



Modern Catholicism: Vatican II and After

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When Pope John XXIII convened the Second Vatican Council in 1963, he could not have predicted the dramatic transformation of modern Roman Catholicism that would result from its deliberations. Its influence has reached into every aspect of Catholic life and continues to be felt and hotly debated to the present day. In this sweeping new study, edited by the eminent British Catholic theologian Adrian Hastings, a distinguished team of international scholars provides a complete history of the Council and assesses its impact on the last quarter century of Catholic thought and practice.

The contributors consider the reign of John XXIII and his immediate predecessors and successors, the history of the Council, and each of the sixteen documents it issued, which together represent perhaps the most authoritative church teaching of this century, embodying radical changes in the liturgy and greater participation in services by lay members. But Vatican II also left behind many unresolved controversies (such as celibacy of priests and birth control) and the contributors also examine these and other issues, including the role of women in the Church, homosexuality, divorce, and war and the nuclear predicament. In addition, the impact of the Council on different parts of the world is discussed, giving full weight to the emergence of liberation theology in Latin America and the Philippines, and the desire of African and Asian Catholics to assimilate aspects of their traditional culture into Church life.

Modern Catholicism offers us a new map for understanding the challenges faced by the Church as we approach the end of the second millennium of Christianity. Commemorating the twenty-fifth anniversary of Vatican II, this book is destined to become the standard resource on the Council and its influence.

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