

FCL 4

Lesson 1

What Is "Ecumenism"?

Ecumenism is a vital mission of the Church that needs to be understood more fully and correctly, especially as we enter this ostensibly pivotal third millennium. Does ecumenism require Catholics to compromise their faith?

The answer lies in whether we are talking about authentic ecumenism or false ecumenism.

Contrary to what some "traditionalist" Catholics say, there is such a thing as authentic ecumenism -- and it is essential for Christian unity. As the Catechism of the Catholic Church states: "Christ bestowed unity on His Church from the beginning. This unity, we believe, subsists in the Catholic Church as something she can never lose, and we hope that it will continue to increase until the end of time. Christ always gives His Church the gift of unity, but the Church must always pray and work to maintain, reinforce, and perfect the unity that Christ will for her.... The desire to recover the unity of all Christians is a gift of Christ and a call of the Holy Spirit" (n. 820).

In *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*, Pope John Paul II also speaks of the urgent need for Christian unity: "By the year 2000 we need to be more united, more willing to advance along the path toward the unity for which Christ prayed on the eve of His Passion. This unity is enormously precious. In a certain sense, the future of the world is at stake. The future of the Kingdom of God in the world is at stake."

So why is ecumenism so controversial? One central issue is the oft-misinterpreted and misrepresented teaching *extra ecclesiam nulla salus* ("outside the Church there is no salvation").

The Catechism quotes Vatican II's *Lumen Gentium* on this subject: "Basing itself on Scripture and Tradition, the council teaches that the Church, a pilgrim now on earth, is necessary for salvation.... Hence they could not be saved who, knowing that the Catholic Church was founded as necessary by God through Christ, would refuse either to enter it or remain in it. This

affirmation is not aimed at those who, through no fault of their own, do not know Christ and His Church" (nn. 846-847).

The Catechism goes on to quote Vatican II's teaching on what is known as Baptism of desire: "Those who, through no fault of their own, do not know the Gospel of Christ or His Church, but who nevertheless seek God with a sincere heart, and, moved by grace, try in their actions to do His will as they know it through the dictates of their conscience -- those too may achieve eternal salvation" (n. 847).

And in its section on Baptism, the Catechism teaches what is known as Baptism of blood: "The Church has always held the firm conviction that those who suffer death for the sake of the faith without having received Baptism are baptized by their death for and with Christ. This Baptism of blood, like the desire for Baptism, brings about the fruits of Baptism without being a sacrament" (n. 1258).

In summary, we know that everyone's salvation -- Catholic and non-Catholic -- is through the Catholic Church, either as faithful members of the Church (Baptism of water), or as persons who give their life for Christ (Baptism of blood), or who would belong to the Catholic Church if they knew it was the one, true Church founded by Jesus Christ (Baptism of desire).

Now there also is such a thing as false ecumenism, which seeks to promote religious indifferentism (all religions are of equal value and therefore it doesn't matter which one you belong to), universalism (the heretical belief that all people are saved), and syncretism (the combining of various beliefs and practices of different religions as a "compromise").

But none of these are taught -- and could never be taught -- by the Church or the Vicar of Christ. Yes, it is (unfortunately) true that some Catholics go too far in this arena and end up promoting erroneous doctrines and ideologies instead of authentic ecumenical dialog. Even a priest can be guilty of this, such as when he allows or encourages non-Catholics to receive Holy Communion - something ordinarily not permitted by the Church.

Ultimately, true ecumenism does not require us to give up our devotions or in any way compromise our faith; it means joining hands with other Christians and people of goodwill to bring our nihilistic, hedonistic, anti-life, anti-family culture back to God, while at the same time acknowledging our obvious differences. Far from being a bad word, ecumenism is -- in the words of John Paul II -- "a response to the exhortation in the First Letter of Peter to 'give an explanation of the reason for our hope'" (1 Peter 3:15).

What is the purpose of ecumenism? Purpose and goal of ecumenism

The ultimate goal of ecumenism is the recognition of sacramental validity, eucharistic sharing, and the reaching of full communion between different Christian denominations.

What are the benefits of ecumenism for Christianity? By being involved in Christian Ecumenism, we are able to celebrate our diversity whilst embracing our unity. As a consequence, we gain a new pride in ourselves within our own Christian beliefs and traditions whilst we all hold true to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

What is ecumenism and why is it important to the Catholic Church? Ecumenism, from the Greek word “oikoumene”, meaning “the whole inhabited world” (cf. Acts 17.6; Mt 24.14; Heb 2.5), is the promotion of cooperation and unity among Christians. “The Catholic Church is committed to working for the reunion of all Christians, but the exuberant spirit following Vatican II has been tempered.

What are the features of ecumenism? “Such a cooperative attitude includes at the outset several features: (a) the limitation of ecumenism to Christians or to Christian churches; (b) the recourse to a tradition (which at least in the beginning was a common one) of the apostolic witness and its basic interpretation in the primitive church; (c) a principled

What is the purpose of ecumenism?

What is the purpose of ecumenical dialogue?

Ecumenical dialogue ultimately aims at reception of the insights gained and the agreements reached, but reception goes beyond the official affirmation of common statements. It involves the mutual reception of the partners in dialogue as sisters and brothers in Christ.

Who started ecumenism?

Protestantism. Nathan Söderblom. The contemporary ecumenical movement for Protestants is often said to have started with the 1910 Edinburgh Missionary Conference.

What is ecumenism and what is its purpose?

Ecumenism is any type of effort which aims to unite differing denominations of Christianity. There are a range of ecumenical communities which, although run differently, have the same aim; to unite Christians from different denominations and background in worship and community.

What does the Bible say about ecumenism?

Tozer maintained that “Unity in Christ is not something to be achieved; it is something to be recognized.” Ecumenists cite John 17:20–23 as the Biblical basis of striving for church unity, in

which Jesus prays that Christians “may all be one” in order “that the world may know” and believe the Gospel message.

What is the differences between Orthodox Catholic and Protestant Christianity?

The Orthodox Church believes the Holy Spirit “proceeds from God the Father,” while for Catholics and Protestants, the Holy Spirit “proceeds from the Father and the Son.” Some Orthodox believers see the Catholic/Protestant version as underestimating the role of the Father in the Trinity, while critics of the Orthodox

Does the Catholic church recognize other denominations?

The Roman Catholic church as a whole has generally recognized the baptisms of most mainstream Christian denominations since the Second Vatican Council, a series of historic church meetings from 1962 to 1965, but the formal baptism agreement is the first of its kind for the U.S. church.

How do you define ecumenism?

ecumenism, movement or tendency toward worldwide Christian unity or cooperation. The ecumenical movement seeks to recover the apostolic sense of the early church for unity in diversity, and it confronts the frustrations, difficulties, and ironies of the modern pluralistic world.

What does interdenominational unity mean?

: occurring between or among or common to different religious denominations an interdenominational prayer group interdenominational cooperation.

What is an example of ecumenism?

Critical to modern ecumenism is the birth of united churches, which have reconciled formerly divided churches in a given place. The most-heralded examples of this ecumenism are the United Church of Canada (1925), the Church of South India (1947), and the Church of North India (1970).

What is the difference between interfaith dialogue and ecumenism?

“ecumenical” as “relations and prayer with other Christians”, “interfaith” as “relations with members of the ‘Abrahamic faiths’ (Jewish and Muslim traditions),” and. “interreligious” as “relations with other religions, such as Hinduism and Buddhism”.

Do Baptists believe in baptism?

Baptists believe that faith is a matter between God and the individual (religious freedom). Baptists do not believe that baptism is necessary for salvation. Therefore, for Baptists, baptism is an ordinance, not a sacrament, since, in their view, it imparts no saving grace.

What was the first major split in Christianity?

CE: Great Schism. On , Patriarch of Constantinople Michael Cerularius was excommunicated, starting the “Great Schism” that created the two largest denominations in Christianity—the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox faiths.

How did the disciples changed after Pentecost?

Now filled with the Holy Spirit, the disciples boldly disbanded and began to proclaim the kingdom of God to the surrounding regions. The lives of people affected by their witness became revolutionary.

What is ecumenical theology?

Ecumenical Theology is frequently understood as a type of theology that initiates and examines the consensus of the official ecumenical dialogues, or as a kind of comparative theology drawing on various Christian traditions and pointing out their commonalities and differences.

Who is called the Church Suffering?

the Church Penitent (Latin: Ecclesia poenitens), also called the Church Suffering (Latin: Ecclesia dolens) or the Church Expectant (Latin: Ecclesia expectans), which in the theology of certain churches, especially that of the Catholic Church, consists of those Christians currently in Purgatory; and.

What is a gathering of bishops called by the pope?

While the words “synod” and “council” usually refer to a transitory meeting, the term “Synod of Bishops” or “Synod of the Bishops”, is also applied to a permanent body established in 1965 as an advisory body of the pope.

What is the Pentecost religion?

Pentecostalism is a form of Christianity that emphasises the work of the Holy Spirit and the direct experience of the presence of God by the believer. Pentecostals believe that faith must be powerfully experiential, and not something found merely through ritual or thinking. Pentecostalism is energetic and dynamic.

Which members of the church are absolutely holy?

Which members of the Church are absolutely holy? All of the Church's members in Heaven have reached the perfection of holiness. According to the Catechism, no. 827, how do members of the Church become holy?

Which is older Catholic or Orthodox?

Therefore the Catholic Church is the oldest of all. The Orthodox represents the original Christian Church because they trace their bishops back to the five early patriarchates of Rome, Alexandria, Jerusalem, Constantinople and Antioch.

Does the Orthodox Church pray to Mary?

In the Orthodox view, devotion to Mary is considered an important element of Christian spirituality, and indifference to her by other Christian denominations is troubling to the Orthodox. Orthodox theologian Sergei Bulgakov called denominations that do not venerate the Virgin Mary "another type of Christianity".

Do Catholics pray to Jesus?

A number of prayers to Jesus Christ exist within the Roman Catholic tradition, but they are usually not associated with a specific Catholic devotion with a feast day. They are therefore grouped separately from the prayers that accompany Roman Catholic devotions to Christ such as Holy Face of Jesus or Divine Mercy.