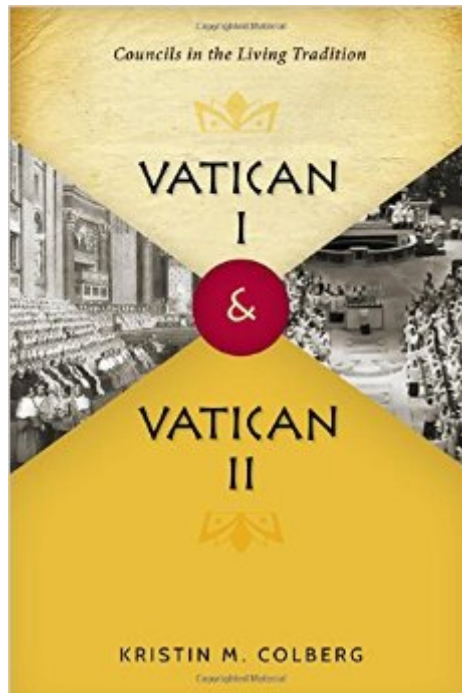


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# Vatican I And Vatican II: Councils In The Living Tradition



## Synopsis

Vatican I and Vatican II represent two of the three ecumenical councils in modern times, yet relatively few studies have sought to understand their relation to one another. In fact, the councils are often positioned as mutually exclusive so that one must choose either Vatican I's or Vatican II's presentations of church and ecclesial authority. Failing to understand the relationship between these councils inhibits the church's self-understanding and risks misinterpreting key aspects of its own tradition; further, it limits the church's ability to teach effectively on topics of concern to modern women and men, such as authority, freedom, and ecclesiology. *Vatican I and Vatican II: Councils in the Living Tradition* uses the questions of what, why, and how the councils taught to frame and demonstrate significant points of continuity, complementarity, and difference between them. It argues that only by seeing both Vatican I and Vatican II as communicating vital dimensions of the Christian faith can the church's living tradition be fully appreciated and speak meaningfully to modern Christian women and men.?

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Rev. Louis T. Brusatti  
Kristin Colberg concludes her book *Vatican I and Vatican II* by noting, "Arriving at a proper understanding of the relationship between Vatican I and Vatican II, therefore, initiates a new phase of ecclesial self-expression and self-understanding, enhancing the church's ability to go and teach all nations." In a precise and focused manner, the book speaks to the relationship between Vatican I and Vatican II. She does an amazing job of

contextualizing the two councils in relation to the notions of "historical rupture" and "the long nineteenth century" by speaking to the WHAT, HOW and the WHY of each council. Pastor Aeternus (Eternal Shepherd) of Vatican I and Lumen Gentium (Light of the Nations) of Vatican II are the central documents used to deepen an understanding of papal infallibility/primacy and episcopal identity. The abrupt suspension of Vatican I precluded it from exploring papal infallibility in relation to the whole church. It was only able to take up the question of the authority of the Pope. Vatican II, in focusing its attention on the church, speaks to the issue of the episcopacy and laity. The book explores what we might think of as the "back story" of the two councils. She clearly provides theological and historical contexts for both councils and demonstrates the significant relationship between the two councils as part of the living tradition of Catholicism. The quality of the research is outstanding and her footnotes are informative for further study and reflection. The book is an easy read and will appeal to both scholars and students of Vatican II. The book gives a fresh perspective on the relationship between Vatican I and Vatican II.

In a church mired by division since the Second Vatican Council, Colberg's astute research and insights offer a greatly needed context for Vatican I and Vatican II that places the relationship between the two councils as complimentary rather than in opposition to one another. Her work reminds us of the need to avoid quick and easy answers and challenges all to embrace the tensions within the church as healthy, for they are signs of a dynamic, living institution always led by the Holy Spirit. This book is direly needed in our polarized church today and has the potential to promote authentic dialogue, greater understanding, and unity among all members of the Body of Christ.

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