



The Rhine Flows Into the Tiber: The Unknown Council

Ralph M Wiltgen

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[From jacket flap] When the Second Vatican Council opened in October, 1962, many Council Fathers believed it had been convoked simply to rubber-stamp previously prepared documents, and they expected it to be over in two or three weeks. Three years and four sessions later, Vatican II completed its work, and the Catholic Church will never be the same. What happened behind the pageantry, on the Council floor? And, more important, what happened behind the scenes, in the secret strategy meetings of various factions: the "liberals," the "conservatives," the "progressives," the "antiprogessives"? Ralph M. Wiltgen, S.V.D., contends that the Council was a struggle between the forces of the Rhine and the forces of the Tiber, that is, between the cardinals, bishops and theologians of the countries of the Rhine-Germany, Austria, Switzerland, France, the Netherlands, and nearby Belgium-and the officials of the Roman Curia and their supporters. In masterly fashion. Father Wiltgen covers the behind-the-scenes negotiations; the emergence of national blocs: the roles of John XXIII and Paul VI; the influence of the American bishops; the great debates and documents. Many books and articles have been published that purport to tell the "whole story." But until THE RHINE FLOWS INTO THE TIBER, the whole story of the unknown Council has not been told.

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