

**Leader's Guide for  
THE VISION OF VATICAN II FOR TODAY WITH FATHER MICHAEL HIMES**

**The Roots of Vatican II**

**Opening Prayer:** Lord our God, you have abundantly blessed our church. As we look back on our rich tradition, may we gain the wisdom we need to move forward as the People of God. Jesus, we place our trust in you. Amen

**Discussion Questions**

- Father Himes speaks of the church as having a “priestly” role, a “prophetic role” and a “kingly” role. Discuss how he describes those functions. Did any of these descriptions surprise you? For example, did you think of “priestly” in a different manner before viewing this program?
- A priestly function is teaching people to pray. Who taught you to pray? Who has led you to greater and greater maturity in faith?
- The priestly dimension of the church “shapes what we love” according to Himes. How does the church do that for you?
- If the priestly mission of the church is not balanced by the prophetic and kingly mission, there can be a danger of superstition. In your opinion, has the church ever lapsed into superstition?
- What impact has the prophetic mission of the church had on you? Himes says the prophetic mission appeals to the intellect. How has the church challenged you intellectually?
- The danger of the prophetic mission is rationalism, or, as Himes says, “asking questions no one asks.” Have you ever experienced that danger?
- The kingly mission is unity and is to be carried out by all people in ministry (ordained and non-ordained). It appeals to the desire for a people to be one. How has the church worked for the unity of all people?
- The danger of the kingly mission in isolation from the other two missions is ambition and tyranny. Have you ever experienced that danger?
- What do you think of Cardinal Newman’s insight that these missions of the church need to check and balance one another?
- Newman tells us that tensions in the church are a good thing. It is a sign that the church is alive and growing. What do you think of that? How does it apply to the church today?
- Himes asks, “How can today’s tensions be fruitful?” What do you say to that question?

**Closing Prayer:** Jesus, we have been comforted and challenged by this gathering. May we never be afraid to follow where you lead, for in you is truth and life. Amen.

© MMII St. Anthony Messenger Press. All rights reserved.

NOTE: This guide can be printed and cut down in size to be stored with the DVD version of this video program. Simply cut ¼ inch from each side of the page for a guide that, when folded, can be placed inside of the DVD case or attached to the DVD or VHS case.

For use with:

*The Vision of Vatican II for Today: The Roots of Vatican II* on VHS (V5050) and DVD (D5050)

St. Anthony Messenger Press  
28 W. Liberty St.  
Cincinnati, OH 45202-6498  
800-488-0488  
[www.AmericanCatholic.org](http://www.AmericanCatholic.org)

**Leader's Guide for  
THE VISION OF VATICAN II FOR TODAY WITH FATHER MICHAEL HIMES**

**The People Are the Church**

**Opening Prayer:** As we gather together this day, may we truly listen for the wisdom of the Spirit. May we approach our time together with open minds and loving hearts. We ask this as we ask all things in Jesus' name. Amen.

**Discussion Questions**

- What are the five ways Cardinal Newman says we arrive at the “sense of the faithful”? Is this how you thought of the *sensus fidelium* before?
- Discuss the notion of “jealousy of error.”
- Aristotle gives us examples of virtue lying in the middle. Can you think of others?
- Aristotle says we acquire virtue by finding virtuous people and “hanging out with them.” Have you experienced that in your life?
- Himes says we can pick up a “feel for what fits with the Christian life and what does not.” Can you think of how that is true in the church today?
- “Reception” is a key dimension to any truth. Have you experienced a tension in the “receiving” of any church teachings? How can you discuss that tension in a productive and respectful way?
- Himes is clear that the faithful are the “teaching church as much as they are learning church.” “The bishops receive as much from the laity as the laity receive from the bishops.” Do you think of yourself as part of the teaching church?
- At the end of the program, Himes brings these many ideas together. How do you bring these ideas together for yourself? After viewing this program are you feeling inspired? Challenged? Overwhelmed?

**Closing Prayer:** Jesus, we are truly a gifted people. We thank you for the mission you have entrusted to us, the mission of bringing Good News to a hurting world. Guide us, Jesus, in all things.

© MMII St. Anthony Messenger Press. All rights reserved.

NOTE: This guide can be printed and cut down in size to be stored with the DVD version of this video program. Simply cut ¾ inch from each side of the page for a guide that, when folded, can be placed inside of the DVD case or attached to the DVD or VHS case.

For use with:

*The Vision of Vatican II for Today: The People Are the Church* on VHS (V5050) and DVD (D5050)

St. Anthony Messenger Press  
28 W. Liberty St.  
Cincinnati, OH 45202-6498  
800-488-0488  
[www.AmericanCatholic.org](http://www.AmericanCatholic.org)

**Leader's Guide for  
THE VISION OF VATICAN II FOR TODAY WITH FATHER MICHAEL HIMES**

**The Church Human and Divine**

**Opening Prayer:** Jesus, this will once again be a challenging session for us. May we enter it with open hearts and minds. May we leave it closer to you and one another. Amen.

**Discussion Questions**

- Father Himes begins with a very powerful question: Are we a church of sinners or are we a sinful church? How did you feel when he asked that question?
- Christ is divine and human. Have there been times in your life when you stressed one or the other? Have there been times in your experience when the church stressed one over the other? How difficult is it for you to hold the “two natures, one person” together in your own image of Christ?
- In your experience, has the church stressed its divine nature or its human nature? Again, is it hard for you to keep the two together?
- Father Himes speaks of “ecclesiastical monophysitism.” What is your understanding of what he is saying here?
- Is it legitimate to critique the church from the many aspects that Father Himes mentions? What can we learn as a church from these disciplines?
- How would taking these “secular” disciplines seriously impact our church today in its present situation?
- Do you think structures within our church need to be converted? Which ones? Think about the local level, the diocesan level and the global level.
- Father Himes says there are elements of the church’s life that can never be corrupted by sin. In these areas we are protected by the Holy Spirit. What do you think of this insight?
- “The church is in constant need of reform.” What do you think of this statement? If this is true, what discussions do we need to have? What, if any, reform is being called for now?

**Closing Prayer:** Jesus, thank you for always being with us. Thank you for protecting us in so many ways. May we have the courage to look for reformation. May we have the courage to know you are with us in these times, you will never desert us, and you will never let us settle for anything less than you. Amen.

© MMII St. Anthony Messenger Press. All rights reserved.

NOTE: This guide can be printed and cut down in size to be stored with the DVD version of this video program. Simply cut ¼ inch from each side of the page for a guide that, when folded, can be placed inside of the DVD case or attached to the DVD or VHS case.

For use with:

*The Vision of Vatican II for Today: The Church Human and Divine* on VHS (V5050) and DVD (D5050)

St. Anthony Messenger Press  
28 W. Liberty St.  
Cincinnati, OH 45202-6498  
800-488-0488  
[www.AmericanCatholic.org](http://www.AmericanCatholic.org)

**Leader's Guide for  
THE VISION OF VATICAN II FOR TODAY WITH FATHER MICHAEL HIMES**

**The Church's Mission Before and After Vatican II**

**Opening Prayer:** Jesus, you have given us two equally important challenges – sanctify the world and raise the quality of life for all people. May we appreciate deeply the dedication and sacrifice that goes into both of these missions. Jesus, bless us with all the energy and hope we need. Amen.

**Discussion Questions**

- The key insight of this program revolves around the Vatican II statement “By its relationship with Christ, the church is a kind of sign or sacrament of intimate union with God and the intimate unity of all of humanity. Just as Father Himes unpacks the incredible wisdom of this statement spend some time expressing your understanding of it
- Father Himes clearly shows the difference in approach between the pre-Vatican II church and the post-Vatican II church. If you have an experience of the pre-Vatican II church, discuss your experience of this difference in approach.
- How have you experienced the “mission of sanctification”? How have you experienced the “social mission of the church”? How have you participated in each?
- How has the ministry of religious women changed since Vatican II?
- How has the ministry of the laity been changed by Vatican II ? Compare and contrast the ministry of the laity in 1950 and 1970 and 2000.
- Father Himes places great stress on the word “and” in the phrase the “love of God AND love of neighbor.” Discuss why this is so important,
- Who do you know that is involved in the mission of sanctification and who is involved in the social mission of the church? Do you acknowledge them as equally important? How?
- Father Himes has many important insights into grace and nature. Which one speaks the most to you?

**Closing Prayer:** Jesus, you are inviting us to change the world – to make it into the kingdom of God. Give us the energy, the courage and the hope. Let us together say the Lord's Prayer.... Amen.

© MMII St. Anthony Messenger Press. All rights reserved.

NOTE: This guide can be printed and cut down in size to be stored with the DVD version of this video program. Simply cut ¾ inch from each side of the page for a guide that, when folded, can be placed inside of the DVD case or attached to the DVD or VHS case.

For use with:

*The Vision of Vatican II for Today: The Church's Mission Before and After Vatican II* on VHS (V5050) and DVD (D5050)

St. Anthony Messenger Press  
28 W. Liberty St.  
Cincinnati, OH 45202-6498  
800-488-0488  
[www.AmericanCatholic.org](http://www.AmericanCatholic.org)

**Leader's Guide for  
THE VISION OF VATICAN II FOR TODAY WITH FATHER MICHAEL HIMES**

**The Sacrament of Everyday Life**

**Opening Prayer:** Jesus, you invite us to fullness of life. You invite us to an incredible mission the cocreation of the Kingdom of God on earth as it is in heaven. As we gather this day, may we embrace that mission ever more enthusiastically. Amen.

**Discussion Questions**

- Monsignor Talbot's "obtuse" statement gets our attention. How have things changed in the church since his time? How have they stayed the same?
- Where do you notice "holiness" outside church circles? Name moments of grace for you in everyday life.
- Father Himes lists three responsibilities of the church: unity, proclaiming the Word of God, service. Of these, which ones are you involved in personally? How does your local church fulfill these responsibilities?
- Discuss what Father Himes means by the episcopal, presbyterial and diaconal missions of the church. Who do you know that embodies each of these missions in a nonordained way? Who do you know that embodies each of these missions in an ordained way?
- Father Himes shines a light on the role of parents in "forming children within the Christian life." Who do you know that does this well? What can you do to raise children (yours and others) in the life of faith?
- Vatican II radically changed the way we see baptism and Ordination. How have you experienced this? Is ordination more important than baptism? What happens when people think it is?
- What is your baptism challenging you to do?

*Closing Prayer:* Jesus, we have been claimed by you forever in baptism. That claim has changed our lives. May we accept the comfort of that claim, the challenge of that claim, the mission of that claim. Jesus, be with us all days. Amen.

© MMII St. Anthony Messenger Press. All rights reserved.

NOTE: This guide can be printed and cut down in size to be stored with the DVD version of this video program. Simply cut 3/4 inch from each side of the page for a guide that, when folded, can be placed inside of the DVD case or attached to the DVD or VHS case.

For use with:

*The Vision of Vatican II for Today: The Sacrament of Everyday Life* on VHS (V5050) and DVD (D5050)

St. Anthony Messenger Press  
28 W. Liberty St.  
Cincinnati, OH 45202-6498  
800-488-0488  
[www.AmericanCatholic.org](http://www.AmericanCatholic.org)