

The reality is that the institution of marriage with its mutual conjugal love is supportive of the persons, and their love itself then expresses itself in the children who are born of that union. Also, when you make the primary end of marriage the begetting of children and then their education, the role of the woman is diminished. *It is diminished.*

Q: Cardinal, what was the relationship between the Papal Commission on Birth Control and your own commission?

A: The original commission constituted by Pope John was very hush-hush. Nobody knew who was on it. Paul didn't augment it until after the Council was over it. I was on the augmented one but not the original. In the course of drafting this document, as we got toward the end, I received word from the Holy Father's office that he wanted me and one or two of our consultants to meet with the members of the Pontifical Commission. So I said fine; we'll set it up.

We learned that the Secretariat was Father de Riedmatten. We spent one whole Sunday in the Belgian College meeting with these people and reviewing with them the texts that we had. They already had their draft near final form but were still open to be sure that there was nothing in it that was inconsistent with their thinking and therefore the Council's. A few Consultors and I did have some contact but not the whole sub-commission.

The greatest pressure that was exerted by strong voices was to have us incorporate terms like "contract" or the "primary end of marriage," the old Code's definition of marriage. There was a great deal of concern over this. When we spoke of marriage as a community of life and of love, people, especially those with a canonical bent, were very much concerned with how to determine a thing like this since this is going to affect the validity of marriage. It's not measurable. Other things can be, but not this one.

The consequence was that there was a lot of uncertainty on the part of many, many bishops early on about the preeminent place that was given to love in this chapter. We had gradually to persuade them that we are not talking about an ephemeral, sentimental, emotional love. We're talking about something much deeper and stronger that pervades

the totality of the person, and that then, finds expression in marriage and all that marriage entails. Read that chapter very, very carefully because *that section is crafted with consummate care and tries to achieve a very careful balance by design.*

Cardinal Dearden with Bishops Walter Schoenherr and Thomas Gumbleton who helped bring the teachings, style and spirit of Vatican II to Detroit.



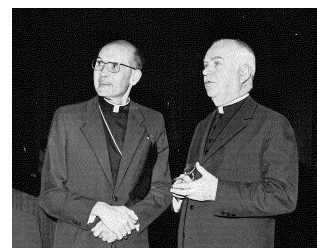
Q: What is the challenge that is facing the Church today in continuing to live the Vatican II spirit?

A: I wouldn't generalize—one must realize that the Church in different countries is in different situations. When you compare, for example, some of the signs of vitality in the Church in Africa, Latin America or other places, you realize that it's not easy to make a homogeneous judgment about this. There are going to be variations. In our own case in the Archdiocese of Detroit, we've attempted to live out much of the Council.

Shortly after it was over, some of the "wild and woolies" were saying, "The time has come now for a third Vatican Council." I said it then and I say it today, "The full implications of all that is in those documents of the Second Vatican Council will not be appreciated in your lifetime, certainly not in mine."

There is much more there than people have really captured and there are a lot of implications that have not been lived out yet and are going to take time. There has to be a process of growth and maturity. Take for example, *collegiality*, a very fundamental reality in *Lumen Gentium*. We just haven't found the way to do it but we're trying.

We just need to have the patience to allow the Spirit to do what He wants in His time – not get in the way but to help the Spirit along.



The first Call to Action in 1976 was an effort by the US bishops to hear the concerns of the faithful. Shown here with host Cardinal Dearden is Apostolic Delegate Jean Jadot who attended.

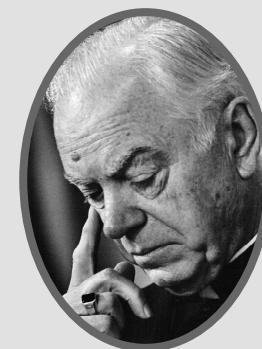
* Ed. note: Ninety-five percent of this text is taken verbatim from the Cardinal's three-hour address and Q & A. I changed the order of his comments to make the synopsis more suitable for this conference. I added transitional phrases and words to clarify the references of pronouns, combined related sentences, and deleted some indefinite articles and unnecessary words/phrases. I made every effort to express and not to change the meaning of the Cardinal's reflections.

The Birth of the Marriage Chapter of *Gaudium et Spes* A Personal Perspective by John Cardinal Dearden

These excerpts were adapted from the transcript of Cardinal Dearden's address on the development, theology and composition of Articles 47-52, Chapter 1 on Marriage and Family, given on November 4, 1986, at St. John Provincial Seminary, Plymouth, Michigan. He served as Secretary (Chairman) of the Sub-commission on Marriage and Family and as a member of the Council's pivotal Doctrinal Commission. After *Gaudium et Spes* was approved, Pope Paul VI asked then-Archbishop Dearden to review every line of these articles so that he would be clear as to the Council Fathers' intent and meaning.

For this synopsis, the transcript has been extensively edited by Judy M. Holmes * (*See editor's note on page four*). The full text will appear with two other fascinating reflections on the inner workings of the Council in a publication about the legacy of John Cardinal Dearden. It will detail his leadership as Archbishop of Detroit, Council Father, first President of the NCCB (1966-71), architect of the 1976 Call to Action Justice Conference and vigilant champion of Vatican II.

For further information, visit: www.johncardinaldearden.com or e-mail: judymholmes@comcast.net



DEARDEN AND THE COUNCIL

I was blessed or privileged more than many in having had something of a background that prepared me for this. For some years I had taught philosophy and the history of philosophy in seminary. And so I came to be better acquainted than many with such trends as phenomenology, phenomenological philosophy and personalism which were crucial to understanding the documents of the Council.

Everyone who participated in the Council experienced a period of growth. First of all, it lasted four years. And, in my own case, because I was so deeply involved, I happened to be elected to the most active and busiest commission of the Council—the Doctrinal Commission. It was pivotal. We were primarily responsible for drafting *Lumen Gentium* and were participants in the *Constitution on Divine Revelation*. We had extensive participation in *Gaudium et Spes* and we also had to clear the document on *Religious Liberty*. I not only attended those sessions but in addition to the long sessions in the fall, I made two and three additional trips each year for commission meetings and preparation of these documents between sessions.

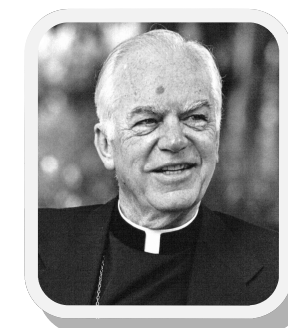
I've said more than once, and it is literally true, I've never worked harder in my life than I did in the final months of the Vatican Council when we were bringing into final form *Gaudium et Spes (GS)*, and particularly in my case, Chapter 1, "Fostering the Nobility of Marriage and the Family" (*found in Part II of GS*).

EVOLUTION OF THE TITLE

Gaudium et Spes in itself is a very extraordinary kind of a document. Its genesis came about as the Council itself proceeded. Initially the thrust of the Council was focused particularly upon our understanding of "Church," but it was realized early on that when we talk about the Church, we are "talking about ourselves." And it seemed very important to address the world on some of the realities that the Church was involved in and the world in which it existed. This realization gradually gave rise to the document known as *Gaudium et Spes*.

Initially, it was known as Schema 17; then as Schema 13, and next we lopped out a few others. Its Latin title started off as *Gaudium et luctu*; it changed to *Spes et angor*; then *Angor hominum omnis qui es temporis*; and later *Luctus et angor, gaudium et spes*.

A very perceptive and historically sensitive person said, "You know, it's the custom to identify Council documents, not by the formal title, but by the opening words of the document. It will certainly sound a lot better if we make this title *Gaudium et Spes* and strike a hopeful note rather than one of pessimism and concern."



COMPOSITION OF THE COMMISSIONS

The drafting of the document was entrusted ultimately to a Mixed Commission composed of two conciliar commissions: the Doctrinal Commission and the Commission on the Laity. As such, it was a very large body—perhaps 60 people or more — consisting

of cardinals, archbishops and bishops. It is from that group that approval was sought. They were perceptive and demanding and didn't always agree but that was normal.

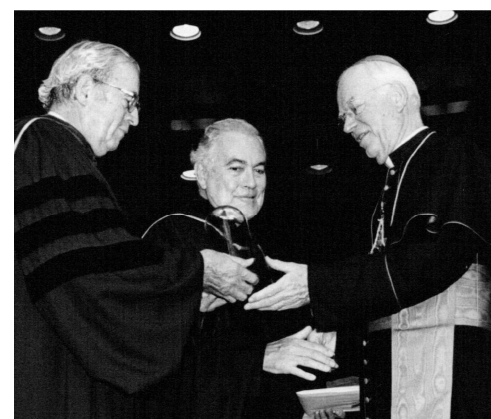
The Doctrinal Commission with which I was involved had access at all times to 50-75 theologians, all sorts of specialists in fields of scripture and systematic theology.

The secretary of my sub-commission on this chapter was Canon Heylen, a Belgian professor at the University of Louvain. He headed up at that time what was a relatively new institution, an institute on human sexuality that had been started by Cardinal Suenens.

Between the fourth and fifth session, we felt that our sub-commission needed a wider representation. For example, we didn't have anyone from behind the Iron Curtain so we asked Archbishop Wojtyla along with a bishop from Japan to join us.

The makeup of our Sub-commission on Marriage and Family was an interesting one. It was obvious to us that this was a theme that should not be dealt with simply by priests or bishops or cardinals. And so, we had lay consultants who were with us in many of our sessions: from the United States, Patty and Patrick Crowley; Mr. and Mrs. Alvarez from Mexico City; Miss Rosemary Goldie from Australia; and Mademoiselle Pilar Bellosilla, head of the women's organizations from Spain.

Early on they were with us in all our chapter discussions and had input and offered insights to our presentations, so it can never be said that our deliberations were done in a vacuum. Representatives of this lay group were brought in to be part of the larger group when the sub-commission itself dealt with the total text.



Recognized for being an "advocate of increased recognition and development in lay ministries," Cardinal Dearden received the Laetare Medal from the University of Notre Dame on May 16, 1982.

CONTENT AND TRANSLATIONS

Within the document itself there are several things to be noted: the strong insistence on the significance of conjugal love and its expression in the marriage act. Its significance is not as an emotional, fleeting attraction of one person to another, but something that is so profound and so deep that it truly unites them, heart and mind, spirit and body, so that they truly *become one* in the fullest sense of the term. And it is this significance of conjugal love that then makes so much more intelligible the reality of the expression of that love in the conjugal act. The begetting of children is the crowning of that marriage.

Many of the things in the chapter will begin on what I would call a natural plane, and move from that to a supernatural plane, a Christian dimension. You'll notice carefully that there is a progression as you go through it. Chapter Two avoids, by design, what I would call technical language. It doesn't get into very formal theological speculation. It's put in a rather simple and straightforward fashion. We were given space limitations that we could not exceed in the drafting of this chapter. The consequence is that the document itself is tightly compressed and *every* word counts. *It is not something for casual reading; I'll tell you very candidly, it is a chapter that demands very painstaking and careful reading.*

Read the document in the Latin; read it slowly. Give to the words the meaning that they enjoy. It is a *very technical document* in its language and grammar—even in such things as a comma. In the famous footnote which occurs in this chapter under number 52, the last sentence in all translations reads:

Sic stante doctrina Magisterii, S. Synodus solutiones concretas immediate proponere non intendit.

In some versions, this is translated as if there were a comma after the word '*sic*.' If you put a comma after *sic* and translate it, the meaning changes completely. That's how precise these texts are. If you put a comma after the *sic* then you make this interconnected and then you have this phrase standing on its own—*stante doctrina Magisterii*—and it really means: "it's to be taken as one," "in the present time," "in the present state of affairs," i.e., "the Magisterium stands for it."

Do not be dependent on a translation. One of the tragedies is that we do not have an English translation with a facing Latin text.

MODI AND FINAL FORMULATIONS

The disposition of the *modi* (changes) was one of the great challenges of the Council, one of the things that took so much of our time. Dealing with the *modi* was itself a very tedious and painstaking task, but a highly responsible one. Nothing relevant was ever brushed aside. This procedure was respected meticulously so that every document that emerged is truly a document of the Vatican Council, not of a particular group with special interests.

The same thing was true even for the famous proposals that came from the desk of Pope Paul and which came to us very late. Many on the commission said, "It is the wish of the Holy Father that we incorporate these proposed changes into the text and that's it!" But we said, "It's not that simple." First of all, we had understood that sometimes these were just his suggestions to be weighed and judged in the light of our experience and our understanding. They were not sent down as something to be entered *categorically*.

All these *modi* were brought together and they ran into the thousands at times and we would have to go through *every one* of those. Almost 200 bishops wanted the word "contract" put in at least some place instead of "covenant" in the document.

Gaudium et Spes, including this chapter, received a very substantial, authoritative vote. If I remember correctly, there were only 200 or so negative votes on this chapter taken in early December, 1965, less than 10% of the total cast.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Of all the conciliar documents, this one is dated more explicitly than any of the other documents, especially the problem section found in the Part II. But you must remember that *GS* was affected very much by the conditions of the times. We're now twenty years later and wouldn't write that chapter on marriage in exactly the same way today as we did then. The essentials would be the same but there would be some qualifications that would have to be introduced that weren't realistic or meaningful at that time. This has to be recognized.

That is one reason why some of the Council Fathers were just uncomfortable with *GS*—they said that no Council has ever attempted anything like this. And that's literally true. As I said at the beginning, this document is addressed to all mankind, not just to the Church. There are particular elements in it addressed to the Church obviously, but it is broad.

Much good has come from *GS*. The optimism from the total Council has been tempered a bit by the challenges of developing some things that were at least germinally in the Council, but we've moved farther than we think. Surely it has contributed to a deepening of some theological reflection such as liberation theology.



Cardinal Dearden with his brother bishops in Rome

Q & A with CARDINAL DEARDEN & STUDENTS

Q: The Council Fathers had broadened the horizons of marital love and captured the essence of the scriptural phrase, "two in one flesh." In light of long-standing formulations, where did this come from?

A: It really is an old doctrine because it is strongly based on scripture. But to see marriage in the broader sense of a real community of life and of love, with all its implications, is really much richer than to see it in the terms of the old canonical formulation—primary and secondary ends.

People tried again and again to get us to affirm the primary end of marriage. We said, "No way—that's not consistent with what we are trying to say here." We sedulously avoided any gradations of any kind. We said it's basically a community of life and of love. And then, out of that, is expressed the reality of conjugal love which gives rise to the birth and rearing of children; it's all incorporated into one community that is very beautiful. "Two in one flesh" is a very meaningful phrase and it's something that calls for a lot of reflection. People would profit a great deal from seeing marriage in this wider and richer context which is profoundly scriptural.

The identification of the primary ends that made marriage primarily an instrument for the propagation of the race seemed to us to be far too narrow, and really in a sense, too limiting in our understanding of what marriage is. It's not that what is in that is wrong, it's just that it shouldn't be emphasized as *the primary purpose* of married life.