

Summary of *Lumen Gentium* (Light of the Nations) for Sermons

Lumen Gentium (Light of the Nations) is one of the principal documents of the Second Vatican Council, promulgated by Pope Paul VI on November 21, 1964. It is the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church and outlines the nature, role, and structure of the Church. In other words, the Dogmatic Constitution provides a comprehensive understanding of the Church's nature, mission, and structure. Therefore, we try to bring you the key points of the Dogmatic Constitution for your preaching.

1. Mystery and Mission of the Church

- a. The Church is described as a mystery (LG 1), "a kind of sacrament of intimate union with God, and of the unity of all mankind" (LG 1), and the people of God.
- b. It is the Body of Christ (LG 7) and the Temple of the Holy Spirit (LG 4).
And so, the mission of the Church is to bring all people to salvation through Christ.

2. People of God

- a. All baptized are part of the People of God and share in the common priesthood of the faithful (LG 10).
- b. "The laity, by their very vocation, seek the kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and by ordering them according to the plan of God" (LG 31).
And therefore, it emphasizes the universal call to holiness for all members of the Church.

3. Hierarchy and Laity

The church, the body of Christ is a hierarchical in its structure. And so, The hierarchical structure of the Church is explained, including the roles of bishops, priests, and deacons.

- a. The hierarchical structure includes bishops, priests, and deacons, with bishops as successors of the apostles (LG 18-20).
- b. "Bishops, therefore, with priests and deacons as helpers, have taken up the service of the community, presiding in the place of God over the flock, of which they are shepherds" (LG 20).
- c. The laity are called to actively participate in the Church's mission (LG 33).
Therefore, all – bishops, priests and laity are called to actively participate in the Church's mission and to bring the Gospel into the secular world.

4. The Church and the World

Under this topic, the relationship between the Church and the modern world is discussed.

- a. The Church's role is to be "a light to the nations" (LG 1), engaging with the world to bring the message of Christ.
- b. "The Church, in Christ, is in the nature of sacrament—a sign and instrument, that is, of communion with God and of unity among all men" (LG 1).
And so, the Church is called to be a light to the nations and to engage in dialogue with contemporary society.

5. Universal Call to Holiness

The church is holy and therefore all the members of the Church are called to holiness, regardless of their state in life.

- a. All members of the Church are called to holiness (LG 39), achieved through the grace of God and participation in the sacramental life.
- b. "All the faithful, whatever their condition or state, are called by the Lord—each in his or her own way—to that perfect holiness whereby the Father himself is perfect" (LG 11).

And therefore, holiness is achieved through the grace of God and active participation in the Church's sacramental life.

6. Mary, Mother of the Church

Mary, the mother of Jesus Christ is the mother of the Church. She is honoured as the Mother of the Church and the model of perfect discipleship.

- a. Mary is honoured as the Mother of the Church and the model of perfect discipleship (LG 53).
- b. "By her maternal charity, she cares for the brethren of her Son, who still journey on earth surrounded by dangers and difficulties, until they are led into their blessed home" (LG 62).

Therefore, the Dogmatic Constitution is trying to highlight Mother Mary's role in the mystery of Christ and the Church is highlighted.

7. Ecumenism

Under this title, the Dogmatic Constitution encourages the efforts towards Christian unity. It encourages all the baptised to acknowledge elements of truth and sanctification in other Christian communities, or in other words, to see how Christ is hidden in others.

- a. Encourages efforts toward Christian unity (LG 15).
- b. "The Church of Christ...subsists in the Catholic Church, which is governed by the successor of Peter and by the bishops in communion with him" (LG 8), while recognizing elements of truth and sanctification in other Christian communities (LG 15).

Conclusion

"*Lumen Gentium*" underscores the importance of understanding the Church's divine and human dimensions, its mission to the world, and the shared responsibility of all its members to live out the Gospel message. In other words, it emphasizes the Church's divine and human aspects, its mission to be a light to the nations, and the responsibility of all its members to live out the Gospel.

- *Summary by Rev. Dr. R. Maria Dellus, Chancellor*

Your Excellency,

Prayerful Greetings from Dellus.

How are you?

I thank you for your wishes through the secretary.

I pray daily for your good health and the success of your mission.

I know that you are carrying us all on your shoulder with a vision.

I keep praying that we would receive a positive result of FCRA before your return to India.

Well, here I have made a summary of *Lumen Gentium*.

If you feel okay with this, I shall make it published in our August Diocesan News Letter.

And in September issue, I shall bring a summary of another document.

Let me have your yes to it before I send it to press for printing.

Take care of your good health.

This little brother never fails to pray for you.

With love and prayer in Christ

Dellus