



St. Mary of the Lake Church
4741 Bald Eagle Ave.
White Bear Lake, MN 55110

All presentations will take place in the St. Joseph Room from 6:30 – 8PM. Sign-up is not necessary.

VATICAN II SERIES SPEAKERS



Sept. 13 | Vatican II and Liturgy:

HOW the Church Prays Tells Us WHAT It Believes

The renewal of the Church at the Second Vatican Council was experienced most profoundly in the reform of the liturgy. At the same time, resistance to the Council's reform among some groups is affecting the relevance of the Gospel message for many in the modern world. As we mark the 60th anniversary of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy this December, it seems appropriate to reflect on how the liturgical reform has reshaped the very nature of the Church. As Pope Francis reminds us, liturgical worship is not an "add on" for a Catholic Christian. How the Church worships gives witness to what she actually believes and confesses. The celebration of the liturgy should lead us to a real encounter with God, a growing experience of unity in the Church, and a profound commitment to carry forth the redemptive mission of Jesus Christ.

Join us for an evening of thoughtful conversation on the ways the liturgical reforms of the Second Vatican Council have been successfully received by most Catholics and their wide-ranging effects for the future of the Church.

Bio

Paul Feela is a retired priest of the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis whose last pastoral assignment was at the Lumen Christi Catholic Community in Highland Park. He also taught sacramental theology and liturgy at the Saint Paul Seminary School of Divinity for many years before returning to parish life. Father Paul has been a priest of the Archdiocese for 45 years and continues to help parishes out with their sacramental needs, to offer continuing education opportunities around the Archdiocese – all while enjoying the opportunity that retirement affords to continue to write, garden, travel, and spend more time with his own family.

Nov. 15 | Vatican II and Morality:

What's a Good Catholic to Do?

The Second Vatican Council was the first such council in a hundred years and happened 400 years after the Council of Trent. Good Pope John XXIII convoked the Council to "open the windows" and bring *aggiornamento* ("bring up to date") to the Church in the modern world. Changes and updating happened in all aspects of the Church's life, practice, and self-understanding. The Church's specific moral teachings were, all in all, less affected than our understanding of and approach to morality and moral decision making. While always rooted in Tradition and Scripture, attention was also given to a deeper, richer experience of the nature of human persons and their complexity, the context in which behavior occurs, the sources of moral wisdom, the role of conscience in moral decision making, and the importance of character and virtue.

Bio

Brother Robert Smith, FSC, PhD, has been a De La Salle Christian Brother for 45 years. A graduate of Cretin High School and Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, he holds a Masters degree in Religious Studies from United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities and a PhD in moral theology from Marquette University. He has written or edited a half-dozen books and some 20 papers on topics related to moral theology, spirituality, and religious life. While spending most of his professional life at Saint Mary's in various roles, he has also lived and worked in Kenya and Bethlehem, Palestine. He has given retreats, workshops, short courses, and the like in the USA and in several parts of the world where the De La Salle Brothers minister. He currently serves as Senior Vice President at Saint Mary's University of Minnesota.

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Dec. 5

Vatican II and Ecumenism

The first sentence of the document *Unitatis Redintegratio* (1964) states, “The restoration of unity among all Christians is one of the principal concerns of the Second Vatican Council.” Indeed, one of the outcomes of Vatican II was a more serious engagement by the Catholic Church with the broader ecumenical movement that had taken hold among different Christian and non-Christian communities in the early 20th century. In this conversation, we focus on *Unitatis Redintegratio* and discuss its principles of ecumenism and possible implications, attending to both the pathways potentially opened up by this document with other faith communities and some of the challenges that emerge.

Bio

Dan Pioske grew up on a family farm about 10 miles north of St. Peter, MN. After attending Gustavus Adolphus College, he completed his M.Div and Ph.D. at Princeton Theological Seminary in Biblical Studies and taught at two institutions prior to coming to St. Thomas, Union Theological Seminary, New York, and Georgia Southern University. He is the author of three books on historical and archaeological topics pertaining to the biblical world and lives in St. Paul with his wife Suzette and their three daughters, Eve, Esther, and Ella.

Dec. 13

Human Sexuality in Catholic Perspective: Exploding the Myth of “Safe Sex”

Among the areas of Catholic life most affected by the renewal (“aggiornamento”) called for by the Second Vatican Council (1962-65), few have been more controversial than sex, marriage, and family. Drawing on a range of sources (Scripture, theologians old and new, philosophy, science, and human experience) the Council offered a radical vision of human sexuality. Radical because grounded, not in the past, but in the future: the common destiny of humankind made present in the person of Jesus Christ. Efforts to understand, much less live out this vision were – and continue to be – complicated by the parallel “sexual revolution” then occurring across the West. In comparison with this revolution, the Catholic vision of sex, marriage, and family, is often considered conservative, or “safe.” The Council’s vision, as Dr. Wojda will explain, is anything but.

Bio

A native of Buffalo, NY, Dr. Wojda received his B.A. in Government and Political Theory from the University of Notre Dame in 1984. He then studied Religious Ethics at Yale University Divinity School, graduating with an M.A.R. degree, cum laude, in 1987. He returned to Notre Dame, where he studied under the late Richard A. McCormick, S.J., receiving his Ph.D. in 1993. Since 1992 Dr. Wojda has taught in the Theology Department at the University

*of St. Thomas in St. Paul, MN. He has also taught as an adjunct for the St. Paul Seminary School of Divinity, the Department of Catholic Studies, the St. Thomas Aquinas Institute for Higher Education in Kiev, Ukraine, and at the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas (Angelicum) in Rome. Dr. Wojda’s area of academic interest and specialization is Catholic health care ethics. He is the former chair of the St. Paul/Minneapolis Archdiocesan Bio-medical Ethics Committee and is the author of *The Church and the Biomedical Revolution* (Linus Publishing 2023). Dr. Wojda lives in Aitkin, MN with his wife, Keely Bishop Wojda. They have five grown children and two grandchildren.*

Feb. 7 | Vatican II:

Seeing and Dreaming our Roman Catholic Church

In our time of so many competing authorities, we consider the Catholic genius for harmonizing faith in Jesus Christ. Given the teachings in the foundational Dogmatic Constitution on the Church – *Lumen Gentium* (1964), we will use careful common sense to understand the realities of our faith community and our church’s mission in the actual world as well as to start projecting our next steps. A Question and Answer session will occur.

Bio

Prof. Greg Sobolewski is an Adjunct Assistant Professor of Theology at the Catholic University of America (2014 – present) and a retired Professor of Theology at Saint Mary’s University of Minnesota (1991–2020). He and his wife Susan are parents of three children and often travel to care for eight grandchildren.

Feb. 21 | Vatican II:

The Social Mission of the Church – Catholics in the World?

The Preface to *Gaudium et spes*, the Second Vatican Council’s “Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World,” states: “The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the people of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ. Hence this Second Vatican Council now addresses itself to the whole of humanity... For the human person deserves to be preserved and human society deserves to be renewed. Hence the focal point of this document will be the person, whole and entire, body and soul, heart and conscience, mind and will.” This evening will be a reflection and conversation on *Gaudium et spes*, its place in Church history and its implications for today.

Bio

*Bernard Brady is a Professor of Theology at the University of St. Thomas. Along with teaching, he also is the Director of the Murray Institute for Catholic Education and the Associate Director for the Office for Mission. He is the author of several books including *Essential Catholic Social Teaching*.*