

What Every Catholic Needs to Know about the Catholic Church and Interreligious Dialogue

PRESENTED BY: THE ST. ELIZABETH PARISH INTERFAITH ACTION
COMMITTEE

Learning Objectives

Introduce salient aspects of the Catholic Church's stance on non-Christian religions, interreligious dialogue, and the New Evangelization, primarily in the context of the teachings of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) and the papal magisterium from Pope John Paul II to Pope Francis (1978-Present).

Invite IAC member religious communities to reflect on their own faith tradition for resources that intelligibly support the endeavor of interreligious dialogue as practicing, committed believers.

Obstacles to Interreligious Dialogue

IGNORANCE



SKEPTICISM



Necessity of 'Religious Inter-Religious Dialogue'

No Peace Among the
Nations without Peace
Among the Religions.

HANS KUNG

Nostra Aetate
(1965)

‘The
Church’s
Best Kept
Secret’



Pastoral Tone of the Document

“...the Church examines more closely her relationship to non-Christian religions...in her task of promoting unity and love among peoples, indeed among nations...” (no. 1)

A 'No' To No

“The Catholic Church rejects nothing that is true and holy in these religions.” (no. 2)

Promoting Other Religions (!)

“The Church, therefore, exhorts her sons, that through dialogue and collaboration with the followers of other religions, carried out with prudence and love and in witness to the Christian faith and life, they recognize, preserve and promote the good things, spiritual and moral, as well as the socio-cultural values found among these persons.”
(no. 3)

Nostra Aetate and Vatican II

STILL BEING IMPLEMENTED

St. Elizabeth's Interfaith Action Committee

Living the Call

“Each member of the faithful and all Christian communities are called to practice dialogue, although not always to the same degree or in the same way.”

Pope John Paul II, *Redemptoris Missio*, no. 57

Catholic Theological Principles

Who are you, Lord?
Who am I?

❖ Theological Anthropology

❖ Soteriology (The Universal Salvific Will of God)

God and Salvation as Mystery

❖ “the Holy Spirit in a way known only to God offers to every person the possibility of being associated with the paschal mystery.” (GS, no. 22)

❖ Room for Theological
Exploration

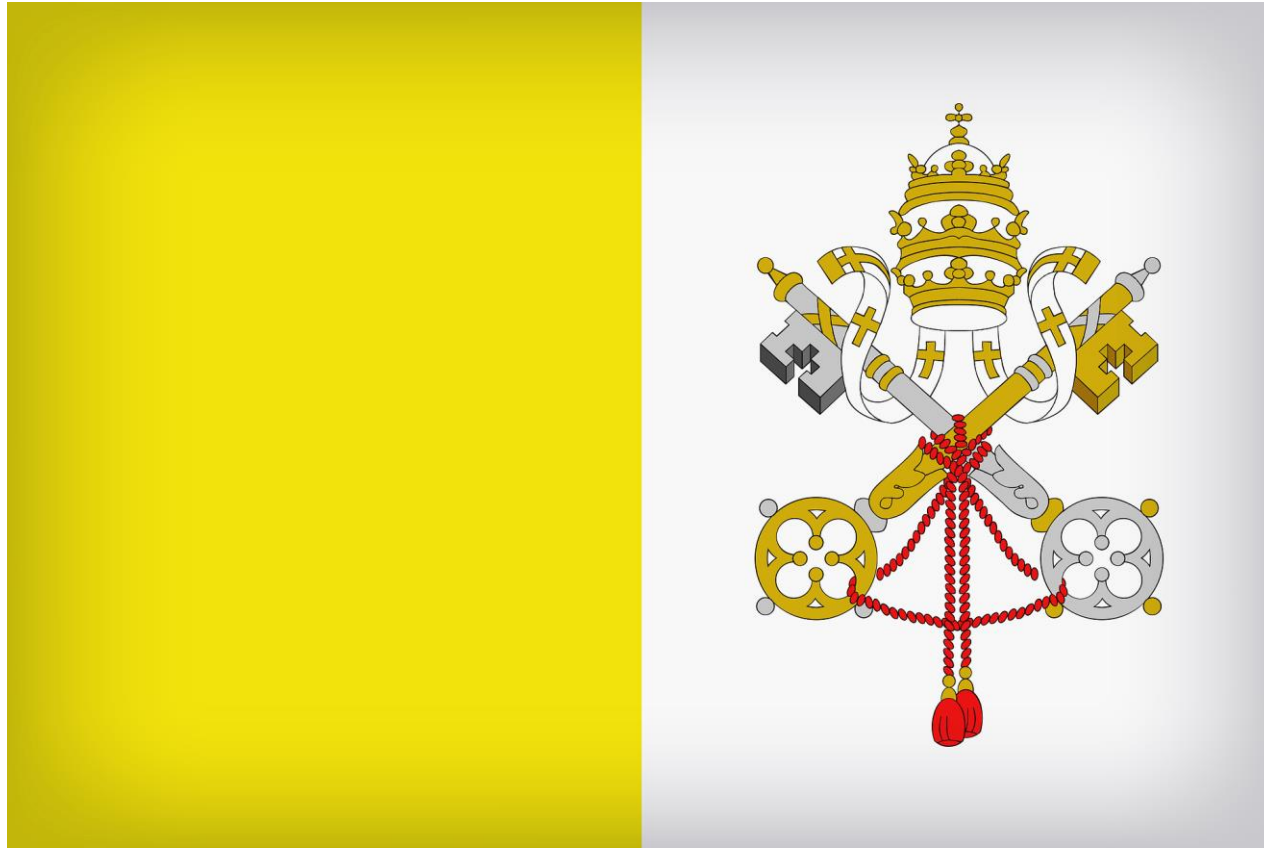


Mission and Dialogue

“Christians too must allow themselves to be questioned. Notwithstanding the fullness of God’s revelation in Jesus Christ, the way Christians sometimes understand and practice it may be in need of purification.”

– *Dialogue and Proclamation*, no. 32.

Papal Magisterium and Interreligious Dialogue



Pope John Paul II (1978-2005)



Assisi Day of Prayer for Peace



“By dialogue we let God be present in our midst; for as we open ourselves in dialogue to one another, we also open ourselves to God.”

Pope John Paul II (Madras, 1986)

Pope Benedict (2005-2013)



Interreligious Themes in Benedict's Papacy

- ❖ Primacy of Truth in Dialogue
- ❖ Public Witness to Truth
- ❖ Growth and Learning
- ❖ Strides with Islam
 - ❖ Catholic-Muslim Forum

“...they need not overshadow the common sense of awe and respect for the universal, for the absolute, and for truth, which impel religious peoples to converse with one another in the first place.”

POPE BENEDICT XVI

Pope Francis (2013-Present)



Way of Friendship



Newer Elements

- ❖ Thomas Merton, OCSO (1915-1968), pioneer in Buddhist-Christian dialogue, among the 'Four Americans' mentioned in his address to the U.S. Congress, September, 2015
- ❖ Apostolate of Friendship and Friendship as a Spiritual and Theological Context
- ❖ Respect for Indigenous Religions
- ❖ Cited Sufi poet-saint from India, Ali-al-Khawwas in *Laudato Si* – becoming the 1st Pope to quote a non-Christian religious figure in a papal encyclical
 - ❖ 'mystical meaning' in nature

The Fourfold Ministry of Interreligious Dialogue

- ❖ Everyday Life
- ❖ Social Action
- ❖ Spiritual Experience
- ❖ Theological Exchange