

THIRD SESSION OF VATICAN II: CLOSING ADDRESS OF POPE PAUL VI
NOVEMBER 21, 1964

[In this address Paul VI gave an overview of how he saw the various documents-in-process of Vatican II (some of which were not yet named) in relation to each other]

We like to think that **the doctrine of the mystery of the Church**, illustrated and proclaimed by the Council will, from this moment find a positive echo in the minds of Catholics.....it will let them admire a prodigy of historical fidelity, of stupendous sociology, of outstanding legislation, a forward-moving realm in which divine and human elements blend in order to reflect on believing humanity the outlines of the Incarnation and Redemption – the whole Christ our Saviour, to use the expression of St Augustine.....

We also hope that the same doctrine of the Church will be benevolently and favourably considered by the Christian brothers and sisters who are still separate from us. We wish that **this doctrine, completed by the declaration contained in the schema on Ecumenism**, likewise approved by this Council, might have in their souls the power of a loving leaven for the revision of thoughts and attitudes which may draw them closer to our communion, and finally, God willing, may merge them in it. To us this same doctrine gives the surprising joy of observing how the Church, by precisely tracing its own outlines, does not restrict, but widens the boundaries of its charity and does not check the movement of its multiform progress, inviting catholicity.....

And finally we should like for the doctrine of the Church to radiate some attractive light on the profane world in which it lives and by which it is surrounded.....

The Church is for the world. The Church does not desire any other earthly power for itself than that which enables it to serve and to love. By perfecting its thought and its structure, the Church does not aim at estranging itself from the experience which is proper to men and women of its time, but it aims rather at understanding them better, at sharing better in their sufferings and their good aspiration, at better sustaining the effort of modern human beings towards their prosperity, their liberty, their peace. But this recurrent theme will have its development at the end of the Council when the **schema on religious liberty, which will crown the work of the Council**, and which, only because of lack of time at the end of this session could not be ended, **and the one on relations between the Church and the world**, which has already been deliberated on at the present session, will be finally and completely treated at the next session.

From Xavier Rynne, The Third Session, (Lon: Faber & Faber, 1965), 384 – 386.