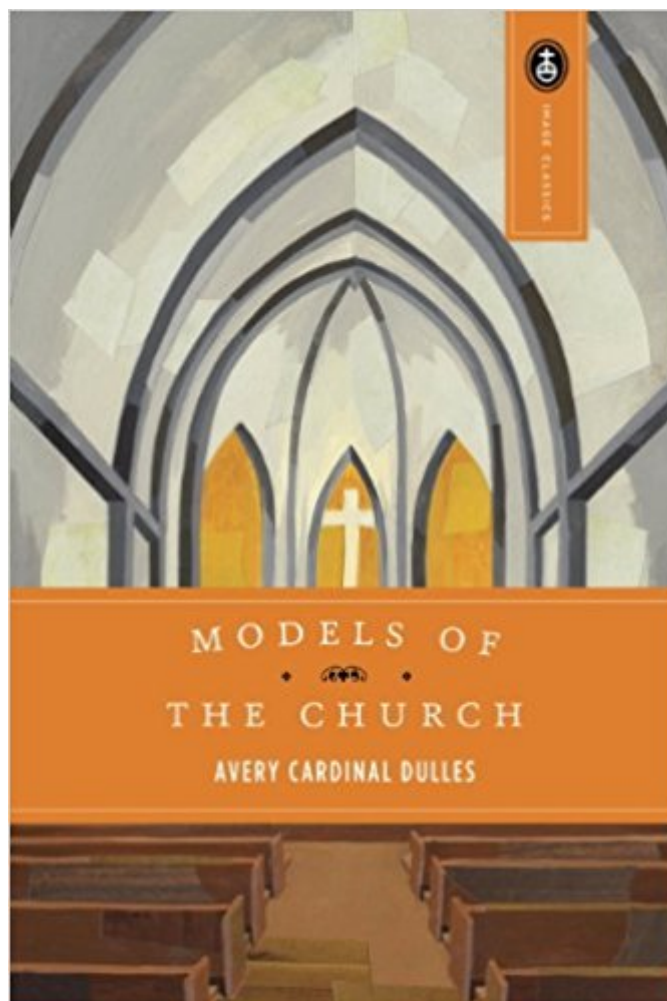


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# Models Of The Church (Image Classics)



## Synopsis

There is today a dramatic reexamination of structure, authority, dogma -- indeed, every aspect of the life of the Church is held up to scrutiny. Welcoming this as a sign of vitality, Avery Dulles has carefully studied the writings of contemporary Protestant and Catholic ecclesiologists and sifted out six major approaches, or "models," through which the Church's character can be understood: as Institution, Mystical Communion, Sacrament, Herald, Servant, and, in a recent addition to the book, as Community of Disciples. A balanced theology, he concludes, must incorporate the major affirmations of each. "The method of models or types," observes Cardinal Dulles, "can have great value in helping people to get beyond the limitations of their own particular outlook and to enter into fruitful conversation with others... Such conversation is obviously essential if ecumenism is to get beyond its present impasses." This new edition includes a new Appendix and Preface by the author. From the Trade Paperback edition.

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## Customer Reviews

This book was referenced by Systematic Theology: Roman Catholic Perspectives (Theology and the Sciences) and I am glad that I purchased the Kindle version and read it. As a lay minister in a Protestant denomination, I wished I had known about this resource when I was attending school. This is because my denomination concentrated only on its own polity when training lay and diaconal ministers. There was not a specific class covering the five models presented in this book. This issue recently came up again as I contemplated ministering in a denomination with congregational polity versus episcopal. I didn't want to spend a lot of time in a class on congregationalism and this resource met my needs as this form of government is covered under Church as Herald. However, the only criticism I have of the book does not diminish its excellency for classroom use. Even though the author does bring out the fact that the original issues which resulted in separated churches are no longer at the forefront, the current issues at the forefront are causing further division within denominations. To be sure there are other communions are inclusive of various expressions of the church, I found the author to be too hopeful of a future unification around any of the models. Otherwise, the book presents a fair amount of reality regarding each model as far as the diversity of use by theologians and the difficulty of harmonizing into a single model. On a positive note, the author empowers his readers to pick and choose based on each models merits. Some of those readers will undoubtedly be future congregational leaders or theologians.

I read this book years ago when it first came out. Now reading it again at an older age, I find it to be excellent. I would recommend it to any Christian, Protestant or Catholic. Avery Dulles, a learned and objective theologian, who writes with beautiful clarity and comprehensiveness, presents five models of the Church, showing their values & limitations. He then evaluates & applies the models to various critical issues, like ministry, ecumenism etc. I found it to be a hopeful book regarding the possibility of overcoming the divisions among the churches. Not an easy read for those without some theological expertise, but well worth the effort.

This 1976 book by the late theologian Cardinal Avery Dulles SJ was a landmark in Catholic ecclesiology. Presenting several "models" or ways of looking at the Christian Church, it expands our way of thinking beyond the institutional model (the external Church in its visible) structure common in Catholicism before the Second Vatican Council. Some of the models Dulles introduces here are

popular in Protestant as well as Catholic circles, reflecting the Jesuit cardinal's desire to find truth in sources even beyond Catholicism. Dulles, elevated to cardinal by Pope John Paul II and visited by Pope Benedict XVI in New York shortly before his December 2008 death, exhibits here his trademark elegant writing style here. Within his sizable output, this book remains the most brilliant and creative of Dulles's many contributions to post-conciliar Catholic theology. It remains a must-read in Catholic ecclesiology today.

Dulles's book remains relevant even today, providing a great framework to discuss ecclesiology across the bounds of doctrinal differences and within the self-understanding of the Catholic tradition. His writing is quite accessible (though perhaps not so much for those unfamiliar with an academic style), and the book has proven a quick read. The newest edition features a much more attractive cover than the older editions, and an additional essay on John Paul II's understanding of the Church.

actually I was wishing for the first edition he wrote so as to give it to my grandson (age 14) to help him understand what 'church' actually means. I enjoyed that first edition. this one seems a bit more 'intellectual' than the first but I do believe that it contains, essentially, what the first edition conveyed. god bless henry haefner

This book has been a reference for me since it was first published. It helped me then and it helps me now to look at various ways that people see the Church.

The book, though a little dated, is still a classic when it comes to giving the reader an idea of just what makes up the Catholic Church and how they can differ in many ways but still remain true to the Spirit. I recommend this to any person who wants to take a serious look at what the Church is and what part they have. It can deepen their faith and make these changes more clear and acceptable. Models of the Church - A Critical Assessment of the Church in all its aspects

As a required text I was worried it would be dry, however, Cardinal Dulles does a wonderful job of writing in a conversational style, explaining all the complex terms, and giving complete detailed explanations without losing the reader!

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