

III. The Conciliar Period

Method of Study:

1. In the previous period we were able to take the major theological concepts and ask what the church taught on each. For this period that is not a good approach. The church is less united in expression and more diverse in attitude...it is furthermore, very shortly divided into groups and areas of conflicting interest nationally and sacramentally. We will therefore adjust our methodology to "fit the crime" or something like that. The procedure will be in the following order:

a. We will survey the ecumenical councils..noting the historic circumstance, etc., of each, the issues at stake, the decisions rendered and how these affected the life of the church. At the close of each council we will summarize what it contributed to the knowledge previously expressed in and by the church and will designate that information with particular theological terms (Theology Proper, etc.)

b. Biographical notes will be furnished only where necessary for the understanding of the growth of the theological expression.

c. Key thoughts of individual thinkers and their writings will be summarized from time to time.

d. And, when the period ends we will offer some general summary notes on the whole.

2. Our historical material, beside what is on page 53, will be given in connexion with the individual councils rather than trying to characterize this total diverse age.

3. You will discover that the main productions of this period are the church credal statements and the writings of individual Christian leaders.