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ECCLESIOLOGY MODULE AUTUMN 2009

ASSIGNMENTS

The lecture material for this course has concentrated on presenting the Catholic Church's own understanding of what it is to be church – that is, the official opinions of the teaching authority of the Church (the Magisterium). One easy way of finding alternative views of what it is to be church is to look at the practices and beliefs of other Christian denominations. Another good source of what theologians (Catholics and others) are saying to challenge or refine the Magisterium's view, is Richard McBrien's *Catholicism*.

The Assignment for this module can be fulfilled in one of the following ways:

- An essay of 1500 words.
- A lesson plan indicating how an answer to the question could be taught (please indicate the target age-group).
- A power-point presentation accompanied by an outline script or a recorded audio narration of at least 750 words.
- An A2 poster with at least 50% of the display area being text.

In all cases, the submission must be accompanied by a bibliography. If the format is not an essay, each item in the bibliography should be annotated to explain which part(s) of the plan / poster / presentation it refers to.

The Assignment should be sent to Fr Gareth Leyshon by e-mail or post to arrive by noon on Thursday 3rd December 2009. It is fine to send it early. If there are difficulties with this timing, please discuss an extension with Fr Gareth by email or on 01443 402 439.

(See the Student Guidance document for more information on Assignments.)

Choose ONE of the topics on the following page, or propose an alternative topic to be agreed with the tutor no later than Session 3 (1st October 2009).

- A. Choose 3 hymns which speak about the Church. How do they reflect the vision of Church expressed by Vatican II and by Avery Cardinal Dulles S.J.'s models?
- B. Rick Warren's book, *The Purpose-Driven Church*, is currently very influential among evangelical Christians. To what extent is Warren's model of church compatible with the vision of Church expressed by Vatican II?
- C. Suppose that an unbaptised teenager with severe learning difficulties, enrolled at your local Catholic comprehensive school, expresses a wish to become Catholic. To fulfil this wish will require special catechesis, and the teenager will require lifelong support to be able to attend Mass or receive communion at home. Some catechists in your parish question whether it is worth the effort. As a leading catechist informed by the teaching of Vatican II, what will your response be? Why?
- D. Suppose you are a teacher in a Catholic School whose catchment area extends over more than one parish, covering churches served by different parish priests. What different experiences of the "QAHAL YHWH" will your pupils receive? How will you balance the Church's ideal vision with the lived experience of your pupils?
- E. Should Catholic schools treat vocations to the priesthood and religious life as "careers" alongside other careers, or should they give these ways of life a special emphasis – and if so, how? Justify your answer.
- F. A member of your parish RCIA group says: "All religions are paths to God, but I feel most at home attending Mass, so I want to be a Catholic." How could you respond? Justify your answer.
- G. "*Caritas Internationalis* and its national agencies (CAFOD, SCIAF, etc.) **IS** the Catholic Church in its capacity as servant of the world." To what extent is this an accurate ecclesiological statement? Justify your answer.
- H. Describe three ways in which the Catholic Church is at the service of the people of Wales and England. What essential differences are there between these initiatives and those of similar humanitarian groups which profess no faith?
- I. What is the Catholic Church's vision of the role of a Christian in the workplace? How have the social teaching documents of Popes John Paul II and Benedict XVI confirmed or developed the teaching of Vatican II in this regard?