

Towards a Truly Catholic Church: An Ecclesiology for the Third Millennium

By Thomas P. Rausch SJ

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How should we understand church? Is it visible or invisible, one or many, local or universal, hierarchical or congregational in its structure, sacramental or biblical in its expression? Different Christians--whether Catholic, Protestant, Orthodox, or Evangelical--tend to approach these foundational questions through the lenses of their own histories and traditions. Some place great weight on the Church's Christological foundations, and thus on history. Others place more emphasis on the dynamic work of the Spirit, with its capacity to introduce the new and the unexpected. Others see an original diversity of ecclesiologies, grounding a contemporary pluralism of confessions. These lenses color not just how Christians see the church today, but also how they imagine it for tomorrow.

In *Towards a Truly Catholic Church*, Thomas Rausch, SJ, draws on these different voices to develop a theology for the church that builds on the work of the Vatican II, is ecumenical in its approach, and envisions the church in the context of globalization. In an increasingly interconnected world, Rausch offers hope that tomorrow's church will be a world church, a communion that reconciles unity in diversity.

Chapters are*Lumen Gentium*, *Gaudium et Spes*, Metaphors and Models of Church, Communion in the Body of Christ, The Church's Apostolic Ministry, Safeguarding the Apostolic Tradition, The Marks of the Church, Reception and Communion, A Truly Catholic Church, Challenges to the Other Christian Churches, and Challenges to Roman Catholic Church.

Thomas P. Rausch, SJ, PhD, is the T. Marie Chilton Professor of Catholic Theology at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles. A specialist in ecclesiology, ecumenism, and the theology of the priesthood, he has published numerous books including the award-winning Catholicism at the Dawn of the Third Millennium, Who Is Jesus?, The College Student's Introduction to Theology, *and* Reconciling Faith and Reason: Apologists, Evangelists, and Theologians in a Divided Church, *published by Liturgical Press.*

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Editorial Review

Review

In a vision that holds the tensions and antinomies together, Rausch's picture is truly catholic.
Worship

This concise but well documented synthesis is an invaluable resource on Catholic ecclesiology, its ecumenical engagements, and prospects for the future as Christianity moves into the postmodern world.
Theological Studies

The intelligence and clarity of this study, and the breadth of voices and issues it synthesizes, makes it a useful text for professors and students to use in surveying the landscape of ecclesiological tasks.
Catholic Studies

Rausch writes with ease and clarity about matters of deep concern of good people everywhere. Little of lasting value will be achieved in our efforts to advance Christian unity if Rausch’s plea for removing barriers and building bridges is ignored by church authorities.
Prairie Messenger

Readers will come to the last page of this encouraging and enlightening book with the sober hopefulness imparted by good news.
Prairie Messenger

We strongly recommend this new book for your thoughtful reading and reflection.
The Catholic Book Club Newsletter

About the Author

Thomas P. Rausch, SJ, is the T. Marie Chilton Professor of Catholic Theology at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles. A specialist in ecclesiology, he has published twenty books and numerous articles and has long been active in ecumenism. He co-chairs the Los Angeles Catholic/Evangelical Committee and the Theological Commission for the Archdiocese. From 2010 to 2014 he was a consultor to Jesuit Superior General Father Adolfo Nicholás for ecumenical affairs.

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