

# YEAR OF FAITH

October 11, 2012-November 24, 2013

## Scripture Study Program—SESSION 2 of 6

(reflections on the 4 Constitutions of Vatican II included in sessions 2-6)

*The Year of Faith: A Bible Study Guide for Catholics* by Fr. Mitch Pacwa, S.J.,  
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### SESSION TWO: “ASSENT TO THE CREED” (pp. 31-42)

Having read everything up to page 42, let us begin with a prayer:

#### *An Act of Faith*

*O my God, I firmly believe that you are one God in three divine Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; I believe that your divine Son became flesh and died for our sins, and that he shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe these and all the truths that the Holy Catholic Church teaches, because you have revealed them, who can neither deceive nor be deceived. Amen.*

Learning the Creed by heart was important to early Christians—and is to us. (see p. 31 for Pope Benedict’s words on this).

Concern for the truth is *what* is believed was important for Jesus (see Mark 7:1-23 and Matthew 15:1-20 for examples). (p. 32)

There are 613 commandments in the Torah, the first 5 books of the Bible—p. 33.

Passages on false teachings (p. 34):

Galatians 1:6-19; 2:4-5

II Corinthians 11:1-6, 12-15

Philippians 3:2-11, 17-21

I Timothy 1:3-7, 18-20

Hebrews 6:1-6

II Peter 2:1 – 3:4

I John 2:18-25; 4:1-6

Read p. 35 on your own for descriptions of certain heresies.

Read p. 36 for description of focus of first 7 of Church’s 21 Ecumenical Councils.

How do knowledge and mystery fit together when we speak of the faith? READ AT YOUR TABLES THE PASSAGES GIVEN IN THE BOX ON PAGE 37; DISCUSS.

At home, read the passages associated with our Creed (pp. 40-41) to understand it best. Here, write a phrase or two about each question on p. 41. Go around your table to share.

PRACTICE (p. 42)—ponder these 4 lines when you go home; then do during the week.

**READ THE SECTION FOR SESSION 3 (pp. 43-57) FOR NEXT WEEK.**

Quotations from *The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church* of the 2nd Vatican Council (*Lumen Gentium*—from the opening line: “Christ is the light of all nations.”—11/21/64)  
[http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist\\_councils/ii\\_vatican\\_council/documents/vat-ii\\_const\\_19641121\\_lumen-gentium\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19641121_lumen-gentium_en.html)

Chapter 1 of this constitution is titled “The Mystery of the Church.” It says in article 1:  
--that this Second Vatican Council “has been gathered in the Holy Spirit”;  
--that “the Church is a kind of sacrament.”

**How do you see these statements as describing the Church that you know?**

Article 6 of this constitution describes the Church in 4 images:

- the Flock of Christ
- the Vineyard of God
- the Temple of the Holy Spirit
- the Spouse of the Immaculate Lamb

**With which of these do you most identify? How do you see the reality of each?**

A surprisingly open statement is found in article 8:

*Many elements of sanctification and of truth can be found outside of her visible structure.*

**Can you think of any examples?**

Chapter 2 of this constitution is titled “The People of God.” Article 9, ¶4 is one of the most beautiful in the entire Constitution, touching on a number of themes of Vatican II:

- the universal expansiveness of the Church
- its role as a sacrament of unity
- its weakness and dependence upon God’s help during its earthly pilgrimage
- its ardent hope for the final fulfillment of God’s kingdom

**Which of these strikes the strongest chord with your own heart?**

Article 11 describes the family as “the domestic church.”

**How have you experienced “the domestic church” in your own family?**

Chapter 4 is titled “The Laity” and in it we read in article 31 that the laity “seek the kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and by ordering them accordingly to the plan of God.”

**What are examples of ordering your temporal affairs according to the plan of God?**

Pope John XXIII personally wanted Chapter 7 included in this Constitution. It is titled “The Eschatological Nature of the Pilgrim Church and Her Union with the Heavenly Church.” In it, in article 48, the point is made that the final time is already here.

**How do you experience the final time now, and how can this influence our actions?**

In Chapter 8, “The Role of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, in the Mystery of Christ and the Church,” we read: “May [Mary intercede for us] until all the peoples of the human family, whether they are honored with the name of Christian or whether they still do not know their Savior, are happily gathered together in peace and harmony into the one People of God, for the glory of the Most Holy and Undivided Trinity” (art. 69).

**What great hopes for increased unity, present back then, do you still see possible?**