

Liturgy

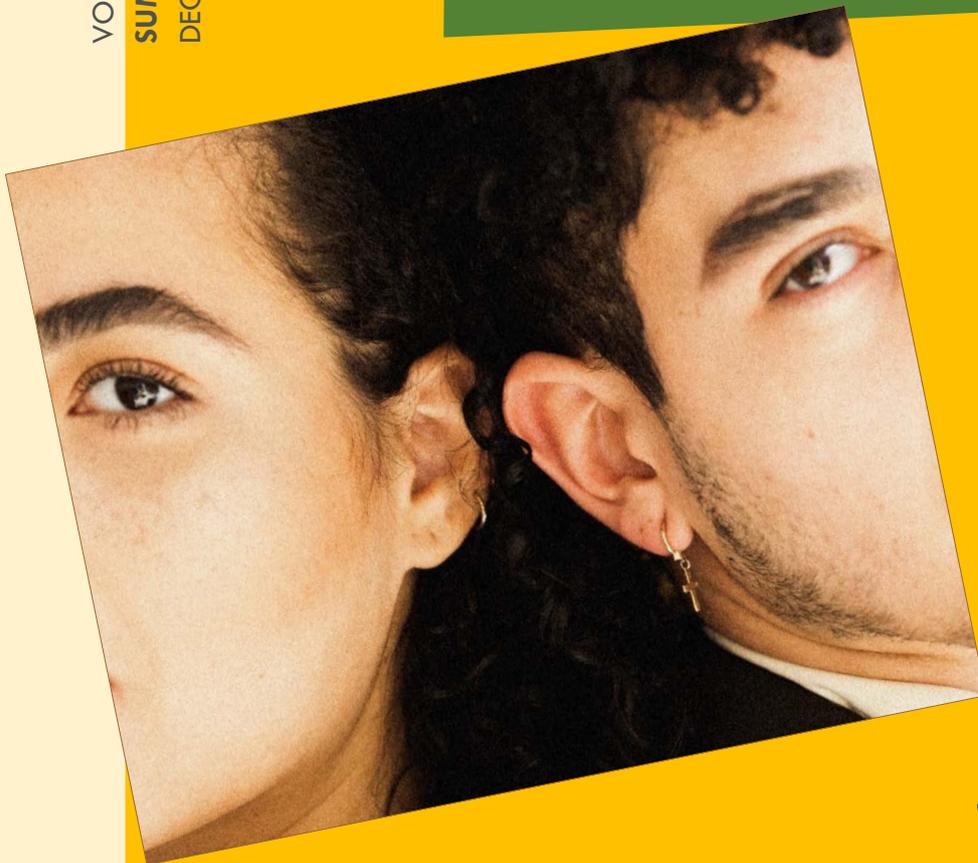
NEWS

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SUMMER

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Sacred Scripture
accomplishes
its prophetic work
in those who listen to it.
(Aperuit Illis 12)



IT
PROVES
BOTH
SWEET
AND
BITTER

IN THIS ISSUE

- [EDITOR: TO BOLDLY GO...](#) ■ [LIFT UP YOUR HEARTS: INITIATION OF CHILDREN](#)
- [PLENARY COUNCIL: LITURGY IN A HUMBLE CHURCH](#) ■ [PLENARY COUNCIL: A LITURGIST ATTENDS](#) ■ [SCHOOLS: EXPLORING CHARISM AND LITURGY](#)
- [BOOKS: REWEAVING THE MINISTRIES](#) ■ [AND ALL THE LATEST LITURGY NEWS](#)

TO BOLDLY GO...

The timid are often tempted to turn back to what is familiar, to take refuge in the securities of the past. Sixty years ago, we moved the altar forward and the priest faced the people as they celebrated Eucharist. Some were alarmed that this placed too much focus on the priest and his actions. So a movement grew advocating that churches revert to an arrangement where priest and people all faced towards the East together. The problem however was not that we had gone too far; it was that we had not gone far enough. We need to take the next step and place the altar and the priest in the midst of the assembly. Grouped around the altar rather than sitting in rows 'facing the front', people can begin to understand that all share in the liturgical offering made at the altar. This is the 'full, conscious, active participation' that the Vatican Council set out as the liturgical norm. The Council calls us *to boldly go where no one has gone before*, so to speak, in finding new ways to implement its vision.

Such a bold, forward-looking perspective is characteristic of Pope Francis' leadership of the Church and is enshrined in several recent Roman documents. The pope has encouraged us to find new pastoral ways of including those who are marginalised in the Church's liturgy, from the divorced and remarried, to those in same-sex relationships, to peoples living in the Amazon.

Another challenge to be bold comes with Pope Francis' provisions overturning Benedict XVI's normalisation of the old liturgical forms from the 1950s which predate the reform of the Vatican Council. Those who have embraced the liturgical use of the Council of Trent appear to have taken fright at a liturgy which is more extrovert. They fear that, with the assembly singing and responding, with everyone exchanging the peace and receiving communion in the hand, there is a loss of reverence and a sense of the sacred. They seek a return to the more introverted silence of the Tridentine rite, which is deemed to be more meditative and holy. They insist they do not want to be divisive and they maintain that they accept the reforms of Vatican II. But the Tridentine rite does not express the theology of the Church as the Vatican Council presents it. The Church is the whole community of the baptised and the liturgy is the communal action of the entire people of God. The active participation of all is both demanded by the nature of the liturgy itself and is also the right and duty of the baptised.

The thinking underlying the liturgical reform is challenging and may be difficult for some. However, we need to respond not by retreating into familiar and comfortable forms, but rather by moving forward boldly. We need to ensure that the reformed liturgy manifests more clearly the sense of the sacred, making space for the silence in which we receive God's revelation. We need to make our liturgical symbols and actions so beautiful, so authentic, that they do speak to us of the saving action of Christ. If we stepped forward more boldly, there might be less reason for others to retreat.

The use of the vernacular in liturgy is another evocative example. *Since the use of the mother tongue, whether in the Mass, the administration of*

the sacraments, or other parts of the liturgy, frequently may be of great advantage to the people, the limits of its use may be extended, declared the Vatican Council (SC 36.2). The vernacular took hold very quickly, more quickly than anyone had imagined. Soon the whole liturgy was spoken aloud and everyone could understand what they were listening to and praying. We were delighted that the words of Scripture and liturgical prayer came spontaneously to our lips.

Once again, however, gradually a reaction began to develop. How could we speak to God in the normal language of everyday life? Should we not have something more formal, more strange, for our liturgical language? Some remembered prayers in the old hand missals which read like this: *Quickened by thy holy gift, we give thee thanks, O Lord, and we beseech thy mercy, that thou wouldst make us worthy to partake of it* (Postcommunion, 18th Sunday after Pentecost). The reaction of retreat culminated in 2001 with the Holy See's instruction *Liturgiam Authenticam*. It deliberately set aside contemporary usage in favour of what it called 'sacral language'. Style manuals for good English were explicitly rejected in favour of a word-for-word rendering of the normative Latin. For over a decade now we have been praying the Mass with convoluted sentences, exclusive language, strange words like *oblation* and addressing God as *your majesty*.

In 2017, Pope Francis turned back this retreat, changed the Code of Canon Law, and urged bishops conferences to take charge once again of producing and approving authentic vernacular translations. The boldness of *Magnum Principium* took bishops by surprise. The English-speaking bishops were paralysed and sought clarification. The post-conciliar vision of the

vernacular was indeed being reinstated: *[In translating biblical and liturgical texts] it is necessary to communicate to a given people using its own language all that the Church intended to communicate to other people through the Latin language.*

Now a new document (*Postquam Summus Pontifex*) published on 22 October 2021 spells it out in great detail. What is a faithful translation? *The adverb 'faithfully' implies a threefold fidelity: firstly to the original text, secondly to the particular language into which it is translated and finally to the comprehension of the text by the addressees who are introduced to the vocabulary of biblical revelation and liturgical tradition* (PSP 20). The third element here recognises that the liturgy is a means of oral communication and so attention must be given to the fact that the texts are intended for proclamation, for listening to, and for choral recitation and singing.

So after two decades or more of looking backwards, we are again encouraged to look forward boldly. After a 25-year struggle, we have the green light to move ahead with a new Lectionary translation. The possibility of revising the prayers of the Missal, which the Australian bishops have been considering, is now a real possibility. The 1998 *Revised Sacramentary*, which at the time was roundly rejected by the Holy See, will be resurrected and will help us *to boldly go...* into a new era.



LIFT UP YOUR HEARTS

Completing the Initiation of Children



by Barry Craig

Lists of our Sacraments always begin with these four in this order: 1) Baptism, 2) Confirmation, 3) Eucharist, 4) Penance. This reflects the order in which they occurred from ancient times, with the first three celebrated in a single ceremony while Penance was introduced later. This remains the case in Eastern and Oriental Churches, and it is in our restored *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* (RCIA). However currently, for most Roman Catholics baptised as infants, there are four separate events; Penance is second, and for the majority it is followed by Eucharist and then Confirmation some years later. The changed position of Penance can be explained easily, but the reversal of Confirmation and Eucharist defies coherent explanation unless Confirmation is accorded an essentially different meaning from what it first had. A revised meaning for Confirmation and the reversal of proper order has not been accepted universally. (As long ago as 22 June 1897, Pope Leo XIII objected to it in a letter the bishop of Marseille; Bishop Thomas Cahill in the Diocese of Cairns 1948-1967 also insisted on Confirmation before Communion.) Many dioceses have more recently restored the original order, but then they struggle to modify preparation programs to better fit that sequence.

After watching and pondering for some years what was happening in parishes it dawned on me that we need to revise our view of the sacraments of initiation and to re-establish a more integrated and comprehensive experience – one that is easier on all involved, and one that better prepares the children to participate consciously and actively in the Eucharist as the culmination of initiation and the nourishing source of the Christian life. To explain this requires turning back first to our source documents in the New Testament.

Baptism in the New Testament is complex. John's baptism *of repentance for remission of sins* was performed *in water*, perhaps a reworking of the Jewish ritual bath for purification. John is reported saying that while he baptised *with water* the coming Christ would baptise *with the Holy Spirit*. The accounts of the baptism of Jesus include the Holy Spirit descending on him. The Apostles and other disciples perhaps had only John's baptism before they received the Holy Spirit as the Church was born and commissioned on Easter Sunday according to John 20:20, or at Pentecost

in Acts 2:1-4. The Church's baptism is sometimes described as being *in water* and *for remission of sins*, sometimes *with the Holy Spirit*, and sometimes both. It is often said to be *in the name of Jesus*, and only once *in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit*. In Acts 10:44-48, non-baptised Gentiles first receive *the Holy Spirit* and then they are *baptised in water*, while in Acts 19:1-7, some disciples whom Paul met had had only John's *baptism of repentance* and so they were then *baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus* (without specifying how) and received *the Holy Spirit* when Paul laid hands on them. Elsewhere, being gifted with the Holy Spirit is said to be an *anointing*.

Little evidence has survived from the first three centuries for how initiation was performed, but there are hints at there being two distinct practices depending on the region, one as a bath of purification, the other as an anointing with oil. It appears that a fusion of these two rituals formed the main initiation rites for which there is much evidence from the fourth and fifth centuries, the golden age of the catechumenate.

Preparatory rituals were performed in Lent, and the initiation proper was normally celebrated during the vigil of Easter night (Holy Saturday): the candidates were led from the church to the baptistery where each was baptised in the waters in the font and then was presented to the bishop who laid hands on them and anointed them with Chrism. Now as members of the Church, the Body of Christ, they were led back into the church to join in the Eucharist for the first time. Over the next few days or weeks, in a series of lectures (the *mystagogia*) the bishop explained to the neophytes the rituals they had undergone, including the Eucharist. Since they had not been present for the Eucharist before that night, it was only now that they were taught what they were to say and do at Eucharist.

Children of Christians went through the same initiation ceremony and could be communicants from infancy. As whole populations became largely

Christian, the need for adult initiation diminished and vanished, and so did the preparatory rites of the catechumenate and the *mystagogia*. Infant baptism became the norm, and eventually came to be celebrated on any day soon after birth. This made it impractical for bishops always to be present, so in

the East and some places in the West, priests confirmed, thus preserving the traditional unity of Baptism and Confirmation. However in the West, bishops ultimately reserved Confirmation to themselves, but this required its separation from Baptism, detaching also the first reception of Communion; even giving Communion to infants (up to seven years) was eventually forbidden. The history of

children's initiation in the West up to modern times is very interesting, but it need not be covered here beyond noting that Confirmation was reinterpreted by many not as part of initiation but as an optional extra to strengthen Christian commitment and as a sign of maturity.

When we focus on the original unity of the

sacraments and the character of their rites, a simple and comprehensive explanation for the two becomes clear:

- ◆ Baptism washes clean; it washes away sin.
- ◆ Confirmation consecrates to sacred duties.

To expound briefly on these, sin is washed away in the cleansing water of baptism, making candidates presentable to the Lord. Then the laying on of hands and anointing or christening instils the Holy Spirit to consecrate the baptised to sacred duties which, in this first instance, is to join the other members of the Church, the Body of Christ, in the exercise of his priesthood by the offering of the Eucharist and the reception of the sacramental signs, the symbol of our communion in him.

This brings us to the matter of the years falling between the two celebrations and why Penance is placed in between. The West's established practice



PISA:
Baptistery and Cathedral

BAPTISM TO EUCHARIST



FLORENCE:
Baptistery and Cathedral

defers Communion until the child can distinguish between right and wrong and so is capable of acknowledging wrong-doing and being sorry for it. In the experience of personal sin, even if only in a very minor manner, the state of the newly baptised is lost. In the Sacrament of Penance sin is absolved with a form of words and the penitent is restored to the state enjoyed when newly baptised. The best way of doing this in age-appropriate ways remains an open question. Instead of the daunting experience many of us were subjected to, it is fitting that it be an uplifting and freeing experience, just as Baptism is for adult candidates.

For adults Baptism readies the candidate to be confirmed and Communion follows at once. For children it is appropriate that Penance does likewise: it should promptly be followed by Confirmation and participation in the Eucharist. In some places this may be done in a single ceremony, as it is for adults. In other places Confirmation is conferred outside Mass on a weekday so that the first Communion for the newly confirmed takes place at a normal Sunday Eucharist in the parish. This pattern works well in rural parishes with multiple churches, all the candidates celebrating Confirmation with the bishop, but then joining the regular Sunday congregations for the final step.

There is more to sacred duties than participation in the Eucharist, namely, the prophetic ministry of proclaiming the Good News to all, and working for and building up the kingdom of God, but there is no need to cover everything in children's preparation. Keeping the simple explanation for Confirmation foremost is the best way to guide preparation; there is no need for children to learn any particular number of gifts of the Holy Spirit, nor to overemphasise Pentecost as if it were the only relevant episode in Scripture. Rather, the focus should be on the first sacred duty to be performed after Confirmation, and that is, participation in the Eucharist. Another condition to establish readiness to be confirmed and receive first Communion is that the child understands there is a difference between ordinary bread and wine and the eucharistic Body and Blood that demands respect. Exploring this can be part of preparation that highlights all the people's vocal parts of the Eucharistic Prayer. It is saddening at 'first Communion' events to see the children silent throughout, knowing how to receive Communion but not knowing how to be part of the Eucharist. It has long been known that singing helps us all memorise texts; so teach them to sing their parts. It is a joy to hear children's voices replying confidently, *We lift them up to the Lord*. It is a delight to hear them cue the priest for the first line of the Eucharistic Prayer, *It is right and just*.

■ Rev Dr Barry Craig studied liturgy in Rome and is parish priest of Malanda in the Diocese of Cairns.

LITURGICAL PRACTICE IN A HUMBLE, HEALING AND MERCIFUL CHURCH

by Clare Condon SGS

During the Australian Catholic Church Plenary Council consultative processes, there has been a consistent cry for a humble, healing and merciful Church. That call has prompted me to wonder what might be some changes in liturgical practice to emerge in such a church community.

Humility is derived from the *humus* of the earth. A humble person is grounded in reality, one who knows her place within the earth community as part of the universe, one who respects her own dignity and that of others and all of the created order.

Perhaps a humble, healing and merciful Church would need to acquire the same attributes, knowing its place in the larger scheme of reality, acknowledging that not all truth rests within the Church alone, recognising that it is a frail and sinful body which acknowledges its deep failures. It is not the *perfect society* that Pope Leo XIII proposed in 1885 (*Immortali Dei*, 852). Rather it is grounded deeply in the reality of this earth and all its rich manifestations. A humble Church would be a self-critical Church, constantly referencing itself to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

When the Catholic Church portrayed itself as this 'perfect society', it sees itself as the fount of all wisdom and bearer of truth. Yet its 2000-year history tells us that such an understanding has strayed from the gospel message as taught by Jesus. When, in the search for truth, its leaders and theologians fail to engage in constructive dialogue with other knowledge disciplines – scientific, biological, social, environmental, religious or physical – the Church assumes an arrogance not well founded. A well-noted example of this failure to listen to the scientific world was the case of Galileo in the 17th century, when the Church failed to heed the discoveries of the time and stubbornly persisted in a factual falsehood.

A humble and healing Church, therefore, is one which recognises, values and engages the new discoveries of knowledge that inform our understanding of the universe, the climate, and the human person. Thus grounded in reality and with a searching mind and heart, it seeks out the mystery that is revealed as God. It would follow the motto of St Anselm who described theology as *faith seeking understanding*.

The consultation for the Plenary Council had identified specific groups that call on the Church's humble, healing and merciful response, namely, First Nations People, those with a disability, the unemployed, single parents, divorced and remarried Catholics, LGBTIQ+ people, those who have suffered abuse within the Church and, of course, women.

So I ask: what would need to change for such a Church to emerge? Dialogue would become its *modus operandi*, listening would be pre-eminent. Its leaders would seek to learn from the shifts in knowledge in all its manifestations, to hear the cry of the environment. Listening to the needs of the various groups would help find mutual pathways in searching out the mystery of God. Such an approach would have significant implications for the Church's liturgical practices, its worship of the God of the universe as revealed in Jesus Christ.

I will name just a few, based on Vatican II's document on the Sacred Liturgy. It affirmed that the Priesthood of Christ is activated by the *full, conscious and active participation* of all the People of God (SC 14). The Council called for unity within cultural diversity: *The Church has no wish to impose a rigid uniformity in matters that do not involve the faith or the good of the whole community* (SC 37).

So a humble, healing and merciful Australian Church needs to embrace the deep spirituality of our First Nations People and to do so in a way that is not simply a token. Their cultural connections to land and water, key symbols of their spirituality, would be expressed in liturgy in culturally appropriate ways. For example, they may baptise their children in the waters that flow through their lands. Amongst many other symbolic actions, smoking ceremonies are an integral part of their rites of welcome and purification. A positive example of integrating the smoking ceremony into Catholic liturgy was seen the beatification ceremony for Mary MacKillop in 1995. I quote from the Mass booklet: *The smoking ceremony replaces the incensation at the beginning of Mass. This is used widely among the Aboriginal groups around Australia as a rite of purification and wholeness.* By contrast, I have witnessed tokenistic practice during NAIDOC week in recent times. Here the smoking ceremony is kept outside the church; then when the priest enters the church, he incenses the altar as if the smoking ceremony had not even happened.

We would heed Pope Francis' 2021 homily on the feast of Corpus Christi: *Let us not forget that the Eucharist is meant to nourish those who are weary and hungry along the way. A Church of the pure and perfect is a room with no place for anyone. On the other hand, a Church with open doors that gathers and celebrates around Christ is a large room where everyone – everyone, the righteous and sinners – can enter.*

In welcoming and not judging, a merciful and humble Church is reborn. Divorcees, LGBTIQ+ people, those with mental health issues or addictions, people with disability of many kinds, all those who feel alienated could find a home of acceptance and welcome. The celebration of Eucharist would move away from the comfortable, settled and safe elite and move to the edges where the suffering and struggling find themselves at the heart of the Church where they belong.

The priest would need to come down from an elevated position and preside from within the common priesthood of the People of God. The bishop might dispose of the mitre. This symbol originated with an official of the Imperial Byzantine court and was introduced into the Roman Church in the 11th Century. I suggest it is not relevant in a humble Church community where symbols are meant to signify the sacred. As Frank O'Loughlin wrote in 2013, symbols *point beyond themselves to things that cannot be heard, touched or seen... Their purpose is to reveal not to conceal. So there is a certain 'transparency' between the sign and the mystery.*

The liturgy needs to be intelligible to those who participate with full, active and conscious participation. Given that in Australia women comprise more than 60% of these participants, they have a right to be visible and recognised not only physically but also in language and ritual. It is incongruous in a humble Church to assume that the male is the reference point of all humanity. This incongruity continues a false dichotomy of *complementarity* which assumes that women are defined in reference to and in subjugation to men. This medieval fallacy is espoused by Thomas Aquinas: *the female is a misbegotten male* (De Gener.ii,3) and *women are defective and misbegotten* (ST Ia q.92, a.1, Obj.1). Such an understanding still pervades church language and behaviour.

We can no longer assume that God can only be imaged as male. A full gamut of scriptural images of God would be a beginning in a humble Church. Women will not be full participants until ritual language includes them in their own right. Inclusive language gives equal recognition to all of humanity. The constant use of the principle of *complementarity* argued by church documents is no longer supported by anthropological studies.

A humble and healing Church will need to be repentant and a reconciler. Rituals of lament and sorrow can support the slow and painful healing journey for those abused by church personnel. Lament implies tears and anguish at the horrific failure of those who were trusted. It also enables *metanoia*, a change of heart, a resolve to change and action to address the causes of such failures. A humble Church will examine the sustained philosophical and theological propositions which, I believe, contributed to an abuse of power by members of the clergy, religious and laity. Perhaps, only a restored communal Third Rite of Reconciliation, or the introduction of other rites for communal repentance, will offer some sense of ongoing healing within the Catholic community at local and universal levels.

Finally, a humble, healing and merciful Church will be an enculturated Church, one which honours the experiences of local communities, where unity and not simply uniformity is sought. So might an Australian Church emerge from its European origins in a more authentic way. It will engage with local and will honour the experience, the pain and the hope of a pilgrim people. In this time of epochal change, I sense that nothing less will renew the People of God.

■ Clare Condon was formerly Congregational Leader of the Sisters of the Good Samaritan (2005-2017).

A LITURGIST ATTENDS THE PLENARY COUNCIL

David Orr OSB

In the Plenary Council discernment papers drawn from the original consultations, a number of proposals addressed liturgical topics. Many Australian Catholics had challenged the Council to look at the priesthood of all the baptised (1 Peter 2:9) and to consider what part lay people could have in liturgical ministry. This was thought to be especially important for the Church in Australia because of the needs in many areas where the celebration of Eucharist is diminished due to the decline in the number of priests available to celebrate. More possibilities for lay ministry, especially for women, would enrich our sacramental life.

There were many other requests that touched on liturgy. For example:

- ◆ Encourage greater links between Eucharist and mission.
- ◆ Invest in national and local formation for the people of God.
- ◆ Expedite and implement a review of the current translation of the Missal (so that it is inclusive and understandable).
- ◆ Revise the Lectionary to make it inclusive, accessible, accurate.
- ◆ Reimagine the model of parish to provide for people's needs and actively support diversity.
- ◆ Ease the conditions under which the bishop may permit the communal rite of the Sacrament of Penance.

From this basis, liturgy could have been foundational to the work of the first Council Assembly early in October. Yet none of this was evident in the work of the Plenary. I was always unsettled by the material that was prepared for this assembly. The six discussion papers formed from the original consultation were translated into sixteen statements which did not encourage liturgical discussion.

When the Assembly opened, I discovered that each member would be assigned to only one question for the whole week and would meet with the same group each day. Unfortunately the question I had nominated had been redesigned and I was not working in my chosen area. While the spiritual discernment provided was very helpful, it did prevent discussion of any issues that may have arisen.

The groups surfaced 363 separate proposals, but few mentioned liturgy or liturgical issues. At most there were references to preaching, deacons, inclusive language, eucharistic adoration... Only the submission by the Chaldean Archbishop explicitly mentioned liturgy. In the open forum, there was scant reference to the baptismal priesthood; when priesthood was mentioned, it only referred to clerical priesthood. Much attention was given to seminary formation, but with no explicit mention of liturgical formation. My group focused upon how to form leaders for mission, but it was never envisaged that liturgical formation would be part of that process.

The thrust of the Council meeting was centred on the call by Pope Francis for a missionary Church, but there seemed to be no interest in grounding that focus in the context of Eucharist, despite the fact that the very celebration of Eucharist forms the community for mission. From Mass to Mission!

I wondered whether the widespread live-streaming of Masses during the Covid pandemic could be a partial explanation of the lack of interest in liturgy. Those accustomed to watching Sunday Mass live-streamed over a couple of years could have experienced a revival of the perception that the liturgy is the preserve of the cleric and the role of the laity is to watch. Live-streaming Mass certainly undermines full, active, conscious participation by a community of believers.

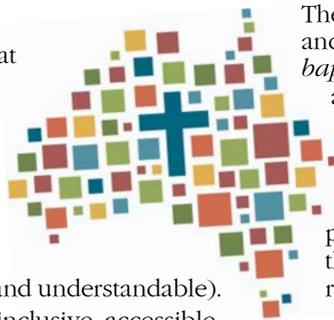
The reforms of Vatican II began with the liturgical renewal and were focused upon the *right and duty of all the baptised faithful to full, active and conscious participation* at Mass (SC 14). This has to be the core focus of liturgy.

However, much liturgical formation since the Vatican Council has been given to the practicalities of the new rites. We taught the assembly what to do, without providing that deep understanding of the baptismal priesthood to ground their liturgical participation. I think the Plenary discussions would have been different if we realised that all the baptised are celebrants of the liturgy!

At the end of the week, Archbishop Costello said: *With the closing of this first Assembly, the Plenary Council process now enters a time of prayer, reflection, maturation and development. This will involve continuing reflection by the members of the Council, and consultation with the wider Church community, as we develop propositions for presentation to the second Assembly of the Council next July.*

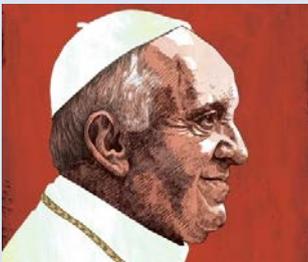
The way forward has been entrusted to the drafting committee to develop the propositions from all the material created in the first Plenary Assembly. What format will the 'consultation with the wider Church community' take? Could this consultation provide an opportunity for liturgy to be restored to its central place in the life of the Church? We are extremely reliant upon the drafting committee. Will the motions they draft be made public for consultation before the next Assembly?

- Very Rev David Orr, Prior of St Benedict's Monastery in Acadia NSW, earned a doctorate in liturgy in Rome.



POSTQUAM SUMMUS PONTIFEX

The Pope's decree *Magnum Principium* (2017) changed the Code of Canon Law regulating the responsibility for preparing liturgical translations and also set out new principles by which translations were to be prepared. That bishops conferences were confused and uncertain was not surprising. The Prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship at the time, Cardinal Robert Sarah, maintained that there was no noticeable change in the respective responsibilities of local bishops conferences and the Holy See, and that *Liturgiam Authenticam* and its principles remained in force. Even though Pope Francis forced him to publish a correction, bishops were left unsure and unwilling to take the initiative. They had, after all, been bullied by the Congregation for twenty years!



Now there is a new decree *Postquam Summus Pontifex* (2021) spelling out exactly what has changed and how. *The first part of the present Decree reiterates, interprets and amends the norms, the discipline, and the procedures regarding the translation of liturgical books and their adaptation.* The document is remarkable not only for what it says about translating the Latin but also for its emphasis on adaptation. There is a major shift away from a controlling role exerted by the Latin text: *All translations of the liturgical texts, being part of the rites themselves, are the voice of the Church which celebrates the divine mysteries, and they have the same value as the*

liturgical texts in Latin. It should be the language as it is used, with *an eye to the near future of its use, beginning with its use by younger generations.*

At the first level, bishops conferences are charged with translating the original Latin liturgical texts and making adaptations as provided in the liturgical books. These are *approved* by the bishops conference and this decision is *ratified* by the Holy See (*confirmatio*). At the second level, namely further adaptation of the liturgical books, new elements are prepared and *approved* by the bishops conference and this decision is sent to the Holy See to be *recognised* (*recognitio*). Adaptation may include cultural practices, symbols and gestures as well as newly composed texts for local celebrations. The conference presents the adaptations along with an explanatory report and the Holy See determines whether the adaptation is congruent with the Roman Rite. A liturgical book with the required *confirmatio* and *recognitio* of the Holy See is then promulgated and published by the bishops conference.

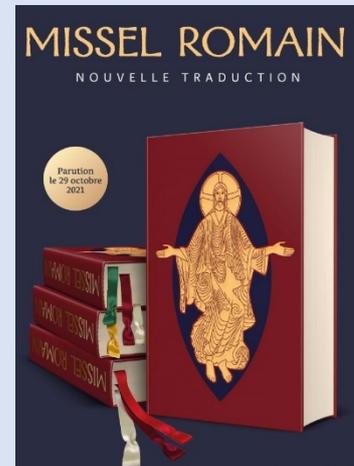
A faithful translation, says the Decree, cannot be judged by individual words but must be sought in the context of the whole communicative act and according to its literary genre... Yes, it should be faithful to the original Latin text. But it must also be faithful both to the language into which a text is being translated and also to the comprehension of the people and their spiritual needs. This recognises that the liturgy is an oral event: it is intended for proclamation, for listening to, for communal recitation.

To take a concrete example, Australia has been seeking a revision of the *Lectionary* for 25 years. Rome has vetoed one translation after another. *Postquam Summus Pontifex* makes it clear that this is a choice for the bishops conference. *With regard to Lectionaries, the confirmatio consists of verifying that the biblical pericopes and their apparatus correspond to the ordering of the typical liturgical books of the Roman Rite.*

Bishops conferences will find in this Decree new confidence to embrace their responsibilities for the good of the Church.

NEW MISSAL IN FRENCH

Ten years after the new English translation of the Missal was produced, a new translation in French has now been released (end October 2021).



The translators for the French-speaking bishops had begun work after *Liturgiam Authenticam* in 2001 but struck difficulties with the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments. The Congregation was imposing changes that the bishops rejected three times. The stalemate was overcome with the new procedures established by *Magnum Principium* in 2017. The *confirmatio* of the Holy See was at last received in 2019 but was accompanied by 121 'observations' which had to be sorted out. Now the new edition is published and ready for use.

The story in Germany is similar in some ways but has not produced a result. The German translators worked on the Missal until 2013. As for the English language, so for German, the Congregation had established its own committee. The resulting translation received a very negative reaction from many of the bishops and it was simply not approved by the bishops conferences of Austria, Germany and Switzerland. Debate continued until 2017 when *Magnum Principium* appeared. The issues were sorted, but the desire to produce a new translation is weak. It does not seem to be a priority at present.

**To all our readers:
HAPPY CHRISTMAS!**

CONSOLATION AND HOPE



Following our discussion in the last issue of *Liturgy News* about the pastoral and sacramental care of those who have chosen voluntary assisted dying (VAD), we are pleased to see the New Zealand bishops have published a pastoral letter and an excellent set of principles and guidelines entitled *Bearers/Ministers of Consolation and Hope* (2021). *There is no place or situation, no matter how uncomfortable, where our faith cannot be expressed or God's grace encountered.* The pastoral and spiritual accompaniment of those considering assisted dying is a walk of hope because it leaves the way open for an encounter with God.

There are some very beautiful paragraphs on accompaniment. *Accompaniment ensures that no one is abandoned to desolation. It calls pastoral carers to enter into a liminal space where the Church's beliefs about euthanasia sit alongside its teaching about accompaniment and consolation.* It does not necessarily mean endorsement. Hope is never extinguished.

On the question of celebrating the sacraments, the bishops are ready to presume good faith in accordance with pastoral practice in other areas. *So it is proper that the Church's sacraments – encounters with God – are provided to the person who requests them.*

Accompaniment embraces also the person's family and extends through the funeral and the time of grieving afterwards. The bishops see the introduction of euthanasia as an opportunity to express in new ways the love and compassion embedded in Catholic belief about the dignity of human life.

Download the pastoral statement at: www.catholic.org.nz/assets/Uploads/Bearers-of-Consolation-and-Hope.pdf

The guidelines and principles can be accessed at:

www.catholic.org.nz/assets/Uploads/Ministers-of-Consolation-and-Hope.pdf

A GENDER STAR?

In English we have masculine and feminine pronouns, but we can make our language inclusive quite easily and naturally by using the plural or avoiding the pronoun altogether. It is much more difficult in German where the nouns themselves have masculine and feminine forms. A 'citizen', for example, is a *Bürger* or a *Bürgerin* depending on whether the person is male or female. There has been a controversial proposal in Germany to make the term gender neutral by using an asterisk. So the inclusive word for 'citizen' would be *Bürger*in*.

Recently the German Young Catholic Community and the Catholic Students' Association suggested that the name 'God' should be written in *Gott** to steer away from the idea of a patriarchal, male, white God. Some German bishops expressed joy that young people were concerned about the image of God, but the bishops conference declined to use the gender star with the name of God.

CARDINAL CUPICH

Cardinal Blaze Cupich of Chicago has been taking an admirable leadership role in a bitterly divided American Church. First, there is the proposed conference document on the Eucharist. Some of the bishops are pushing a strong line on 'eucharistic consistency' which would seek to ban pro-abortion politicians from receiving communion. After intervention from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, this has been modified to some extent. However Dr Kevin Irwin, professor of liturgy at Catholic University of America, saw a draft copy and was not impressed. He commented that it was set up within a Tridentine scholastic framework. Cupich argued that an ahistorical presentation abstracted from daily life must be avoided. The starting point should be rather the needs of people as they live in the present moment and culture. 'Context is key', he wrote. He proposed instead a eucharistic revival centred on five themes: *the imperative to worship; the necessity of the Eucharist; the Eucharist as a call to participation; the Eucharist as a model of self-giving; the Eucharist as a sacrament of the Lord's abiding presence.*



Cupich (*above*) was also one of the few USA Church leaders to speak out in support of Pope Francis' reversal of rules on the old Tridentine Mass. The word 'reform', he said, means that we leave behind a former way of celebrating the sacraments and adopt a new form. He called Pope Francis' new rules a 'gift' in favour of uniting the Church around the single and identical prayer of the reformed Mass. He went on to affirm that the reforms of Vatican Council II are in continuity with the tradition of the Church and he rejoiced in the restoration of the role of the diocesan bishop in regulating the liturgical life of the local Church.

His understanding of what has happened here is also supported by Arthur Roche, Prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship. Roche too rejects the claim by Pope Benedict XVI that the Tridentine rite was never formally rescinded, a claim which led to its establishment as an 'extraordinary form' of the Roman liturgy. This experiment, in which it was hoped that ordinary and extraordinary forms would mutually enrich one another, 'has been ended'. Roche pointed out that, for now, the old rite has not been suppressed but regulated in order to allow for sensitive pastoral care for those who worship in the old form, though its use, he explained, is through *exceptional concession and not by way of promotion.*

ART.CATHOLIC.ORG.AU

By Christmas, nine new articles on Catholic liturgical art will be loaded onto the website of the National Liturgical Architecture and Art Council. Bookmark the site and return regularly to discover a wealth of insight into painting, sculpture, stained glass, architecture and more. www.art.catholic.org.au

POPE SPEAKS TO JESUITS

In speaking to his Jesuit confreres in Slovakia in September, Pope Francis shared the anecdote of a cardinal who told him of two newly-ordained priests seeking permission to study Latin and celebrate the old Latin Mass. The pope continued: *With a sense of humour the Cardinal replied, 'But there are many Hispanics in the diocese! Study Spanish to be able to preach. Then when you have studied Spanish, come back to me and I'll tell you how many Vietnamese there are in the diocese, and I'll ask you to study Vietnamese. Then when you have learned Vietnamese, I will give you permission to study Latin.'* So, the pope added, *he made them 'land', he made them return to earth.*

IN MEMORIAM



PATRICIA LOGAN (1930-2021) was an extraordinary liturgical musician. Her solid music training in Sydney stood her in

good stead when she went to Mt Isa in the mid-1950s. Twenty years later when the family came to Brisbane, she took up the role of Music Director at Kenmore parish, a ministry in which she continued for well over thirty years. She played a large role in RSCM (Royal School of Church Music), running workshops in organ and choir, and inspiring and nurturing a younger generation of church musicians. She was always an enthusiastic supporter of the liturgical renewal in the Archdiocese of Brisbane.



EILEEN BROWN SGS (1944-2021) entered the Good Samaritan novitiate in 1962 just as the Second Vatican Council began. After some years as a science and religion teacher, she moved into parish

ministry with a special focus on adult faith education. With a Masters in Pastoral Studies from Chicago under her belt, she became an RCIA consultant in the Diocese of Wollongong and, for fifteen years, the diocesan liturgy coordinator, until Parkinson's forced her retirement in 2011. She was well known to liturgy people throughout Australia.



MEDINA ESTÉVEZ (1926-2021), Chilean cardinal, was Prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments between 1996 and 2002. Under his reign, the Holy See usurped the work of liturgical translation from bishops conferences, rejected the translation of the *Revised Sacramentary*, seized control of ICLEL furnishing it with new statutes and vetting its personnel, established his watchdog committee Vox Clara, and imposed the rigorist *Liturgiam Authenticam* which yielded our current problematic edition of the *Roman Missal*. His approach has been decisively overturned by Pope Francis in recent years.

NEW PAPAL MC

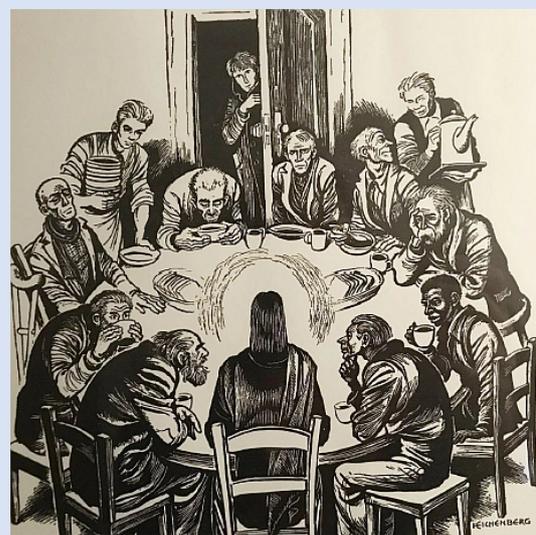


The Master of Pontifical Liturgical Ceremonies can shape the style of liturgy which the pope celebrates. He is responsible for the papal sacristy, directs papal liturgies and in recent years has also been director of the Sistine Chapel Choir. The previous incumbent, Guido Marini, has been ordained a diocesan bishop and a new liturgical appointment has been made: Mons Diego Ravelli, 56, Marini's deputy. Ravelli was previously in charge of the Office of Papal Charities; he earned a doctorate in liturgy in 2010 from Sant'Anselmo.

HONOURING SUNDAY

The bishops conference of England and Wales in its plenary assembly on 18 November 2021 released a beautiful, simple, pastoral statement on Sunday Mass. It invites people to reflect on their experience during the pandemic and recognises the on-going hesitations that some have in returning to Mass. The statement says in part:

The central appeal of the Mass, its beauty, and its transcendence, raises our minds and hearts to God in an unambiguous and compelling manner. Our Lord Jesus invites us to receive anew the gift of Sunday as the preeminent day, the day of the Resurrection, when the Church gathers to celebrate the Eucharist. Here we stand together before our heavenly Father, offering our thanksgiving and prayer, through our Saviour in the Holy Spirit. Here we receive Christ in his Word. Here we are nourished by Christ in his precious Body and Blood. This is our primary joy, for which there is no substitute, and from which we draw our strength.



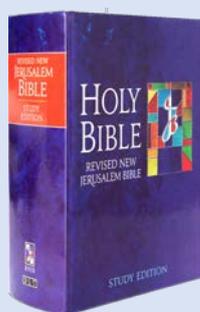
Fritz Eichenberg, *Last Supper* (1951)

The Sunday Mass is the very heartbeat of the Church and of our personal life of faith. We gather on the 'first day of the week', and devote ourselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers (Acts 2:42). The Eucharist sustains us and spurs us on, renewing our gratitude and our hope. When we say 'Amen' to Christ in receiving his Body

and Blood, we express the love of God which is deep within us, and at the end of Mass, when we are sent forth, we express our love for our neighbour, especially those in need. These two dimensions reveal the full meaning of our faith. We are gathered together and sent out, we pray and are fed, we worship and we adore; these are intrinsic to our lives as those baptised into Christ.

AUSTRALIAN LECTIONARY

The Australian bishops have received clear affirmation from the bishops conferences of New Zealand and Ireland that they are in favour of producing a new Lectionary based on the Revised New Jerusalem Bible and are willing to cooperate with Australia in its creation.



Magnum Principium (2017) and *Postquam Summus Pontifex* (2021) both confirm that this decision and the work of producing the liturgical books are the responsibility of bishops conferences and not of the Holy See. This work should be able to proceed from the beginning of 2022 following November discussions by the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference and the National Liturgical Council.

OUR COVER

Our cover quotations this year have been taken from *Aperuit Illis*, a 2019 document of Pope Francis instituting the annual Sunday of the Word of God.

It contains some profound meditations on the power of the words of Scripture. Sunday of the Word of God will next be celebrated in Australia on the first Sunday in February (6 February 2022).

How will your parish honour the holy Scriptures on that day?

Sacred Scripture accomplishes its prophetic work above all in those who listen to it. It proves both sweet and bitter. ...

The sweetness of God's word leads us to share it with all those whom we encounter in this life and to proclaim the sure hope that it contains.

Its bitterness, in turn, often comes from our realisation of how difficult it is to live that word consistently, or our personal experience of seeing it rejected as meaningless for life.

We should never take God's word for granted, but instead let ourselves be nourished by it, in order to acknowledge and live fully our relationship with God and with our brothers and sisters (AI 12).



MATISSE: LIFE & SPIRIT

This exhibition at the Art Gallery of New South Wales brings together over 100 works of Henri Matisse (1869-1954) whose colourful inventiveness rivalled that of Picasso. He became known in the first decade of the 20th century as a 'Fauvist' because of his startling use of colour.

He became more or less incapacitated after a bout of cancer in 1941 and he gave up painting for his large-scale paper cut-outs. The Sydney exhibition includes the largest collections of these bright art pieces ever seen in Australia. This body of work leads directly to the culmination of his life in art, the Chapel of the Rosary in Vence in the south of France.

The exhibition offers a special presentation of the chapel, with life-sized maquettes of the windows (*above*). The chapel is remarkable because Matisse designed every detail: the coloured glass, painted murals, furnishings, vessels and vestments. This brilliant gem of sacred art and architecture was completed in 1951.

Most of the works on show are drawn from the collection of the Centre Pompidou in Paris. The exhibition runs from 20 November 2021 until 13 March 2022. It is a unique opportunity to encounter at first hand one of the most significant artists of the twentieth century.

CHARISM AND LITURGY: THE PATHS DO CONNECT

by Bill Sultmann

We often hear the statement, 'she or he is a charismatic person'. An initial interpretation of charism is usually associated with an individual who has compelling characteristics. Charism is typically related to a religious figure who attracts followers and becomes emblematic of an entire community. However the term *charism* in light of the Gospel and the tradition of the Church is somewhat different; in this context, charism, interpreted broadly, is a gift to the community, and an insight into the Gospel that adds value to the community and is evidenced practically in the works of the community.

The word 'charism' is synonymous with a spiritual energy, a dynamic force which is communicated and lived in multiple ways. It is not a structure or a programme. Rather, it is a way of interpreting the Gospel towards an end point which is constantly incarnated in and adapted to the circumstances of the day. In this light, charism is not restricted to a founder, a religious community or a particular age. It is for all, a gift to the community to share, to be interpreted in light of the Spirit and to provide a consistent focus for the Christian life. In this regard the words of St Paul are abundantly insightful: *there are many gifts but it is always the same Spirit; there are many different ways of serving but it is always the same Lord. There are many different forms of activity but in everybody it is the same God who works in them all* (1 Cor 12: 4-6).

The experience of charism draws both an internal (personal) and external (communal) response, inviting reflection and action. The goal of seeing the Divine in all things signals a relationship with God at the centre of every moment of every day. This form of relationship is depicted by the theologian Karl Rahner SJ as *sacramental consciousness*. It is the progressive instinct to take time, see, and marvel at the seemingly ordinary experiences of life that give rise to amazement and appreciation. It may be the smile of a child, the song of a bird, the vastness of a landscape or the scent of a flower. Whatever the experience, for a moment in time, this new imagination transforms us; it takes us into a new being and offers a tiny inkling of the experience of heaven. I can well recall the late Archbishop John Bathersby saying how powerful were simple words and gestures as a means of affirming the dignity of others and showing the respect that naturally follows.

Liturgy relies on this sacramental consciousness which awakens an awareness the presence of God in all things; liturgy is a means for giving form to understandings, feelings, yearnings and behaviours which reinforce our primary identity in Christ and our commitment to live this identity within community. It is a process of celebrating life as a sacred gift and the presence of God within life. The late Archbishop Francis Rush used to say: *the extent to which you place Christ at the centre of your life and ministry will be the extent of your success*. Vatican Council II said something similar: *the more we lose sight of God, the more we lose sight of the dignity and value of the human person* (LG 36).

When the Church gathers for liturgy, we do so in response to the mystery of encountering God in the world. The Church sacramentalises this larger liturgy of the world (the 'liturgy' of the week, the ordinary and the everyday) by means of its rituals. The purpose of the sacraments to the life of the Church is to sanctify... to build up the body of Christ and finally to give worship to God (Catechism of the Catholic Church 1123). They are called



Many schools today try to get in touch with the charism of their patron saint or founders. This is celebrated in their liturgy and becomes a theme in their classroom teaching.

sacraments of faith because they nourish and express faith and *touch all the stages and all the important moments of Christian life* (CCC 1210). In short, *what faith confesses, the sacraments communicate* (CCC 1692). Sacraments and a sacramental consciousness empower liturgical celebration and reflect God's life in the world.

Charisms provide a bridge into the Gospel by focusing on aspects of its richness which can be ritualised in a particular time and place. The relationship of charism as one of the instruments for amazement, and liturgy as the means for integration, is suggestive of a deep and critical relationship. Communities of faith can interpret and ritualise gifts and traditions, encounters and engagements through sacraments and sacramental reflection

So we ask ourselves how the charism of my community might challenge me in my personal faith, family life, work and community. Then we reflect upon the way this charism or gift leads us to experience the presence of Jesus in our life and community. And finally we ask ourselves how our faith community celebrates our tradition liturgically.

■ Dr Bill Sultmann has been a leader in Catholic Education in Brisbane, Toowoomba and Cairns and is currently Associate Professor at ACU.

CHARISM OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN

by Ursula O'Rourke SGS

The Church proclaims the Gospel of the Good Samaritan on the Fifteenth Sunday of Ordinary Time (Year C). In this parable, Jesus introduces a Samaritan. He highlights the power of one who saw a person in need and *did compassion*. The Samaritan does not pass by, but recognises an abused and wounded human being. He stops to help, bandaging his wounds and strengthened his broken body with the pouring out of oil and wine. In a further act of compassion, the Samaritan offers the wounded person accommodation, a place of safety where the innkeeper is told to provide him all the resources needed for healing. At the conclusion of the parable, Jesus' invitation is to *Go and do likewise!*

This invitation is the foundation of the Good Samaritan Charism. School communities founded by the Sisters of the Good Samaritan of the Order of St Benedict are steeped in this charism of a compassionate love that breaks down barriers between people. The charism was born in an Australian setting in our earliest days. Embedded in this Good Samaritan charism is the Benedictine charism, a spirituality founded on living the gospel with a focus on the word of God as the source of life and of daily living. Benedictine spirituality is about living our baptismal commitment, growing daily in our commitment to witness to Christ wherever we are called to serve our sisters and brothers.

Twelve words illustrate the basis of a Good Samaritan Benedictine spirituality.

STEWARDSHIP. Literally, this is about caring for the 'goods of the monastery'. It relates to the care of the earth and the environment. It is about appreciating what is good in society and creation, and what needs to be challenged by the gospel.

RELATIONSHIPS. How do we live with one another in community? Do we reverence one another *in Christ*? We show the compassion of Christ to one another, to those who are sick, alienated, marginalised, or strangers. We respect the wisdom and counsel of the community where we support one another in our search for God.

the community for life, a belonging to the group, its mission and ministry.

PEACE. Benedictine spirituality embraces the way of peace. *Seek peace and pursue it...never let the sun go down on your anger, but make peace before the setting of the sun...*

HUMILITY. This comes from an understanding of our place in the universe where all creatures are interdependent. It is the call to know our real selves before God. The spirit of the *Magnificat* makes us realise that our spiritual growth is a process of continuing conversion.

BALANCE. There is a time for everything. Everyone needs time out for rest and relaxation, for leisure. The Benedictine charism

GOOD SAMARITAN EDUCATION IN THE BENEDICTINE TRADITION



St Benedict and Benedictine Archbishop John Bede Polding, first bishop of Sydney and founder of the Sisters of the Good Samaritan

COMMUNITY. We live our charism and way of life together. We share all things in common. The community is a place of welcome and hospitality; here we support one another in their weakness and endeavour to put the interests of others before our own.

AUTHORITY. Striving to be people of compassion, we listen to the voice of God. Those who are called to leadership are called to serve and to unify.

STABILITY. This is linked to authority. It is a commitment to

strives to achieve a balance between prayer, work and leisure.

WORK. The world is unfinished and is ours to develop. Using one's gifts and skills for the good of the community and contributing to the common good

of all is one of the basic parts of Benedictine spirituality. There is a variety of works, not only manual work, but also study, teaching, writing, serving others with compassion to bring about the reign of God. So finally we acclaim: *In all things, may God be glorified* - this is the Benedictine motto!

HOSPITALITY. Here is a key component of Benedictine spirituality. It is the call to welcome Christ in the guest, the stranger, the alienated, the marginalised. *I was a stranger and you welcomed me* (Mt 25:35).

SIMPLICITY. The Benedictine spirit marks a 'back to basics' approach. The material things of life are treated with respect and reverence and with a certain detachment. Benedict encouraged monks to treat the goods of the monastery as they treated the sacred vessels of the oratory. Without personal ownership of the goods of the monastery, the monk respected the beauty of material things but was not possessive of them.

PRAYER. The foundation and source of spiritual nourishment, prayer is the pattern of life in a Good Samaritan community. Each day is structured according to the rhythm of praying morning and evening prayer and concluding with night prayer. Personal prayer is nourished through communal prayer and flows out of *lectio divina*, the reflective reading of God's word.

The charism of the Good Samaritan and the Benedictine way of life are key aspects of formation within the school communities of Good Samaritan Education. These gifts permeate the daily life of the school communities and enable everyone to live out the commitment to Christ which arises in their baptismal call.

■ Ursula O'Rourke sgs teaches liturgy and is part of the formation team at Holy Spirit Seminary, Queensland.



Gilbert Ostdiek, *Reweaving the Ministries: The Emmaus Paradigm*

(Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2021)
132+xiv pages.

by James Cronin

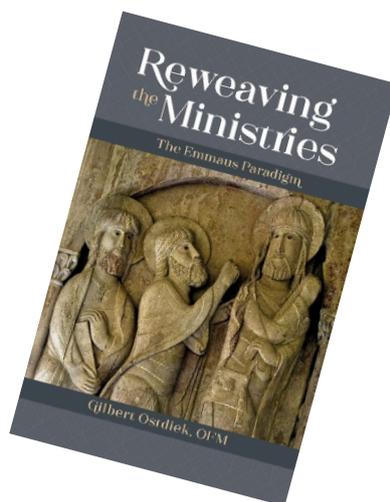
*The rite of dismissal is in truth a vital part of the Eucharist. We gather for word and table precisely to be sent forth on mission. The mission work we go out to resume is what we bring back to our next gathering. That act of gathering again ... might be better thought of, not as just gathering, but as 'return from mission' (p. 91). As a presider, I must confess that my attitude to the dismissal rite is usually 'that's another job completed' rather than leaping forth into mission! Ostdiek challenges us to consider carefully the final song and the way we exit: *Some favour keeping the rite as simple as possible... we are to immediately take the word proclaimed and the mystery of the cross just celebrated with us into daily life in the world. [Others ask] could the processional cross, candles, and Gospel Book used in the entrance rite be prominently featured in the dismissal procession as well?* (pp. 93-4).*

In this book, and in church teaching generally, there is a distinction between ministry and mission. Basically, mission is broader than ministry: *the mission of the Church includes the pursuit of justice, peace, care of the earth and transformation of the world* (p. 6). All of us have a longing to be comforted by the one

whose 'yoke is easy' and whose 'burden is light', but we may not want to be too bothered about going out 'to the whole world' and making 'disciples of all nations'. Pope Francis ties both dimensions together by calling all of us 'missionary disciples'.

As the Emmaus story unfolds, it moves from catechesis to Eucharist to mission. This is the Emmaus paradigm Ostdiek uses. Emmaus gets star billing from this author, not just because it is a skilfully crafted story, but also because it is *the first celebration of the Eucharist in the post-resurrection community, led by the risen Christ himself* (p. 97). Ostdiek has run parish workshops at which the following questions were posed: *Where does our ministry fit into the Emmaus story? How does the Emmaus story confirm and/or challenge our approach to ministry? How might we want to nuance or expand the Emmaus approach for our context? How can we coordinate what we do with other pastoral ministries?* (p. 130) My first reaction to this line of questioning is one of shame. Lots of good ministry happens at both formal and informal gatherings in our parish, both during the liturgy itself, and also in other locations such as at the Vinnies shop, the hospital and nursing home. But overall co-ordination and regular improvement (what Ostdiek calls 'reweaving') are lacking.

I evidence our bemusement at the goings-on at the Plenary Council: what is meant by 'synodality', we ask. It surely has something to do with *listening* (Jesus' first reaction on the road to Emmaus) and to our learning simply to stop and pay *attention* (Jesus' first reaction to blind Bartimaeus shouting for help).



High school students going to serve coffee to street people are warned to 'go as a guest'. This is hard to do when we live in separate silos and get all our answers from those who already agree with us.

The *proliferation of lay ministries has been a great gift to the church* (p. 7). The ongoing worry is lack of formation. One ministry that is well-organised and trained-for in our diocese is hospital pastoral care; those who complete the Clinical Pastoral Education course seem to minister well. Our parish here at Dalby is not so small as to be in danger of losing its resident priest but, with fewer and aging clergy, much ministry everywhere is done by lay people. I would love to use this book as the basis for a reading group for parish staff and lay ministers (even though getting some people to read even a few pages is challenging).

Wherever we begin, the ministry of Jesus himself should inform the discernment of what is most important. Jesus' ministry expanded because he *learned to read the specific needs of those he encountered. The mission he entrusted to his disciples was to be universal in scope. It also calls for discernment... in responding to the needs of people in specific contexts* (p. 11). Good things continue to happen in our parish of course: centenary celebrations for our church building, and the purchase of a bus to take the lonely and isolated on free picnic journeys are just two notable examples. But are we undertaking these admirable ventures because they are the most needed, or because they make us feel good? A pivotal point in the Emmaus story comes with the words of the two disciples: 'we had hoped'

Emmaus is a story of deep *disillusionment and shattered hope* (p. 101). I remember Cardinal Martini making this point strongly when he gave talks in Australia some decades ago. He emphasised that we have to give up our hopes in order to take on those of the suffering and risen Christ.

There is sheer mastery in the stranger's retelling of [the disciples'] story. The words of retelling are also theirs, familiar words borrowed from Moses and the prophets. ... At the stranger's invitation they had told their story, and in response he has accepted their version of the story and has given them that same story to retell, but with a new ending (p. 104). Biblical studies teach us that there is both a world behind the text (to be glimpsed in the culture and language of the ancient authors) and a world in front of the text (our culture today). On the pastoral level we can plumb the former by reading and study, but the latter only by listening and persistent interaction. It is easy to be good to our friends, but much harder to be kind to (and really listen to) those on the margins, the very ones for whom the Gospel is first intended. Our lives are the only Gospel many people will ever read.

The main goal of ministry of the word is to help disciples learn to retell the story of their lives in terms of the gospel story. That is how they will be able to name the presence and working of God's Spirit in their lives and how Christ is walking with

them and they with Christ on a journey to newness of life (p. 49). I remember being comforted and challenged by *Fulfilled in Your Hearing* (1982), a US document on the homily which Ostdiek cites: *An effective way for preachers to be sure that they are addressing some of the real concerns of the congregation in the homily is to involve members of that congregation in a homily preparation group* (p. 47). *Reweaving the ministries* means that we create opportunities – at least for those who have publicly-recognised ministries in each local Church – to address questions such as: *What stories do they hear? What struggles and issues do [they] commonly face? ... What are their hungers and hopes? How do they need to be cared for, nurtured, supported? What resources do they have or lack?* (p. 29).

I recommend this book because it made me think beyond ministry to mission. It made me more determined to prepare liturgy which empowers us all to be 'missionary disciples'.

■ James Cronin, our regular reviewer, studied liturgy in Rome and is parish priest at Dalby, Qld.

YOUR FEEDBACK IS ALWAYS WELCOME.

Let us know what you think of *Liturgy News* and its articles.

CONTRIBUTIONS FOR PUBLICATION ARE ALSO WELCOME.



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