The Second Vatican Council began 50 years ago — on October 11, 1962. Vatican II, as it came to be known, has profoundly affected Christian life ever since. This series offers the opportunity to explore key areas of Vatican II transformation for Catholic Christians.

September 22, 2012  Rev. Felix Just, S.J. Vatican II and Our Understanding of Revelation and Scripture

In November of 1965, the Second Vatican Council issued Dei Verbum, the “Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation”. This short but crucial document summarizes the Catholic Church’s official teaching on the bible, understood within the context of God’s “revelation” or “self-communication” to the world, and how it is passed on across generations and centuries. An understanding of Dei Verbum is essential for scripture study and lectionary-based ministry in the Catholic Church. This workshop will explore key questions, such as: How did Dei Verbum take shape? What are its central principles, and how has this remarkable document affected the theology and pastoral life of the Church? In what ways does Dei Verbum still challenge us to grow, as individuals and as Church?


The Council’s call for the restoration of the Church’s ancient catechumenate for the initiation of adults with the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults was not an isolated move that emerged at the Council. It was a decision built upon two “trans” fairly recently, the revival of a pastoral experiment in adult initiation in Africa, and, second, the Council’s overall shift from an Ordo Baptismalis to a Baptismalis Spirituality. This workshop will explore these two “trans” in their historical context and in the theology of the Council, along with an emerging tension within the Church today between these two spiritualities. It will then provide an overview of the restored Catechumenate and its implementation in the US since 1988, identifying some challenges for us as we continue to implement the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults.

October 6, 2012  Rev. Ronald Oakham, O.Carm. The Period of Purification and Enlightenment in the RCIA: Keeping a Holy Lent

Lent, although observed by the faithful for centuries, was regarded as a period of intense preparation for the Easter Sacraments for the catechumens of the ancient Church. When the catechumenate faded from the Church’s initiation practice, the faithful continued its disciplining as part of their preparation period for Easter. This workshop will explore: the history of Lent as a period of preparation for Easter; the restored Period of Purification & Enlightenment as an essential foundation for understanding of the growth of early Christianity in this great land.

October 20, 2012  Rev. Ronald Oakham, O.Carm. Early Christians in Turkey: Most Important Sites To Visit Today

While some of the early Christian sites mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles and the letters of Paul are unexcavated, or buried under modern cities, others are spectacular archaeological sites, containing the ruins of ancient temples, theaters, houses, ports and features of historic cities. This workshop will provide an overview of the remains of the early Christian centuries that are still visible to modern pilgrims — in cities and regions such as the lent the Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Series.

March 9, 2013  Rev. Alexei Smith Who Are the Christians of the Middle East and Turkey?

This workshop will examine the influence of the Second Vatican Council on the relationship between the Catholic Church and other Christian Churches and between the Catholic Church and other religions. This workshop will examine two key documents of the Council: Unitatis Redintegratio (Restoring Christian Unity), and Neocatecumenate (the Decision on Interreligious Dialogue). We will (1) explore their origin, major points, and development; (2) review how the Church has accepted or revised these documents in practical terms; and (3) take a serious look at the state of their questions today, suggesting directions that the Church appears to be heading, offering suggestions as to how parishes and individual Catholics may become involved in living out the vision of these two historic documents of the Council.


Early Christians in Turkey: Most Important Sites To Visit Today

When attending three or more workshops in a series, a discounted ‘series rate’ will apply.*

* Registration for the two workshops in the Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations Series will qualify you for the discounted ‘series rate’.

For additional registration forms, go to:

Workshops in a series complement each other but may be taken independently or in conjunction with another workshop or series. When attending three or more workshops in a series, the discounted ‘series rate’ will apply.*

To register, complete this form (front and back) and, with check or credit card info, mail to:

Ecclesiate - Campus Ministry
Mount St. Mary’s College
10 Chester Places, Los Angeles, CA 90007

Or call 310-956-4126
Or email ggru móc.eur.msmc.edu

WORKSHOP: Please check the boxes of the workshops you would like to attend.

Sept. 1  Gail M. Gresser The Catholic Church and Other Religions: Rediscovering Vatican II

The workshop description is located under the “Early Christians in Turkey” Series. It may also, or alternatively, be taken as part of the “Scripture” Series.

Sept. 22  Rev. Felix Just, S.J. Vatican II and Our Understanding of Revelation and Scripture

This workshop description is located under the “Early Christians in Turkey” Series. It may also, or alternatively, be taken as part of the “Scripture” Series.

February 9, 2013  Rev. Felix Just, S.J. Early Christians in Turkey: Most Important Sites To Visit Today

This workshop description is located under the “Early Christians in Turkey” Series. It may also, or alternatively, be taken as part of the “Scripture” Series.


This workshop description is located under the “Early Christians in Turkey” Series. It may also, or alternatively, be taken as part of the “Scripture” Series.

December 8, 2012  Rev. Alexei Smith The Catholic Church and Other Religions: Rediscovering Vatican II

This workshop description is located under the “Early Christians in Turkey” Series. It may also, or alternatively, be taken as part of the “Scripture” Series.


This workshop description is located under the “Early Christians in Turkey” Series. It may also, or alternatively, be taken as part of the “Scripture” Series.

February 9, 2013  Rev. Felix Just, S.J. Early Christians in Turkey: Most Important Sites To Visit Today

This workshop description is located under the “Early Christians in Turkey” Series. It may also, or alternatively, be taken as part of the “Scripture” Series.

March 9, 2013  Rev. Alexei Smith Who Are the Christians of the Middle East and Turkey?

This workshop description is located under the “Early Christians in Turkey” Series. It may also, or alternatively, be taken as part of the “Scripture” Series.

March 9, 2013  Rev. Alexei Smith The Period of Mystagogy— Unfolding the Mysteries: Not Just for the Neophytes during Eastertide

Prior to Vatican II, and in most child-centered catechetical programs today, Catholics experience the celebration of any given sacrament as the concluding piece of a sacramental preparation program. However, the early Church’s approach (restored by Vatican II with the reintroduction of the Catechumenate in its sacramental practice) of preparing for the sacrament as thresholds along a faith journey. Thus the celebration of the sacrament is not a concluding ritual, but a key element in the overallformation process itself. This is best seen in the RCIA’s Period of Mystagogy and its implications for sacramental preparation and catechesis. This workshop will explore:

3 the difference between Sacramental Preparation & Sacramental Catechesis
3 the Period of Mystagogy as structured in the Eastern Liturgy
3 a methodology (with a practicum) for implementing this period in a parish
3 a Dismissal as a way of life for the Christian

For more about the pilgrimage to Turkey, go to:

Mount St. Mary’s College, Doheny campus.
The Presenters

Gail Gresser is the Director of Campus Ministry at Mount St. Mary’s College. She also teaches the certification course for RCA ministers at the Center for Religion and Spirituality at Loyola Marymount University. She served for many years on the Office for Worship Liturgy Committee and is currently a member of the Religious Education Congress Liturgy Committee. She holds a Masters degree in Anthropology from UCLA, and a Masters in Theological Studies from LMU.

Felix Just, S.J., is the Director of Biblical Education at the Loyola Institute for Spirituality in Orange, CA. He received his Ph.D. in New Testament Studies from Yale University, and has taught at several universities, including Loyola Marymount. A frequent public lecturer, educator and retreat director on a wide variety of scriptural themes, he also maintains an internationally recognized webs ite of “Catholic Resources”, especially for scripture, at http://catholic-resources.org.

Ron Oakham, O.Carm., is the pastor of St. Cyril of Alexandria Parish in Tucson, AZ, a position he assumed after serving as the Carmelite Western Regional Provincial. For many years, he has been a leader in Initiation ministry throughout the United States. He has served with the North American Forum for the Catechumenate as the Director of Institutes, Team member and Board member, and as the Director of the Catechumenate for the Archdiocese of Newark. A strong advocate for a renewed Baptismal spirituality, he is the author of One at the Table: The Reception of Baptized Christians.

Rev. Alexei Smith is the Ecumenical and Interreligious Officer of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. He studied International Relations at USC, and earned his Masters of Divinity from the Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology. Ordained a Greek Catholic priest, he serves as pastor of St. Andrew’s Russian Greek Catholic Church in El Segundo. He has served as co-chair of the Catholic-Orthodox Dialogue, and as president of the Interreligious Council of Southern California, and is the recipient of the Religious Leadership Award of the Valley Interfaith Council.

Ecclesia is a project of Mount St. Mary’s College
Campus Ministry committed to the continuing education, development and support of ministry in the contemporary and future Church.

Ecclesia welcomes ministers, lay and ordained, salaried and volunteer, from the Archdiocese of Los Angeles and beyond.

Serving Those
Who Serve the Church

Mount St. Mary’s College
Los Angeles
2012-2013