



REFLECTIONS

Before the Scottish Parliament, March 19, 2009

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In the dawning Age of Global Dialogue we humans are increasingly aware that we cannot know everything about anything! This is true for the physical sciences: no one would claim that s/he knows everything about biology, physics, or chemistry. Likewise no one would claim that we know everything about the human sciences, sociology, or anthropology, or—good heavens!—economics! And each of these disciplines is endlessly complicated.

However, when it comes to the most comprehensive, the most complicated, discipline of all — theology or religion — billions of us still claim that we know all there is to know, and whoever thinks differently is simply mistaken! But if it is true that we always can only know partially in any limited study of reality, as in the physical or human sciences, surely it is all the more true of religion, which is an “explanation of the ultimate meaning of life, and how to live accordingly, based on some notion of the Transcendent.” We must then be even more modest in our claims of knowing better in this most comprehensive field of knowledge, religion, “the ultimate meaning of life.”

Because of the work of great thinkers like the recently deceased Hans Georg Gadamer (1900-2002) and Paul Ricoeur (1913-2005), we now also realize that no knowledge can ever be completely objective, for we the knowers are an integral part of the process of knowing. In brief, all knowledge is interpreted knowledge. Even in its simplest form, whether I claim that the Bible is God’s truth, or the Qur’an, or the Gita, or indeed, the interpretation of the Pope, or John Knox, it is I who affirm that it is so. But if neither I nor anyone can know everything about anything, including most of all the most complicated claims to truth, religion, how do I proceed to search for an ever fuller grasp of reality, of truth?

The clear answer is Dialogue. In Dialogue I talk with you primarily so I can learn what I cannot perceive from my place in the world, with my personal lenses of knowing. Through your eyes I see what I cannot see from my side of the globe, and vice versa. Hence, Dialogue is not just a way to gain more information. Dialogue is a whole new way of thinking! We are painfully leaving behind the Age of Monologue, and are with squinting eyes entering into the Age of Global Dialogue!

FROM THE EDITOR’S DESK

Playing Chicken with the Vatican

As strange as the Vatican usually is, right now it is even more bizarre than usual. We have a panzer-cardinal, now a panzer-pope, sitting in his office writing books and encyclicals about how loving God is, and how terrible “modernism,” which to him equals relativism, is. Unobtrusively, even smilingly, he makes sure that anyone

who might disagree with his medieval tenets is hounded out of the Church. He has brought Archbishop Raymond Burke in to head the Apostolic Signatura to make sure that anyone daft enough to think the Vatican dispenses justice gets “Vatican Justice” instead. He has brought his favorite student, Cardinal William Levada, to Rome to do his old job, running the CDF (the Congregation for the Defense of the Faith) to pursue, persuade, prosecute and persecute anyone who seems capable of disagreeing with his views.

Theologians are learning that the new and improved CDF’s bulldog tenacity means that one punishment is not necessarily all there is. The renowned Jesuit theologian, Roger Haight, was forbidden by the CDF to teach theology in a Catholic school, so he joined the faculty at Union Theological Seminary in New York, which is non-denominational. Oh no, said the CDF, that’s too much exposure and - gasp - influence. Not only may you not teach anything anywhere but you may not write or publish on theology (and we might extend that beyond theology). Haight, being a Jesuit bound by a fourth vow, of obedience to the pope, will obey.

These are standard orders made through the standard Catholic pipeline for silencing those who might be said to question core dogmas and might influence Catholics to think in ways the magisterium fears.

But then there is the very strange case of the alleged “excommunication” of Father Roy Bourgeois MM.

Pope John Paul II was vehemently against the ordination of women to the priesthood or even to the diaconate. He wrote an Apostolic Letter entitled “*Ordinatio Sacerdotalis*” stating, contrary to some strong historical evidence, that the Church had not and could not ordain women to the priesthood - it didn’t have the power. Furthermore, he forbade even the mere discussion of women’s ordination. That the Pope can rule what Catholics can or cannot discuss is news to us all! The then-Cardinal Ratzinger even chimed in with “and that’s infallible!” which of course does not make it so, as he well knows.

Once Pope, Benedict spelled it out: anyone participating in or facilitating the ordination of a woman to the Roman Catholic priesthood was automatically excommunicated. As Father Tom Doyle explained in his brilliant article in the last issue of *ARCC Light*, there are only seven offenses in Canon Law that bring automatic excommunication and cooperating in the ordination of a woman to the priesthood ain’t one of them. In August of 2008, Roy Bourgeois, whose devotion to justice has been proven in his 22-year fight to close the torturers’ training School of the Americas, participated in the ceremony ordaining Janice Sevre-Duszynska to the priesthood by preaching the homily. October 21st he received a letter from the CDF informing him that if he did not recant his action, his belief and public statements in support of the ordination of women within thirty days, he would be excommunicated. Two weeks later, Fr. Bourgeois sent a very polite letter, which he made public, explaining why he could not disown his actions. The text of that letter can be found at <http://nconline3.org/drupal/?q=node2545>. Not long

thereafter a Curial cardinal was asked Fr. Bourgeois' status. His answer? "He has excommunicated himself." How does one excommunicate oneself? The only answer even in the ballpark would be if Fr. Bourgeois committed heresy by denying a solemnly defined dogma, which we know he has not done.

Needless to say, this situation has given rise to a great deal of discussion on Catholic reformers' lists. I posited the idea a few weeks ago that it was in the Vatican's interest to convince dissenters that they had somehow excommunicated themselves because then they would leave the Church themselves, i.e., the hierarchy would not have to do the "dirty deed" because the dissenter did it for them. Upon further reflection, I think there is more to the maneuver.

I have no doubt that the CDF would love to send a notice to Fr. Bourgeois through his Maryknoll superiors that he has been excommunicated for violation of Canon X, but they can't because he has not violated a canon punishable by excommunication – AND THEY KNOW IT !

Whether by bureaucratic zeal or blundering or lack of thought they have made a threat they cannot deliver in the present circumstances. So, to save face ("la bella figura" in Italian) and perhaps achieve their end, they are trying this bluff - "He's already excommunicated. He did it to himself." So far, Fr. Bourgeois has not blinked. He is a courageous man and he has the support of thousands or hundreds of thousands of Catholics who see no reason women should not be ordained and see a lot of reasons that Rome's high-handed treatment of this good man and these women who seek to serve the People of God, should be condemned.

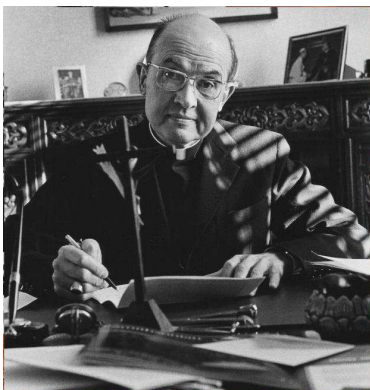
It is possible, perhaps even likely, that Rome will find another way of silencing, defrocking or excommunicating Fr. Bourgeois. However, the lesson is there for all to see. Slowly Rome will be forced to accept that the old methods or even new ones that are equally high-handed, just won't work anymore.

Christine M. Roussel

RIP Archbishop Jean Jadot

by John Alonzo Dick - Louvain, Belgium

One of the Vatican's most memorable representatives in the United States, Archbishop Jean Jadot, died on January 21, 2009, in Brussels, at the age of 99. He was instrumental in creating a more progressive church in America in the 1970s and is considered the architect of the U.S. "pastoral church." He recommended the appointment of a generation of bishops who were enthusiastic about the Second Vatican Council and espoused causes that dismayed many U.S. conservatives.

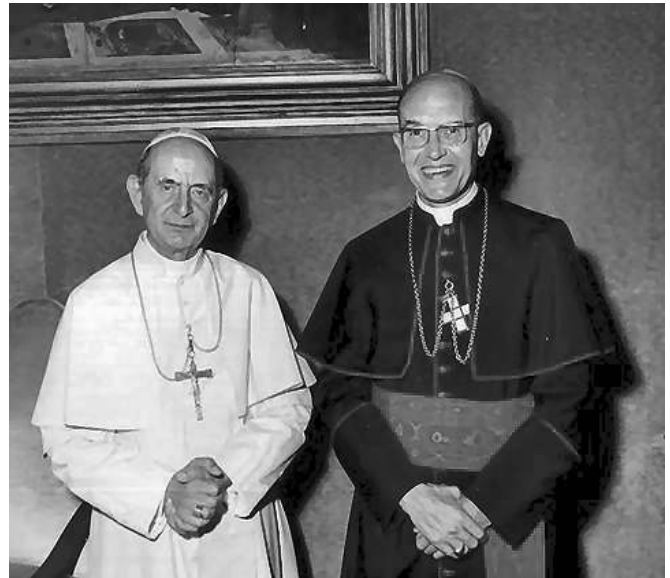


Jean Jadot was born in Brussels on November 23, 1909 and came from a well-known aristocratic Belgian family of engineers, bankers, and railroad builders. When he was sixteen, Jadot entered the Catholic University of Louvain where he was recognized as an exceptionally bright student, completing his doctorate in philosophy *magna cum laude* by 1930. Four years later he

was ordained a priest and began his pastoral ministry in a suburban Brussels parish. Subsequently, he held several chaplaincies for youth and the military, including eight years as chaplain for the Congolese troops in the then-Belgian Congo. He was made an archbishop in 1968 when he went to Thailand as Apostolic Pro-Nuncio.

Archbishop Jadot was already an experienced diplomat when he was appointed Apostolic Delegate to the United States in 1973, having represented the Vatican in Laos, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Cameroon, Gabon and Equatorial Guinea.

While serving in Cameroon, Jadot received a letter from the Vatican Secretary of State, Cardinal Jean Villot, who informed him that Pope Paul VI wanted him as Apostolic Delegate for the United States. At their meeting Paul VI told him he was concerned that most American bishops



Pope Paul VI Archbishop Jean Jadot

were more big businessmen than pastors and made it clear that he expected Jadot to be a new kind of representative of the Holy See.

The new Apostolic Delegate signaled the change immediately by announcing that he would not enter the United States by the traditional way of New York but go directly to the capital city of Washington DC. There he was warmly greeted by an impressive group of cardinals and bishops. The Archbishop of New York, Cardinal Terrence Cooke, was not amused.

The "new ways" of Jadot were soon the talk of Washington. In his seven years as Apostolic Delegate, he was responsible for the appointments of 103 new bishops and the assignments of fifteen archbishops. His more progressive-minded bishops came to be known as "the Jadot boys." But the new ways were not always easy.

Key turning points were his personal involvement in the 1976 Bicentennial Call to Action meeting in Detroit and his address on November 9, 1976, to the General Meeting of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops in Washington DC. In his candid assessment of the state of the Catholic church in the United States, Jadot stressed three areas of concern: the coming shortage of priests; "new forms of parochial life so that the parish can become a community of small communities"; and the problems of minorities in the American church. "How" he asked, "are we to give pastoral care to those who do not feel at home

with our white, Western European ways of public worship and community living? How are we to foster the unity of the people of God within the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church while at the same time preserving the diversity that is one of the riches of this great country?"

In his concluding remarks, the Apostolic Delegate called brief attention to two more areas of concern: the role of women in society and in the church and the rejection of traditional standards of morality in society, political, and business life.

A few American bishops were delighted with Jadot's observations while a number were dumbfounded. Some, however, were downright angry, especially when *The National Catholic Reporter* published a major Jadot interview in March 1977 and included a laudatory lead article entitled "Jadot Urbi et Orbi."

From then on, Jadot received a steady flow of anonymous hate mail from conservatives (postmarked from Missouri). He was also being denounced in Rome. At one point Jadot even offered his resignation to Paul VI who responded immediately by saying "No. You are doing just what I want you to do." However, the climate in the Vatican changed considerably with the accession of John Paul II. In 1980 Jadot offered his resignation to John Paul, who happily accepted it.

In 1980 Jadot went to Rome to serve as Pro-President of the Vatican Secretariat for Non-Christians (today's Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue) for four years. Commenting about his four years in Rome, the Archbishop told a friend: "I was given every courtesy but never any friendship." After Rome he enjoyed an active retirement in Brussels. John Paul withheld the cardinal's hat that traditionally was given to apostolic nuncios of major sees. When his successor, Pio Laghi, received his red hat, Jadot rightly recognized that it was intended as a slap in his face.

I believe American Catholic church history will be kind to Archbishop Jadot as was the eminent American Catholic church historian, John Tracy Ellis, who wrote: "It was my good fortune to become a friend of this admirable churchman and the more I studied him the more did I admire his dedication to the church, his high intelligence, his broad reading habits, and his friendly approach."

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This article was edited by Christine Roussel from Obituaries in *The National Catholic Reporter* and *The Tablet*, with the author's permission.

YOUR MIND OR YOUR FAITH

In November, the UK newspaper *The Telegraph* in an article by Jonathan Wynne-Jones reported that the Bishop of Lancaster, Patrick O'Donoghue, has claimed that "educated Catholics have sown dissent and confusion in the Church." The bishop was quoted as saying that "What we have witnessed in Western societies since the end of the Second World War is the development of mass education on a scale unprecedented in human history ... However, every human endeavor has a dark side, due to original sin and concupiscence. In the case of education, we can see its

distortion through the widespread dissemination of radical scepticism, positivism, utilitarianism and relativism."...."The Second Vatican Council tends to be misinterpreted most by Catholics who have had a university education -- that is, by those most exposed to the intellectual and moral spirit of the age. These well-educated Catholics have gone on to occupy influential positions in education, the media, politics, and even the Church, where they have been able to spread their so-called loyal dissent, causing confusion and discord in the whole church."

Clearly, Bishop O'Donoghue believes that higher education does not fit well with the teachings of the institutional Church. One could interpret this as saying that the Church is best suited to the uneducated, or at least that higher education entails a grave danger to one's Catholic faith. One could also accept that there is some truth in the bishop's position and ask what it is about higher education that presents such a danger.

One of the main goals of any proper higher education is, in addition to imparting knowledge, the development of the capacity for critical thinking on the part of the students. Essentially, this means that students should be encouraged to examine a proposition and try to decide whether it makes sense or not. One area which the properly educated person can find troubling is the proposition that teachings of the church, broadly defined, are not to be subjected to questioning or challenge. This idea is put forward in spite of an obvious logical inconsistency. Such a position could only make sense if it could be shown that the church has never taught something (we are obviously not talking about the relatively few solemnly-defined dogmatic teachings of the Creed) that was later determined to be invalid. If evidence of any previous teaching that was later rejected can be shown, then it destroys the rationale that all present teaching of any grade must be accepted without question.

Anyone even remotely familiar with the history of the church knows that there is a long list of rejected teachings, some of them having had catastrophic consequences. Here the term "teachings" must include actions as well as words. As some of the most well known of these rejected teachings, we can cite the following:

The condoning of slavery and the failure to define it as intrinsically evil until the twentieth century.

The two-millennia-long collective condemnation of the Jews as Christ-killers.

The use of torture and execution against people defined as heretics.

The teaching that the earth is the center of the universe (i.e., solar system), which almost cost Galileo his life and resulted in his life-long imprisonment for heresy.

The teaching that lending money for interest is morally wrong.

The teaching by Pope Pius IX, as part of his 1864 encyclical "Quanta cura," that it is an error, for example, to believe that:

"The Church ought to be separated from the State, and the State from the Church."

"In the present day it is no longer expedient that the Catholic religion should be held as the only religion of the State, to the exclusion of all other forms of worship."

"It has been widely decided by law, in some Catholic countries, that persons coming to reside therein shall enjoy the public exercise of their own peculiar worship."

Thus, to treat all current church teaching as effectively infallible is to engage in blatant self-deception. Church teachings are essentially opinions that are based on the present knowledge and understanding of the teacher. As with court opinions, they deserve serious attention and consideration. However, to believe that they are eternally immutable is to ignore the lessons of history.

None of this should be used to deny the teaching authority of the Church. However, authority to teach does not imply infallibility. All faculty members of teaching institutions, for example, have authority to teach, by virtue of their appointments. However, any serious student realizes that any such teaching has always to remain open to question and challenge. Only the most simple minded would be willing to hold it as eternal truth.

Given this bit of Church history, it is no wonder that any bishop who holds that all present day Church teachings are to be considered immune from questioning would find the spread of higher education threatening. However, one could wonder about the future of an institution that assumes blanket infallibility for all its opinions and pronouncements.

Charles McMahon



Review of *What Happened at Vatican II* by John W. O'Malley, S.J. (Cambridge MA, 2008)

The Second Vatican Council (1962-65) was certainly one of the pivotal events of Catholicism in the twentieth century. We use its language freely, saying that "the Church is the People of God," referring to the "universal call to holiness," and of course attending Masses in our own languages with lay people serving as lectors and Eucharistic Ministers. We talk about "the Spirit of Vatican II" and sometimes read books or articles on various aspects of the Council, but there has been a major problem.

Vatican II met for four three-month sessions over three years. Its 2500 bishop-participants, plus advisors and observers, wrote, discussed, and voted upon sixteen major documents (constitutions). It was a tremendously complex event, complete with factions, secret meetings, and behind-the-scenes appeals to two popes. Until now, to get any kind of overview of the entire event, one had to either be satisfied with a few pages' summary, or spend \$450 to \$500 for the five-volume *History of Vatican Two* by Alberigo and Komonshak, which is the most complete account in English. There are two- and three- volume guides to the documents of Vatican II, but they don't, as a rule, contain the bishops' discussions, and there are accounts of the public and private discussions, such as

Xavier Rynne's delightfully witty *Letters From Vatican City* but it is now somewhat dated and by no means complete.

Finally, this year a well-known professional historian, the Jesuit John O'Malley, has written a scholarly one-volume overview of the Council, what he calls ". . . a basic book about the Council . . ."

"By basic I mean a brief, readable account that does three things: first, provide the essential story line from the moment Pope John XXIII announced the council on January 25, 1959, until it concluded on December 8, 1965; second, set the issues that emerge in that narrative into their contexts, large and small, historical and theological; third, thereby provide some keys for grasping what the council hoped to accomplish." (1)

This book, and Richard P. McBrien's *The Church*, which will be reviewed in a future issue of *ARCC Light*, are part of a new and very welcome trend: the writing of complete "textbooks" for educated laypeople and non-specialized clergy by acknowledged scholars in their fields. John O'Malley is a prominent historian with a PhD from Harvard who specialized in sixteenth-century religious culture. His books have ranged over a broad area of early modern European history including especially studies of the Jesuits and the Council of Trent.

O'Malley had the good fortune to be doing research in Rome during two years of the Council. He attended Public Sessions and press conferences and carefully followed the proceedings, giving him the familiarity of someone who lived through, observed and absorbed the people and events of Vatican II - indeed, he frequently makes the reader feel s/he is there too. He also carefully studied the 51-volumes of the *acta* of the Council as they came out over the 40 years after Vatican II. Beginning in the early 1970s (about when I had the pleasure of teaching with him at the University of Detroit) he published a number of articles on Vatican II, some of which were assembled in *Tradition and Transition: Historical Perspectives on Vatican II* in 2002. Then in 2007 he and a number of other Vatican II specialists asked *Vatican II: Did Anything Happen? What Happened* seems to be his reply: Yes, some very important things happened although it may be decades or even centuries before we can spell them out completely.

What Happened is a pleasure to read. It is both well-organized and well-written. Participants are sketched and situated as they act and the significance of their acts is explained when needed. As O'Malley states quite clearly, many specialists have written on the contents of the Constitutions, decrees, and declarations. What he now wants to do is

". . . put the documents into their contexts to provide a sense of before and after. . . . Only by tracing the documents' genesis and, even more important, locating them in their contexts can their deeper significance be made clear." (3)

But first, in two brilliant chapters, O'Malley puts the phenomenon of Catholic church councils into their proper perspective, sketching their history, the preparations for Vatican II and then what is called the "long nineteenth century" stretching from the French Revolution of 1789 through the papacy of Pius XII. O'Malley packs a prodigious amount of background information into these

chapters, including a discussion of the kind of language used in the documents of Vatican II - horizontal pastoral and encouraging rather than the commanding and condemnatory vertical language of earlier councils - that I found fascinating as well as illuminating.

Chapters Four through Seven discuss the four sessions of the Council, with a clarity that shows O'Malley's years of teaching experience. He outlines the presentation and discussion of each schema, going to the heart of its meaning, importance, strengths and weaknesses, and explaining how its problems were overcome, if they were, or why they were not. Important personalities are identified in the text and referenced in a multi-page appendix of "Council participants frequently mentioned." O'Malley sketches the activities of the majority (liberal) and minority (conservative) bishops very well but if one has a copy of Melissa Wilde's *Vatican II: A Sociological Analysis of Religious Change*, reviewed in the January 2008 issue of *ARCC Light*, the two books complement one another beautifully.

There are enough quotes from the sessions, discussions, memos and descriptions of actions to keep the text moving and interesting, to put it mildly. One of the most interesting aspects of this book, in my opinion, is how vibrantly the personalities of the key "actors" emerge. Suenens, Agagianian, Maximos IV, Bea, Kung, Ottaviani - they are all here, weighing, discussing, mediating, or in Ottaviani's case, obstructing, organizing opposition, and complaining to the Pope. The interaction of Paul VI and Ottaviani, who was head of the Holy Office, is fascinating to watch, although I think O'Malley could have tried to understand and sketch out Paul VI a bit more than he did. O'Malley states quite clearly that Montini's knowledge of theology was not up to the level of the issues raised by the Council [PAGE?], presumably because he had spent virtually his entire career in the Curia. O'Malley refers to this fact several times and he implies that is why Pope Paul was, in his view, more conservative than the bishops in the Council. I think that the mechanisms at work, especially in Paul's interaction with Ottaviani, were actually much more complex. Ottaviani and Cicognani had known and worked closely with Montini for many years and they knew exactly which buttons to push to paralyze Pope Paul. Paul VI understood quite well the major changes in the practice and structure of Catholicism that could result from questions being debated in the Council. I suspect that Paul was more liberal, even radical, theologically, than John XXIII had been. But his "job" as Pope was to steer the Church through these changes successfully and safely. The "button" that would always paralyze Paul was fear of schism.

It has been bruited about for many years that Ottaviani threatened to denounce Paul VI as a heretic and threatened schism. We don't know how often he may have threatened but the recipient of these threats saw the preservation of Church unity as one of his greatest responsibilities or even the greatest. Certainly, only he as Pope, could overrule or shut down the Council's deliberations on any particular matter, which is probably also why he became so protective of papal power once he sat in that Chair.

Despite my caveat, and that only a theory, O'Malley gives us accurate portraits of the major characters in this drama: Paul VI, always anxious to do his and everyone else's best, a bit scrupulous perhaps, solicitous of everyone's hopes, desires, and consciences, determined to bring the Council to a successful conclusion and thus allow the

Church to shine forth in all its beauty, infinitely polite, hearing everyone out, and crushed by the response to *Humanae Vitae*, the man without whom the Council would probably have met for one session, and then been relegated to the dustbin of history by a Curia that never wanted it; Cardinal Ottaviani, head of the Holy Office, a man who would have been comfortable in the sixteenth century, fiercely protective of *his* Church, ruthless, always ready to use whatever maneuver or force would accomplish his goals, could probably have eaten Ratzinger for a mid-morning snack without staining his napkin. And on it goes. Some of the personalities seem all too familiar today, because their clones are in the hierarchy, but there are many significant differences as well. We have clones of preferred company men in the present hierarchy partly because human nature is what it is, but mostly because the last two popes have made absolute conformation and obedience to the Holy See on every Roman diktat, whether defined or not, an absolute requirement for advancement. Instead of the thinking pastors sought by John XXIII and Paul VI, we have the obedient, brainwashed branch managers sought by John Paul II and Benedict XVI.

The bishops at the Vatican Council, on the other hand, represented the great variety of the Church itself, a Church that had been exposed to modern ideas and theology. The new theology was there written by scholars like Chenu, Congar, Danielou, de Lubac, Murray, Rahner, Schillebeeckx, Teilhard de Chardin and others. Many had been censured, silenced, forbidden to publish, but their ideas had been out, circulating, percolating, influencing intelligent readers and hierarchy for years. The Catholic "climate of opinion" was changing. Then over 2,500 bishops and archbishops with their *periti* gathered together in one place, St. Peter's Basilica, and discovered they were not alone in holding these radical or semi-radical ideas, and they were certainly not alone in taking the summons to meet in council seriously. With numbers came courage. From the moment on the first day of the Council when first Cardinal Lienart and then Cardinal Frings proposed postponing the vote on the 160 that the Curia had picked to constitute the working committees of the Council and their proposal was greeted with long, thunderous applause from the Council Fathers, the bishops knew they had allies and they, not the Curia, would run the Council. It was, as Americans would say, a new ballgame. This extraordinary scene and many others come to life thanks to John O'Malley's painstaking work. At times one is amazed at the lengths to which the minority, the conservatives, will go to change or eliminate a constitution or even a section of one. Ottaviani, Felici, Cicognani and their conservative/reactionary cohorts were rigid but they were intelligent. There were issues under these issues being discussed, the big issues that so worried the conservatives who saw them so clearly.

O'Malley believes there were at least three of these super-issues

"(1) the circumstances under which change in the Church is appropriate and the arguments with which it can be justified; (2) the relationship in the Church of center to periphery or, put more concretely, how authority is properly distributed between the Papacy, including the Congregations (department of bureaus) of the Vatican Curia, and the rest of the Church; and (3) moreover, the style or model according to which that authority should be exercised. These issues are a key to understanding Vatican

II. They are, moreover, critically important for anybody who is interested in grasping the tensions and conflicts within the Catholic Church today." (8)

Thank you, John. Well done.

Christine M. Roussel

Easter Vision of Hope

"The day will come when, after harnessing the ether, the winds, the tides, and gravitation, we will harness for God the energies of love. And on that day, for the second time in the history of the world, man will have discovered fire."

From *The Evolution of Chastity*, Teilhard de Chardin (who died Easter Sunday, 1955)

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