

Liturgy

NEWS

Christ Jesus
is knocking at the
door through the words
of sacred Scripture.
(see Aperuit Illis 8)

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the
doors
of our
minds
and
hearts

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ENGAGING IN THE RITUAL PROCESS

I am often confounded when well-educated and committed people seem to be unable to engage in the ritual process. When an occasion arises that is out of the ordinary, the first questions put forward are: 'do you have a liturgy for...?', 'have you got intercessions for...?'; 'what do we do when...?' They reach for a mass-produced off-the-peg garment rather than craft a bespoke item which is appropriate and beautiful.

One current example relates to the closing of churches. Communities immediately look for 'resources', ritual templates, sample prayers... The National Liturgical Architecture and Art Council took a different approach. In *Fit for Sacred Use: Stewardship and Renewal of Places of Worship* (2018), the community taking leave of a church building was urged to engage in a process of remembering, documenting and ritualising. This is the work of a local group, brought together perhaps under the guidance of an external resource person.

The phase of ritualising depends on what is occurring. Is the building to be demolished or used for another purpose? What opportunities will be offered to the community for future worship and belonging? Has the church stood empty for a long time? Is it the centre of a country town or a less important second church in suburbia?

Who are the stakeholders in the event of the closing? Those who have been baptised in the church, or married there over the years, or those who have celebrated the funeral of a loved one, all have a claim to the sacred space. What is the primary emotion at play – thanksgiving for what has been or lament for what is ending?

What will happen to the furnishings and fittings... font, altar, tabernacle, artworks, altar linen, vessels and vestments, holy oils, processional cross, paschal candle? Will they find a place in a new community and a new place of worship? Where are the lines of continuity and discontinuity?

There are a lot of questions. It will take some time for the local community to talk over these things. But it is only when the locals arrive at some understanding and consensus that the liturgy can be prepared. Can there be some kind of handing over to a new community? Can there be some kind of procession to a new place? How and where will the memories be preserved? How will people take their leave?

In some church closures, people will move from place to place within the church making a prayer at the font, ambo, altar, tabernacle, front door... Sometimes people move out of the building in an exultant procession to a BBQ feast. Sometimes the liturgy ends in silence with candles and subdued lighting; individuals leave when they are ready after a time of vigil; the church is closed when the last one leaves. These ritual choices can only be made and appropriate texts composed when the community has engaged in the whole ritual process of reflection and discernment.

ENGAGING IN POST-COVID RITUAL RECONSTRUCTION

I believe a similar process is required of communities as they emerge from COVID restrictions. There is no blueprint. We need to talk together and map out a ritual process. Now, as the vaccination roll-out unfolds, it is time to start the discernment.

Some things will be easy and readily embraced by all. Most will be ready to take water again at the church entry to remind themselves of their baptism. (Churches that acquired contraptions such as 'contact-free' automatic holy water dispensers should take them down and put them into storage!) As touching others makes a return in our social interactions, so will most take to the sign of peace without too many scruples, particularly if sanitiser is still available at the door. A procession of gifts at Mass may return. What decisions do we need to make about hymn books or the collection plate? The regular cuppa after Mass will make a welcome comeback.

Some new practices might be continued. Perhaps those who have checked attendance lists at the door will continue their ministry with a new emphasis on welcome and hospitality. Producing an electronic newsletter and sending it to all parishioners by email, adding to this the Sunday readings and family liturgy resources, these are important strategies of outreach and connection which a parish might want to continue.

The sacramental practice of the parish since early 2020 will need to be reviewed. Where have we been over this time and where are we up to now? What has happened to our baptismal liturgy? Is it time to emphasise again the communal nature of baptism with several baptisms celebrated together? Should baptisms be celebrated at Sunday Mass? What about the little children who would have celebrated confirmation, first communion and penance? What has changed? What do we want to do now?

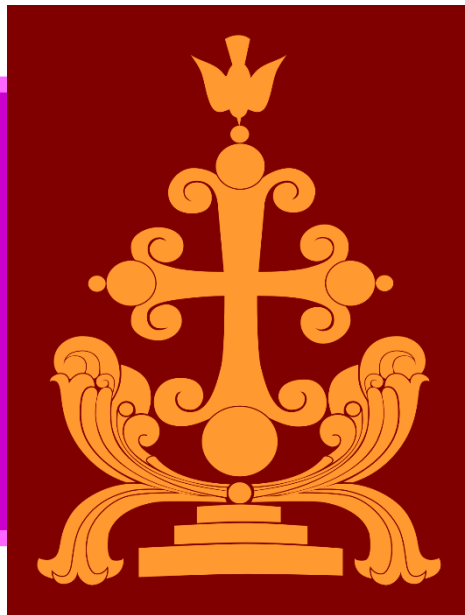
No doubt the most challenging will be our reception of communion. Will some want to go back to kneeling and receiving communion on the tongue or will a year or two of a different practice have reshaped their understanding? How will we go about reintroducing the fuller sign of communion from the cup? Will there be a temptation on the part of parish communities to forego the familial symbol of sharing a common cup, forego this sign of the kingdom and of the eternal covenant sealed in the blood of the cross? Australian parishes have worked hard over some decades to reassure people that sharing the common cup poses no health risks beyond what they encounter in normal everyday activities. How and when can we reengage with the command of Christ: *Take and eat... Take and drink...?*

Many parishes have adopted live streaming from the church, even investing in equipment and expertise. Where do these practices go now? How will a parish use them as a support to people's prayer life without compromising the full, active, conscious participation demanded by the liturgy itself? A reproduction is never a patch on a real work of art; a picture on screen is a long way from a real event. But it may continue to inspire. For example, parish groups might celebrate Morning Prayer or Evening Prayer for the screen at home, thus enriching the liturgical life of the parish and not impoverishing it.

The ritual reconstruction which needs to occur in a parish post-COVID will not be successful by just following instructions or copying what someone else has devised. It will be a wasted opportunity if it is nothing more than a return to the 2019 status quo. The parish pastoral council, liturgy committee, or another group of interested parishioners will need to embark upon an imaginative and collaborative ritual process.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'John W.' with a stylized flourish.

A STRANGER ... AND YOU WELCOMED ME



by John Fitz-Herbert

Some years ago I spoke to a parishioner who had returned to 'home base' following a three-month caravan trip across Australia. I have forgotten all the places he visited but I remember his comment about joining local communities for Sunday Mass. He remarked: *Father, if it wasn't for the overseas priests in the bush, we just wouldn't have had Mass!*



In mid-2020, I was asked to meet with two priests recently arrived from India who had begun ministering in the Church of Brisbane. My task was to work with them in *the ministry of presiding*. A third priest who had been in Brisbane for almost two years came along to join us. These priests were Eastern Catholics from the Syro-Malabar Catholic Church in southern India.

The liturgy in Roman and Syro-Malabar Churches is quite different in language and liturgical order, in music and vesture, in gesture and movement. So in the eight sessions we had together, we decided to cover the main Roman rites that are celebrated in parishes: Sunday Mass, funerals, infant baptism and the RCIA, penance, marriage. We studied the introductions and the basic structure of each rite. In particular, we explored and discussed how the liturgy must be adapted to the needs of the celebrating assembly. The *Order of Christian Funerals*, for example, specifically requires it: *In preparing and planning a funeral, priests are to keep in mind with delicate sensitivity not only the identity of the deceased and the circumstances of the death, but also the grief of the bereaved...* (18). The paragraph goes on to urge mindfulness of those present who never or seldom take part in the Eucharist.

We also needed to address the pastoral challenges presented by the cultural variations between Australia and India, and differences between Western and Eastern rite liturgy. Finally we reflected together on their actual experience of ministering in the parishes of the archdiocese. For example, two of the priests had celebrated funerals in the last two weeks we met. We could unpack what happened during these funerals as well as the preparation with families. I found the priests were keen, relaxed, willing to learn and ready to explore liturgical issues for their ministry as presiders.



Interculturation of Clergy in Australia

The *Preamble* of this 2020 document of the National Office for Clergy Life and Ministry of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference is instructive:

Like Australian society more broadly, our Church is culturally forming in many new ways. By way of example, in 2009, the largest five groupings of overseas-born clergy were: Irish (113), New Zealander (109), Vietnamese (75), Italian (34), Solomon Islands (32).

By 2014, the largest five groupings of overseas born clergy were: Indian (150), Vietnamese (82), Filipino (73), Irish (68), Nigerian (37).

Based on the high number of visa applications handled by the Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office in recent years, it is predicted that the next census [in 2021] will demonstrate further significant change.

As a receiving church, the Australian Church is committed to acculturation as a process whereby members of one cultural group come to understand the customs, habits and behaviours of their new cultural home. This process demands mutual exchange, appreciation and understanding by all— both the newly arrived and those welcoming them.

What is meant by 'interculturality' encompasses all of this, but it is deeply grounded in the Gospel vision of the Kingdom or Reign of God as a new Pentecost, where 'in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power' (Acts 2:11).

In the words of Anthony Gittins: 'Intercultural living demands graciousness, diplomacy, compromise, mutual respect, serious dialogue, and the development of a common and sustaining vision. A vision is something that inspires the common effort of a lifetime and also provides appropriate means to achieve a desired end.' (Living Mission Interculturally, 2015, p. 5).

When the clergy gather for the diocesan Chrism Mass or an ordination, it is instructive to look around at the faces. It is stating the obvious that many Australian parishes and

dioceses *have* experienced, *are* experiencing and *will* experience significant change in the ministers who preside at Sunday Mass and the other liturgical celebrations of the local faith community.

❧ III ❧

In light of this data and after working on liturgy in Australia with priests from India, I have begun to wonder more and more about *their* experience of ministering liturgically amongst us.

I wondered what they were doing in ministry before they were sent to Australia. How long had they been ordained? What was their experience in India and perhaps in other places? What is their experience of being an Eastern Catholic? What is their 'DNA' as a Syro-Malabar Catholic? What experience of Latin or Western rite liturgy did they have before coming to Australia?

What did they notice on arriving in Australia? What was familiar? What was unfamiliar? How had they gone about settling in here? What was their experience of parish liturgy? What had they learned? What might they want to say to our local faith communities which are increasingly led and ministered to by priests from overseas?

To help understand these issues, I contacted three Syro-Malabar priests from India ministering in the Archdiocese of Brisbane to ask if we could have a conversation about their liturgical experiences as priests here in Australia. All three were happy to meet. Two are Carmelites of Mary Immaculate, from Mysore province, Karnataka: Fr Josekutty Vadakkal and Fr Emmanuel Ayankudy; and the third is a member of the Missionary Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament, from Zion province, Kerala: Fr Rony Kalapurackal Chacko.

Josekutty, 48, is eighteen years ordained and has had a lot of experience in the vocation, formation and spirituality fields in India. In Australia he has ministered in three parishes and worked full-time in formation at Holy Spirit Seminary



JOSEKUTTY

Queensland at Banyo, when he was available for weekend supply in a variety of parishes. Josekutty is the new parish priest of Albany Creek parish on Brisbane's northside. He has ministered in the Archdiocese for ten years.

Emmanuel, 50, is twenty-one years ordained with rich experiences in a busy parish in India; he was involved in formation for minor seminarians, directed a spirituality centre, and completed higher studies in philosophy and sacramental theology. He then served three years on seminary staff at Charles Lwanga Major Seminary in Windhoek, Namibia. After three years, he returned to India and his focus shifted to education, serving as vice-principal of a college for year 11 and 12 students. Emmanuel then began doctoral studies and during this time was elected as Secretary for Education within his province. Emmanuel is now the parish priest of Alexandra Hills-Capalaba parish



RONY

and the Dean of the Redland/Bayside Deanery. He has served four years in this Archdiocese.

Rony, 35, is six years ordained and, before being asked to come to Australia, served in the Communications Office of his province in Kerala. His congregation publishes several magazines in the areas of theology and family formation in two languages, English and Malayalam. He was involved with a team

at every stage of magazine production. Rony is associate pastor of Jubilee parish. He has served in the Archdiocese for almost eighteen months.

What did I discover from the liturgical experiences of Josekutty, Emmanuel and Rony?

Firstly, they are members of the Catholic Church. They bring their life experience as Syro-Malabar Catholics to the Catholic Church in Australia. They currently serve in Latin rite parishes, but they do NOT lose either their heritage or unique Catholic identity.

It was John Paul II who cut through a millennial-old myopic view of Catholicism in his 1995 encyclical *Ut Unum Sint*. Writing about the Catholic Church of East and West, he said that *the Church must breathe with her two lungs... the vision of the full communion to be sought is that of unity in legitimate diversity* (54). The one Body of

the Church has two lungs and this is the work of the Holy Spirit. The priests from India bring the richness of their liturgical traditions and place them at the service of the worship of our Latin rite community.



EMMANUEL

Secondly, they are now ministering in Australia - not India. We who are Australian Catholics may need to remember that everything is different for priests from overseas especially societal assumptions and beliefs that underpin our daily life. Rony vividly remarked, *I felt*

like Alice in wonderland! The Church here exists as a part of Australian society and is not separate from the daily pulse of nation, town or suburb.

Thirdly, each priest is keen to learn! They want to be effective ministers of the gospel amongst the people they serve. They know their spoken English sounds different. They also know that their written expressions require modification for their audience. As anyone who has tried will know, learning a new language requires humility and a sense of humour. Rony once told the staff, 'I am going to have my Lent'. They first thought it was an Indian penitential practice, but then they realised he meant to say he was going for lunch!

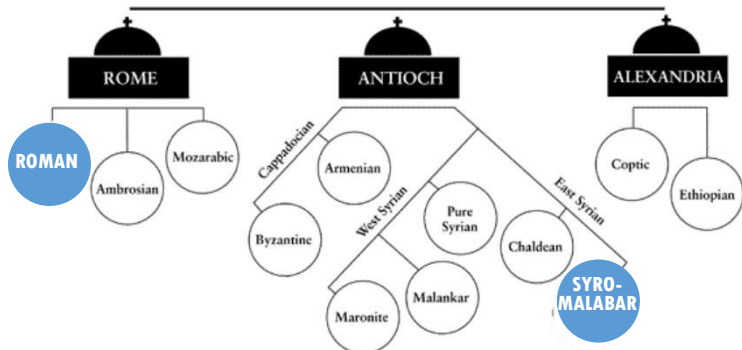
Each spoke positively about the support that is given to them both by the priest they work and live with as well as by parishioners. At times the support and outreach of parishioners is expressed in the offer of friendship, kindness and concern for them as persons. Inclusion and welcome to parish, community and home gatherings truly nourishes their ongoing human development.

Fourthly, ongoing support is offered via the local Church through access to online courses in Australia for all aspects of communicating in English: speaking, listening, and writing. Each of the three found the support of a key parishioner or two vital for their homily preparation and for practising the spoken texts to be prayed during the liturgy. Supportive feedback on pronunciation, emphasis, pace and tone is invaluable as they settle in.

Fifthly, these priests mentioned additional support of other parishioners who are steeped and formed in the liturgy – members of the liturgy preparation team, for example – who know the rites and realities involved in effective, prayerful and pastoral celebrations. Each shared humorous anecdotes of what happened in the first year or so of presiding at various celebrations – getting lost in an unfamiliar liturgical book, for example, though priests from India have no monopoly on that!

One thing I learned is that it not always true that a newly arrived priest from India comes with no experience of the Latin rite. Both Emmanuel and Josekutty spoke extensively about their time before ordination which provided experiences of celebrating the Latin rite Mass. This experience of celebrating the Roman liturgy continued in their respective experiences in seminary formation. They also assisted with Mass supply in Latin rite parishes in both southern India and Namibia. The difference now is the context of the Australian parish, and Queensland parishes at that!

SIMPLE DIAGRAM OF RITES OF CATHOLIC CHURCH



Sixthly, they would encourage a diocese to contribute to liturgical presiding skills by establishing a process like the one described at the beginning of this article. Each priest 'learned' ways of celebrating from the first priest where they were appointed. This approach seemed to be *Watch what I do and now do it*. It is true that much can be shared by an experienced pastor. It is equally important that a newly-arrived priest reflect upon what he has been seeing. This would uncover what he may bring from other experiences of celebrating in the Latin rites, what he has noticed in his 'doing' as liturgical presider and what the rite asks in the ritual books. In other words, there is a dialogue with the principles and norms of the liturgy. As many know, this is a continual work in progress as we all face new liturgical experiences.

Finally, I want to describe two practices Josekutty shared. The first was around language. After some time, he realised he needed to immerse himself as much as he could in Australian English. He read papers, watched movies, limited speaking his first language, turned on the radio in the car and listened to music and talk-back radio. When alone in the car and at home, he would repeat the sounds and pronunciation he was hearing. I was stunned! This even applied to eating the food of the people he was amongst.

The second practice was around acculturation. For ten years he has carried a small notepad that fits in his top pocket. Josekutty writes down words, phrases and observations from his encounters. He later interrogates their meanings which are often multiple. As he told me of this practice, he motioned to the computer on his desk. By the side of the keyboard was his current notepad. It was a new take on Jesus' invitation to *Come and See!*

❧ IV ❧

From my conversations, it strikes me that there is much richness to be discovered working alongside priests from overseas. Not least is the possibility of a mutual exchange of gifts. Josekutty suggested that, as a Syro-Malabar priest gains proficiency in in Latin-rite liturgy, there could be a chance for him to share the differences in liturgy, culture, spirituality and traditions. As he learns the local ways, he said, the locals might be interested to know something of his culture and Church.

The reality of welcoming priests from overseas to minister amongst us is part of the ongoing story of the Church in Australia. We would do well to remember with gratitude the presence of a mostly Irish clergy who came in the century and a half following settlement in Australia; to note the arrival of overseas chaplains after WWII as a result of European migration; and to celebrate the presence today of missionary priests from religious congregations and other dioceses from around the globe.

Let us practise the living and ministering that Anthony Gittens identified: *graciousness, diplomacy, compromise, mutual respect, serious dialogue, and the development of a common and sustaining vision. A vision... that inspires the common effort of a lifetime and also provides appropriate means to achieve a desired end.*

■ John Fitz-Herbert is parish priest of Boonah and a member of the *Liturgy News* board.



Saintly Endeavours

by Clare Schwantes

It has been exam time recently at my house, and with four teenagers in their final years of secondary school there's a palpable buzz of activity. As they work to prepare assignments, exam notes, multi-modal presentations and music compositions, it is clear that they are navigating a fine pathway between feeling industrious and just plain overwhelmed. As a parent, the natural inclination is to assist with time management skills, encourage a distraction-free environment, and be a general source of academic and emotional support. But it was the perspective of a grandmother that helpfully shifted the focus and added to our arsenal of tools designed to conquer the exam period. This came to my attention during a 'scheduled break' when I overheard my daughters discussing something quite unexpected. Their grandmother had suggested they might like to find out the patron saint of studying to help them through these challenging weeks, and they had subsequently become rather engrossed in the stories of the saints. The following morning on the way to school, one of them commented, 'I wonder if that man has said a prayer to St Vincent Ferrer today'. I confess I was rather puzzled as we pulled up beside a utility van advertising a plumbing company. When I enquired further, I was promptly informed, 'Well, St Vincent Ferrer is the patron saint of plumbers, of course!'

Why has the Catholic tradition of honouring the saints become relatively unfamiliar to young people today? Some decades ago, children preparing for Confirmation were asked to select the name of a saint who exhibited qualities they admired or whose life or death had particularly inspired them. This opportunity to explore the lives of the saints has become less common in recent times, with Confirmation preparation programs focussing instead on honouring the child's baptismal name and highlighting the unity of the Sacraments of Initiation. Children who attend Catholic schools often learn only about the saint after whom their school has been named, or about the saint who founded the religious order responsible for establishing their school. Others may have heard a parent or grandparent saying a frantic prayer to St Anthony when something important has been lost and needs to be found quickly.

Giving students the opportunity to learn about the saints in a more intentional way, and to research one saint in particular, according to their interests, introduces them to the vastness of the Catholic tradition and the variety of ways in which people have demonstrated their faith. Yet, it is important to note that learning about the saints is more than introducing children to an important element of the Catholic tradition; it has a contemporary and real-world relevance, highlighting for students that they can model holiness in whichever situations they find themselves. It is all too easy for a study of the saints to become limited to a collation of biographical details and interesting facts about an historical person. However, the most important thing for students to keep in mind is: How does this person help me to be more like Jesus? Another concrete and relevant connection for students is the capacity of the saints to help us through their intercessory prayer. Of course, students need to understand that they are not praying to the saints to help them directly, but rather asking the saints to plead with *God* on our behalf so that *God* might act to effect a positive outcome.

Choosing a saint

Saints included in the General Roman Calendar are celebrated throughout the liturgical year, by way of solemnity, feast, memorial or optional memorial. However, the liturgical calendar includes only a small selection of the saints listed in the Roman Martyrology, a 776-page volume which lists all the canonised saints venerated by the Catholic Church.

A project like this could be a year-long side activity in the classroom, a supplement to the RE curriculum alongside daily classroom prayer. As children begin to explore the lives of the saints either in books or online, some of the saints they uncover may seem familiar and others somewhat more obscure. Even trying to pronounce some of the saints' names can be engaging for children! The age of the students will determine how many saints they might initially explore before choosing one to present to their group.

- ♦ Children may like to begin by finding out the saint who shares their first, middle or even surname.
- ♦ In cases where a child does not share their name with a saint, they could learn about the saint whose feast falls on their birthday.
- ♦ Some children may prefer to find a saint that corresponds to a particular interest or talent they have. Some examples follow.

Children who are **ARTISTS** may find an affinity with St Catherine of Bologna who excelled in painting and drawing. Others may enjoy learning about St Albert Chmielowski, a famous Polish painter who eventually ended his career as an artist to devote his life to the poor.



The patron saint of **MUSICIANS**, St Cecilia, may appeal who children who sing or play a musical instrument. Budding composers may relate to St Romanus the

Melodist or St Hildegard of Bingen, both known for their musical compositions.

Those who are **ATHLETES** may enjoy learning about St Sebastian, the patron saint of athletes and archers, or St Teresa of the Andes who loved swimming and horseback riding.

Students who are **WRITERS** may find inspiration in the story of Teresa of Avila, who wrote extensively and was one of only a few female Doctors of the Church, or St Augustine, a prolific writer and Doctor of the Church who experienced a powerful conversion.

Children who have a special connection with nature or **ANIMALS** may enjoy exploring the stories of St Francis of Assisi, patron saint of animals and ecology, or St Kateri Tekakwitha, patron saint of ecology and environment, and the first Native American to be recognised as a saint by the Catholic Church.

Those who are **HIGH ACHIEVERS** may be interested in the life of St Abbo of Fleury, a scientist and mathematician who studied the theory of numbers before Arabic numbers were introduced, or St Catherine of Siena a great scholar and philosopher.

Some may feel a particular connection with their **CULTURAL HERITAGE** and choose to learn about the patron saint of their country. There are various websites which list the patron saints of each country for those students who may be interested in this.

Some students may struggle with a particular **PROBLEM**, and may be able to relate to those patron saints most closely.

- ◆ Young students who are afraid of the dark may feel a connection with St Giles, a saint who lived in the forest for many years and endured many dark nights.
- ◆ Those who are afraid of thunderstorms may find appealing the story of St Medard who was sheltered from the rain by a hovering eagle during a storm.
- ◆ Those who need courage in other areas of their life may identify with the story of St Joan of Arc, a young saint who showed great courage in leading an army to victory.
- ◆ Students who struggle with anxiety or depression may find comfort in the witness of St Ignatius of Loyola or St Teresa of Calcutta.

◆ Those who are working towards exams may like to learn about (and pray for the intercession of!) St Joseph of Cupertino.

◆ Students who tend to procrastinate may find motivation in the story of St Expeditus.

Resources to Enhance a Study of the Saints

BOOKS: It will be important to have an array of suitable books available about the lives of the saints, and to let the students explore these during quiet reading times. Here are a few suggestions which come recommended.

[Companion to the Calendar: A Guide to the Saints, Seasons, and Holidays of the Year](#)

[The Loyola Treasury of Saints](#)

[The Picture Book Of Saints](#)

[St Joseph Picture Books Gift Set](#)

[Around The Year Once Upon A Time Saints](#)

[Saints And Angels](#)

[An Alphabet Of Saints](#)

[Can You Find Saints](#)

WEBSITES: To guide the students' research, it may be helpful to compile a preliminary list of websites where they might begin searching. For example:

<https://teachingcatholickids.com/category/saints/>

<https://www.loyolapress.com/catholic-resources/saints/saints-stories-for-all-ages/>

https://www.catholic.org/saints/fun_facts_arch.php

<https://www.catholic.org/saints/popular.php>

ONLINE VIDEOS ABOUT THE SAINTS: It is important to curate these resources, as some online videos can be frightening or disturbing for children. The YouTube channel, [Stories of Saints for Kids](#), offers short videos on many of the saints. Searches for particular saints can reveal a range of age-appropriate videos for children and teens, especially those particular to the Australian context which are not found in typical collections such as [Mary MacKillop](#).

HOLY PICTURES: Small cards showing pictures of individual saints and a brief story about them can be a good resource to have in the classroom too, as easy-to-access information snippets. These also provide artistic representations which students may find appealing. There are sets of holy pictures of the saints available which are suitable for [younger children](#). You may be able to access some of the art of Bro. Mickey McGrath.

THE LITURGICAL CALENDAR: Throughout the year, teachers can briefly introduce the saint/s whose feast falls on a particular liturgical day. Involving the class in prayer and action for the people associated with that saint/s will create a meaningful connection to the students' lives.



◆ On July 26, the Church celebrates the memorial of St Joachim and St Anne, the parents of the Virgin Mary and grandparents of Jesus. On this day, the class might ask God, through the intercession of St Joachim and St Anne, to bless their grandparents in a special way. Grandparents could be invited in for a morning tea celebration.

◆ August 10 marks the feast of St Lawrence, a saint who was generous to the poor and needy. On this day, students could be encouraged to donate non-perishable food items to be delivered to St Vincent de Paul, or hold a cake stall at school with proceeds going to a local charity. As a class, the students could pray in a special way for the poor and disadvantaged in their community and ask for the intercession of St Lawrence.

What to include in a presentation

In presenting their saint to their peers, students could be asked to include some or all of the following information in their final presentations.

- ◆ Where and when was the saint born?
- ◆ What are some interesting facts about the saint's life?
- ◆ What is the date of their feast day?
- ◆ If this saint is a 'patron saint', list the groups that s/he is a patron of.
- ◆ At what times might we ask this saint to help us?
- ◆ How can this saint help us to be more like Jesus?
- ◆ What is your special connection to this saint? Why did you choose this saint?

It might be opportune to plan the conclusion of such a unit around 1 November with the Solemnity of All Saints, and to have a class celebration in honour of all the saints.

Possible formats for the presentation

- ◆ Make a poster or PowerPoint presentation.
- ◆ Dress up and do a role-play monologue in character as the saint, telling the class about your life and how you can help the listeners be more like Jesus.
- ◆ Present information on A5 cards and make a class display.
- ◆ Create a video biography of the saint.
- ◆ Create a 'Saintsbook' page for the saint.
- ◆ Choose a prayer written by your chosen saint and lead the class in praying it.
- ◆ Lead the class in a craft activity you have found online which pertains to the saint.
- ◆ Write a song or rap to capture the main qualities and virtues of the saint.

- ◆ Build a constructed model or statue that depicts key attributes of the saint.
- ◆ Create a comic strip either on paper or on the computer to represent the saint's life.
- ◆ Write a poem about the saint and how we might follow their example.

As students explore the lives of saints from different centuries and different places, they will come to notice a common set of values and attitudes to aspire to which transcend the boundaries of time and culture. The saints, although usually not popular or well-known figures in their time, offer genuine examples of discipleship, service, loyalty, perseverance, faith, generosity, love and hope. It would be a fruitful activity to spend some time discussing people in the students' own lives who exhibit 'saintly' qualities and who provide contemporary examples of these attributes as they strive to live according to the teachings of Jesus.

However, it should be very apparent to students that those venerated by the Church as saints were not perfect people; St Augustine famously prayed for the strength to be pure, 'but not yet'. Highlighting these imperfections helps children to realise that becoming a saint is always a work in progress. The children should be encouraged to relate to the saints as ordinary people who faced enormous challenges, but who were able to achieve extraordinary things through the grace of God. Ultimately, students should feel assured that the saints pray with us and for us to God who alone has the power to bring about positive change in our lives.

■ Clare Schwantes, teacher and liturgist, chairs the National Liturgical Council and works for Liturgy Brisbane.

Image: Fra Angelico (The National Gallery, London)

OUR COVER

Sacred Scripture and the sacraments are inseparable. When the sacraments are introduced and illumined by God's word, they become ever more clearly the goal of a process whereby Christ opens our minds and hearts to acknowledge his saving work. We should always keep in mind the teaching found in the Book of Revelation (3:20): the Lord is standing at the door and knocking. If anyone should hear his voice and open for him, he will come in and eat with them. If we hear his voice and open the doors of our minds and hearts, then he will enter our lives and remain ever with us. (Aperuit Illis 8)

OUR WORLD MAY HAVE CHANGED OUR MISSION HAS NOT

by Kate McLean

COVID presented challenges for those of us working in RCIA. How could we manage with closed churches? How could we adapt with such limited contact in our parishes? How would we identify those people searching for Jesus in their lives?

Schools were closed; schoolwork was sent home; parents became the tutors of their children. But the Holy Spirit was working even then. I was approached by three parents from our parish school who, after months of finishing religion topics and writing prayers with their young children, decided that they wanted to become Catholic 'to share this with their children'. Those three parents are now part of our parish family. When I see them at Mass on Sundays, I offer a silent prayer of thanks. Sometimes sacramental preparation for families has been the start of the journey.

RCIA is a very special ministry to me, mainly because the catechumens and candidates *choose* to want Jesus in their lives and to get to know Christ better. Leaders and catechumens see that prayer becomes our communication with Jesus and sustains us through thick and thin.

COVID challenged me again to see the RCIA journey as growth in love of God and in understanding of the gospel stories. It is not a 'program' of parish meetings that starts in September and ends at Easter. It is frightening to hear stories of people turned away because it's too early - *No, the 'parish RCIA program' does not start for two months!*

RCIA is much more than that. It is a journey that is personal and geared toward each individual and what they need. Everyone comes with a different history. How long the journey takes will vary. For experienced leaders, it's almost as though you know when someone is ready to be received into full communion with the Catholic Church because you have been journeying with them.

An older man who had never been baptised had been bringing his Catholic wife to Mass for 37 years. He would come forward at communion time to receive a blessing. One day (in God's time!) he decided he was ready. His RCIA team had a very easy time of preparation because they were not starting from scratch. He had been living the gospel stories all through his married life.

Children can become evangelisers through their classmates at school and through their parents chatting to one another. I was approached by a mum from our local parish school. She had come home one day and launched into a rant about work. Her daughter in Year 2 said *Mum sit down. Jesus will look after everything. He's right here (patting her shoulder) and you'll be OK.* This mum had not been baptised and asked me whether she could become a Catholic like her children. With the help of her two children, it was a most beautiful journey. It was celebrated in the parish with the support of many school families. In fact it is not unusual for the children at parish schools and those preparing for the sacraments to be evangelisers of their parents. It always amazes me how much children take in and what they know.



RCIA

TALKING THINGS OVER
LEARNING TOGETHER
TELLING STORIES
COFFEE WITH MY SPONSOR
PASTA WITH THE PARISH
LAUGHING
EXPERIENCING BEAUTY
PRAYING

For me, the whole parish needs to be involved in the RCIA journey. There are so many simple ways to make catechumens feel they are part of the faith community; coffee after Mass, personal invitations to parish activities, sharing dinner with people from the parish, special welcome at Mass and, especially if they have children, involving them in activities surrounding the parish Mass. An effective sponsor is crucial in accompanying the candidate and drawing them into the life of the parish.

As part of the early gatherings with our 'seekers', I ask some members of the parish to come to talk about their faith. I have always been amazed by their honesty. Sometimes they may question if God does listen to us, asking how they could get through a particular part of their life; but then they show how they turned back to the gospels and listened to what God is telling them. We hear of amazing journeys where faith sustains them through difficult and glorious times.

A most empowering element of RCIA is that God does not ask *us* to determine who is able to travel this journey. Pope Francis has shown us how to embrace all people irrespective of colour, nationality, class, gender or lifestyle. Our world has changed but still we pray, love God and celebrate Mass with the acceptance and non-judgemental kindness that Christ displayed. Even in a changing world, there will always be people searching for faith in their lives. *We* have to be ready to welcome them when *they* are ready, to embrace who they are and draw them into parish life.

Mass numbers are falling, but I do not believe it is a lack of faith. People lead busy lives. I remember, when my children were young, quite suddenly Sunday sport was added to our agenda! It was a netball carnival at 8 am and football at 9 am. I think I always got the netball run as somehow it lasted all day! We live in a different world and the RCIA has changed and evolved to match. When I look at the number of people at the Rite of Election on the First Sunday of Lent every year, I take heart. So many desire to share our faith, to know Jesus in their lives. It's inspiring.

Jesus welcomed the little children. Today children can be our great evangelisers, bringing their parents to want God in their lives. Following the example of Christ, the Church welcomes children and their families, those seeking to know Jesus. Our world has changed but our mission has not.

■ Kate McLean is a member of the Archdiocesan Catechumenate Committee in Brisbane.

NEW LITURGY HEAD



Following the retirement of Cardinal Sarah as Prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments and a consultation process within the Congregation, Pope Francis has appointed the Secretary, Archbishop Arthur Roche, to be the new Prefect. He was ordained bishop in 2001 and was first an auxiliary in Westminster before being appointed to the Diocese of Leeds in 2004. He went to the Congregation as secretary in 2012. He is 71. He chaired the International Commission on English in the Liturgy (ICEL) during the decade when the Missal translation was being prepared according to the principles of *Liturgiam Authenticam*. This will have given him an insight into the work of episcopal conferences in relation to liturgical translation. He was subsequently involved in the production of *Magnum Principium* (2017) which decentralised responsibility for liturgical translation from strong Roman control back to local bishops conferences. He is not known to engage in the partisan polemics sometimes called ‘the liturgy wars’.

Happily two other officials with liturgical expertise have been appointed to the Congregation office as well. The new secretary is Bishop Vittorio Viola OFM, 55, who has taught liturgy at Sant’Anselmo. Monsignor Aurelio García Marciás, 56, is the new undersecretary. He has a doctorate in liturgy from Sant’Anselmo.

ENGLISH LECTIONARY

It has been revealed that the bishops of England and Wales through their Department of Christian Life and Worship have been quietly modifying the ESV Lectionary behind the scenes. The English Standard Version which they chose is a literalist translation which does not use inclusive language. Phrases such as ‘brothers and sisters’ are being cautiously included ‘where contextually appropriate’.

CHRISTCHURCH CATHEDRAL

The Diocese of Christchurch has decided that the 1905 cathedral damaged in the 2011 earthquakes will be demolished and a new cathedral and Catholic precinct will be constructed on a new site at a cost of \$100m. Funds from the sale of the previous site would go towards the building project.

Having examined contemporary and traditional styles of architecture for the replacement, the new bishop, Paul Martin, announced that they had chosen the traditional option. Local architects will team up with Franck & Lohsen, an American firm which specialises in what they call ‘Catholic architecture’. Constructing arches and domes which they imagine to be ‘timeless’, they will design the new building to appeal to those nostalgic for the style and elegance of the old cathedral. It is a missed opportunity. Adventurous contemporary architecture would have generated some excitement and presented the Church as a forward-looking participant in 21st century life.

It is to be hoped at least that the liturgical brief for the cathedral will not succumb to a performer/spectator arrangement but will embrace the dynamic of ‘full, conscious and active participation’ in the liturgy which the Vatican Council advocated sixty years ago.

LITURGICAL ABUSE

In what some would call ‘weaponizing’ the liturgy, we have witnessed recent examples of liturgical abuse on both left and right wings of the Church.

There has been widespread reaction to a ban from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith on blessing homosexual couples. Discussion of these issues is important in the Church so that

we make sure to respect all the baptised and create space for them in the liturgy. However, in more than a hundred parishes in Germany and in several other places, communities expressed their disagreement with the Roman ruling by celebrating public blessing rites for same-sex couples. Thus a liturgical rite was employed as a means of taking a public stand on a hot-button issue in current debate.



Meanwhile in the USA, a number of bishops have been urging the conference of bishops to issue a statement that Catholic President Joe Biden be denied Communion because of his political stance on abortion. The Prefect of Rome’s Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith wrote to the president of the US bishops conference urging extreme caution. Cardinal Luis Ladaria stated that such a policy required much more dialogue to reach a consensus, warned against making abortion the preeminent moral issue while ignoring other dimensions of Catholic social teaching, and advised against targeting only political leaders. This is another example – from a very different constituency in the Catholic Church – of using the liturgy to make a political statement.

These are not isolated examples, nor is it a recent phenomenon. Over the years, Catholic women who have been ‘ordained’ or priests who have left the ministry to get married have celebrated Eucharist publicly in order to bring about change in Church law. In Australia, a high-profile example occurred twenty years ago with the rainbow sash movement. Gay activists who normally would receive Communion without incident wore rainbow sashes, using the liturgical rite to make a statement about human rights.

Using the liturgy for political or sectarian purposes betrays the nature of the liturgy as worship and fractures the unity of the Church which it expresses. It is a liturgical abuse and generally not justified even for a worthy cause.

LITURGICAL LEADERSHIP IN IRELAND

The Irish Institute of Pastoral Liturgy established in Carlow in 1978 is well known to many Australians who studied there over the next eighteen years. In 1996, The Institute was transferred to St Patrick's College, Maynooth, as the National Centre for Liturgy. The diploma it offered was expanded with a post-graduate Higher Diploma and a theology masters specialising in liturgy. Now after twenty-five years, beginning in September 2020, liturgical formation has been placed within the Pontifical University of St Patrick's College.



The National Centre for Liturgy is continuing to provide guidance and pastoral support to dioceses and parishes. Fr Neil Xavier O'Donoghue, theology lecturer at St Patrick's, has been appointed episcopal conference Executive Secretary for Liturgy and Sr Moira Bergin RSM will coordinate the Centre from within the university. Moira wrote that the Centre will continue to be a place of welcome and hospitality, worship and prayer, study, reflection and refreshment.



LAY MINISTRY OF CATECHIST

Following hard on the heels of *Spiritus Domini* (10 January 2021) which opened the instituted ministries of Lector and Acolyte to women, Pope Francis has established the instituted lay ministry of Catechist (*Antiquum Ministerium*, 10 May 2021). These ministries, based on Baptism, are open to all.

It recognises the *competent and dedicated Catechists [who] are community leaders in various parts of the world and [who] carry out a mission invaluable for the transmission and growth of the faith* (3). They work collaboratively with the clergy and with parents in their teaching role.

Those called to the instituted ministry of Catechist [should] be men and women of deep faith and human maturity, active participants in the life of the Christian

community, capable of welcoming others, being generous and living a life of fraternal communion. They should also receive suitable biblical, theological, pastoral and pedagogical formation to be competent communicators of the truth of the faith and they should have some prior experience of catechesis (8).

Catechists are called first to be expert in the pastoral service of transmitting the faith as it develops through its different stages from the initial proclamation of the 'kerygma' to the instruction that presents our new life in Christ and prepares for the sacraments of Christian initiation, and then to the ongoing formation that can allow each person to give an accounting of the hope within them. At the same time, every Catechist must be a witness to the faith, a teacher and mystagogue, a companion and pedagogue, who teaches for the Church. Only through prayer, study, and direct participation in the life of the community can they grow in this identity and the integrity and responsibility that it entails (6).

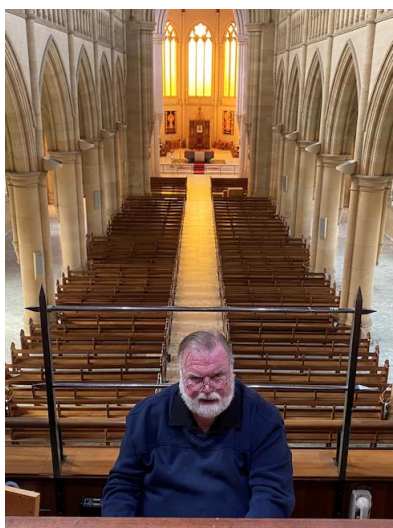
Catechists have long had a key role as leaders of local parish communities in Africa and on islands in the Pacific among other places. While it is not primarily a liturgical role, it would be appropriate for these pastoral leaders to lead the liturgy when a priest is not available. It is another step in promoting lay women and men to positions of leadership in the Church.

(Illustration: Archbishop Peter Loy Chong of Suva, Fiji, with a group of catechists)

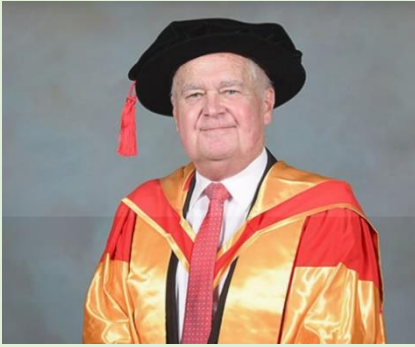
BENDIGO ORGANIST

After forty years as organist at Bendigo's Sacred Heart Cathedral, John Hogan (*left*) has retired at the age of 74. He began his role as church organist in Melbourne.

The new maestro at the keyboard of the cathedral's 1905 grand pipe organ is Dr Paul Taylor. Paul began his role as organist and Director of Music at the end of 2020. A native of Bendigo, he was Director of Music at St Patrick's Cathedral in Melbourne for five years. He spent 27 years working in liturgy and music in the Melbourne archdiocese and is currently Executive Secretary for the Bishops Commission for Liturgy and the National Liturgical Council.



COMPOSER HONOURED



Jesuit composer, Christopher Willcock, has been awarded an honorary doctorate by the Australian Catholic University for his contribution to Catholic liturgical music. Vice Chancellor Zlatko Skrbis spoke of his life of service as priest, professor and composer which, he said, is a wonderful inspiration to the students, staff and alumni of ACU. In his occasional address at the graduation ceremony in Melbourne, Willcock said: *Music, more than words, images, textures and aromas, brings us into contact with the utterly inexpressible, in short, it brings us into contact with the divine. For myself, I would describe music as a critical part of my spiritual life, the 'sound-wave' along which God communicates with me, and along which I, as a composer, communicate with God.*

CONGRATULATIONS



Congratulations to Loreto Sister Deirdre Browne who has been recognised with a Medal in the General Division (OAM) in the Queen's Birthday 2021 Honours. Deirdre, liturgist and musician, has taught at Yarra Theological Union. She received the honour for service to the community as a religious sister, and through music, education and the liturgical arts.

ORDO 2022


Parishes around Australia are in for a surprise when they receive this year's ORDO. It will be significantly bigger. At the request of the National Liturgical Commission, it will now include not only the Scripture references for the daily readings, but also the tagline to each reading. These phrases, provided in red at the beginning of each reading in the Lectionary, are a guide to the content of each reading. In addition the Ordo will include the psalm reference and psalm response, along with the Gospel acclamation for each day.

ORDO 2022


This will make the Ordo a more useful resource for musicians, readers and others who

prepare the liturgy. The special days of commemoration assigned by the Holy See or the bishops conference, previously included in a list at the end of the book, will now also be included in the body of the text.

To maintain its ease of use, however, features of the ORDO which have become familiar over the last thirty years will be retained. As far as possible the design will maintain a week-to-an-opening. The general structure, layout and spiral binding will also be kept. ORDO 2022 can be ordered from Liturgy Brisbane and will be dispatched from October.



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IN LATE JULY 2021**

SUNDAY

In April 2021, the bishops of England and Wales offered a reflection, *The Day of the Lord*, in light of the COVID story of last year. It begins by paying tribute to the courage, generosity and understanding of so many in the face of adversity, sustaining others in times of great isolation, loneliness and grief.



The bishops look to the challenges for the Church emerging from the pandemic. They identify a threefold pattern.

◆ *There are the fearful and weary, anxious about coming into the enclosed spaces of our churches; those who have simply lost the habit of coming to church. Personal contact, clear reassurance, and sensitive invitations will all be needed.*

◆ *There are those who will have reassessed their pattern of life and priorities. The practice of faith within the community of the Catholic Church may not be among those priorities. A gap may have opened up, or widened, between the spiritual dimension of their lives and any communal expression of that spiritual quest. They represent a particular focus and concern for our outreach.*

◆ *There are those whom we might describe as the 'COVID curious', those who have come into contact with the Catholic Church through our presence on the internet – a contact we may be able to develop through our continuing presence across diverse media platforms.*

Among the resources the bishops nominate to respond to these challenges are schools, social outreach and the Church's sacramental life. It is especially the Sunday Mass, a weekly gift from God to his people, which they emphasise. *For the Eucharist should be the cause of our deepest joy, our highest manner of offering thanks to God and for seeking his mercy and love. We need to make it the foundation stone of our lives.*

SOCIETAS LITURGICA



Plans for the next Societas Liturgica congress in July 2021 came to an abrupt halt with the COVID crisis. During 2020, it was hoped that the congress could go ahead at Notre Dame, Indiana, as a hybrid event: face-to-face for those who could attend and online for those who couldn't. By early 2021, it was obvious that this still could not occur. With extraordinary support from the local committee at Notre Dame and with the assistance of students on campus, it has now been set up as an entirely online congress.

The topic for the Congress is *Liturgy and the Arts*. The keynote presentations and formal responses, together with forty short papers from members, are all being recorded and will be available online to those who register. They will be available for viewing for a week before the congress (20-22 July) and for six months afterwards. There will be live worship, discussion and meeting opportunities. And all of this for a very low registration fee.

For full details of the congress statement and registration, go to the website www.societas-liturgica.org.

NLAAC WEBSITE



On 10 May 2021, the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference launched a new website set up and managed by its National Liturgical Architecture and Art Council (NLAAC).

In its ten-year history, this Council has produced guidelines for building new churches and for renovating existing churches. Now in the third phase of its work, the Council is tackling liturgical art.

It was decided to do this by preparing illustrated articles for a website, showcasing good examples of Australian Church sculpture and painting, vessels and vestments, stained glass and architecture.

After only eighteen months there are thirty articles on the website. It will grow to become an indispensable reference for students and teachers, liturgists and pastoral leaders, and all who are interested in the arts. Contributions are invited from all Australians. Articles are approved for publication by the NLAAC. Bookmark the site for regular reference. www.art.catholic.net.au.

West's Loss is Brisbane's Gain

The Brisbane liturgical music scene is pleased to welcome organist Dominic Perissinotto as he takes up the position of cathedral organist at Brisbane's St Stephen's. Dominic, until recently organist and director of music at the Basilica of St Patrick, Fremantle, was last seen in Brisbane in 2014 when he performed as part of the Twilight International Organ Series at St John's Cathedral. "I'm thrilled to be back in Brisbane and to be part of the team of excellent musicians that Chris Trikalis is leading at St Stephen's."

Dominic is one of Australia's most well-established and respected organists, widely sought as a solo recitalist and in association with other artists. He was awarded a fellowship by the Churchill Memorial Trust to assist postgraduate studies at the Royal College of Music in



Dominic and Eva-Marie

London (1991-1992), during which he served as organ scholar at Westminster Cathedral. Since then, Dominic has released several recordings, toured extensively through both Europe and Australia, and received a number of Australia Council grants for the commissioning and recording of new Australian organ works.

Dominic's 18 year-long Pipe Organ Plus concert series based at the basilica in Fremantle was one of the stalwarts of the Perth classical music scene, and often featured unusual combinations of instruments. "I have always loved performing with other musicians, be it more traditional pairings such as violin, trumpet or voice, or pushing the boundaries by working with saxophones, accordionists and percussionists. With the variety of high caliber musicians here in Brisbane, I really look forward to the creative possibilities of this city."

Dominic has moved to Brisbane with his wife, soprano Eva-Marie Middleton, who besides being one of the principal cantors at St Patrick's Basilica recently sang with the Fremantle Symphony Orchestra performing Mahler's Symphony No. 4.

Celebrating Two Women of Faith

by Elizabeth Harrington

Two solemnities falling on consecutive Sundays replace the nineteenth and twentieth Sundays of Ordinary Time in Australia in 2021: St Mary MacKillop on 8 August and the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary on 15 August. Those responsible for liturgy preparation in parishes and other communities will need to begin thinking about what implications this has for the celebration of Sunday Mass on these days.

St Mary MacKillop: 8 August

The texts given for the Mass of the Saint are the Collect, Prayer over the Offerings, Prayer after Communion and Solemn Blessing. There is not yet a special Preface (the Australian bishops have asked for one) so Preface 1 or 2 of Saints is used. Preface 2 seems the better choice as it reflects the particular charisms of Australia's first saint. Background information on Mary MacKillop can be found on the Sisters of St Joseph website at www.sosj.org.au/our-story/saint-mary-mackillop.

Some suggestions for preparing the liturgy were given in *Liturgy News* in 2014 (44/2). This piece is well worth consulting. It includes a list of suitable hymns and songs for the feast (see page 13 www.liturgybrisbane.net.au/resources/liturgy-news/issues/vol-44-no-2-june-2014).



It is difficult for the assembly to participate if the only time they hear a particular hymn is on the rare occasion that the feast falls on a Sunday. To overcome this, the melody can be played before Mass or during the Preparation of Gifts for several weeks beforehand. Or, for example, if parishes plan to use *From Penola's Plains* (CWB II 437) on 8 August, they might well consider scheduling *O God Beyond All Praising* (CWB II 566) which is set to the same tune – THAXTED – in the weeks leading up to the feast.

An excellent hymn to sing on this day is *Daughter of Australia*, the text of which was written by Archbishop Mark Coleridge in honour of the Patron of the Archdiocese of Brisbane. The words are set to the tune BRISBANE, an Irish traditional melody arranged by Dr Percy Jones. A setting of the psalm for the day has been written by Christopher Willcock. Both of these resources (together with the texts of the readings and prayers) are to be found on the Liturgy Brisbane website www.liturgybrisbane.net.au/resources/liturgical-documents/saints.

This year's celebration of our patronal feast of St Mary MacKillop offers an opportunity to recognise the Year of St Joseph. St Mary was conscious of St Joseph's loving care for the child Jesus and sought the same protection for her sisters. She often finished her letters with the words: *In St Joseph's care, I leave you.*

Assumption of Mary: 15 August

The Missal texts given for the Assumption are the Collect, Prayer over the Offerings, Preface, Prayer after

Communion and Solemn Blessing. The feast celebrates Mary's participation in the life of the Risen Lord. It can be seen as another dimension of our celebration of Easter.

In both the Missal and the Lectionary, the Feast of the Assumption is one of those occasions in the Church year when two sets of texts are provided, one for a Vigil Mass and another for the feast day Mass. Note that 'vigil' here refers to a preparatory celebration the day *before* the feast. When the feast is celebrated the evening before (as we regularly do on Saturday evenings), it is the feast we intend to celebrate, not the day before the feast. The only days when the Vigil liturgy must be used are, of course, the Easter Vigil and, when it is held, the extended Vigil for Pentecost. The *Ordo* indicates that the texts of the Vigil need not be used 'for pastoral reasons'; not least among the pastoral reasons would be to spare the preacher having to prepare two different homilies!

The readings of the day for the solemnity emphasise what God did in Mary. The first reading, from the book

of the Apocalypse, depicts 'the woman' in the process of giving birth to a son and being threatened by a dragon. God rescues them, evil is foiled, God's reign is established and Mary rejoices. The second reading from Corinthians reminds us that Mary's privilege of sharing eternal life with the Risen Lord will be shared by all who follow Christ.

The Gospel emphasises that Mary's greatness comes from her participation in God's plan. Mary responds to Elizabeth's greeting with a splendid hymn of praise, the *Magnificat*, which Christians have sung at the Church's Evening Prayer from earliest times. The feast is a good time for singing one of its many musical settings.

However, not every hymn at Mass on the Assumption should refer to Mary. The normal principles for choosing music - the liturgical, musical and pastoral judgements - still apply. Thus the main purpose of the opening hymn is to help form those present into a worshipping assembly (liturgical judgement). It must therefore be a familiar hymn that people can join in readily (pastoral judgement).

Again, if a new hymn is to be sung on the day, it is important that the assembly be introduced to it in the weeks leading up to the feast by having it played at appropriate times before, during or after Mass, or having the choir or a cantor sing it during the Preparation of Gifts.

The liturgical colour for both feasts is white, so white banners or a white floral arrangement in the worship space will be appropriate. An image of Mary MacKillop could be displayed prominently and/or carried in procession on 8 August. Special attention could be given to the shrine of the Virgin Mary on 15 August, for example, giving worshippers the opportunity to light candles and spend some time in prayer with the image of Mary after Mass.

Image: Chiara Perinetti Casoni, *Triptych of Our Lady Seat of Wisdom*, 2018, 188 x 132.5 cm, with thanks to Australian Catholic University Art Collection.

BOOKS

Kevin W Irwin, *Pope Francis and the Liturgy: the Call to Holiness and Mission*, (Paulist Press, New York, 2020, 192 + xxiv pp)

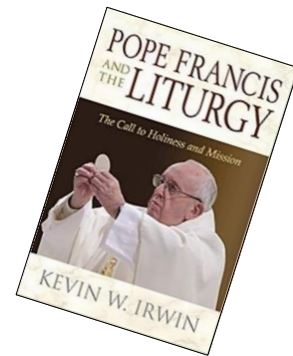
by James Cronin

Pope Francis treats the liturgy 'from the inside', that is, as something that is *lived in life and not just correctly celebrated* (p. 101); and the lifestyle that liturgy should provoke is surely to *wash feet, serve meals, visit the sick, and revere the dying* (p. 131).

After setting out his understanding of liturgy and the current state of play in liturgy, Kevin Irwin devotes his first chapter to the liturgical contributions of John Paul II, Benedict XVI and Francis and then looks in some detail at Pope Francis' liturgical initiatives. The rest of the book unfolds three great liturgical themes: inculturation and participation, the missionary dimension of the liturgy, and environmental considerations arising from *Laudato Si'*.

In an iconoclastic tone one rarely hears in papal encyclicals, Pope Francis summarises his position: *I do not want a Church concerned with being at the centre and which then ends by being caught up in a web of obsessions and procedures. If something should rightly disturb us and trouble our consciences, it is the fact that so many of our brothers and sisters are living without the strength, light and consolation born of friendship with Jesus Christ, without a community of faith to support them, without meaning and a goal in life* (EG 49, p. 83).

Pope Francis stays at arms length from the narrow concerns of some US bishops who are jousting with the Vatican about whether abortion is the pre-eminent concern for the Church (a controversy about giving Communion to pro-choice Catholic politicians). Francis' scope is broader.



Pope Francis calls us to appreciate the 'interrelationships of all' and that we are fellow creatures on this common home... Rhetoric that speaks of 'using' 'things' or 'objects' in worship needs to be rethought and our conventional categories about the sacraments re-envisioned. For example, we should use rhetoric that acclaims, raises up, values, and reveres God's gifts to us in nature and as fellow beings on this earth (p. 119). This implies a shift in mentality. The basis is already there in such texts as the Berakah prayer used at the preparation of the gifts: *Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation...* We see the same approach in the blessing of water for baptism, but we still need to go further to incorporate these ideas of God's creation into our official liturgies.

I came across this aspirational pledge in a recent service: *deeply connected to all of life on this tiny blue planet, we are open to the ever-evolving mystery as experienced in the sun's unconditional and enduring love, the fertility of the soil, the life-giving essence of water and the breath of life in the air that we breathe.* A bit fey perhaps, but I realised that we have nothing in the Missal which approaches the tenor of a sentence like this.

In a 2017 address at the Italian National Liturgical Week, Francis reaffirmed that the Vatican II liturgical reform is ongoing and irreversible; saying: *The Church in prayer gathers all those whose hearts listen to the Gospel, without discarding anyone: she convokes the small and the great, the rich and the poor, children and elderly, healthy and sick, the just and*

the sinful... The liturgical assembly overcomes, in Christ, every boundary of age, race, language and nation... 'The Eucharist is not a sacrament 'for me'; it is the sacrament of the many, who form one body, God's holy and faithful people' (p. 99). On his famous visit to Lampedusa, his first trip outside Rome as pope, Francis said we should weep over our indifference to the tragedy of so many refugees drowning in the Mediterranean. Irwin comments on this prophetic action of Francis at Lampedusa. Who is my neighbour? The liturgy is not for like-minded people with similar incomes and lifestyles, with few worries and even fewer bills. It is for everyone to worship together and to go forth in communal self-transcendence to engage in spiritual and corporal works of mercy and to show mercy to our common home. Francis showed us who our neighbours are (p. 20).

Many will be surprised that the pope regards a preoccupation with liturgical rubrics as evidence of an *insidious worldliness*. In *Evangelii Gaudium*, he writes: *In some people, we see an ostentatious preoccupation for the liturgy, for doctrine and for the Church's prestige, but without any concern that the Gospel have a real impact on God's faithful people and the concrete needs of the present time. In this way, the life of the Church turns into a museum piece or something which is the property of the select few. ...no effort is made to go forth and seek out those who are distant or the immense multitudes who thirst for Christ (EG 95, pp. 77-78).* This is almost a catch-cry for a pope who *invites us to raise our voices to defend the poor and to share signs and actions of peace outside the walls of our sacred assemblies* (p. 130).

Irwin is familiar with ICEL's work of translating liturgical texts over the decades and knows the terrible harm caused by infighting in relation to the 1998 *Sacramentary* and the 2011 *Roman Missal*. Against this background, he lauds Francis' 2017 document *Magnum Principium* which *teaches by word and example* how the Church and its leaders can work together across various parts of the world (pp. 62-68). Reading this volume has convinced me to side with Pope Francis in emphasising that *one of the purposes of celebrating the liturgy is not to get the rite right but to get life right, or at least to get life less wrong* (p. 131).

Liturgy

NEWS

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Mrs Clare Schwantes

Articles for publication are welcome.
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CONTACT



GPO Box 282, Brisbane Australia 4001
orders@liturgybrisbane.net.au
www.liturgybrisbane.net.au