

April, 2008  
DFW Lay Council II Summary

Paul Lakeland, "Catholicism at the Crossroads: How the laity Can Save the Church"

Approximately five dozen folks found their way to the Hillcrest Community College in East Dallas, for the "Second" DFW Lay Council. Paul Lakeland presented key ideas from his book in the morning, then tasked us with a worksheet of Ten Steps Toward a More Adult Church, based on chapter 10 of his book, for work through lunch and the afternoon. Individuals assembled themselves in table groups according to their preferences for the action headings on the list. We were free to roam and interact at other tables for an open exchange of ideas. The day ended with reports and general debate on the narrow range of practical steps open to us to work toward a more open and accountable Church. Nonetheless, Lakeland held out to us a five point vision of Openness, Optimism, Dialog, Collaboration, Co-Responsibility. Add to this vision Solidarity, since the ordained are sacramental symbols of realities possessed by all the faithful in virtue of our one baptism into a priestly, missioned People of God.

"Ordinary Catholics are going to have to strive for post-Vatican II orthodoxy if our leaders are not going to do so. **And let us be careful to defend the word "orthodoxy" from those who would steal it away from us.** "Orthodox" does not mean "conservative" or "traditionalist" and "liberal" does not mean "heterodox." Orthodoxy is a **spectrum** bounded by the gospel, not an **ideology** pronounced by an institution or promoted by some of its bishops. Orthodoxy is roomy enough for most liberals and most conservatives." Pg 4.

"The Vatican Council is the contemporary expression of Catholic orthodoxy. Its teachings are neither liberal nor conservative, but its spirit is one of openness to the whole world, optimism and dialog, collaboration and co-responsibility. A Church that is faithful to the vision of Vatican II will **not** be one in which doctrinal liberals are comfortable and doctrinal conservatives are disaffected. **But it will be one in which dialog between these different points of view is the order of the day, one that shows the world the face of an open rather than a closed society.** It will be uncomfortable for people who cannot see that they must behave as adults in an adult church." Pg 7

"Loving the Church, we all want it to be more and better in its faithfulness to the gospel. But just because love of the church is not love of an object that we might possess but an act of solidarity, the desire that the church grow in faithfulness has to be carried out in community, in dialog where there is disagreement. **We must know the difference between where we can agree to differ and where we must keep talking—always, of course, seeking the truth of the gospel and not our own advantage;** always speaking honestly and even forthrightly but always aware that our own judgments are revisable; always willing the good of the other; always loving those with whom we are in profound disagreement; always purifying our intentions through the prayer of the publican; and always trusting our hearts and using our heads.' Pg 25.