



Called & Co-Responsible

SUMMER SEMINARS FOR CHURCH LIFE RENEWAL

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McGRATH INSTITUTE FOR CHURCH LIFE



CO-RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH

“To what extent is the pastoral co-responsibility of all, and particularly the laity, recognized and encouraged?” ... to “improve pastoral structures” in the Diocese “in such a way that the co-responsibility of all the members of the People of God in their entirety is gradually promoted.” ... “demands a change in mindset, particularly concerning lay people. They must no longer be viewed as ‘collaborators’ of the clergy but truly recognized as ‘co-responsible’ for the Church’s being and action.”

- Benedict XVI, 2009

Vatican II Decree on Priestly Life and Ministry:

“The Lord Jesus, ‘whom the Father consecrated and sent into the world’ (Jn. 10.36) gave His whole Mystical Body a share in the anointing of the Spirit with which He was anointed. In that Body, all the faithful are made a holy and kingly priesthood. They offer spiritual sacrifices to God through Jesus Christ, and they proclaim the mighty acts of Him who has called them out of darkness into his marvelous light”

(Presbyterorum Ordinis 3, citing 1 Peter 2.5, 9).

“In virtue of their baptism, all the members of the People of God have become missionary disciples (cf. Mt. 28.19). All the baptized, whatever their position in the Church or their level of instruction in the faith, are agents of evangelization, and it would be insufficient to envisage a plan of evangelization to be carried out by professionals while the rest of the faithful would simply be passive recipients.”

(Evangelii Gaudium 120).

“The idea of **co**-responsibility, the idea that this is a *shared* responsibility specifically, is elaborated *specifically* against the context of what Benedict calls a “tendency to identify the Church unilaterally with the hierarchy, forgetting the common responsibility, the common mission of the People of God, which, in Christ, we all share.”

- Benedict XVI, 2009

A lay ecclesial minister is someone who exercises the “ministry” appropriate to the laity, to the common priesthood of the baptized, by collaborating in the “ministry” appropriate to the ordained, or, as it says in the document *Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord*, “in close collaboration with the pastoral ministry of bishops, priests, and deacons,” and it “entails an explicit relationship of mutual accountability to and collaboration with the Church hierarchy.”

The priesthood of the ordained is a share in Christ's priesthood different in kind, not in degree, from that of the baptized. The ordained priesthood is *ordered towards* the building up of the royal priesthood of the baptized. It exists, "for the sake of the universal priesthood of the new covenant," and it does not "replace but promote[s] the baptismal priesthood of the entire people of God"

(JPII, *Pastores Dabo Vobis* 14; 17, citing PO 10).



NEXT WEEK, JUNE 10

USING MEDIA WELL TOGETHER: CO-RESPONSIBILITY & CHURCH COMMUNICATIONS

DR. BRETT ROBINSON