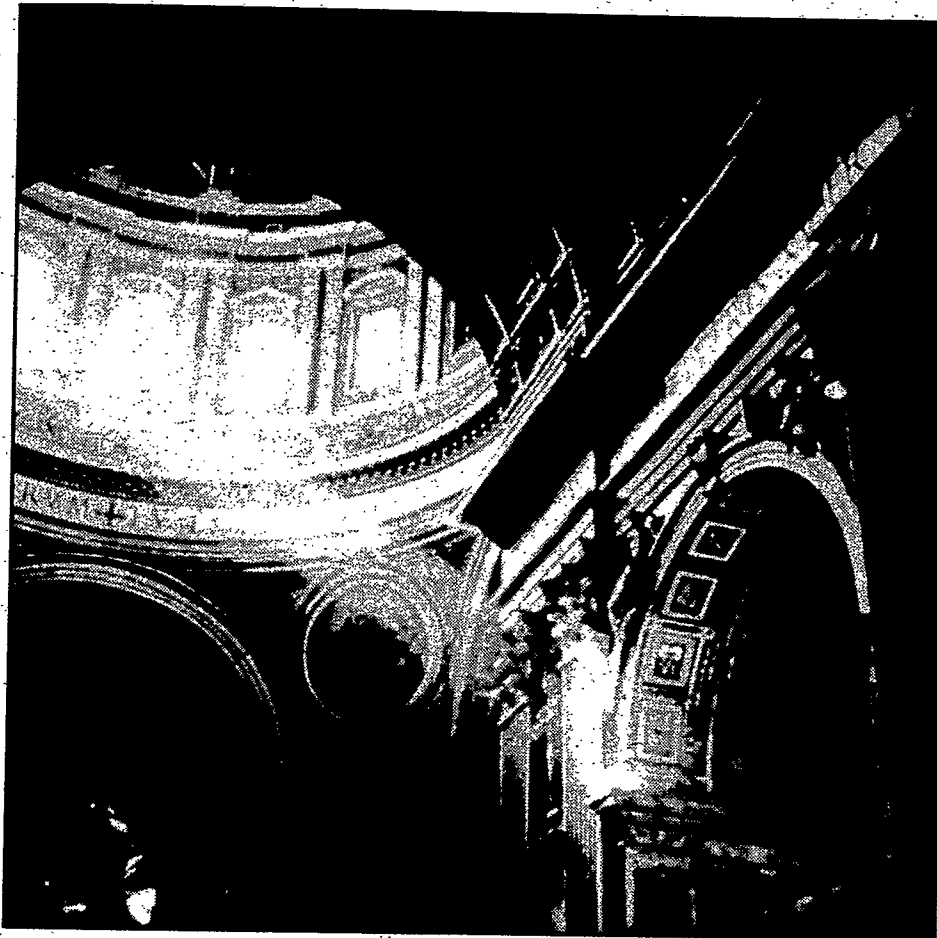


WORLD & NATION



PBS special examines outcome of Vatican II

By Henry Herx
Catholic News Service

NEW YORK — Looking back at the ecumenical council called by Pope John XXIII and what was accomplished during its sessions from 1962 to 1965 is the documentary, "Reflections on Vatican II," airing Friday, Sept. 18 on PBS.

Pope John had called the council to address what he termed an "aggiornamento," an updating of the church in the modern world.

And the world took notice of what was sensed as an historic event, making the council front-page news in the secular press and amply covered by TV news agencies.

The documentary makes good use of this visual record showing the splendor of the Vatican surroundings and dramatic images of the more than 2,200 church leaders who were participants.

In discussing the documents issued by the council and how they were implemented, the program relies on comments taken from interviews with 169 theologians, priests and religious, philosophers, journalists and celebrities.

The program begins with the liturgical reforms in the use of the vernacular and the priest facing the people in celebrating Mass as the first changes to affect Catholic parishioners.

There is a segment with Father Virgil Elizondo talking about how these liturgical changes affected his San Antonio congregation, especially their forms of musical expression within the Mass.

Other segments are devoted to the role of women in the church, the collegiality of pope and bishops, lay responsibility and leadership as well as such social justice is-

sues as nuclear arms and human rights.

The program has a strong section on ecumenism and religious liberty that leads to a discussion of Pope John Paul II's moral leadership in the end of communist rule in Poland.

The church's inculturation in foreign lands and the special relationship between Christians and Jews are also handled in individual segments.

Noted in the program's end is the fact that the Second Vatican Council, unlike many of its predecessors, resulted in but

one schism, that of French Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre and his small group of followers.

This is coupled with some brief comments from those who think the council reforms have gone too far and others who think they haven't gone far enough.

But the program concludes with the view that Vatican II called Catholics to dialogue with one another, with other religious groups and with the contemporary world.

Produced and directed by Mark Birnbaum, the documentary looks at Vatican II as a historical event which continues to influence the life of Catholics today and their role in the church and in the world.

What makes it a fascinating program is its diverse collection of individuals, some well-known and others not, all of whom have thought deeply about Vatican II and share their insights with the viewer.

The documentary does not bog down in institutional conflicts but deals with how Catholic life has adapted to the changes of Vatican II and in many ways grown.

The result shows that the spirit of Vatican II is alive and well in the Catholic Church and the faith of its people.

Local broadcast times

Rochester: WXXI 21, Sept. 18, 10 p.m.
Syracuse: WCNY 11, Sept. 18, 11 p.m.; Sept. 20, noon

Floods devastate Chiapas, Mexico

MEXICO CITY (CNS) — Priests and catechists gathered information about the needs and whereabouts of flood victims, many of whom were left in isolated regions created by flooding in the southern Mexican state of Chiapas.

Father Guillermo Nieto of the Tapachula diocesan social ministries of-

fice said Sept. 12 that the full extent of the disaster was not yet known because many communities could not be reached.

The Tapachula Diocese includes Pacific coastal portions of Chiapas, Mexico's southernmost state, where about 1 million people were affected by heavy rain and floods in early September.

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