

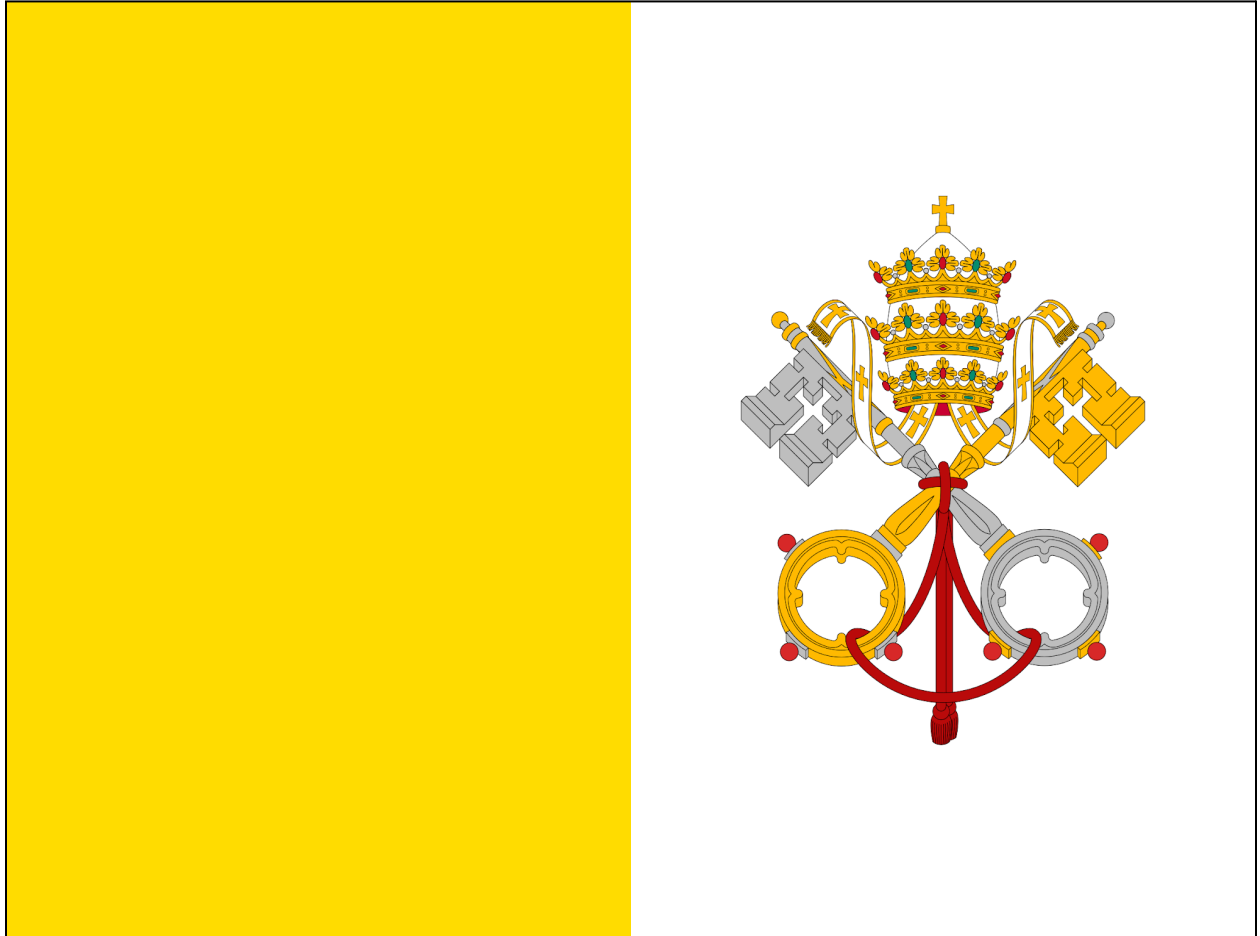
Boston College High School

Model UN Conference

XXXII



The Third Vatican Ecumenical Council: The Catholic Church and the Changing World



Chair: Joachim Arokiaraj

Co-Chair: Thomas Feeney

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Letter from the Chair

Greetings Delegates,

I hope that this letter finds you well. My name is Joachim Arokiaraj '25 and I will be your chair for the Third Vatican Ecumenical Council on church reform. I am so excited to be able to chair this committee as I am very passionate about the topic. This is my 8th conference in all my time in Model UN, including the BC High conferences I have helped with in the past. I have always had a passion for the world, and a passion to learn more about the people in it. This is what led me to take up an interest in geography which turned into history which ignited the match for my Model UN journey. My first conference was my freshman year at Catholic Memorial. I had not attended a single Model UN meeting at that point so I was so confused and I only spoke once throughout the entire conference. Looking back at that moment, it was one of the best experiences I have had. As much as I would have enjoyed speaking with the other delegates more, I was also able to witness 2 gentlemen from BC High who were on the same committee as me. One of them in particular was sitting in the back and he was making so many points and motions and such that I was inspired. This gentleman was a senior at BC high that year and was the brother of our secretary general, and he won two awards that day. I was so awestruck and I said to myself, "I want to win some awards, let me work on my debate skills and get better for next time." I can't say that I have reached that level of skill but I can say that I have made good progress from freshman to junior year. I hope to keep on growing my skills and part of that comes with being a delegate and also being a member of the conference staff.

Understanding both sides provides a real appreciation for all of the work that goes into these events. That being said, I want to let you all know that you are more than welcome to email me your position papers. I will gladly accept email copies up until the night before the conference and then paper copies the day of the conference. Please note that we do have an award for the best position paper here at BC High, so please get those in to be considered for the award. Thank you so much and see you in march!

Sincerely,

Joachim Arokiaraj '25 Director of Financial Affairs

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Letter from the Co-Chair

Dear Delegates,

My name is Thomas Feeney, and I will be your Co-Chair for the Third Vatican Ecumenical Council. I, along with the chair, Joachim Arokiaraj, am a junior at Boston College High School and am involved in the Model UN club. I have attended many other conferences, although this is my first time being a co-chair. I am very excited for this opportunity to learn and to meet all of you. In addition to Model UN, I am involved in many other extracurricular activities at BC High including the Hyde Center, which encourages better habits to make our world a more environmentally friendly place. As well as St. Louis Project, where the other leaders and I bring out a group of students to care for the homeless and the Creative Writing Club. In addition to this, I am now a member of the National Honor Society. As for the committee, I am interested in Co-Chairing this because I grew up Catholic and have always been interested in hearing other points of view on some problems in the church and this is a unique committee, meaning unlike the traditional Model UN setting where everyone represents a country, here everyone will represent a religious leader. As Joachim said, feel free to email him the position papers or bring them in person, and also feel free to email either of us with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Thomas Feeney '25 Co-Chair

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Introduction to the topic

The catholic church has most definitely changed throughout the years. It started as a small group of believers in the eastern Mediterranean and has grown to be the most prominent religion in the world. Unfortunately, these numbers are dwindling day by day. Young people are becoming disconnected from the church's ideology and are leaving the church over controversial practices. They ask questions such as “Why are there no female priests” and “Why does the church not bless same-sex marriages?” Issues such as these are the result of the world we live in today. Our current pope, Pope Francis, has been in his position for about ten years now. Ever since he took office, he oddly enough expressed his thoughts on how we need to make the church a more modern body and bring it into the 21st century. These are just some of the topics that we will be discussing in our committee



Caption: A picture of Pope Francis, the Leader of the catholic church on earth.

History of the Topic

As you may have caught on by now, this would not be the first time that the church realized there were some changes to be made. The first Vatican Council was held from December 8th, 1869 to October 20th, 1870. This is nearly a year of work put into bringing the catholic church into the changing times. For some reference, most of the world had seen the Industrial Revolution by this point in time. Inventions such as the telegraph, the steam engine, the light bulb, and the typewriter had all been invented just a few decades beforehand. All of these inventions would have made it much easier for the council to meet and form documents. Out of all the decrees to come from this council, there are two that are quite significant. The first is called *Dei Filius* which discusses the relationship between Faith and reason. The second is called *Pastor Aeternus* which describes papal primacy and infallibility. This decree justifies how the pope has authority over the catholic church on earth.

Fast forward a century to the 1960s and the Second Vatican Council is occurring. This was held between October 11th, 1962, and December 8th, 1965. This is just over three years of debates and decrees passed by the catholic church. At the beginning of the council, JFK was president, Elvis Presley was earning his fame and fortune, and Martin Luther King Jr. was traveling around America to bring equal rights for all. Meanwhile, in the Vatican, Bishops and church dignitaries discussed divine revelation, priestly ministry, missionaries, and Christian education. By the end of this Council, many decrees had been passed which formed the catholic church we see today. Up until the second council, masses around the world were still speaking in Latin, a language that no one spoke. Masses started to be said in the local language for all to understand. The church also started to recognize and respect other religions. Most of the decrees which were passed during these three years have been carried out till the present day.

Now, those were the issues facing the catholic church back in the 1800s and 1900s however, now we are in the 21st century. With any traditional institution, it is important to step back and realize that there is a world beyond the older ways. Take the English monarchy, for example. In 2022, Queen Elizabeth II. the longest-reigning monarch in British History passes away after spending 70 years on the British throne. She was crowned queen at 26 years old in 1952 and she died at 96 in 2022. 70 years on the throne granted her the opportunity to witness the immense change that came with electronics, specifically computers. To show how modern

her reign would be, the queen's husband, Prince Philip, decided it would be a good idea to televise her coronation for the public to view. This was unconventional as the only people who traditionally attended the coronation were the nobility. Others said it was a marvelous way to start her reign as it reinforced her commitment to serving the public and her country. The compromise came when the coronation was televised but used a big golden canopy to cover her during the most sacred part of the ceremony, the anointing. Among many precedents that she set for the British Monarchy, this was one of the firsts. We must be courageous enough to challenge the standards as the late Queen and all those who attended the Vatican councils did.



Caption: Queen Elizabeth II's official coronation photo from 1952.

Problems and Obstacles

As with any idea, there are those in favor and those against the idea. One can easily summarize the issues brought up at the first and second Vatican councils. The First Council brought up the issues of relationships in the church. The second brought up the issue of understanding one another. The third council would be focused on the role of women and members of the LGBTQ+ community in the church. Some examples of these issues can include but are not limited to

- Ordaining women as priests
- Having married clergy in the church
- Would priests from religious orders remain celibate (not marry)
- Can the church bless same-sex marriages?
- How does the LGBTQ+ community play a part in the church?

These five topics are some of the biggest issues facing the catholic church today. People have already left the church over these issues and unless they are addressed, then soon enough, the church will suffer the consequences of an ineffective response. Three major factions lie in the catholic church:

- Modernists or liberals see the church as an institution in need of significant updates to attract a younger crowd.
- Conservatives who find the church to be as it should be also feel they could use more members.
- The grey area of people believe in the church teachings and some traditions. However, they also think that the church can take better steps toward being more accepting of all people.

All of this is to say that as much as the church law (canon law) has clear and concise definitions of how to accommodate these issues, there is still a lot of room for interpretation. The reasons for opposing views on this matter are extensive. For some, it might be a cultural stigma, others might have been taught these negative views from a young age, and others might simply be set in their ways. People's attitudes can most definitely not be changed in an instant so to take effective action would require years, maybe even decades of hard work.

Alliances

One of the largest organizations committed to the role of females in the catholic church is the Women's Ordination Conference. This Conference, founded in 1975 by Mary B. Lynch, is the oldest and largest organization working for the church to ordain women as deacons, priests, and bishops. They claim this will make a more inclusive and accountable Roman Catholic Church.

Unlike the Women's Ordination conference, there is not an official conference or organization relating to the LGBTQ+ community and their involvement/participation in the Church. However, Pope Francis announced in October of 2023 that some catholic priests would be able to bless same-sex unions. This effectively hinted at a reversal of the Vatican's official stance on the matter which has turned away many progressive followers and put them at odds.



Caption: A photograph of the first Women's Ordination Conference

Bloc Positions

~25 cardinals from around the world

1. Pope Francis - Pope Francis is the first Jesuit to lead the Catholic church and has been doing so since 2013. His positive views towards Same-Sex Marriage and the LGBTQ+ community make him a controversial pope in the eyes of some Catholics. Just in December (2023), Pope Francis authorized the blessing of Same-sex Marriages.
2. Cardinal Sean O'Malley: Cardinal Sean O'Malley has been the archbishop of the Archdiocese of Boston, Massachusetts since 2003. He is a member of the order of Friars Minor Capuchin and, in March 2023, defended the Vatican's degree against gay marriage.
3. Cardinal Gérald Cyprien Lacroix, I.S.P.X.: Cardinal Lacroix is the 15th archbishop of Quebec and the 8th Cardinal of the Archdiocese of Quebec. He does not voice his opinions often but has stated that "It's not language or sexual identity that sets us apart. We are all baptized children of God...without labels, we are not going to put any labels on people."
4. Cardinal Carlos Aguiar Retes: Cardinal Aguiar Retes has been a priest for over 50 years in Mexico. In Mexico, 80% of its 130 Million people are affiliated with the catholic church, where they lean more on the conservative side in regard to social issues. He agrees with Pope Francis with his views on same-sex marriage and LGBTQ+ rights, however, he shows no signs of wanting to change the church's doctrine.
5. Cardinal Sérgio da Rocha – Archdiocese of são Salvador de Bahia, Brazil: Cardinal da Rocha serves in Brazil, which has the highest catholic population in all the world with 123 million people identifying as part of the catholic church. He also has an interesting view on the LBBTQ+ community in the church, stating, "The Church wants to welcome everyone, without excluding anyone, but, at the same time, tries to offer, under the light of the Gospel, the values that come from God's words, that must orient the actions of everyone."
6. Cardinal Ángel Sixto Rossi, S.J. – Archdiocese of Córdoba, Argentina: He is an Argentine prelate of the Catholic Church. From 1992 to 1995 he served as master of novices of the Jesuits. More recently, he has been archbishop of Córdoba since 2021 and

a Jesuit since 1976. Pope Francis additionally, just recently made him a cardinal on 30 September 2023.

7. Cardinal Pedro Ricardo Barreto Jimeno, S.J. – Archdiocese of Huancayo, Peru: Cardinal Jimeno serves in Peru where 70% of the population is catholic. He has recently been known to be open to the prospect of ordinating women deacons in his country.
8. Cardinal Jean-Marc Noël Aveline – Archdiocese of Marseille, France: A French prelate of the Catholic Church who served as an auxiliary bishop there since 2013. He then became the Archbishop of Marseille on 8 August 2019. Most recently, on 27 August 2022, Pope Francis made Aveline a cardinal.
9. Cardinal José Cobo Cano – Archdiocese of Madrid, Spain: Cardinal Cano is quite a traditional catholic priest in what seems to be a generally liberal country. He holds his stance that marriage is for men and women, meaning that he sides with the tradition of the catholic church.
10. Cardinal Reinhard Marx – Archdiocese of München und Freising (Munich), Germany: Cardinal Marx has actually admitted to blessing some same-sex marriages. He says that the catechism, the laws of the church, are not set in stone and that one may question it.
11. Cardinal Kazimierz Nycz – Archdiocese of Warszawa, Poland: Poland is mostly a conservative catholic country, and Cardinal Nycz has expressed similar views. There was an incident where a group of activists placed an LGBTQ flag on a statue of Jesus which signified hope in the Warsaw uprising against the nazis in 1944. Nycz condemned the act as an act of desecration and vandalism.
12. Cardinal Anders Arborelius O.C.D. – Archdiocese of Stockholm, Sweden: Cardinal Arborelius presides over Sweden's only archdiocese, and generally shares a common view on same-sex marriage with other Nordic cardinals. These cardinals signed a letter in March 2023 which reinforced their commitment to accompanying all while conforming with catholic teaching.
13. Cardinal Oswald Gracias – Archdiocese of Bombay, India: Cardinal Gracias is head of India's national conference of catholic Bishops and a member of the pope's council of 9 cardinal advisors worldwide. Apart from his high position, Cardinal Gracias' views on

the LGBTQ+ community are quite liberal considering India is a bit more of a conservative nation when it comes to these kinds of issues.

14. Cardinal Jose Fuerte Advincula – Archdiocese of Manila, Philippines: Cardinal Advincula is the 33rd Archbishop of Manila. He vowed to be “a listening shepherd” as he leads his new flock in the face of recent pastoral challenges, including problems in the church surrounding the LGBTQ+ community.
15. Cardinal Thomas Aquino Manyo Maeda – Archdiocese of Osaka-Takamatsu, Japan: Cardinal Thomas Qquino Manyo Maeda has been Archbishop of Osaka-Takamatsu since 2023 and was Archbishop of Osaka from 2014 to 2023. He has helped expose the faithfulness of the LGBTQ+ community and has even recommended it in some cases.
16. Cardinal Albert Malcolm Ranjith Patabehdige Don — Archdiocese of Colombo, Sri Lanka: Cardinal Albert Malcolm Ranjith Patabehdige Don was made Cardinal in 2010 and has been a prominent figure throughout the church. Known for his strong stance on Catholic teachings, he has addressed various social issues, including concerns related to the LGBTQ+ community, but also with a focus on upholding traditional values.
17. Cardinal Stephen Chow Sau-yan, S.J. – Diocese of Hong Kong (Xianggang), China: Cardinal Stephen Chow Sau-yan S.J. holds a significant role in the Catholic Church. As a member of the Society of Jesus, he brings a unique perspective to his position against the LGBTQ+ community. His leadership in the Diocese of Hong Kong reflects a commitment to the Catholic faith and its engagement with the diverse challenges in the region.
18. Cardinal Antoine Kambanda – Archbishop of Kigali, Rwanda: Cardinal Antoine Kambanda has been the Archbishop of Kigali since 2019 and is the first cardinal from Rwanda. His views on same-sex marriage generally align with those of the church, maintaining a perspective rooted in traditional Catholic doctrine.
19. Cardinal Fridolin Ambongo Besungu O.F.M. Cap. – Archbishop of Kinshasa, DRC: Cardinal Fridolin Ambongo Besungu, O.F.M. Cap. typically adheres to traditional Catholic teachings. His stance on issues like same-sex marriage and LGBTQ matters aligns with the core doctrines of the Catholic Church, emphasizing traditional values and teachings.

20. Cardinal Cristóbal Lopez Romero S.D.B. – Archdiocese of Rabat, Morocco: Cardinal Cristóbal López Romero, S.D.B., became a cardinal on October 5, 2019, appointed by Pope Francis. While he hasn't been extensively outspoken on specific issues, his cardinalate positions him as a key figure in guiding the Church's principles, including traditional views on matters like same-sex marriage and LGBTQ issues.

21. Cardinal François-Xavier Bustillo - Bishop of Ajaccio, France: Cardinal Bustillo was made a cardinal by Pope Francis on September 30, 2023. Along with around 20 other bishops, he was made cardinal with a group of people that were more inclusive and who saw this issue through a global perspective.

22. Cardinal Oscar Cantoni - Bishop of Como, Italy: Cardinal Oscar Cantoni has been bishop of Como since 2016 and was made cardinal in 2022. He actually defended a homosexual pedophilic priest prior to Pope Francis making him cardinal.

23. Cardinal Sebastian Francis - Bishop of Penang, Malaysia: Cardinal Sebastian Francis was made a cardinal by Pope Francis on September 30, 2023. Along with around 20 other bishops, he was made cardinal with a group of people who were more inclusive and who saw this issue from a global perspective.

24. Cardinal José Luis Lacunza Maestrojuán O.A.R. - Bishop of David, Panama: He was made a cardinal in 2015 and since then has been very close with Pope Francis. Although, he stands traditionally in his beliefs regarding homosexuality and same-sex marriage.

25. Cardinal Peter Ebere Okpaleke - Bishop of Ekwulobia, Nigeria: Cardinal Peter Ebere Okpaleke was made a cardinal in late 2022 by Pope Francis. He isn't very open about his beliefs regarding these topics, but based on other events we can infer that he stands traditionally in the church's beliefs regarding homosexuality.

26. Fr. Arturo Susa SJ – Superior General of the Society of Jesus (Jesuits): Fr. Arturo Susa SJ was elected the 31st Superior General of the Jesuits on October 14, 2016. He remains with a more traditional view of the LGBTQ community, believing that it is immoral in the Roman Catholic church.

27. Fr. Alejandro Moral Antón – Prior General of the Order of St. Augustine (Augustinians):

He was elected Prior General of the Augustinians in September 2012. With neutral and slightly positive views towards the LGBTQ community, he reflects a more modern view of religion. Overall, he believes everyone should be treated with compassion and this issue should be addressed with said compassion for those who suffer from problems arising from this topic.

28. Fr. Mícéal O'Neill – Prior General of the Carmelites

29. Fr. Gerard Timoner III – Master of the Order of the Dominicans

30. Fr. Massimo Fusarelli – Minister General of the Order of Friars (Franciscans)

31. President of Georgetown University, John J. DeGioia: President DeGioia is the 48th president of Georgetown University. He recently committed to making the university a more inclusive environment for members of the LGBTQ community.

32. President of the University of Navarra (España), prof. María Iraburu Elizalde: Maria Elizalde was inaugurated in January 2022 as president of the University of Navarra. She is a biologist who has led several research projects and taught classes in Navarra's schools of Medicine and Sciences.

33. President of the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore (Italia), Andrea Patane: Andrea Patane became president of the university in July of 2020 during Covid. She recently introduced and welcomed a film of gay priest John McNeill, praising his courage to come out and promote God's love for LGBTQ people.

34. President of the Australian Catholic University, prof. Zlatko Skrbis: Professor Zlatko Skrbis is Australian Catholic University's fourth Vice-Chancellor and President, holding this position since January 2021. Early last year, President Skrbis showed his negative opinions towards LGBTQ people by ordering the removal of rainbow flags in public throughout the campus. This shows his commitment to the traditional Roman Catholic values.

35. President of the Université Catholique de Louvain, Mathieu Van Vyve: He currently holds a Ph.D. and is a professor at Université Catholique de Louvain UCLouvain, Louvain-la-Neuve. He teaches in the Center for Operations Research and Econometrics.

36. President of the Universidade Católica Portuguesa, Professor Isabel Maria de Oliveira Capeloa Gil: Professor Maria de Oliveira Capeloa Gil is the current president of the university, elected in July 2018. She is not very public about her opinions on the matters that will be discussed.
37. President of Fordham University, Tania Tetlow: A lawyer and law professor from New York herself, she is the first woman to be president of this college. Recently she gave a Keynote Address to the university and emphasized how much love the people of the LGBTQ community have and deserve.
38. President of Loyola Marymount University, Dr. Timothy Law Snyder: Dr. Snyder became president of the university on June 1st, 2015. The university he is president of has a large LGBTQ community, and he notes that recently college students are pushing for safe spaces and more accepting practices.
39. CEO/President of Catholic Charities USA, Sister Donna Markham OP: Sister Donna is an Adrian Dominican sister and spends her career attempting to transform the delivery of behavioral health care. She is the first woman to be the president of this organization and is strongly against the LGBTQ community.
40. Cardinal Mario Grech - Secretary General of the Synod of Bishops: Appointed September 15, 2020, Cardinal Grech is a central figure in the pope's plan to change the Catholic Church. After Pope Benedict XVI's forceful denunciation of the LGBTQ community, many people were excommunicating themselves from the church in protest. Cardinal Grech claimed that if people cannot accept the truth of Jesus Christ and Catholicism and be honest with themselves, then they should excommunicate themselves.

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