



Council 50 : *Towards a Church, Inspired by the Gospel, for the world*

Postal address : c/o EN-RE 68 rue de Babylone 75007 Paris France

Web site: <http://www.council50.org>

Contact : francois.becker@council50.org

What the Council 50 project is?

Council 50 is a process that contributes to explicit the “sensus fidelium/sensusfidei” that is one of the key aspects of the theological thoughts of Pope Francis¹. It gives to communities, movements, groups, associations and parishes, which during the last 50 years worldwide made germinating seeds sowed by the Council Vatican II and developing new practices, the opportunity to give their point of view onto the reforms inspired by Gospels and the spirit of the Council Vatican II to be implemented in the Church by participating in the following strongly connected activities:

1) **To send to the organizing committee** to make them widely known, their experiences, their reflections and their analyses, too often ignored, in two strongly connected directions:

- towards the being of the Church (the people including the hierarchy), her functioning and her organization in order to improve her so that it is in 21th century that she says to be,
- towards the saying it and the doing of the Church in order to allow her members to illuminate with the Spirit of Jesus the evolving world and to contribute to its transformation into a world of peace, justice and solidarity in which every man and every woman can develop him/herself completely in all the dimensions of his/her being.

Hence the leitmotiv " Council 50, towards a Church inspired by Gospels for the world "

2) As the apostles and the followers of Jesus did in Jerusalem (Act. 15, 2-4), **to delegate their representatives to the international gathering of delegates from 20 till 22 November 2015 in Rome** and to the colloquium organized **in the same place from 11 till 17 November 2015** in Rome by the Institut für Theologie und Politik in cooperation with Council 50 in order **to renew and update the commitments of the Pact of Catacombs and and relight the flame of Council Vatican II.** (see event in Rome)

3) **To submit to the pope the charter Council 50** during the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the close of the Council Vatican II and to work to the realisation of a book presenting in a coherent and pedagogic way the contributions collected during this process and the works of the meeting of Rome.

4) **To build-up a lively network of correspondents worldwide**, that will allow the exchanges and brotherly confrontations necessary for the discernment for an authentic life of Church and of Christians in our evolving world, since as father Joseph Moingt says, the search for the Truth must be democratic.

¹ See for instance:

http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/cti_documents/rc_cti_20140610_sensus-fidei_en.html and

http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/cti_documents/rc_cti_20140610_cerf-sensus-fidei_fr.html

The five outputs of the project:

- 1) the Council 50 Charter built from the contributions of the people and from the discussions of the workshops during the event in Rome. This Charter will be given to Pope Francis;
- 2) increased awareness of the reform movements, an improvement of personal contacts and the creation of an updated lively network;
- 3) a booklet “Council 50, towards, etc...” for the renewal of our Church that will be edited from all the materials gathered and the different talks and contributions. It will include the Charter;
- 4) a contribution to the creation of links between the institution, the pope and the cloud of groups and associations for renewal;
- 5) hopefully a reform of our Church such that it be a Church for the 21st century inspired by the Gospel, and thus enlightening the world to live according to the spirit of Jesus.

How to contribute to the project?

Besides financial support and the attendance of delegates to the gathering of delegates in Rome on 20-22 November 2015, it would be very important that these communities, groups, associations, parishes, etc.

- contribute to the charter and to the workshops by sending to Jacopo Raffaele (raffaele.council50@gmail.com) and François Becker (francois.becker@council50.org) its contributions, proposals, actions and experiences for church renewal that will be published.

- answer eventually the 3 following questions:

* The past: What are the five most central pastoral decisions of our Church that you think are errors, made since 1965, when the council ended?

* The present: What are the five major pastoral reforms that could have been envisioned world-wide in the fifty years since Vatican II ended?

*The future: What are the major benefits for the People of God that will follow from these five reforms?

- Prepare posters, documents, videos, objects to be exhibited during the event in Rome,

- Nominate delegates for the event in Rome

Who are the initiators of this project, who is involved, who supports?

Stimulated by the proposals of the Second Vatican Council and the difficulties of the Church to put them into practice, movements, communities, associations, think tanks were created in different parts of the world, each with its own specificities related to its culture, socio-economic and political context. They put into practice some of these proposals and so measured all their importance and wealth. To share their experiences and thoughts, they formed networks that allowed them to develop their reflexions and practices.

In front of the successive abandonments of the reforms aroused by the Council Vatican II and without perspective of a change of orientation under the pontificate of Benoit XVI, in front of the risks of a deadly fracture between the institution and a big part of the "people of God"², it

² In his “Address to the Roman Curia, offering them his Christmas greetings” on the 22 December 2005, Pope Benedict XVI insisted in identifying two contrasting interpretation of the Council or hermeneutics, “quarrelling with each other”: the first one “of discontinuity and rupture” and the second one of “renewal in continuity”. The former “risks ending in a split between the pre-conciliar Church and the post-conciliar

seemed necessary for two of these networks, the International Movement We Are Church³ (IMWAC) and the European Network Church on the Move⁴ during their common meeting of 2008 to think about a project allowing the "people of God" on the occasion of the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the close of the Council Vatican II to challenge the institution from their practice, as did St Francis of Assisi in his time, and to show their potentialities for a revival of the Church.

The election of Pope Francis and the spirit he gave in the early days to his pontificate, his renewed attention to the Synod, his attitude to other faiths and to the dialogue with the contemporary world, his provenance "from the peripheries of the world", have made the project Council 50 more coherent with the direction the church is moving to. This aroused great hope and encouraged the two associations IMWAC and the European Network Church on the Move to reaffirm the values and the spirit of the Council and to give space and opportunity of networking between the different experiences that sprang from it. This is why they have launched worldwide in 2013 the Council 50 project, then in harmony with the orientations of Pope Francis, by inviting international associations in the Catholic reform-minded networks to participate in its development and to contribute to its final shaping, so that The project Council50 brings to Pope Francis and to all those in the Church that want to rekindle the message of the Council the contributions and support from the base, still maintaining their freedom to be critical of what they consider not in line with the Word of Jesus.

Presently Council 50 benefits from the contributions, participation and support of members of many networks and associations such as : Articulacion Continental de Comunidades eclesiales de base, Amerindia, World Forum Theology and Liberation, Kairós/Nós Também Somos Igreja – Brasil, International federation for a renewed Catholic Ministry, American catholic Council, Corpus, International Movement We Are Church, European Network Church on the Move, Pax Romana, Australian Coalition for Church Renewal, Coordination of European Base Communities, We Are Also Church South Africa, Réseau des Anciens Jecistes d’Afrique, European Forum of LGBT Christian Groups, Institut für Theologie und Politik, Wijngaards Institute for Catholic Research, Center for Asia Peace and Solidarity (CAPS), Asociación de Teólogos Juan XXIII, Redes Cristianas

Personalities in most of the continents support this project and agreed to constitute a committee of Recommendation. We can quote at the moment: Giovanni Franzoni, Raniero La Valle, Leonardo Boff, Luiz Carlos Susin (World Forum Theology and Liberation), Hermann Häring, Paul Hwang (Center for Asia Peace and Solidarity), Germaine Lipeb (Réseau des Anciens Jecistes d’Afrique.), J.J. Tamayo, Mgr. Jacques Gaillot, Anthony Padovano (CORPUS, USA), J.M. Castillo, Nontando Hadebe woman theologian from South Africa and Zimbabwe), Paul Collins (Australian Coalition for Church Renewal)... ..

Church", and claims that "the true spirit of the Council" should be taken in consideration, and not only the literal contents of the Council documents. The latter, being the correct one, sees the Council as merely a way "to transmit the doctrine, pure and integral, without any attenuation or distortion", calling for "adherence to all the teaching of the Church in its entirety and preciseness..." in "faithful and perfect conformity to the authentic doctrine:

³ IMWAC is a network of WAC associations present in a large number of countries throughout the world.

⁴ The European Network Church on the Move is constituted of more than hundred associations in about ten countries of Europe. It is awarded the participatory status of the Council of Europe and is therefore a member of the INGO conference of the Council of Europe.