Role of the Laity
What is the place of the laity in the hierarchy of the church?
How is the church hierarchical?

Soldiers at the bottom; commanders on top

Lay people at the bottom of the hierarchy; clergy on top of the hierarchy
Hierarchy in the church is a sacrament

Hierarchical church

Non-hierarchical church

Bishops

Presbyters

Deacons
“there exists sacred ministers who have received the sacrament of Holy Orders and who form the hierarchy of the Church.

The other members of the Church are called the laity.”

(CIC 207; CCC 873, 934; Compendium CCC 178)
Vat II on the specific role of the laity

“It belongs to the laity to seek the kingdom of God by engaging in temporal (secular) affairs”
(Lumen Gentium 33)

“The Christian who neglects his temporal duties neglects his duties toward his neighbour and even God and jeopardizes his eternal salvation.”
(The Church in the Modern World, 43)
Co-responsibility requires a change in mentality, particularly with regard to the role of the laity in the Church, who should be considered not as “collaborators” with the clergy, but as persons truly “co-responsible” for the being and activity of the Church. It is important, therefore, that a mature and committed laity be united, who are able to make their own specific contribution to the Church’s mission...