Theological Anthropology of Gaudium et Spes and Fundamental theology

The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, Gaudium et Spes, is one of the last documents that the Second Vatican Council approved before its official closing on December 8, 1965. It is a unique and extraordinary document in many ways. First of all, it is the longest Counciliar document in the history of any Ecumenical Councils. Secondly, it is the first Council document that explicitly locates the Church in the world (in mundo huius temporis) and speaks extensively of ‘worldly’ matters that concern human and societal life. One can say without any hesitation that this document makes a serious attempt to connect the Church to the modern world. It has opened the windows of the Church and let fresh air in. It shows, for the first time, that the Church is aware of her responsibility towards the world and its problems. With this document the Council has responded positively to John XXIII’s original intention for convoking the Council – redefining Church’s mission so that it may be able to read the signs of the times. Thirdly, for the first time in the history of any Council, the Church in one of its documents openly discusses the anthropological question as a specific theme. Also from the point of view of fundamental theology it is a promising document and therefore it deserves our special attention and appreciation.

The general impression one gets while reading some of the commentaries of Gaudium et Spes is that it is a document that treats only the Church’s relationship with the world. Though it is true that the major part of the introductory statement (GS 4-10) of the document is devoted to the present day situation of the world, a careful reading of the whole document makes it obvious that the point of reference of the text remains the human person. Even when it describes the achievements as well as its negative aspects of the modern world, the reference frequently falls back to man and his uniqueness in the universe. For example it says: «As a creature man experiences his limitations in a multitude of ways; on the other he feels himself to be boundless in his desires and summoned to a higher life» (GS 10). Though limited, this creature experiences himself a unique being in the world. Everything seems to revolve around him. It may not be an exaggeration to say that there is an ‘anthropological concentration’ in Gaudium et Spes.
In this article I would like to draw the attention of the reader to some of the aspects of Christian anthropology that are present in Gaudium et Spes. From a theological perspective we can say that Christian anthropology studies the basic constitution of the human person and his or her innate orientation towards God. Here, the discussion boils down to one question: What is the human person? Exactly the same question appears in the first chapter: quid est homo? (GS 10). Gaudium et Spes has a balanced view of the human person. It situates man in ‘today’s world’. It does not portray the human person as an atemporal ‘pure being’. In other words, the man we find is a concrete person in flesh and blood. His concerns are not imaginary ones. They are real. In the opening statement the Constitution reaffirms this conviction: «These are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ» (GS 1). On the other hand, the man in this document is not a pure ‘rational animal’. He has a special vocation in the economy of creation. While describing the present condition of the human person the Council does not just provide us with a sociological report on man but takes us right back to the fundamental aspect of human being: his divine vocation. Man, though sinful, is an expression of God’s love. Though man is a finite creature, he is called to eternal life. He is created for God: capax Dei. How does he realise that? Here, the key is not a statement or a description about man but the fundamental anthropological question: «What is man?» This starting point, which is central to today’s fundamental theology, takes us to other questions, especially the eschatological question: What comes next? Left to himself, in his incessant questioning, man fails to find an answer. Only in the light of Christ, who is the image of the unseen God, man gets an answer. It also gives us the indication that in which direction the Council moves while dealing with the question of man. In the process it refers us back to the recurring theme of the document – imago Dei.

Historical background of «Gaudium et Spes»

Now, in order to have a better understanding of the document, briefly let us turn our attention to the historical background of the document. Like all other Conciliar documents, Schema 13, which later became the pastoral constitution, went through a series of changes and revisions during the preparatory period. What is interesting to note is that in the drafting process the fundamental character of the theological part of the document got changed.


Though the idea of the Pastoral Constitution goes back to John XXIII's fundamental intentions for the Council, no tangible work was done on the subject during the preparatory period of the Council. The need for a document on the Church-World relationship began to manifest itself only after the first period of the Council. The Council Fathers realised that, if that Church wanted to be relevant to the modern world, she needed to speak of the problems of man in the present world situation. There was a growing realisation that the discussion on the Church *ad intra* was not sufficient enough to deal with the present day problems of the world. The intervention of Dom Helder Câmara was symptomatic: He kept on asking «what ought we do now?» He spoke of excessively internal character of the Council discussions. «Are we to spend our whole time discussing internal problems while two-thirds of mankind is dying of hunger? What have we to say on the problem of underdevelopment? Will the council express its concern about the great problems of mankind?» Even after long and protracted debates, vexed with many problems, the preparatory Central Commission could not arrive at a satisfactory text on the Church's relationship with the world. At one point there was even a suggestion to abandon the schema on the Pastoral Constitution. «In the meantime, indeed, the very existence of *Gaudium et Spes* as a decree of the council appeared to be threatened». A strong message was communicated to the Council Fathers that «the world would not understand how the bishops could spend three sessions studying their own position in the Church but fail to study the problems of the two-thirds of mankind». Thereafter, the work was hurried up and the draft (Ariccia text) was ready for discussion in the *aula* in the fourth period of the Council. One may even recall the bitter debate raged in the *aula* even to the point where one group of the Council Fathers calling the proposed Constitution as «the *Magna Carta* of modern paganism» while the opposite block eulogising it as the «*Magna Carta* for humanity today». After the heated and passionate debate in the *aula* the council approved the schema. The Pastoral Constitution was approved and promulgated by Pope Paul IV on the penultimate day of the Council, i.e., December 7, 1965.

*The Anthropological turn*

In the process of drafting the document there has been an 'anthropological turn'. Now the interesting question is: How does the theme of man find its

---


7 N. Tanner, *The Church and the World*, 34.
way into the Pastoral Constitution that deals with the relationship between
the Church and the World? A careful study of the proceedings that lead to the
drafting of the document makes us realize that it has its way to the Council
document via the concept of *imago Dei* (image of God). As we know it is a bib­
lical concept that is very dear to the patristic tradition. However, according to
Charles Moeller, this anthropological angle entered in to the preparatory
schema «precisely in the perspective of man's dominion over the world,
which is expressly connected with the divine image which irradiates his coun­
tenance».8 It is also important to note that during the preparatory phase of
the Council Pope John XXIII did speak of *imago Dei* in relation to human
progress and technological advancement: «The progress of science and tech­
nology has vastly increased man’s dominion over nature. Yet in nature we see
but reflection of the light of God's wisdom which is the brightness of eternal
light, and the unspotted mirror of God's majesty, and the image of his good­
ness».9 Again, the question of man in the Pastoral Constitution is also con­
nected with communist atheism of that time and its challenge to the faith in
general. During the discussion on the draft of the Constitution in 1964 some
of the Council Fathers were aware of the humanistic character of modern
atheism. They were of the opinion that the challenges of communist atheism
cannot be met with by a mere condemnation. It needs a Christian response.
This response should be based on the affirmation that Christ is the 'new
man'. In other words, they find that Christian anthropology is the answer to
the threat of communism. In their view true anthropology lies in the mystery
of Christ who is not only the epiphany of God but also the epiphany of man
in his plenitude. Therefore, according to Ratzinger, the question of atheism is
dealt deliberately within the framework of the question of man. «This makes
it clear that it does not simply express a metaphysical failure or a breakdown
in epistemology, but draws its inspiration from an authentic desire for a true
humanism. It must therefore be answered on the anthropological plane. Is
God merely a projection of man or it God who makes it possible for man to
be human?»10

Another reason that anthropology has gained wider acceptability among
the Council Fathers is its potential mediatory role in a changing world. From
the beginning those who have been entrusted with the task of drafting the
text are vexed with the problem: «Should the Church-World relationship be
dealt with theologically or, rather pragmatically?»11 If the text were to start

---

10 J. Ratzinger, «The Church and Man's Calling» in H. Vangrimlcr (ed.), *Commentary on the
from a purely theological perspective, the Council Fathers are afraid that the document would not be able to address the contemporary reality of the world. Already in *Lumen Gentium*, the Council has dealt with the theological aspect of the theme, especially the Church as the universal sacrament of salvation. Now the question is: In what way the new document in the making would be different from *Lumen Gentium*? On the other hand, if the proposed document were to start from a pragmatic perspective, is it not obscuring the theological and eschatological dimension that was fundamental to the original biblical concept that the Church?\(^2\) In what way the proposed document is in harmony with the already recognized ecclesiology of *Lumen Gentium* of the Council? To overcome these dilemmas some of the Fathers have even suggested leaving the practical questions to an appendix and getting on with the doctrinal part of the document. That would have made the second section of the document less important and thereby defeating the very purpose of the document itself. Meanwhile the Council Fathers are frequently reminded that the addressee of this document is humanity as a whole, not the Catholics or the Christians alone. From that perspective it is pointless to start with a language that the two-thirds of the population on the face of earth would not understand. Therefore, what is needed is a vantage point that would be acceptable to all – both the Christians and the non-Christians alike. The Council Fathers are in search of a common ground and a language that would express not only what is specifically Catholic and Christian but also one that would be acceptable to non-Christians because the proposed document is meant for all. Here comes the possibility and relevance of an anthropological approach. They have realised that the anthropological crisis as a starting point could become a common ground for a dialogue between the Church and the contemporary world that included both Christians and non-Christians. Thus, anthropology has become the Archimedean point for the Pastoral Constitution, the basis of a dialogue for the world of today.\(^3\)

---

\(^2\) That seems to be the position of Karl Rahner even after the promulgation of the Pastoral Constitution. Elsewhere, while speaking on *Gaudium et Spes*, Rahner observes: «While recognising to the full the validity of the universal, we must say that any free decision, as a concrete individual act, and therefore as an act of the person endowed with spiritual faculties in the concrete, is never merely one instance among many sharing a common nature. And for this reason it can never, in the last analysis, be fully deduced from universal principles» (K. Rahner, *Theological Investigations*, vol. X, London, 1974, 297). See also N. Tanner, *The Church and the World*, 9; Id., «The Church in the World» in J.A. Komonchak (ed.), *History of Vatican II*, vol. IV, Maryknoll, 2003, 273.

\(^3\) W. Kasper, «The Theological anthropology of *Gaudium et Spes*», 48-49.
Anthropology of «Gaudium et Spes»

What actually does the Pastoral Constitution tell us on Christian anthropology? The document begins by saying that the joys and hopes of every person of the world are joys and sorrows of the followers of Christ. What does it mean? First of all, it expresses the theological as well as the anthropological structure of any human society. While elaborating the contemporary human condition, the document does not forget to emphasize its Christian character. In fact, it categorically affirms that followers of Christ are a community of men and women united in Christ and lead by the Holy Spirit in their pilgrimage to the kingdom of the Father. Therefore, the Trinitarian perspective is present in the document right from the very beginning. At the same time, one cannot ignore the fact that man in world is the concern of the document: «The focal point of our total presentation will be man himself, whole and entire, body and soul, heart and conscience, mind and will» (GS 3). Indeed, the starting point of Gaudium et Spes is not explicit faith but the experience of human beings of our age - both believers and unbelievers. Secondly, the document interprets the Church’s understanding of the world – a world in relation to man. According to Gaudium et Spes, the Church sees the world as one human family (universam familiam humanam) in its total environment. All are brothers and sisters (omnium fraternitatem). Thirdly, the document does not make a distinction between Christian and non-Christian with regard to the world. What one can infer from the introductory statement of the Pastoral Constitution is that God in Jesus Christ does not make distinction among human beings. The purpose of the Incarnation is the salvation of all men and women. Therefore, the followers of Christ are called upon to carry forward the work of Christ (opus ipsius continuare Christi) - the

---

14 Here, we would like to remind the reader that, though Christian anthropology is very much present all through the document, especially in the four chapters of Part 1, given the scope of our study, we limit ourselves to the preface, the introductory statement and the first chapter of the first section of Gaudium et Spes. Our aim is to study the Christian anthropology that is present in the first part of the Constitution.

15 It is important to note that the Council here carefully avoids using the term Populus Dei (people of God) and chooses Christi discipulorum in order to avoid giving the impression that Christians are a chosen people cut off from the rest of humanity. See, Ch. Moeller, «Preface and Introductory statement» in H. Vorgemoller (ed.), Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II, vol. V, New York, 1969, 85. However, Ratzinger seems to differ on this point and argues that «this way of speaking of the Church involves no smaller danger of sinking once more into a purely sociological and ideological view of the Church» (J. Ratzinger, «The Church and Man’s Calling», 118).

salvation of all. God wants all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. The believer cannot forget the fact that he received the message of salvation not because he deserves it on his own merits but it is a gratuitous gift of God. He could have been a non-believer. The gift he has received is not for him alone but it is to be shared with all who have not yet received it. In fact, Christian existence means not only a life assigned but also a life to be assumed - of *datum* and *mandatum*. Receiving the message of salvation does not automatically guarantee him the salvation that God has offered to all (1Tim 2:4). Therefore, taking note of the responsibility towards the one human family, the recipients of the message of salvation have a duty to continue the mission of Jesus: *Missionem continuans Filii Dei*.

The document has a holistic approach to the idea of man. It does not stop with a pure description of the present state of man without taking note of his end. It tries to grapple with the ultimate question: the question of death and what comes after this earthly existence. The fear of perpetual extinction shocks man to the core. «It is in death that the riddle of human existence grows most acute» (GS 18). In the face of all gratuitous and pessimistic definitions of the human person and his or her destiny, the document encourages all men to resist accepting any thesis that announces their total destruction and complete departure. According to *Gaudium et Spes*, the human person is able to withstand such pessimism because «he bears in himself an eternal seed which cannot be reduced to sheer matter». It is in Christ that man has the answer to the problem of death because with his resurrection Christ has freed man from death. Therefore, one may note that the anthropology of *Gaudium et Spes* would have remained incomplete without treating the existential absurdity of death. The document does not avoid the problem but makes a serious attempt to face it head-on. According to Ratzinger, «the introduction of the problem of death into the outline doctrine of man given in the Pastoral Constitution, involved in the transition from a purely essentialist treatment to a presentation taking into consideration the plane of existence. It is certainly no accident that it is only here, in a fragment of existential analysis, that Christological themes find expression».17

After a brief treatment of atheism and Church's response to it (GS 19-21), the document returns to anthropology again (GS 22). However, this time it is with a difference. It is a Christological anthropology. The Council wants to dwell on the mystery of man in the light of the incarnate Word. Christ is seen as the key to the human riddle because he is the new human being – the new Adam who brings new status to man. From an anthropological view it is interesting to note what the Council says about the relationship that exists between the old and the new Adam: «Adam, the first human being, was a rep-

---

17 J. Ratzinger, «The Church and Man's Calling», 140.
presentation of the future, namely of Christ the Lord». A reference from Tertullian makes it clear that the Council wants to affirm that Christ is the eschatological Adam to whom the first Adam already pointed (Christ was intended as the man who was to be). What does it mean? This Council text is very significant and it offers rich avenues for creativity in theology, particularly in fundamental theology. Ratzinger writes:

The attempt to pursue discussion with non-believers on the basis of the idea of humana, here culminates in the endeavour to interpret human being Christologically and so attain the resolutio in theologiam which, it is true, also means resolutio in hominem (provided the sense of homo is understood deeply enough). We are probably justified in saying that here for the first time in an official document of the Magisterium, a new type of completely Christocentric theology appears. On the basis of Christ this dares to present theology as anthropology and only becomes radically theological by including man in discourse about God by way of Christ, thus manifesting the deepest unity of theology. The generally theologically reserved text of the Pastoral Constitution here attains very lofty heights and points the way to theological reflection in our present situation.18

From the context we understand that the term Adam stands for entire humanity.19 Here the Council reiterates the Pauline theology that is found in his letter to the Romans (Rm 5:14). In Paul the figure of Adam functions as a link between anthropology and Christology. It is important to note that in Paul there are differences between the first Adam and the second Adam. In fact, the first one is opposed to the second: The first man was from the earth; the second man is from heaven (1 Cor 15:47). Perhaps that is why the Council prefers to use «New Adam» for Christ instead of «Perfect Man».20 Like «the New Testament is hidden in the Old and the Old is made manifest in the New» (DV 16), the New Adam reveals who man is: «The truth is that only in the mystery of the Incarnate Word does the mystery of man take on light». Though imperfect as he is, the Old Adam is the figure (τύπος) of the New Adam who is to come. Any true Christian theology cannot afford to sacrifice the human nature of the Incarnate Word. Christ is truly human and has the structure of every man except sin: «For by his incarnation the Son of God united himself in some sense with every human being». This affirmation avoids the danger of

---

18 Ibid., 159.
20 The title of the Ariccia text was «Christ the Perfect Man». But the Council preferred to use «Christ the New Man» because it wanted to affirm that the Incarnate Word is not something «derived from philosophical argument or human willing». See Acta synodalit sacrosancti Concilli Oecumenici Vaticani II, vol. IV, pars VI, 446.
reducing Christ to a mythical figure and thereby sinking Christian theology to pure mythology.21 Here the Incarnation means God establishing a relationship with every human being and Christ taking an actual concrete human existence. Jesus is not a God in human disguise who behaves 'as if' he were truly man without being so.22 However, an excessive and disproportionate accent on the humanity of Jesus can blur the real picture of the Incarnate Word. Like the divine-human tension in Christology, the Adam-Christ dialectic needs to be kept alive in fundamental theology precisely because it offers great potential for theology, especially for Christian anthropology. Indeed, the Council in Gaudium et Spes invites us to take note of the close interaction between Christology and anthropology. Though Christology does not depend on anthropology, a close examination of the anthropology of the Conciliar document demonstrates the need for a Christology.23

Relevance of Theological Anthropology for Fundamental Theology

One of the concerns of fundamental theology is to justify Christian faith in a changing world. Apologetics, the predecessor of fundamental theology, down through the centuries busied itself with this task. It sought to show the credibility of the option of faith — in what way Christian revelation was worthy of faith. In other words, it attempted to demonstrate that faith was a 'reasonable' act, not a leap in the dark. However, the leading tendency among apologists during the period between Vatican I and Vatican II was to reaffirm and justify the Church teaching that God can be known with certainty through the natural light of human reason (Dei Filius, 1). To a certain extent, apologists overemphasised the role of human reason. So much so that it gave the impression that faith was only a by-product of reason. In some of the theological enterprises the cult of reason continued unabated forgetting the fact that reason could not exist on its own. Any exaltation of reason at the expense of the human person ran the risk of reducing theology to sheer abstraction. Some of the apologists became aware of the danger in the cult of abstract reason and in interpreting faith as rationality that was independent of 'subjects'.24 They were of the opinion that theological ratio did not exist for its own sake, but for man. Therefore fundamental theology needed to show that theological reason was closely related to anthropological meaning.

22 G. Karakunnel, The Christian vision of Man, Bangalore, 1984, 133-34.
23 Ibid. This is what exactly Rahner wants to explain in his transcendental-fundamental theology.
Indeed, fundamental theology wants to show that faith is reasonable. However, any excessive reliance on reason in theology that is 'above' and 'beyond' the reach of the human person cannot appeal to modern man. Again the question arises: can faith simply be made subordinate to reason? Like truth, reason without reference to 'subjects' can become an irrelevant topic. «Truth and relevance are bound to converge to the extent that truth becomes the type of relevance that applies to all subjects».25 In the same way, reason without relevance to subjects cannot make much sense to the contemporary world. That is why the Pastoral Constitution of Vatican II begins by situating man in the modern world. By doing so, the Council has recognized the importance of theological anthropology. It is the discipline that takes the human person as subject. It helps man to deepen his understanding of the meaning of life and faith. His search for meaning of life is a new way of doing theology. Therefore, we can say that theological anthropology provides an opportunity to fundamental theology in its search for the logos of Christian faith.

The anthropological orientation of Gaudium et Spes, especially the first chapter of Part 1, is very important for fundamental theology today. It helps us to see a correlation between Christian revelation and the mystery of the human person. Both are mysteries. As far as man is concerned these mysteries are interconnected. How do we understand these mysteries? Can we understand the mystery of God without a reference to man? In the same way, can we comprehend the mystery of man without turning to the Ultimate Mystery called God? Gaudium et Spes makes an in-depth analysis of these interrogatives. These are fundamental questions for man. Gaudium et Spes shows us that man finds answers to these questions only in relation to his ultimate destiny - God.

Though God remains the formal object of theology, the 'God-talk' can be meaningful only if it is and remains the concern of man. Fundamental theology as a discipline that is charged with giving reasons for one's faith (1 Pt 3:15), needs to enquire the conditions of the possibility of the enquiring subject. Here theological anthropology has an important role to play. If one has to give reasons for his belief it is a question that concerns his very life. So it cannot just be an abstract enquiry of reason. It has to start with man. «He is the question which rises up before him, empty, but really and inescapably, and which will never be settled and never adequately answered by him».26 In the same way, any interpretation of man without a reference to God remains a 'regional' interpretation of man that can be revised and reinterpreted at a subsequent chapter of human history.27 At the end, it remains an open enquiry, without an end. After all, from the human point of view, theology is

25 Ibid., 60. See also J.B. Meitz, The Emergent Church, New York, 1981, 21.
that science which deals with the relationship between God and man. *Gaudium et Spes* takes this task seriously and shows that there exists an intimate relationship between God and man.

A careful study of the document shows that the answer to the anthropological question - what is man? - does not come from any human speculation but from his relationship with God. From the very beginning of the document the Council wants to emphasise the biblical perspective of man: *imago Dei*. With this assertion the Council wishes to reaffirm the transcendental character of the human person. By nature human beings are capable of knowing and loving their creator.\(^\text{28}\) In other words, the very constitution of the human person, with body and soul, not only proclaims his uniqueness among all creation and his supernatural destiny but also the greatness of the creator, to whom he owes his being. The intellectual nature of the human person confirms his transcendence and freedom. Man's dignity requires him to act through conscious and free choice that is personally motivated and prompted from within (GS 17). These descriptions of man in the document undoubtedly tell the transcendental nature of man. From the point of view of fundamental theology this transcendental anthropology is not only helpful but also a must for future justification of Christian faith. A serious reflection on the fundamental nature of man reveals that man is ordained for a supernatural end.\(^\text{29}\) Thus, *Gaudium et Spes* shows how human nature is not only directed to God but also God is the fulfilment of human destiny. His vocation remains incomplete without being possessed by God. Therefore, we may say with Augustine: «You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you» (*Confessions I*, 1). *Gaudium et Spes* emphasises this supernatural aspect of human existence.

**Conclusion**

At the very beginning of his book, *Foundations of Christian Faith*, Rahner asks an interesting question: «What is a Christian and why can one live this Christian existence with intellectual honesty?»\(^\text{30}\) It is, as Rahner puts it, a question that comes from the fact of Christian existence. In other words, it is a question in harmony with the basic mandate of fundamental theology: give an account of one's faith (I Pt 3:15). How are we going to give an account of our faith in a post-modern, post-Christian world?

---

\(^{28}\) L. LADARIA, «Humanity in the light of Christ», 388.

\(^{29}\) The Church reaffirms this aspect of human destiny in the first chapter of the Catechism: *Homo est Capax Dei*. See *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nn. 27-30.

It is a fact that we live in a world of pluralism with enormous possibilities and, at the same time, endless uncertainties. Like the free man who 'came of age' in the Enlightenment, modern man with his technological advancement has no hesitation in claiming autonomy before God or even denying his existence. On the other hand, the spiritualities of New Age offer him unlimited choices and, at the end, without regret, leave him on the crossroads of uncertainty. Today, scholastic philosophy, as the philosophy, is not there to give him 'solid' answer to his incessant questioning. Dogmatic positivism or a «Denzinger theology»\(^3\) hardly appeals to modern man. In the face of such a scenario how is fundamental theology going to justify Christian faith? What will be the starting point of such a justification? As we have seen above, the Pastoral Constitution, indeed, opens up new opportunities in fundamental theology.

The Pastoral Constitution, *Gaudium et Spes*, is a key document for fundamental theology. Because of the prominence that other documents (especially of *Dei Verbum* and *Lumen Gentium*) received at the Second Vatican Council, *Gaudium et Spes* gets very little attention in fundamental theology. The Dogmatic Constitution *Dei Verbum* is considered as the document of Vatican II with regard to fundamental theology because it directly deals with the theme of revelation and its transmission. The Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium*, is seen as the document that deals with fundamental ecclesiology. In fundamental theology *Gaudium et Spes* often remains in the sidelines and is discussed in the context of Church's mission in the world. The often-highlighted aspect of the Pastoral Constitution with regard to fundamental theology is its focus on the relationship between faith and culture. As a result, once gets the impression that *Gaudium et Spes* is all about the Church's interpretation of culture. It has not taken its rightful place in fundamental theology. If we consider fundamental theology as a disciple that deals with revelation and its justification in today's world we cannot ignore the importance of *Gaudium et Spes*. One may even say that the Pastoral Constitution complements *Dei Verbum* because it not only speaks of 'man in the world', but also throws lights on his relationship with a revealing God in Jesus Christ. The Schema 13, that eventually became *Gaudium et Spes*, is a Christological document. «In reality it is only in the mystery of the Word made flesh that the mystery of man truly becomes clear» (GS 22).

Gregorian University
Piazza della Pilotta, 4
00187 Roma

JOSÉPH XAVIER, S.I.

---