



The Holy See

APOSTOLIC BRIEF
OF POPE PAUL VI
"IN SPIRITU SANCTO"
FOR THE CLOSING OF THE COUNCIL

DECEMBER 8, 1965

The Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, assembled in the Holy Spirit and under the protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary, whom we have declared Mother of the Church, and of St. Joseph, her glorious spouse, and of the Apostles SS. Peter and Paul, must be numbered without doubt among the greatest events of the Church. In fact it was the largest in the number of Fathers who came to the seat of Peter from every part of the world, even from those places where the hierarchy has been very recently established. It was the richest because of the questions which for four sessions have been discussed carefully and profoundly. And last of all it was the most opportune, because, bearing in mind the necessities of the present day, above all it sought to meet the pastoral needs and, nourishing the flame of charity, it has made a great effort to reach not only the Christians still separated from communion with the Holy See, but also the whole human family.

At last all which regards the holy ecumenical council has, with the help of God, been accomplished and all the constitutions, decrees, declarations and votes have been approved by the deliberation of the synod and promulgated by us. Therefore we decided to close for all intents and purposes, with our apostolic authority, this same ecumenical council called by our predecessor, Pope John XXIII, which opened October 11, 1962, and which was continued by us after his death.

We decided moreover that all that has been established synodally is to be religiously observed by all the faithful, for the glory of God and the dignity of the Church and for the tranquillity and peace of all men. We have approved and established these things, decreeing that the present letters are and remain stable and valid, and are to have legal effectiveness, so that they be disseminated and

obtain full and complete effect, and so that they may be fully convalidated by those whom they concern or may concern now and in the future; and so that, as it be judged and described, all efforts contrary to these things by whomever or whatever authority, knowingly or in ignorance be invalid and worthless from now on.

Given in Rome at St. Peter's, under the [seal of the] ring of the fisherman, Dec. 8, on the feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the year 1965, the third year of our pontificate.

PAUL VI