

## **New church will arise after faithful stop paying for old**

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In 1962, a great prophet ascended to the throne of St. Peter, John XXIII. Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, he convoked the Second Vatican Council.

Its purpose was to make the church once again the people's church. It was called a "four-year wake" that buried the old church. Pope John opened the windows to let some fresh air into a musty place.

What a laugh. Since his death, those windows have been slammed shut once again.

Catholic teaching is that an ecumenical council wields the power and authority of infallibility. The bishops under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit wrote the documents of Vatican II. But that is as far as it went. It never got off the ground.

The bishops authored the documents but were unable to implement them. They talked a great Vatican II game, but they had a Vatican I mind-set.

They were the architects, but they were not bricklayers. They did not have the vision or courage or spirituality to let go of the power and control they had always had. It was the perfect example of what Jesus said, "And no one puts new wine into old wine skins." (Mark 2:22)

The bishops actually used a Vatican II vocabulary to block the progress of Vatican II. The National Federation of Priests' Councils was formed after the vision of decision-making at a lower level and the bishops denounced it as against the spirit of Vatican II.

The bishops used the excuse about all the "sufferings that had been caused by the changes in the church." That was a first-class cop-out.

What caused the suffering in the church was the unkept promise of Vatican II. When you make a promise and do not keep that promise, you will cause suffering.

The world asked, "Where is this Vatican II we have heard so much about?" And nothing came forth. It atrophied and died a death of stagnation.

Now what do we have? A splintered church, the danger of rising militant clericalism, parishes closing, people going without Mass. Forty million deacons do not make one priest; 40 million communion services do not make one Mass.

This was brought home to me when the inmates at the state prison made the appeal to the diocese, "Send us a priest! We want a real Mass!"

It does not have to be like this. The irony is that we priests who worked to implement Vatican II are looked on as rebels and renegades. I even heard Pope John XXIII referred to as the "one who started all the trouble."

We who accepted and promoted Vatican II are now old and vastly outnumbered. But the Holy Spirit is in charge, and Vatican II will have its day. But don't look to the pope or the hierarchy to bring it about.

Vatican II proclaimed that the people are the church, and it is the people who will hasten freedom's day. If they want to be heard, let them hold back the dollars. The people will usher in the new church when they quit paying for the old church.