



ADORATIO

LESSON ONE DVD OUTLINE

- I. INTRODUCTION
 - A. Christianity is a relationship with Jesus Christ
 - B. Jesus is understood through the lens of the Old Testament
 - C. Jesus is called “the Christ,” meaning “the Anointed One”
 - D. In the Old Testament, “anointed ones” were priests, prophets, and kings
 - E. Jesus is the definitive Priest, Prophet, and King
 - F. Through Baptism, we participate in Christ and share in his offices of priest, prophet, and king

- II. FIRST OLD TESTAMENT PRIEST: ADAM
 - A. Priests perform sacrifices that unite divinity and humanity
 - B. Before the Fall, Adam was the first priest because he was united with God and walked in easy fellowship with him in the Garden of Eden
 - C. Adoratio means “mouth to mouth” or being perfectly aligned with God in right worship

- III. RIGHT WORSHIP LEADS TO HARMONY
 - A. A properly integrated self: creature worshipping creator
 - B. Well-ordered family, city, culture, and cosmos
 - C. Garden of Eden/Heavenly Jerusalem is the true “culture of life”

- IV. WRONG WORSHIP LEADS TO DISINTEGRATION
 - A. Sin
 - B. Lack of unity with God

- V. NO COMMUNION WITHOUT SACRIFICE
 - A. Temple sacrifice
 - B. Getting rightly aligned to God will hurt (sacrifice)



LESSON ONE

ADORATIO

John the Baptist, having been arrested by Herod, sent some of his disciples to Jesus. Upon finding him, they asked the question that was on the minds of so many: “Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?” (Mt 11:2-3; Lk 7:19-20)

By this they meant, “Are you the Messiah, the Anointed One?” Some had wondered if John, the desert-dwelling preacher, might be the Messiah. He denied it directly: “I am not the Messiah” (Jn 1:20). But Jesus, of course, did not deny that he, the cousin of John, was the Messiah. Instead, he answered:

“GO AND TELL JOHN WHAT YOU HEAR AND SEE: THE BLIND REGAIN THEIR SIGHT, THE LAME WALK, LEPERS ARE CLEANSSED, THE DEAF HEAR, THE DEAD ARE RAISED, AND THE POOR HAVE THE GOOD NEWS PROCLAIMED TO THEM. AND BLESSED IS THE ONE WHO TAKES NO OFFENSE AT ME”
(MT 11:4-6).

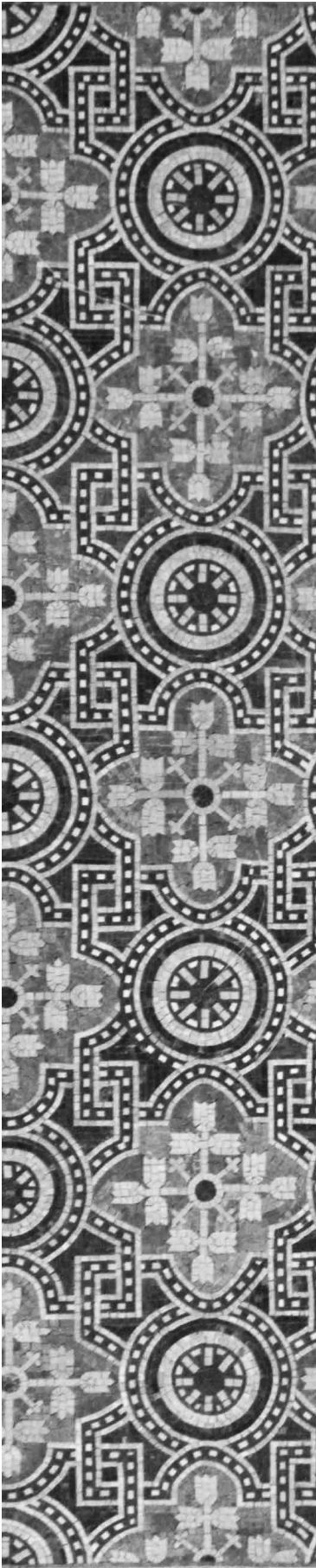
Later, at Caesarea Philippi, Jesus asked his disciples two questions, and they have resonated down through time ever since. First, he asked, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” The disciples responded, “Some say John the Baptist, others Elijah, still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” In our own day, if the same question were asked, the response might be, “Some say a good teacher, others a wise guru, still others a life coach or one of the enlightened ones.”

Then Jesus asked a second question: “But who do you say that I am?” Peter famously replied: “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God” (Mt 16:13-16).



THE MEANING OF MESSIAH

The title “Messiah,” or “Christ” in Greek, is not just one of many names for Jesus, but a title of central importance. One bit of evidence for this can be found in the opening words of the Gospel of Matthew, written for Jewish readers: “The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of



David, the son of Abraham...” (Mt 1:1). We are so accustomed to speaking of “Jesus Christ” that the boldness, the startling audacity, of those words can easily escape us. The Gospel of Mark, arguably the first of the four Gospels written, likewise commences with similarly surprising claims: “The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God” (Mk 1:1).

In both instances, there is a direct and intended allusion to the Old Testament (which, of course, was not “old” to either Mark or Matthew, but simply “Scripture”), and to the mysterious and oft-discussed Anointed One. Who was he? What would this “Christ” be like? What would he do? How would he reveal himself? Pope Benedict XVI, in homily given at a Chrism Mass at Saint Peter’s (April 1, 2010), provided a helpful summary:

“The word “Christians,” in fact, by which Christ’s disciples were known in the earliest days of Gentile Christianity, is derived from the word “Christ” (Acts 11:20-21) – the Greek translation of the word “Messiah,” which means “anointed one”. To be a Christian is to come from Christ, to belong to Christ, to the anointed one of God, to whom God granted kingship and priesthood. It means belonging to him whom God himself anointed – not with material oil, but with the One whom the oil represents: with his Holy Spirit.”

In the Old Testament, a priest was made so by anointing. Anointing was an act of consecration, of setting a man apart in a unique way for the word and work of God. But to be anointed was not just to be set apart. It was to be given the power and ability to perform the task given by God. Similarly, prophets and kings were declared so by anointing. The Anointed One—the One—would therefore be all three: priest, prophet, and king. “It was necessary that the Messiah be anointed by the Spirit of the Lord at once as king and priest, and also as prophet,” explains the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. “Jesus fulfilled the messianic hope of Israel in his threefold office of priest, prophet, and king” (par 436).

What is notable about the language of the Old Testament is that while priests, prophets, and kings were called “the Lord’s Anointed” (1 Sam 24:6), “my Anointed” (1 Chron 16:22; Psa 105:15), or “his Anointed” (1 Sam 12:3-5;

Psa 18:50), there is no use of the term “Messiah.” The Gospel writers and the other early Christians recognized and professed Jesus as Messiah, thus giving him a designation that is at once unique and yet also thoroughly rooted in the Jewish Scriptures. Michael F. Bird, in his study *Jesus Is the Christ* (InterVarsity Press, 2012), states:

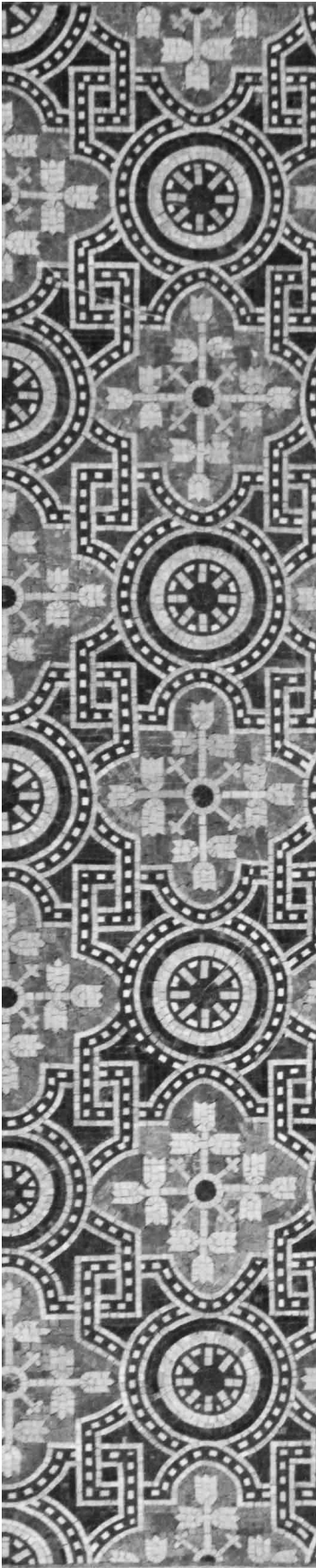
“The evangelists [Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John] clearly provide different appropriations of messianic traditions in their respective portrayals of Jesus, and the messiahship of Jesus functions differently in each Gospel. Yet there is a pervasive and shared conviction that Jesus is the Christos. The various titles assigned to Jesus (e.g. Son of God, Son of David, Son of Man) are expressions of the messianic role attributed to him. Also the citation, allusion, and echo of scriptural texts are built around the conviction that Jesus is the climax of Jewish scriptural expectations that point to the Messiah” (p 141).

For example, the Gospel of John describes how Andrew, one of disciples of John the Baptist, spent a day with Jesus and then searched out his brother, Simon, to say, “We have found the Messiah” (which means Christ)” (Jn 1:39-41). The same evangelist, John, in his first epistles declared, “Every one who believes that Jesus is the Christ is a child of God...” and “... we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, to know him who is true; and we are in him who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life” (1 Jn 5:1, 20). The messiah was always understood within the context of the reign or kingdom of God. And that, as we will see throughout this study, is at the heart of the person, teachings, and actions of Jesus, the Christ.

† PARTICIPATION IN CHRIST’S THREE-FOLD OFFICE

Jesus Christ, as Bishop Barron emphasizes, must be read and understood in light of the Old Testament “christs”—that is, those priests, prophets, and kings that foreshadowed the perfect Priest, Prophet, and King. In doing so, we not only deepen our understanding of the Messiah, we deepen our understanding of how each of us, as baptized Christians, participate in the life and work of Christ, sharing in his three-fold office of priest, prophet, and king.

Lumen Gentium, the Second Vatican Council’s dogmatic constitution on the Church, begins by describing the grand vista of salvation history. God, in his wisdom and goodness, created all things,



and his plan “was to raise men to a participation of the divine life” (2). The Son, Jesus Christ, came to carry out the will of the Father, and so he “inaugurated the Kingdom of heaven on earth and revealed to us the mystery of that kingdom. By His obedience He brought about redemption. The Church, or, in other words, the kingdom of Christ now present in mystery, grows visibly through the power of God in the world” (3). *Lumen Gentium* explains in detail many aspects of the Church and the Kingdom, and how the two relate to one another. The Church, established by the new covenant, consists of both Jew and gentile, made into one people by baptism and the Holy Spirit—“new people of God.” These people of God are, in the words of St. Peter, “a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a purchased people . . . who in times past were not a people, but are now the people of God” (LG 9; 1 Pet 2:9-10). These people, the conciliar fathers stated, are “messianic people” for Christ, the Messiah, is the head of the Church. And while this messianic people might “look like a small flock,” they are being used by Christ “as an instrument for the redemption of all, and [are] sent forth into the whole world as the light of the world and the salt of the earth” (9). The document then emphasizes a key point: all of the faithful have been baptized, regenerated (that is, “born again”), and anointed by the Holy Spirit. And because of this, they “are consecrated as a spiritual house and a holy priesthood, in order that through all those works which are those of the Christian man they may offer spiritual sacrifices and proclaim the power of Him who has called them out of darkness into His marvelous light” (10).

Yes, there is an essential difference between the “common priesthood of the faithful” and “the ministerial or hierarchical priesthood.” But the two are interrelated, and they each in their own way participate in the “one priesthood of Christ” (10). The ministerial priest has been ordained so that, acting in the person of Jesus Christ, he can make present the Eucharistic sacrifice, offering it to God “in the name of all the people.” How do the non-ordained faithful share in the priesthood of Christ? First, by joining in the offering of the Eucharist. And:

“They likewise exercise that priesthood in receiving the sacraments, in prayer and thanksgiving, in the witness of a holy life, and by self-denial and active charity” (10).

There is no competition between the common priesthood of all believers and the ministerial priesthood, for both rely completely on the singular priesthood of Jesus Christ, both are rooted in the life-giving sacrament of baptism, and both are at the service of the one, holy, Catholic, and apostolic Church. This means that every disciple of Jesus Christ—not just ordained priests or consecrated nuns—are to follow the exhortation of the Apostle Paul:

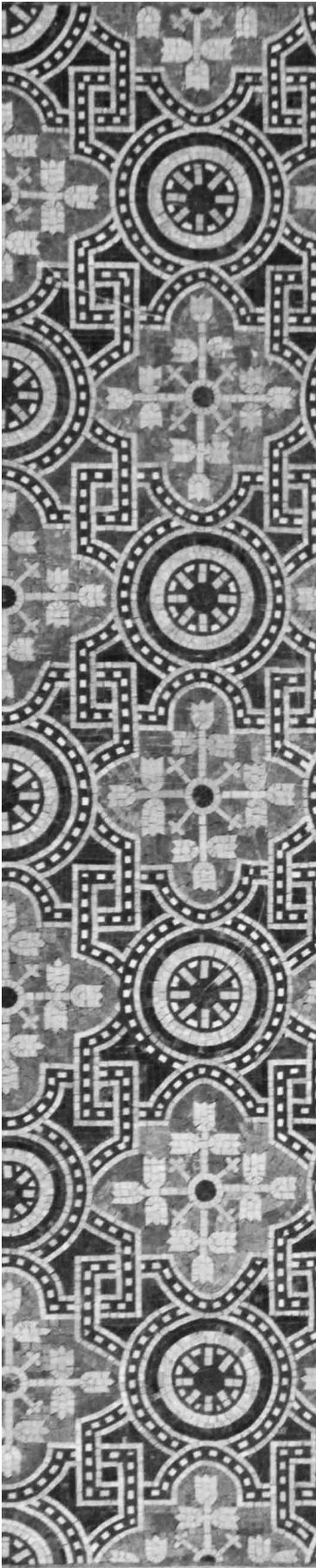
“I APPEAL TO YOU THEREFORE, BRETHREN, BY THE MERCIES OF GOD, TO PRESENT YOUR BODIES AS A LIVING SACRIFICE, HOLY AND ACCEPTABLE TO GOD, WHICH IS YOUR SPIRITUAL WORSHIP. DO NOT BE CONFORMED TO THIS WORLD BUT BE TRANSFORMED BY THE RENEWAL OF YOUR MIND, THAT YOU MAY PROVE WHAT IS THE WILL OF GOD, WHAT IS GOOD AND ACCEPTABLE AND PERFECT” (ROM 12:1-2).

This sharing of the laity in the three-fold office of Christ was of great importance to Saint John Paul II, who reiterated it throughout his pontificate. In fact, in the homily given on the inauguration of his pontificate on October 22, 1978, he stated:

“The Second Vatican Council has reminded us of the mystery of this power and of the fact that Christ’s mission as Priest, Prophet-Teacher and King continues in the Church. Everyone, the whole People of God, shares in this threefold mission. Perhaps in the past, the tiara, this triple crown, was placed on the Pope’s head in order to express by that symbol the Lord’s plan for his Church, namely that all the hierarchical order of Christ’s Church, all “sacred power” exercised in the Church, is nothing other than service, service with a single purpose: to ensure that the whole People of God shares in this threefold mission of Christ and always remains under the power of the Lord; a power that has its source not in the powers of this world but in the mystery of the Cross and Resurrection.”

In his first encyclical, *Redemptor hominis* (March 4, 1979), John Paul II wrote that “the Church must be always aware of the dignity of the divine adoption received by man in Christ through the grace of the Holy Spirit and of his destination to grace and glory” (18). By having this clear and magnificent goal in view, the people of God are better suited for the service they are called to:

“The Church performs this ministry by sharing in the “triple office” belonging to her Master and Redeemer. This teaching, with its Biblical foundation, was brought fully to the fore by the Second Vatican Council, to the great advantage of the Church’s life. For when we become aware that we share in Christ’s triple mission, his triple office as priest, as prophet and as king, we also become more aware of what must receive service from the whole of the Church as the



society and community of the People of God on earth, and we likewise understand how each one of us must share in this mission and service" (18).

Finally, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches that the “whole People of God participates in these three offices of Christ and bears the responsibilities for mission and service that flow from them” (par 783). And:

“On entering the People of God through faith and Baptism, one receives a share in this people’s unique, priestly vocation: “Christ the Lord, high priest taken from among men, has made this new people ‘a kingdom of priests to God, his Father.’ The baptized, by regeneration and the anointing of the Holy Spirit, are consecrated to be a spiritual house and a holy priesthood” (par 784).

With that background in mind, let’s look at the priesthood of Christ and how the faithful share in it.

† PRIESTHOOD

What does it mean to be a “priest”? Up until modern times, almost all cultures had some form of priesthood, and the role of priests was usually central to the culture of a particular people. The great British historian Christopher Dawson (1889-1970), in *Religion and Culture* (1948), explained:

“Of all the social organs of religion the priesthood is that which has the most direct and enduring influence on culture. For priesthood represents religion embodied in a stable institution which forms an integral part of the structure of society and assumes a corporate responsibility for the religious life of the community.”

While priests might also be teachers and educators, Dawson observed, “The primary function of the priest is not to teach. It is to offer sacrifice.”

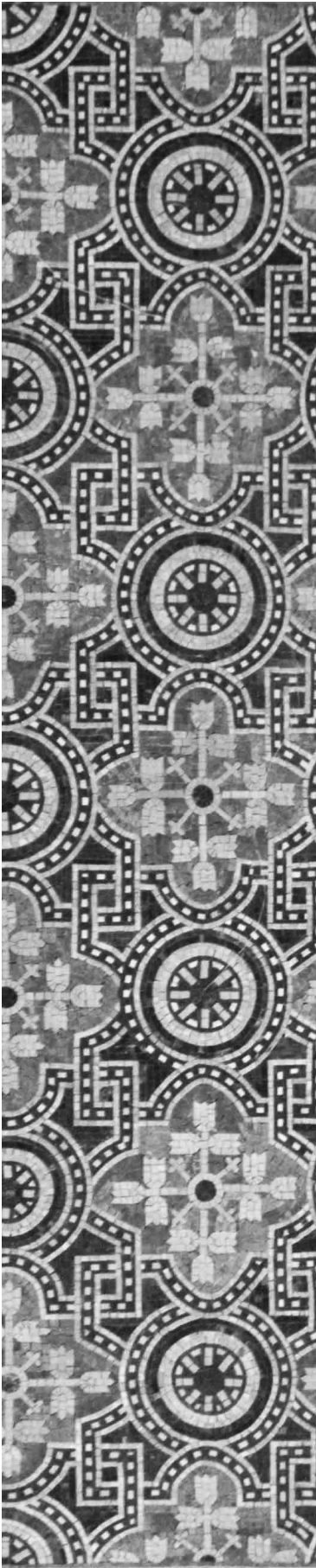
He then noted the assertion of St. Augustine that “there is no people without sacrifice.” The act of sacrifice, as Dawson explains, “is the vital bond of communion between the people and its gods...” And the priest stands between the two, interceding in a unique way on behalf of the people.

Orthodox theologian and priest Fr. Alexander Schmemmann (1921-83) made a similar but more theologically incisive observation in his classic book, *For the Life of the World* (1963). “The first and most basic definition of man is that he is a priest,” wrote Schmemmann. “He stands in the center of the world and unifies it in his act of blessing God, of both receiving the world from God and offering it to God—and by filling the world with this eucharist, he transforms his life, the one that he receives from the world.” The sacrifice offered by man is, first and foremost, to offer proper praise and worship to God and to enter fully, in love, into communion with God. The power of man as priest, Schmemmann explained in *Of Water and the Spirit* (1974), is fulfilled in sacrifice, which, “long before it became almost synonymous with ‘expiation,’ was and still is the essential expression of man’s desire for communion with God, of creation’s longing for its fulfillment in God, and which is essentially a movement, an act of praise, thanksgiving and union. Thus man is king and priest by nature and calling.” The fall of Adam was due to his refusal to be priest. Rather than be filled and satisfied by God and his love, Adam chose to eat elsewhere, to seek satisfaction in something other than God. “The first consumer,” argued Schmemmann, “was Adam himself. He chose not to be a priest but to approach the world as consumer: to ‘eat’ of it, to use and to dominate it for himself, to benefit from it but not to offer, not to sacrifice, not to have it for God and in God.”

Adam, as Bishop Barron explains, had perfect and intimate communion with God. He lived in God’s love, breathing of God’s divine life. Adam gave right worship and adoration—not because God needed it, of course, but because Adam needed it! For without true communion with God, man perishes—and true communion with God is established and nourished by loving and worshipping God. Adam, then, was a priest, and Eden was a perfectly ordered and life-affirming culture.

Understanding the nature of priesthood is foundational because it precedes the offices of king and prophet. It is, so to speak, primordial, for it situates the face-to-face, eye-to-eye relationship between Creator and the creature. It gets at the very essence of God’s relationship with man.

Fr. Albert Schlitzer, C.S.C., in *Redemptive Incarnation* (1956), reflected on how Christ’s priesthood, even more than his kingship and prophetic office, demonstrates that “the office of Christ as Priest



most perfectly of all reveals Him as Mediator tying God to man and man to God. ...”:

“In the name of mankind He worships God to the full measure in which God deserves to be worshipped. ... As the new Head of the human race, the Second Adam, He gives mankind back to God. This recognition of God’s supreme dominion, and the total yielding up of one’s self to the Supreme Being consequent upon that recognition, are at the very core of religion.”

The great Jesuit scholar Jean Cardinal Danielou (1905-74) insisted that “Christ’s work may be considered first as priestly, the offering of the perfect sacrifice which truly glorifies the Father, and which enables Creation to reach its goal” (*The Advent of Salvation*, 1950). Or, in the words of Danielou’s friend, John Paul II:

“In Christ, priesthood is linked with his Sacrifice, his self-giving to the Father; and, precisely because it is without limit, that self-giving gives rise in us human beings subject to numerous limitations to the need to turn to God in an ever more mature way and with a constant, ever more profound, conversion” (RH, 20).

The first Adam consumed the forbidden fruit, turning his back on the love of God; the second Adam consummated his life and divine mission by embracing the cross, revealing his perfect love for the Father and for the world. The first Adam’s denial of love lead to death; the second Adam’s denial of self opened the doors to life through death. “For as by a man came death,” wrote St. Paul, “by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive” (1 Cor 15:21-22).

The ministry of Christ—the Anointed One—was to proclaim glad tidings to the poor, grant liberty to captives, give sight to the blind, and free the oppressed. This is true restoration from the ancient exile of both Jews and Gentiles in the land of sin and darkness. Every man is invited by the

Messiah to leave the land of sin and enter the promised rest. “He set the captives free,” wrote Cyril of Jerusalem, “having overthrown the tyrant Satan, he shed the divine and spiritual light on those whose heart was darkened.”

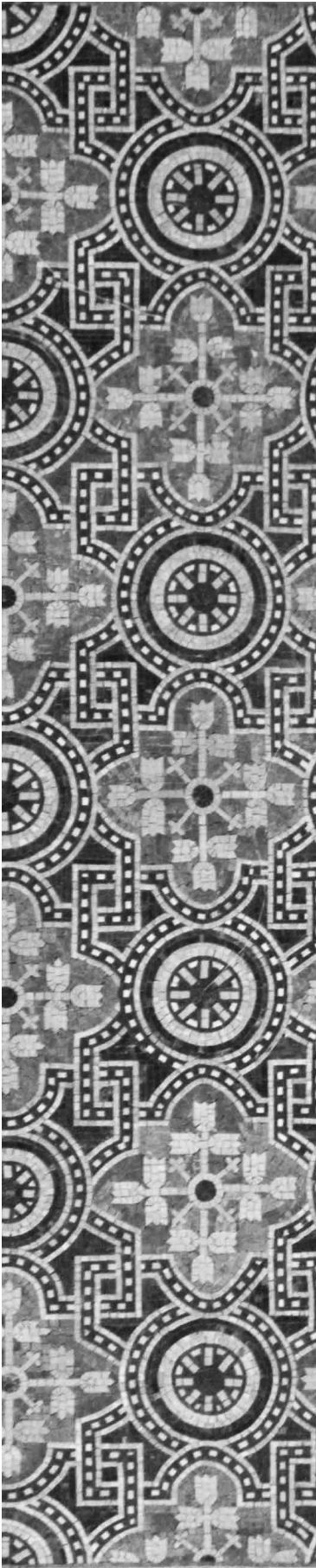
Because of the Messiah’s sacrifice, there is light and life. There is also a people—a messianic people who are also called to fellowship, sacrifice, and worship. Because of the Messiah’s sacrifice, we can be priests again, able to love the world and to lead lives worthy of those called to be children of God. For, in the words of the conciliar fathers, “Christ, the final Adam, by the revelation of the mystery of the Father and His love, fully reveals man to man himself and makes his supreme calling clear” (*Gaudium et spes*, 22).

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION: VATICAN II & THE ROLE OF THE LAITY

For some Catholics, the Second Vatican Council was an updating of the Church that supposedly resulted in changes to the Church’s goals and focus. This is, however, an unfortunate misreading. The Council was a renewal meant to aid Catholics in reappropriating and rediscovering the Church’s goals and focus in a world that had changed dramatically in a short amount of time. The mission of the Church never changes, but our understanding of how to best live it in a specific culture does develop and change.

That mission, according to *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, the council’s Decree on the Apostolate of Laity, is to proclaim the Gospel and to fill the temporal order with the light and salt of the Gospel; the laity have an essential role in this task:

“Christ’s redemptive work, while essentially concerned with the salvation of men, includes also the renewal of the whole temporal order. Hence the mission of the Church is not only to bring the message and grace of Christ to men but also to penetrate and perfect the temporal order with the spirit of the Gospel. In fulfilling this mission of the Church, the Christian laity exercise their apostolate both in the Church and in the world, in both the spiritual and the temporal orders. These orders, although distinct, are so connected in the singular plan of God that He Himself intends to raise up the whole world again in Christ and to make it a new



creation, initially on earth and completely on the last day. In both orders the layman, being simultaneously a believer and a citizen, should be continuously led by the same Christian conscience” (AA 5).

It would be difficult to overstate the importance and centrality of the laity in this most pressing mission. According to *Lumen Gentium*, it is the laity’s “special vocation . . . to seek the kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and directing them according to God’s will. . . . There they are called by God that, being led by the spirit to the Gospel, they may contribute to the sanctification of the world, as from within like leaven, by fulfilling their own particular duties. . . . It pertains to them in a special way so to illuminate and order all temporal things with which they are so closely associated that these may be effected and grow according to Christ and may be to the glory of the Creator and Redeemer” (LG 31).

The Council Fathers taught that “the laity must take up the renewal of the temporal order as their own special obligation,” being led by the “light of the Gospel and the mind of the Church and motivated by Christian charity.” This involves a permeation of culture, of society, and of all aspects of the kingdom of man with the “higher principles of the Christian life” (AA 7). John Paul II wrote that “in particular the lay faithful are called to restore to creation all its original value” (*Christifideles Laici*, 14). This task is not the priority of priests or religious; in fact, they are not qualified for, or capable of, such activity!

Only the laity, because of their skills in the marketplace, in the institutions of society, and in the everyday activities of men, can properly perform this crucial activity: “The apostolate in the social milieu, that is, the effort to infuse a Christian spirit into the mentality, customs, laws, and structures of the community in which one lives, is so much the duty and responsibility of the laity that it can never be performed properly by others” (AA 13). In other words, the laity need to realize they have important work to do, and the time to start that work is now.

Lesson One: QUESTIONS FOR UNDERSTANDING

Please use the commentary above and the references listed with each question to develop your answers.

1. What does the title “Messiah” mean? Although the term “Messiah” does not appear in the Old Testament, how is its use in the New Testament rooted in the Old Testament? (Mt. 16:13-20; CCC 436-40)

2. What are some passages from the Gospels and other New Testament books that identify Jesus as the Messiah? Why did the apostles and disciples think that Jesus was the Christ? (Mt. 1:1; 16:13-20; 26:63-4; Mk. 1:1; Lk. 4:41; Jn. 1:39-41; Acts 2:29-32; 1 Jn. 5:1, 20)

3. What does it mean to say that all of the baptized are priests? What distinguishes the ordained or ministerial priesthood from the common priesthood of all believers? (1 Pet 2:9-10; CCC 783-786)

4. What are essential features of priesthood? (Rom 12:1; CCC 1120, 1142, 1547)

5. Why is there such a close relationship in Scripture between love and sacrifice? What are some examples? (Mt 5:43-6; Jn 13:34-5; 15:12-17; Rom 12:1-2; Eph 5:1-2)

Lesson One: QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION

1. How has your understanding of Jesus as Messiah changed or deepened?

2. What can you do to better offer yourself as a “spiritual sacrifice” to God?

3. How might you deepen and enrich your worship of God, both in private and in liturgy? How can you worship God in your daily thoughts, words, and deeds?

4. In what way are you a priest? What does that indicate about your relationship with Christ? With the Church? With your fellow Christians? With the world?