

Vatican II – Saturday Morning Sessions

Session 6: Saturday 27th April 2013

Feedback from Group Work: Constitution on Divine Revelation (Dei Verbum)

Group 7 Feedback:

- *Preface – paragraph 1*
- *Chapter One – Revelation – paragraphs 2-6*

Question	Group response
<p>How does the din of modern life – the commotion of the world – sometimes make it difficult to hear the voice of God?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A very pertinent question - it can be difficult to hear the voice of God as we can be preoccupied with other things.• The workplace and the busy street.• We do have the capacity though to experience God in places where there is a lot of noise – e.g. in the relationships we have with others.• We can overcome the din and hear God's voice
<p>Where and when do you feel God is most present, communicating himself to you?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In the daily Mass (as distinct from the Sunday Mass where there can be a lot of noise and distraction and where we have to work harder to hear God speaking to us because of this).• In quiet solitude – let thoughts drift in and out.• In nature – peaceful/beautiful surroundings.• First thing in the morning and last thing at night.• Spring-time.• Quiet time with a candle.• Birds singing.

Question	Group response
What does this way God has of revealing himself teach us about God?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• God is complete, omnipresent beyond our containment.• God is closer than our best friend.• He is closer than our next breath.
Given all this, if asked by someone unfamiliar with God, how would you describe God to him or her?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We do not seek to prove that God exists – we demonstrate his existence in our lives.• He is revealed to us in four ways:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– In creation: the power, majesty and wonder of the world – e.g. in a baby’s smile.– In close friendships – cf. the Old Testament.– In Christ’s life – the perfect revelation.– In the Holy Spirit

Group 6 Feedback:

Chapter Two - Handing on Divine Revelation – paragraphs 7-10

Question	Group response
<p>God reveals himself through Jesus. As the body of Jesus, how does the Church pass this on?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We see ourselves as the Church, the Body of Christ. • We pass this on through the gift of the Holy Spirit by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The example of our living witness. – Learning about our faith – liturgy; adult education. – Sharing our faith with others; in relationship with others.
<p>How does Scripture reveal to us who God is and what he is like?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Because the stories in Scripture reach out to us, connect with us, and show us how God relates to people and the natural world. • In the Scriptures God invites us to a personal relationship with him. • God shows us himself through Jesus.
<p>When is the Word of God most alive for you?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The weekly Sunday Eucharist – he is present in the loving, accepting and nurturing community. • In the awareness of God, especially in times of need, but also in everyday living – in family and the natural world (e.g. a walk across the park; a major family event such as a birth). • In times of deep solitude and prayer. • In a quiet weekday Mass where we can be touched by the Word of God in a different way.

Group 3 Feedback:

Chapter Two - Handing on Divine Revelation – paragraphs 7-10

Question	Group response
<p>God reveals himself through Jesus. As the body of Jesus, how does the Church pass this on?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• When it is proclaimed during the liturgy.• It can come alive for us during the children’s liturgy – cf. the discussion and the responses from the children.• Reading and sharing the Word of God with others – bringing the stories alive in our everyday lives and challenges.• Learnt so much about faith and the Word of God when working with adults with special needs.• Through baptism we have been given the power to understand the Word of God.• It is also alive when the Word is proclaimed and really believed in by the readers and leaders of liturgy – sometimes because of the way it is read we hear it as if it was the first time we had ever heard it.• Where we are in our lives impacts on how alive the Word of God is to us.

Question	Group response
<p>How does Scripture reveal to us who God is and what he is like?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When we were growing up there were a lot of rules, regulations and a fear; not much about a loving God and the Kingdom. The emphasis was on traditions, rituals; not the Word of God. The bible wasn't a huge part of our lives. • But this has changed. We now see that Jesus is as present in the Word of God as he is in the Eucharist. • Influence is passed on through people. Christ is in people who have inspired us on the way. This can sustain us through times of doubt about the Church. • Teaching related to social justice is embedded in the Gospel. • Through the Word, tradition and teachings – not always been balanced and given equal weight in the past.
<p>When is the Word of God most alive for you?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At times the word of God is expressed, by the institution, in a culture of 'literalism' and rules. Not as alive and living, dynamic word – 'each age hearing it as if a living voice for that particular time.' • Scriptures were written from a lived experience – not at a distance.

Question	Group response
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We meet the Word of God in our lives, challenges, complexities. But not sure that is how the Scripture is led and understood by the Church governance/hierarchy – it seems more certain, static and dogmatic than alive and dynamic.
<p>Read paragraph 10 again. Whose job do you think it is to help the people of today's world meet Christ and come to know the Church?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tradition is often authenticated by a misuse of Scripture. Three examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – It is often quoted that 'the new translation brings us closer to God', but if we look at the words of the new translation in the Eucharistic prayer it says 'for many' whilst the Scripture clearly says that Jesus came to save all. – Little justification for a male, celibate priesthood from Scripture. – There is a perception that much of the moral theology of the Catholic Church is not fit for purpose and is not centered on the Scriptures. However, when the context is social justice the Word of God clearly informs and develops Church teaching and traditions – e.g. redistribution of wealth issues; nuclear weapons.

Group 5 Feedback:

Part 1

Chapter Three - Sacred Scripture: Its Divine Inspiration and Interpretation - paragraphs 11-13

Subject	Group's understanding
Describe in your own words what you understand by Inspiration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Came from the Holy Spirit. • God is leading us to think in a certain way to find the truth. • Putting the thoughts in there.
Describe in your own words what you understand by Writers of Scripture	<p>Scribes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People who were moved by their every day experiences. • In tune with the Holy Spirit. • Touched by God's goodness. • Witnesses to God/Jesus' work – maybe kept a diary. • Motivated to write about what they experienced using their intelligence and emotions.
Describe in your own words what you understand by Understanding and interpreting the Bible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Holy Spirit influencing our emotions and intelligence. • The theories are the same, but we interpret in a way that is relevant to today's world. • There can be new insights and interpretation in a changing world – maybe that is magical/special.

Part 2

Chapter Four - The Old Testament - paragraphs 14-16

Question	Group response
Who are the prophets in today's world?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Somebody who reads the signs of the times in today's world.• They needn't be religious – can be people with concerns for the environment, etc.• People who have a wholesome wisdom about life, the world we live in.• We are all called to become prophets.• Some examples of prophets in our time are:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Sister Joan Chittester– Bob Geldof– Michael Buerk – let the world know about Ethiopia.
How is the story of God's love, begun in Old Testament times, continued today?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• God chose the people of Israel because they were downtrodden.• The Old and the New Testaments interlock with each other – they are intimately linked.• The News Testament is hidden in the Old and the Old Testament is made manifest in the New.

Question	Group response
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="792 254 1351 453">• The Old Testament demonstrates how God prepared the world to receive Christ and that is carrying on today – we are still learning and preparing.<li data-bbox="792 485 1312 600">• It is no ordinary book – particularly in difficult times we are supported by this story.

Group 2 Feedback:

Part 1

Chapter Four - The Old Testament - paragraphs 14-16

Question	Group response
Who are the prophets in today's world?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pope Francis.• Mother Theresa – by her way of life.• Nelson Mandela• Martin Luther King.• Unknown prophets – people who influence society at any level.• Are we prophets?
How is the story of God's love, begun in Old Testament times, continued today?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• It is good to read the Bible, but more important to interpret it.• There is a difference between faith and knowledge – faith leads us to get the message.• With regard to Christ's teaching today, we live in a society that is affected by Christ – his teaching affects the whole of society.

Part 2

Chapter Three - Sacred Scripture: Its Divine Inspiration and Interpretation - paragraphs 11-13

Subject	Group's understanding
Describe in your own words what you understand by Inspiration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A response to be better.• The Old Testament is a story of the journey of a people with God.• The New Testament is the teaching of Jesus.

Group 4 Feedback:

Part 1

Chapter Five - The New Testament – paragraphs 17-20

Question	Group response
<p>How did Jesus reveal God to us?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God sent Jesus to us. • In sending Jesus we can learn about the personality and character of God – by observing the personality and character of Jesus. • When Jesus died he knew that some people in the world would continue not believing in him, despite his example.
<p>What did Jesus reveal about God to us?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God is a loving God. • God is a forgiving God. • Jesus went through with the passion despite knowing people would reject him. He knew Judas was going to betray him, but he still washed his feet (cf. John 13) • Without Jesus, God is too remote. • God loves everybody (not just the Jews as in the Old Testament).
<p>What are the central and core truths found in the New Testament?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That we should all be one. • The life of Jesus was a practical example of how we should live. • Jesus wasn't just a philosopher – he did it, he lived it out. • We should learn about and respect people of other religions.

Part 2

Chapter Six – Sacred Scripture in the Life of the Church – paragraphs 21-26

Ways in which Scripture is central to life of church

- Should more be done to help us to become familiar with the Bible?
- Should we have more opportunity to study the Scriptures? If so, how?
- At Mass – perhaps once in a while we could discuss the passages we have just read? Would need to tell people in advance so that they knew what to expect.
- Or perhaps evening meetings? But the disadvantage of this would be that the Eucharist and the Word wouldn't be together – Mass is a unity of the Word and the Eucharist and is therefore preferable.
- Perhaps it is a case of “both ... and” – at Mass **and** evening studies – both would be helpful and valuable.

Group 1 Feedback:

Part 1

Chapter Six – Sacred Scripture in the Life of the Church – paragraphs 21-26

Ways in which Scripture is central to life of church

- The Scripture makes no mistake about what our commitment to our Christian community should be.
- Emphasis in the past was on the Real Presence in the Eucharist/Host but now we are more aware of the Real Presence coming more alive in the breaking of the Word in Scripture.
- The Bible is being more and more used by families and individuals; and with good translations.
- Our celebrations are more enriching through the singing of scripture inspired hymns and psalms.
- Increasingly words of Scripture well up within us when we are alone or reflecting and praying.

Part 2

Chapter Five - The New Testament – paragraphs 17-20

Question	Group response
How did Jesus reveal God to us?	In a personal way. Jesus came into the very reality that is exactly as we know the world to be today – he came” to a world that was deep in chaos, frantic with fear, and starved for peace (chapter 5 paragraph 17). It’s here that He shows us who and where God is.
What did Jesus reveal about God to us?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jesus is passionate about the ways our lives should be; God wills how life should and should not be-Jesus senses

Question	Group response
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jesus love for God reveals and mirrors God's love and passion for all. God is so inclusive and unconditional in his love for everyone. Our God is a God of love and compassion and not a god of fear.
What are the central and core truths found in the New Testament?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jesus has come to make us free: free to live and love beyond what we think and sometimes feel to be impossible - even loving our enemies.• We are called to be One: to love one another as He loves us - as the Father loves Him.• The central purpose of Jesus life is to show us who God is; to tell us how God loves us; to introduce us to the reign of God and what it involves for us.