

Study and Discussion Questions
for
Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (Gaudium et Spes)

Numbers in parentheses refer to paragraph numbers in the document

Preface

Rephrase the purposes of *Gaudium et Spes* (GS) as stated in paragraph #2 (2).

To whom is **GS** addressed? (2)

What does the Church affirm as her sign of “respectful affection” toward the world? (3)

List two goals of the Church in writing **GS**. (3) (10)

Introduction – the situation of man in the world today

- In paragraph #4, the Church lists several dichotomies (contradictions) of the modern world. Choose two or three that you find most pertinent. (4) Explain your choice.
- Paragraph 6 speaks of man exercising “his freedom in a more mature and personal way.” What are the obstacles to this? (6)
- At the end of P9, the Church identifies a “modern dilemma.” How would you summarize it?
- Why does the Church feel herself capable of entering into a “discussion with the world?” (10)
- “The dichotomy affecting the modern world is, in fact, a symptom of the deeper dichotomy that is in man himself.” (10) Discuss, especially in light of the nature of man from previous studies.

Ch 1. The Dignity of the Human Person

- Believers and unbelievers agree almost unanimously that all things on earth should be ordained to man as to their center and summit. (12) **GS** was written in 1964. Do you think this statement is still true?
- What two characteristics of man’s essential nature are discussed here. Summarize (14).
- What is meant by a “correct conscience”? (16)
- Discusses causes of atheism. Is there any sense in which atheism is natural to man? Describe one cause of atheism. (19)
- Compare and contrast the end of PP 19 and the end of PP 21, regarding our public witness of Christianity. Discuss the special responsibility of the Lay Dominican in light of these two paragraphs. (19) and (21)
- This paragraph is extremely important not only for GS, but also in the entire body of teaching of St. John Paul II. Discuss some of the ramifications of God becoming man. (22)