratified in Christ, and of that fuller revelation which was to be given through the Word of God Himself made flesh. I will give my law in their bowels, and I will write it in their heart, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. For all of them shall know Me, from the least of them even to the greatest, saith the Lord. This was to be the new People of God. For those who believe in Christ, who are reborn not from a perishable but from an imperishable seed through the word of the living God, 88 not from the flesh but from water and the Holy Spirit, 89 are finally established as "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a purchased people. The state of this people is that of the dignity and freedom of the sons of God, in whose hearts the Holy Spirit dwells as in His temple. Its law is the new commandment to love as Christ loved us. Established by Christ as a communion of life, charity and truth, it is also used by Him as an instrument for the redemption of all, and is sent forth into the whole world as the light of the world and the salt of the earth. God gathered together as one all those who in faith look upon Jesus as the author of salvation and the source of unity and peace, and established them as the Church that for each and all it may be the visible sacrament of this saving unity. Christ the Lord, High Priest taken from among men, made the new people "a kingdom and priests to God the Father". But the faithful, in virtue of their royal priesthood, join in the offering of the Eucharist. It is through the sacraments and the exercise of the virtues that the sacred nature and organic structure of the priestly community is brought into operation. Taking part in the Eucharistic sacrifice, which is the fount and apex of the whole Christian life, they offer the Divine Victim to God, and offer themselves along with It. Strengthened in Holy Communion by the Body of Christ, they then manifest in a concrete way that unity of the people of God which is suitably signified and wondrously brought about by this most august sacrament. Those who approach the sacrament of Penance obtain pardon from the mercy of God for the offence committed against Him and are at the same time reconciled with the Church, which they have wounded by their sins, and which by charity, example, and prayer seeks their conversion. By the sacred anointing of the sick and the prayer of her priests the whole Church commends the sick to the suffering and glorified Lord, asking that He may lighten their suffering and save them; she exhorts them, moreover, to contribute to the welfare of the whole people of God by associating themselves freely with the passion and

death of Christ. Finally, Christian spouses, in virtue of the sacrament of Matrimony, whereby they signify and partake of the mystery of that unity and fruitful love which exists between Christ and His Church, help each other to attain to holiness in their married life and in the rearing and education of their children. By reason of their state and rank in life they have their own special gift among the people of God. The family is, so to speak, the domestic church. In it parents should, by their word and example, be the first preachers of the faith to their children; they should encourage them in the vocation which is proper to each of them, fostering with special care vocation to a sacred state. Fortified by so many and such powerful means of salvation, all the faithful, whatever their condition or state, are called by the Lord, each in his own way, to that perfect holiness whereby the Father Himself is perfect. That discernment in matters of faith is aroused and sustained by the Spirit of truth. It is exercised under the guidance of the sacred teaching authority, in faithful and respectful obedience to which the people of God accepts that which is not just the word of men but truly the word of God. It is not only through the sacraments and the ministries of the Church that the Holy Spirit sanctifies and leads the people of God and enriches it with virtues, but, "allotting his gifts to everyone according as He wills, He distributes special graces among the faithful of every rank. By these gifts He makes them fit and ready to undertake the various tasks and offices which contribute toward the renewal and building up of the Church, according to the words of the Apostle: Extraordinary gifts are not to be sought after, nor are the fruits of apostolic labor to be presumptuously expected from their use; but judgment as to their genuinity and proper use belongs to those who are appointed leaders in the Church, to whose special competence it belongs, not indeed to extinguish the Spirit, but to test all things and hold fast to that which is good. All men are called to belong to the new people of God. In the beginning God made human nature one and decreed that all His children, scattered as they were, would finally be gathered together as one. He it is who brings together the whole Church and each and every one of those who believe, and who is the well-spring of their unity in the teaching of the apostles and in fellowship, in the breaking of bread and in prayers. Since the kingdom of Christ is not of this world the Church or people of God in establishing that kingdom takes nothing away from the temporal welfare of any people. On the contrary it fosters and takes to itself, insofar as they are good, the ability, riches and customs in which the genius of each people expresses itself. Taking them to itself it purifies, strengthens, elevates and ennobles them. The Church in this is mindful that she must bring together the nations for that king to whom they were given as an inheritance, and to whose city they bring gifts and offerings. By reason of it, the Catholic Church strives constantly and with due effect to bring all humanity and all its possessions back to its source In Christ, with Him as its head and united in His Spirit. Through the common sharing of gifts and through the common effort to attain fullness in unity, the whole and each of the parts receive increase. Not only, then, is the people of God made up of different peoples but in its inner structure also it is composed of various ranks. This diversity among its members arises either by reason of their duties, as is the case with those who exercise the sacred ministry for the good of their brethren, or by reason of their condition and state of life, as is the case with those many who enter the religious state and, tending toward holiness by a narrower path, stimulate their brethren by their example. Between all the parts of the Church there remains a bond of close communion whereby they share spiritual riches, apostolic workers and temporal resources. For the members of the people of God are called to share these goods in common, and of each of the Churches the words of the Apostle hold good: And there belong to or are related to it in various ways, the Catholic faithful, all who believe in Christ, and indeed the whole of mankind, for all men are called by the grace of God to salvation. This Sacred Council wishes to turn its attention firstly to the Catholic faithful. Basing itself upon Sacred Scripture and Tradition, it teaches that the Church, now sojourning on earth as an exile, is necessary for salvation. Christ, present to us in His Body, which is the Church, is the one Mediator and the unique way of salvation. In explicit terms He Himself affirmed the necessity of faith and baptism and thereby affirmed also the necessity of the Church, for through baptism as through a door men enter the Church. Whosoever, therefore, knowing that the Catholic Church was made necessary by Christ, would refuse to enter or to remain in it, could not be saved.

Chapter 5 : Summary of Lumen Gentium | Shaun McAfee

Today we pick up right where we left off in Part II and finish our discussion on the Blessed Virgin Mary in Chapter 8 of the Second Vatican Council's Dogmatic Constitution on [] "Mondays with Mary" - The Blessed Virgin Mary in Lumen Gentium, Part II.

Photo by Jayson M. The newly canonized Pope St. Thus, the Second Vatican Council was conceived, a Council whose purpose was, essentially, to recover the spirit of the earliest Christian communities and the writings of the early Church Fathers, and reconcile those with the expectations and genuine needs of post-industrial, 20th-century man. Lumen Gentium, was solemnly promulgated on November 21, , by Pope Paul VI, who continued, and ultimately brought to conclusion, the Ecumenical Council that his predecessor had begun. Lumen Gentium has played a most significant role in defining the nature and mission of the Catholic Church in contemporary times, and has had a monumental impact on theology in general, ecclesiology in particular, and in the thought, preaching, and writing of the four post-conciliar popes—Paul VI, John Paul I, John Paul II, and Benedict XVI, all of whom participated in the Council. The essay that follows highlights some of the more salient themes that characterize Lumen Gentium. For the sake of accuracy, a summary of, and occasional brief commentary on, each of the eight chapters that comprise the document shall be presented in chronological order. This, then, constitutes the purpose and nature of the document. Having endured his passion and death, the risen Christ sent his Spirit in accordance with his promise to the disciples, that they would be led into the fullness of the truth. The nature of the kingdom of God, the Church established by Christ, is depicted by the Lord through metaphors. It is a flock of which God himself foretold he would be the shepherd cf. It is precisely in the partaking of the Eucharist, that we are united with both Christ and with each other: Thus, we are truly members of the one Mystical Body of Christ, with each individual having his own unique mission and charism. Chapter one continues on to speak of the Holy Spirit as the principle of unification which binds Christ, the head, to his Mystical Body, the Church. Thus, the Church, like Christ, is simultaneously human and divine, earthly and heavenly. 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 her visible structure. Thus, God elected and brought together his chosen people, the Israelites, revealing both himself and his will to them, and establishing covenant relationships with them. The end, or goal, is the kingdom of God, which Christ began on earth and which will be brought to perfection at the end of time, when Christ shall come again and return all of creation to the perfect glorification of the Father. While the document emphasizes the exalted priestly status of all the baptized, it does not neglect to distinguish between the different types of participation in the one Priesthood of Christ. While it is true that the ministerial priesthood of those who have received the sacrament of holy orders is interrelated with the common, royal priesthood of all the baptized, it is also true that these two types of participation differ in both essence and degree. But the faithful, in virtue of their royal priesthood, join in the offering of the Eucharist. Elaborating on the role played by the laity, Lumen Gentium goes on to state: Thus, both by reason of the offering and through Holy Communion, all take part in this liturgical service, not, indeed, all in the same way, but each in that way which is proper to himself. The entire body of the faithful, anointed as they are by the Holy One cf. That discernment in matters of faith is aroused and sustained by the Spirit of truth. Unfortunately, this reality of the *sensus fidelium* has, on not a few occasions, been misused by small factions of dissenters within the Church in an effort to effect changes in official Church teaching on fundamental issues of faith and morality which constitute the Sacred Deposit of Faith. The Magisterium has no authority to change or alter any of the truths of the faith; rather, her function as the official teaching body of the Church is to preserve, safeguard, and articulate these truths which God himself has revealed—he who can neither deceive nor be deceived. Section 13 of the document addresses one of the single most misunderstood and controversial dogmas of the Church: Based on this reformulation, we are in a better position to examine the issue from the perspective of the conciliar document, which sheds a great and necessary light on an essential

tenet of the faith that could otherwise very easily be misunderstood. This passage is important to keep in mind as we continue through the remainder of this section. Christ, present to us in his body, which is the Church, is the one Mediator and the unique way of salvation. In explicit terms, he himself affirmed the necessity of faith and baptism cf. Salvation simply cannot take place outside of Christ, who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Thus, if any person of any faith tradition receives, from God, the tremendous grace of eternal salvation at the pivotal moment of death, it will necessarily have been through, with, and in Christ and his Mystical Body, the Church, which cannot be separated from Christ, her head, regardless of the subjectively held theological beliefs of individuals throughout the course of their earthly existence. But, those seeking full unity with the Church and in the process of being initiated into the Church are, for that reason, embraced fully by the Church, and are already considered to be united in a full communion. Section 15 of the document states the following: This section emphasizes the faith and zeal of Christians who accept the authority of Sacred Scripture as a norm for belief in the truths it contains, and adherence to the way of life that it presents. Also, the Sacred Synod points out that through a valid sacramental baptism, whereby water and the Trinitarian formula are used, such individuals are truly incorporated into the Mystical Body of Christ, and are thereby consecrated in Christ. Due to the profound importance of this issue, it is the opinion of this author that readers read for themselves precisely what the Sacred Synod has to say in its own words: In the first place amongst these, there are the Mohammedans, who, professing to hold the faith of Abraham, along with us adore the one and merciful God, who on the last day will judge mankind. Nor is God far distant from those who, in shadows and images, seek the unknown God, for it is he who gives to all men life and breath and all things, and as Saviour wills that all men be saved. Those also can attain to salvation who, through no fault of their own, do not know the Gospel of Christ or his Church, yet sincerely seek God, and, moved by grace, strive by their deeds to do his will as it is known to them through the dictates of conscience. Nor does Divine Providence deny the helps necessary for salvation to those who, without blame on their part, have not yet arrived at an explicit knowledge of God and, with his grace, strive to live a good life. It would thus seem, according to the most doctrinally significant document that the Church has issued in modern times regarding her own nature and mission, salvation is, indeed, available to every human person who, with sincerity of heart, seeks the truth and strives to live a morally upright life in accord with the dictates of his or her conscience, even if, through no fault of their own, they have not come to an explicit knowledge of Christ and the Gospel. And it is the humble opinion of this author, that the Incarnation, in which the Second Person of the Holy Trinity forever united a true human nature to his divine nature, reconciling all of humanity with its Creator, bestowed upon each human person a dignity so profound as to make available the possibility of redemption. Granted, it will only be through the Mystical Body of Christ, the Church, that everyone deemed worthy shall receive this free, unmerited gift, purchased with the Blood of Christ Jesus on the Cross. Rather, over the course of time, the Church has come to a deeper awareness of how she ought to understand herself in relation to both Christ, her Head, and the many peoples who, in some mysterious way, comprise varying degrees of membership in the Church. The Sacred Synod, however, anticipating such a reaction to the explanation provided in the Constitution, concludes this section with the following remarks: And behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world. Wherefore she makes the words of the Apostle her own: By the proclamation of the Gospel, she prepares her hearers to receive and profess the faith. She gives them the dispositions necessary for baptism, snatches them from the slavery of error and of idols, and incorporates them in Christ so that, through charity, they may grow up into full maturity in Christ. Through her work, whatever good is in the minds and hearts of men, whatever good lies latent in the religious practices and cultures of diverse peoples, is, not only saved from destruction, but is also cleansed, raised up, and perfected unto the glory of God, the confusion of the devil, and the happiness of man. The obligation of spreading the faith is imposed on every disciple of Christ, according to his state. The first and second paragraphs of this chapter explain that this Council intends to continue in the tradition and teaching established in the First Vatican Council, and explains that just as Christ was sent forth by the Father, so too, the Apostles whose successors are the bishops were sent forth by Christ to serve his Church as shepherds, with St. The Apostles knew that their divinely appointed mission of spreading and governing the Kingdom of God on earth through their teaching of the Gospel, the

source of life for the Church, was to continue on well past their own death, and even to the consummation of the world. They appointed successors who would continue this apostolic tradition and ministry, with these latter being imbued with the very same charism of the original twelve. Besides the sacred power of sanctifying, the Episcopate has additionally received from Christ the powers of teaching and governing. In virtue of his office, that is, as Vicar of Christ and pastor of the whole Church, the Roman Pontiff has full, supreme, and universal power over the Church. Speaking on the preeminent role of the charism of infallibility that is enjoyed by the pope, the document states in no uncertain terms, the following: And, therefore, his definitions, of themselves, and not from the consent of the Church, are justly styled irreformable, since they are pronounced with the assistance of the Holy Spirit, promised to him in blessed Peter, and, therefore, they need no approval of others, nor do they allow an appeal to any other judgment. Priests, although they do not possess the highest degree of the priesthood, and although they are dependent on the bishops in the exercise of their power, nevertheless, they are united with the bishops in sacerdotal dignity. In other words, through their function as cooperators with their bishops as members of the holy presbyterate, through which they truly act in Persona Christi, priests make it possible for the faithful to exercise the common, royal priesthood, that was bestowed upon all the faithful in their baptism, having been baptized into the priestly, prophetic, and kingly offices of Christ. At the lowest level of the hierarchy are the deacons, whose proper ministry is one of service. We might say that just as the priest is an assistant to his bishop, the deacon, likewise, is an assistant to the priest. Concerning their particular mission within the Church, the document states: Today there are numerous permanent deacons who carry out a legitimate ministry of service within the Latin Rite Church. The document provides the following answer: These faithful are, by baptism, made one body with Christ and are constituted among the People of God; they are, in their own way, made sharers in the priestly, prophetic, and kingly functions of Christ; and they carry out, for their own part, the mission of the whole Christian people in the Church and in the world. Therefore, the chosen People of God is one: Chapter four highlights the tremendous significance of the lay vocation and apostolate: Through their baptism and confirmation, all are commissioned to that apostolate by the Lord himself. Moreover, by the sacraments, especially holy Eucharist, that charity toward God and man, which is the soul of the apostolate, is communicated and nourished. Now the laity is called in a special way to make the Church present and operative in those places and circumstances where only through them can it become the salt of the earth. Finally, toward the end of this chapter, the most significant and salient activity of the laity is addressed. Anyone who has taken an orthodox course on the sacraments of the Church should know that the Holy Eucharist is, unequivocally, the central sacrament prefigured in the first Passover. However, they should also know that each of the other six sacraments, while imparting specific graces, and while possessing their own specific purpose, exist for the greater purpose of bringing the faithful to a full participation in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. For example, while it is entirely true that the sacrament of penance exists for the purpose of forgiving the Christian faithful of their sins and imparting additional graces that will assist them in overcoming that same sin in the future, ultimately, we may state that penance exists for the sake of forgiving mortal sins that would otherwise prevent the baptized from participating fully in the sacred banquet of the Holy Eucharist, as one cannot receive Holy Communion if he or she is in a state of mortal sin. Or take baptism, for instance. In short, the Eucharist is the central sacrament toward which each of the other sacraments tends. This having been said, we are in a better position to understand the tremendous significance of the following passage contained in the chapter on the laity: At the moment we received this most necessary and exalted sacrament, we became participants in the Priestly, Prophetic, and Kingly offices of Christ, the Eternal High Priest. Additionally, we became adopted sons and daughters of the Eternal Father, and brothers and sisters of Christ Jesus. In the words of St. In this way, the work of redemption was begun, and it was completed when Christ, from the altar of the Cross, offered himself as the perfect, unblemished Sacrifice to the perfect glory of God the Father in atonement for the sins of all of humanity. This profound reality of the redemption of humanity by Christ on the Cross historically took place approximately 2,000 years ago, on Calvary, once for all. Further, we, the laity, through our baptism into the Mystical Body of Christ, and as members of the Royal Priesthood of Christ are truly called to exercise our priestly office through our participation in the Eucharistic Liturgy, offering ourselves, our prayers, works,

joys, and especially our sufferings, through, with, and in Christ, to the perfect glory of God the Father and for the salvation of sinful souls. This, then, is the exalted vocation of all of the laity, the Priestly People of God, and is, by no means, to be taken for granted. Thankfully, Chapter Five puts a definitive end to that mode of thought: As it turns out, even janitors, housekeepers and garbage collectors, despite their secular and downright dirty jobs, are called to the same heights of holiness that, prior to the Council, were thought to belong singularly to priests and religious. He did this that he might sanctify her. Therefore, in the Church, everyone, whether belonging to the hierarchy, or being cared for by it, is called to holiness, according to the saying of the Apostle: To emphasize this universal call to holiness, it continues: He himself stands as the author and consummator of this holiness of life: In order that the faithful may reach this perfection, they must use their strength accordingly as they have received it, as a gift from Christ. They must follow in his footsteps and conform themselves to his image seeking the will of the Father in all things. They must devote themselves with all their being to the glory of God and the service of their neighbor. Finally, it sums up everything that had been previously stated, reinforcing the concept of the universal call to holiness: These people follow the poor Christ, the humble and cross-bearing Christ in order to be worthy of being sharers in his glory.

Chapter 6 : Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (Lumen Gentium)

THE THEOLOGICAL CONTEXT OF AND INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTER 8 OF Lumen Gentium Although this paper presents both history and theology, it is intended to be primarily theological.

The mystery of the holy Church is already brought to light in the way it was founded. For the Lord Jesus inaugurated his Church by preaching the Good News, that is, the coming of the kingdom of God, promised over the ages in the scriptures: This kingdom shone out before men in the word, in the works and in the presence of Christ. The word of the Lord is compared to a seed which is sown in a field Mk. Then, by its own power the seed sprouts and grows until the harvest cf. The miracles of Jesus also demonstrate that the kingdom has already come on earth: But principally the kingdom is revealed in the person of Christ himself, Son of God and Son of Man, who came "to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many" Mk. When Jesus, having died on the cross for men, rose again from the dead, he was seen to be constituted as Lord, the Christ, and as Priest for ever cf. Henceforward the Church, endowed with the gifts of her founder and faithfully observing his precepts of charity, humility and self-denial, receives the mission of proclaiming and establishing among all peoples the kingdom of Christ and of God, and she is, on earth, the seed and the beginning of that kingdom. While she slowly grows to maturity, the Church longs for the completed kingdom and, with all her strength, hopes and desires to be united in glory with her king. In the Old Testament the revelation of the kingdom is often made under the forms of symbols. In similar fashion the inner nature of the Church is now made known to us in various images. Taken either from the life of the shepherd or from cultivation of the land, from the art of building or from family life and marriage, these images have their preparation in the books of the prophets. The Church is, accordingly, a sheepfold, the sole and necessary gateway to which is Christ Jn. It is also a flock, of which God foretold that he would himself be the shepherd cf. The Church is a cultivated field, the tillage of God 1 Cor. On that land the ancient olive tree grows whose holy roots were the prophets and in which the reconciliation of Jews and Gentiles has been brought about and will be brought about again Rom. That land, like a choice vineyard, has been planted by the heavenly cultivator Mt. Yet the true vine is Christ who gives life and fruitfulness to the branches, that is, to us, who through the Church remain in Christ without whom we can do nothing Jn. Often, too, the Church is called the building of God 1 Cor. The Lord compared himself to the stone which the builders rejected, but which was made into the corner stone Mt. On this foundation the Church is built by the apostles cf. This edifice has many names to describe it: This temple, symbolized in places of worship built out of stone, is praised by the Fathers and, not without reason, is compared in the liturgy to the Holy City, the New Jerusalem. As living stones we here on earth are built into it 1 Pet. It is this holy city that is seen by John as it comes down out of heaven from God when the world is made anew, prepared like a bride adorned for her husband Apoc. The Church, further, which is called "that Jerusalem which is above" and "our mother" Gal. It is she whom Christ "loved and for whom he delivered himself up that he might sanctify her" Eph. It is she whom he unites to himself by an unbreakable alliance, and whom he constantly "nourishes and cherishes" Eph 5: It is she whom, once purified he willed to be joined to himself, subject in love and fidelity cf. While on earth she journeys in a foreign land away from the Lord cf. She seeks and is concerned about those things which are above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God, where the life of the Church is hidden with Christ in God until she appears in glory with her Spouse cf. In the human nature united to himself, the son of God, by overcoming death through his own death and resurrection, redeemed man and changed him into a new creation cf. For by communicating his Spirit, Christ mystically constitutes as his body those brothers of his who are called together from every nation. In that body the life of Christ is communicated to those who believe and who, through the sacraments, are united in a hidden and real way to Christ in his passion and glorification Through baptism we are formed in the likeness of Christ: Really sharing in the body of the Lord in the breaking of the eucharistic bread, we are taken up into communion with him and with one another. In this way all of us are made members of his body cf. As all the members of the human body, though they are many, form one body, so also are the faithful in Christ cf. There is only one Spirit who, according to his own richness and the needs of the ministries, gives his

different gifts for the welfare of the Church cf. Among these gifts the primacy belongs to the grace of the apostles to whose authority the Spirit himself subjects even those who are endowed with charisms cf. Giving the body unity through himself, both by his own power and by the interior union of the members, this same Spirit produces and stimulates love among the faithful. From this it follows that if one member suffers anything, all the members suffer with him, and if one member is honored, all the members together rejoice cf. The head of this body is Christ. He is the image of the invisible God and in him all things came into being. He is before all creatures and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body which is the Church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things he might hold the primacy cf. By the greatness of his power he rules heaven and earth, and with his all-surpassing perfection and activity he fills the whole body with the riches of his glory cf. All the members must be formed in his likeness, until Christ be formed in them cf. For this reason we, who have been made like to him, who have died with him and risen with him, are taken up into the mysteries of his life, until we reign together with him cf. On earth, still as pilgrims in a strange land, following in trial and in oppression the paths he trod, we are associated with his sufferings as the body with its head, suffering with him, that with him we may be glorified cf. From him "the whole body, supplied and built up by joints and ligaments, attains a growth that is of God" Col. He continually provides in his body, that is, in the Church, for gifts of ministries through which, by his power, we serve each other unto salvation so that, carrying out the truth in love, we may through all things grow unto him who is our head cf. In order that we might be unceasingly renewed in him cf. Consequently, his work could be compared by the Fathers to the function that the principle of life, the soul, fulfills in the human body. Christ loves the Church as his bride, having been established as the model of a man loving his wife as his own body cf. The one mediator, Christ, established and ever sustains here on earth his holy Church, the community of faith, hope and charity, as a visible organization through which he communicates truth and grace to all men. But, the society structured with hierarchical organs and the mystical body of Christ, the visible society and the spiritual community, the earthly Church and the Church endowed with heavenly riches, are not to be thought of as two realities. On the contrary, they form one complete reality which comes together from a human and a divine element. For this reason the Church is compared, not without significance, to the mystery of the incarnate Word. As the assumed nature, inseparably united to him, serves the divine Word as a living organ of salvation, so, in a somewhat similar way, does the social structure of the Church serve the Spirit of Christ who vivifies it, in the building up of the body cf. This Church, constituted and organized as a society in the present world, subsists in the Catholic Church, which is governed by the successor of Peter and by the bishops in communion with him. Nevertheless, many elements of sanctification and of truth are found outside its visible confines. Since these are gifts belonging to the Church of Christ, they are forces impelling towards Catholic unity. View complete text of Lumen Gentium.

Chapter 7 : Chapter VIII of Lumen Gentium â€“ TOM PERNA

Chapter 8: Our Lady. I. Introduction Paragraph 52 Paragraph 53 Paragraph 54 II. The Function of the Blessed Virgin in the Plan of Salvation Lumen Gentium (full.

It flows forth from the superabundance of the merits of Christ, rests on his mediation, depends entirely on it and draws all its power from it. It does not hinder in any way the immediate union of the faithful with Christ but on the contrary fosters it. The predestination of the Blessed Virgin as Mother of God was associated with the incarnation of the divine word: Thus, in a wholly singular way she cooperated by her obedience, faith, hope and burning charity in the work of the Savior in restoring supernatural life to souls. For this reason she is a mother to us in the order of grace. This motherhood of Mary in the order of grace continues uninterruptedly from the consent which she loyally gave at the Annunciation and which she sustained without wavering beneath the cross, until the eternal fulfillment of all the elect. Taken up to heaven she did not lay aside this saving office but by her manifold intercession continues to bring us the gifts of eternal salvation. The Church does not hesitate to profess this subordinate role of Mary, which it constantly experiences and recommends to the heartfelt attention of the faithful, so that encouraged by this maternal help they may the more closely adhere to the Mediator and Redeemer. Mary, type or figure of the Church By reason of the gift and role of her divine motherhood, by which she is united with her Son, the Redeemer, and with her unique graces and functions, the Blessed Virgin is also intimately united to the Church. Ambrose taught, the Mother of God is a type of the Church in the order of faith, charity, and perfect union with Christ. The Son whom she brought forth is he whom God placed as the first born among many brethren Rom. By preaching and baptism she brings forth sons, who are conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of God, to a new and immortal life. She herself is a virgin, who keeps in its entirety and purity the faith she pledged to her spouse. Imitating the mother of her Lord, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, she keeps intact faith, firm hope and sincere charity. And so they turn their eyes to Mary who shines forth to the whole community of the elect as the model of virtues. Devoutly meditating on her and contemplating her in the light of the Word made man, the Church reverently penetrates more deeply into the great mystery of the Incarnation and becomes more and more like her spouse. Having entered deeply into the history of salvation, Mary, in a way, unites in her person and re-echoes the most important doctrines of the faith: Seeking after the glory of Christ, the Church becomes more like her lofty type, and continually progresses in faith, hope and charity, seeking and doing the will of God in all things. The Church, therefore, in her apostolic work too, rightly looks to her who gave birth to Christ, who was thus conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin, in order that through the Church he could be born and increase in the hearts of the faithful. Kleutgen, *textus reformatus De mysterio Verbi incarnati*, cap. PG 97, A. PG 98, BC. PG 96, BC - A. *Adiutricem populi*, 5 sept. ASS 15 , P. *Ad diem illum*, 2 febr. *Miserentissimus*, 8 maii AAS 20 P. AAS 38 P. PL , AB. Paris, Mazarine, , fol. PL 38, ; etc. PL , A. *Nicaenum II*, anno Mansi 13, ; *Denz. Pius XII, Nuntius radioph.* AAS 46 P. *Ad coeli Reginam*, 11 oct.

Chapter 8 : Lumen Gentium 8 | Catholic Sensibility

Lumen Gentium, the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, is one of the four Constitutions of the Second Vatican Council and commonly regarded as the central document of Vatican II. Chapter Five on the Universal Call to Holiness is indeed the heart of this document and therefore, of the entire council.

Hearing the word of God with reverence and proclaiming it with faith, the sacred synod takes its direction from these words of St. What we have seen and heard we announce to you, so that you may have fellowship with us and our common fellowship be with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ" 1 John 1: Therefore, following in the footsteps of the Council of Trent and of the First Vatican Council, this present council wishes to set forth authentic doctrine on divine revelation and how it is handed on, so that by hearing the message of salvation the whole world may believe, by believing it may hope, and by hoping it may love. In His goodness and wisdom God chose to reveal Himself and to make known to us the hidden purpose of His will see Eph. Through this revelation, therefore, the invisible God see Col. This plan of revelation is realized by deeds and words having an inner unity: By this revelation then, the deepest truth about God and the salvation of man shines out for our sake in Christ, who is both the mediator and the fullness of all revelation. God, who through the Word creates all things see John 1: Planning to make known the way of heavenly salvation, He went further and from the start manifested Himself to our first parents. Then after their fall His promise of redemption aroused in them the hope of being saved see Gen. Then, at the time He had appointed He called Abraham in order to make of him a great nation see Gen. Through the patriarchs, and after them through Moses and the prophets, He taught this people to acknowledge Himself the one living and true God, provident father and just judge, and to wait for the Savior promised by Him, and in this manner prepared the way for the Gospel down through the centuries. Then, after speaking in many and varied ways through the prophets, "now at last in these days God has spoken to us in His Son" Heb. For He sent His Son, the eternal Word, who enlightens all men, so that He might dwell among men and tell them of the innermost being of God see John 1: Jesus Christ, therefore, the Word made flesh, was sent as "a man to men. To see Jesus is to see His Father John For this reason Jesus perfected revelation by fulfilling it through his whole work of making Himself present and manifesting Himself: Moreover He confirmed with divine testimony what revelation proclaimed, that God is with us to free us from the darkness of sin and death, and to raise us up to life eternal. The Christian dispensation, therefore, as the new and definitive covenant, will never pass away and we now await no further new public revelation before the glorious manifestation of our Lord Jesus Christ see 1 Tim. To make this act of faith, the grace of God and the interior help of the Holy Spirit must precede and assist, moving the heart and turning it to God, opening the eyes of the mind and giving "joy and ease to everyone in assenting to the truth and believing it. Through divine revelation, God chose to show forth and communicate Himself and the eternal decisions of His will regarding the salvation of men. That is to say, He chose to share with them those divine treasures which totally transcend the understanding of the human mind. In His gracious goodness, God has seen to it that what He had revealed for the salvation of all nations would abide perpetually in its full integrity and be handed on to all generations. Therefore Christ the Lord in whom the full revelation of the supreme God is brought to completion see 2 Cor. This Gospel had been promised in former times through the prophets, and Christ Himself had fulfilled it and promulgated it with His lips. This commission was faithfully fulfilled by the Apostles who, by their oral preaching, by example, and by observances handed on what they had received from the lips of Christ, from living with Him, and from what He did, or what they had learned through the prompting of the Holy Spirit. The commission was fulfilled, too, by those Apostles and apostolic men who under the inspiration of the same Holy Spirit committed the message of salvation to writing. And so the apostolic preaching, which is expressed in a special way in the inspired books, was to be preserved by an unending succession of preachers until the end of time. Therefore the Apostles, handing on what they themselves had received, warn the faithful to hold fast to the traditions which they have learned either by word of mouth or by letter see 2 Thess. This tradition which comes from the Apostles develop in the Church with the help of the Holy Spirit. This happens through the contemplation and study made by believers, who treasure

these things in their hearts see Luke, 2: For as the centuries succeed one another, the Church constantly moves forward toward the fullness of divine truth until the words of God reach their complete fulfillment in her. The words of the holy fathers witness to the presence of this living tradition, whose wealth is poured into the practice and life of the believing and praying Church. Hence there exists a close connection and communication between sacred tradition and Sacred Scripture. For both of them, flowing from the same divine wellspring, in a certain way merge into a unity and tend toward the same end. For Sacred Scripture is the word of God inasmuch as it is consigned to writing under the inspiration of the divine Spirit, while sacred tradition takes the word of God entrusted by Christ the Lord and the Holy Spirit to the Apostles, and hands it on to their successors in its full purity, so that led by the light of the Spirit of truth, they may in proclaiming it preserve this word of God faithfully, explain it, and make it more widely known. Consequently it is not from Sacred Scripture alone that the Church draws her certainty about everything which has been revealed. Therefore both sacred tradition and Sacred Scripture are to be accepted and venerated with the same sense of loyalty and reverence. Sacred tradition and Sacred Scripture form one sacred deposit of the word of God, committed to the Church. Holding fast to this deposit the entire holy people united with their shepherds remain always steadfast in the teaching of the Apostles, in the common life, in the breaking of the bread and in prayers see Acts 2, 42, Greek text , so that holding to, practicing and professing the heritage of the faith, it becomes on the part of the bishops and faithful a single common effort. This teaching office is not above the word of God, but serves it, teaching only what has been handed on, listening to it devoutly, guarding it scrupulously and explaining it faithfully in accord with a divine commission and with the help of the Holy Spirit, it draws from this one deposit of faith everything which it presents for belief as divinely revealed. Those divinely revealed realities which are contained and presented in Sacred Scripture have been committed to writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. For holy mother Church, relying on the belief of the Apostles see John Therefore "all Scripture is divinely inspired and has its use for teaching the truth and refuting error, for reformation of manners and discipline in right living, so that the man who belongs to God may be efficient and equipped for good work of every kind" 2 Tim. However, since God speaks in Sacred Scripture through men in human fashion, 6 the interpreter of Sacred Scripture, in order to see clearly what God wanted to communicate to us, should carefully investigate what meaning the sacred writers really intended, and what God wanted to manifest by means of their words. To search out the intention of the sacred writers, attention should be given, among other things, to "literary forms. The interpreter must investigate what meaning the sacred writer intended to express and actually expressed in particular circumstances by using contemporary literary forms in accordance with the situation of his own time and culture. The living tradition of the whole Church must be taken into account along with the harmony which exists between elements of the faith. It is the task of exegetes to work according to these rules toward a better understanding and explanation of the meaning of Sacred Scripture, so that through preparatory study the judgment of the Church may mature. For all of what has been said about the way of interpreting Scripture is subject finally to the judgment of the Church, which carries out the divine commission and ministry of guarding and interpreting the word of God. In Sacred Scripture, therefore, while the truth and holiness of God always remains intact, the marvelous "condescension" of eternal wisdom is clearly shown, "that we may learn the gentle kindness of God, which words cannot express, and how far He has gone in adapting His language with thoughtful concern for our weak human nature. In carefully planning and preparing the salvation of the whole human race the God of infinite love, by a special dispensation, chose for Himself a people to whom He would entrust His promises. First He entered into a covenant with Abraham see Gen. To this people which He had acquired for Himself, He so manifested Himself through words and deeds as the one true and living God that Israel came to know by experience the ways of God with men. Then too, when God Himself spoke to them through the mouth of the prophets, Israel daily gained a deeper and clearer understanding of His ways and made them more widely known among the nations see Ps. The plan of salvation foretold by the sacred authors, recounted and explained by them, is found as the true word of God in the books of the Old Testament: The principal purpose to which the plan of the old covenant was directed was to prepare for the coming of Christ, the redeemer of all and of the messianic kingdom, to announce this coming by prophecy see Luke Now the books of the Old Testament,

in accordance with the state of mankind before the time of salvation established by Christ, reveal to all men the knowledge of God and of man and the ways in which God, just and merciful, deals with men. These books, though they also contain some things which are incomplete and temporary, nevertheless show us true divine pedagogy. Christians should receive them with reverence. God, the inspirer and author of both Testaments, wisely arranged that the New Testament be hidden in the Old and the Old be made manifest in the New. The word of God, which is the power of God for the salvation of all who believe see Rom. For when the fullness of time arrived see Gal. Christ established the kingdom of God on earth, manifested His Father and Himself by deeds and words, and completed His work by His death, resurrection and glorious Ascension and by the sending of the Holy Spirit. Having been lifted up from the earth, He draws all men to Himself see John. This mystery had not been manifested to other generations as it was now revealed to His holy Apostles and prophets in the Holy Spirit see Eph. Now the writings of the New Testament stand as a perpetual and divine witness to these realities. It is common knowledge that among all the Scriptures, even those of the New Testament, the Gospels have a special preeminence, and rightly so, for they are the principal witness for the life and teaching of the incarnate Word, our savior. The Church has always and everywhere held and continues to hold that the four Gospels are of apostolic origin. For what the Apostles preached in fulfillment of the commission of Christ, afterwards they themselves and apostolic men, under the inspiration of the divine Spirit, handed on to us in writing: Holy Mother Church has firmly and with absolute constancy held, and continues to hold, that the four Gospels just named, whose historical character the Church unhesitatingly asserts, faithfully hand on what Jesus Christ, while living among men, really did and taught for their eternal salvation until the day He was taken up into heaven see Acts 1: Indeed, after the Ascension of the Lord the Apostles handed on to their hearers what He had said and done. Besides the four Gospels, the canon of the New Testament also contains the epistles of St. Paul and other apostolic writings, composed under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, by which, according to the wise plan of God, those matters which concern Christ the Lord are confirmed, His true teaching is more and more fully stated, the saving power of the divine work of Christ is preached, the story is told of the beginnings of the Church and its marvelous growth, and its glorious fulfillment is foretold. She has always maintained them, and continues to do so, together with sacred tradition, as the supreme rule of faith, since, as inspired by God and committed once and for all to writing, they impart the word of God Himself without change, and make the voice of the Holy Spirit resound in the words of the prophets and Apostles. Therefore, like the Christian religion itself, all the preaching of the Church must be nourished and regulated by Sacred Scripture. For in the sacred books, the Father who is in heaven meets His children with great love and speaks with them; and the force and power in the word of God is so great that it stands as the support and energy of the Church, the strength of faith for her sons, the food of the soul, the pure and everlasting source of spiritual life. Consequently these words are perfectly applicable to Sacred Scripture: Easy access to Sacred Scripture should be provided for all the Christian faithful. That is why the Church from the very beginning accepted as her own that very ancient Greek translation of the Old Testament which is called the septuagint; and she has always given a place of honor to other Eastern translations and Latin ones especially the Latin translation known as the vulgate. But since the word of God should be accessible at all times, the Church by her authority and with maternal concern sees to it that suitable and correct translations are made into different languages, especially from the original texts of the sacred books. And should the opportunity arise and the Church authorities approve, if these translations are produced in cooperation with the separated brethren as well, all Christians will be able to use them. The bride of the incarnate Word, the Church taught by the Holy Spirit, is concerned to move ahead toward a deeper understanding of the Sacred Scriptures so that she may increasingly feed her sons with the divine words. Therefore, she also encourages the study of the holy Fathers of both East and West and of sacred liturgies. Catholic exegetes then and other students of sacred theology, working diligently together and using appropriate means, should devote their energies, under the watchful care of the sacred teaching office of the Church, to an exploration and exposition of the divine writings. Sacred theology rests on the written word of God, together with sacred tradition, as its primary and perpetual foundation. By scrutinizing in the light of faith all truth stored up in the mystery of Christ, theology is most powerfully strengthened and constantly rejuvenated by that word. For the Sacred Scriptures contain

the word of God and since they are inspired, really are the word of God; and so the study of the sacred page is, as it were, the soul of sacred theology. Therefore, all the clergy must hold fast to the Sacred Scriptures through diligent sacred reading and careful study, especially the priests of Christ and others, such as deacons and catechists who are legitimately active in the ministry of the word. This is to be done so that none of them will become "an empty preacher of the word of God outwardly, who is not a listener to it inwardly" 4 since they must share the abundant wealth of the divine word with the faithful committed to them, especially in the sacred liturgy. The sacred synod also earnestly and especially urges all the Christian faithful, especially Religious, to learn by frequent reading of the divine Scriptures the "excellent knowledge of Jesus Christ" Phil. And let them remember that prayer should accompany the reading of Sacred Scripture, so that God and man may talk together; for "we speak to Him when we pray; we hear Him when we read the divine saying. This can be done through translations of the sacred texts, which are to be provided with the necessary and really adequate explanations so that the children of the Church may safely and profitably become conversant with the Sacred Scriptures and be penetrated with their spirit. Furthermore, editions of the Sacred Scriptures, provided with suitable footnotes, should be prepared also for the use of non-Christians and adapted to their situation. Both pastors of souls and Christians generally should see to the wise distribution of these in one way or another. In this way, therefore, through the reading and study of the sacred books "the word of God may spread rapidly and be glorified" 2 Thess. Just as the life of the Church is strengthened through more frequent celebration of the Eucharistic mystery, similar we may hope for a new stimulus for the life of the Spirit from a growing reverence for the word of God, which "lasts forever" Is.

Chapter 9 : An Examination of Subsistit in

The following explanatory note prefixed to the modi of chapter three of the schema The Church is given to the Fathers, and it is according to the mind and sense of this note that the teaching contained in chapter three is to be explained and understood.

Posted on 19 August by catholicinsensibility The classic Vatican II definition of the Church, a complexity beyond a simple expression of hierarchy, social structures, and mystic reality in God. First, the witness of the recent popes: Christ, the one Mediator, established and continually sustains here on earth His holy Church, the community of faith, hope and charity, as an entity with visible delineation Leo XIII, *Litt. Sapientiae christianae*, 10 Jan. Satis cognitum, 29 Jun. But, the society structured with hierarchical organs and the Mystical Body of Christ, are not to be considered as two realities, nor are the visible assembly and the spiritual community, nor the earthly Church and the Church enriched with heavenly things; rather they form one complex reality which coalesces from a divine and a human element. *Humani generis*, 12 Aug. AAS 42 p. For this reason, by no weak analogy, it is compared to the mystery of the incarnate Word. As the assumed nature inseparably united to Him, serves the divine Word as a living organ of salvation, so, in a similar way, does the visible social structure of the Church serve the Spirit of Christ, who vivifies it, in the building up of the body. And the witness of the early Church, including that mysterious and often debated principle of subsistence. What does it mean? This is the one Church of Christ which in the Creed is professed as one, holy, catholic and apostolic, Cfr. *Sancta catholica apostolica Romana Ecclesia*.: These elements, as gifts belonging to the Church of Christ, are forces impelling toward catholic unity. And some clarification about the mission of the Church. Recalling that *Gaudium et Spes* is still a year away from promulgation, we get a clear teaching on whom the Church associates with, namely Christ, on his path with the poor, the humble, the lost, the suffering, the sinners: Just as Christ carried out the work of redemption in poverty and persecution, so the Church is called to follow the same route that it might communicate the fruits of salvation to all people. Thus, the Church, although it needs human resources to carry out its mission, is not set up to seek earthly glory, but to proclaim, even by its own example, humility and self-sacrifice. It does all it can to relieve their need and in them it strives to serve Christ. While Christ, holy, innocent and undefiled *Hebr.* Clearly, *Lumen Gentium* 8 builds on Catholic social teaching of the past century. It also reinforces an outward looking mission. After a shower of Scripture quotes, people want to boil down the message of Vatican II into something around which they can wrap their arms. This section does it.