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Liturgy

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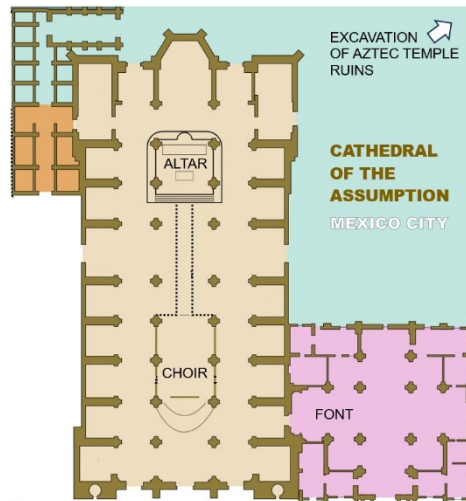
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A TALE OF TWO CHURCHES

The story, the history, of the place where we worship shapes our worship experience in the building. A church built by an impoverished post-war migrant community brings a particular resonance to the liturgy celebrated there, even decades later. A 19th century parish church might suggest that we deal with our colonial past when we stand at the altar. A church originally in a working-class neighbourhood might now be located in a very well-off inner-city suburb. Perhaps a country church was built in a farming or mining area. When we gather, we are conscious of those who have gone before us, those who built the church, and on whose faith we rely even today.

When I was on holidays recently in Mexico and Colombia, I was particularly struck by how strongly history creates a context for worship.

The Cathedral of the Assumption in Mexico City was a particularly striking example. It is a magnificent edifice, a world heritage site, built over 250 years spanning the 16th to the early 19th centuries. It is the oldest and largest cathedral in Latin America. Its style shifts from Renaissance to Baroque to Neo-Classical. It is modelled on the Spanish cathedrals of Jaén and Valladolid and, as is common in Spain, has monumental choir stalls built well down into the main nave. It has two impressive 18th century organs, a peal of 23 bells, and dozens of chapels, each adorned with a magnificent altarpiece carved and gilded. A connected baroque building houses the tabernacle and baptismal font.

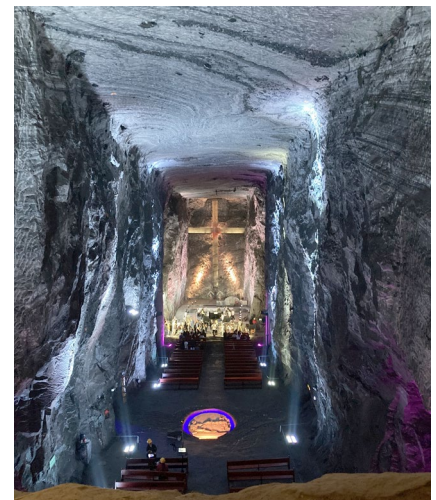


This cathedral in the New World offers a powerful testimony to the continuity of faith and worship with the Church of Europe. But there is a darker side to the history which also impinges on today's liturgical celebrations in this place. The Spanish conquest of the 16th century was violent and bloody. Thousands of Aztec citizens, assembled for a religious festival, were massacred here and their sacred temples were sacked and looted. Indeed the mighty cathedral itself was built over the destroyed Aztec temple complex (*Templo Mayor*) and the very stones of the Aztec temples were used to construct the cathedral. Only in the 20th century have the Aztec ruins beside the cathedral been rediscovered and excavated. This extraordinary juxtaposition, historical and geographical, forces today's worshippers to remember and humbly acknowledge the ruins which became the foundations.

My second tale comes from Columbia, a town called Zipaquirá near the capital Bogota. For centuries before the arrival of the Spanish, this was the site of a salt mine. Today the veritable mountain of salt has multiple tunnels and huge caverns over four levels from which the salt has been excavated. This mining has always been dangerous and arduous work. For centuries extracted by hand, the close atmosphere and salt dust affected the lungs and caused dehydration. The life of the miner was both gruelling

and short. Even since pre-Christian times, small shrines were erected where the miners sought divine help and protection. Christian shrines proliferated in the 1930s and, in 1950, grew into a worship space, the first 'cathedral'. Following structural failures due to blasting, it was closed in 1992, but a new larger 'cathedral' was begun below the old one.

Today, this extraordinary salt cathedral, located 200 metres below ground, can seat over 900 people. In its walls can be seen the marks of the miners' pick. There are three naves 20 metres high representing birth, life and death. The first contains the baptismal font and a huge nativity sculpture, the second is the main worship space dominated by a 16-metre cross carved into the wall, the third houses a monumental sculpture of Christ's deposition from the cross. The most impressive sculpture occurs along the long tunnel of descent where huge modern crosses carved into the rock salt walls represent Christ's Way of the Cross. Each station gives glimpses into the voluminous caverns along the way.



For me, taking part in Sunday Mass in this place was a most moving experience because I could not but be conscious of the suffering, pain and labour of the thousands of miners who forged this space through the centuries. When we speak of the liturgy and social justice, the theological

foundation is the reality that the liturgy is the work of the Church, the whole Church of God, and not just the gathered assembly. Thus standing at the altar, we are one with Christian communities in every part of the world – those in war-torn areas and places of persecution, famine and extreme poverty. They are with us as part of the Body of Christ. How can we celebrate the sacrament of unity unless we are engaged with them all?

In the Cathedral of Salt, there is a palpable sense of solidarity with those who labour and are burdened. One becomes acutely aware that the followers of Christ are called to take up their cross and follow him to Calvary, that suffering with Christ is the path to transformation, transfiguration, resurrection. It is precisely Christ's Paschal Mystery that we celebrate each time we gather for Eucharist. These spaces for worship provide a most challenging and evocative context as we eat the bread broken for the life of the world and drink the blood poured out for the salvation of the world.

Pope Francis spelled it out in 2022: our amazement, our astonishment at liturgy is that the paschal mystery of Jesus' suffering, death and resurrection is rendered present in the concreteness of sacramental signs: in bread, wine, oil, water, fragrances, fire, ashes, rock, fabrics, colours, body, words, sounds, silences, gestures, space, movement, action, order, time, light. (*Desiderio desideravi* 24, 42). He states baldly: *The content of the bread broken is the cross of Jesus* (DD 7).

Never has this been clearer to me than in the tale of these two churches I encountered recently. I believe the background story of our own parish churches is a dimension worth exploring as well.



ARE OUR LITURGIES FOR EVERYBODY?

A pastoral reflection

by Tricia Ryan

There are many lenses through which to view the reception of Vatican Council II's *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* (SC) in our parishes in this the quarter of the twenty-first century. We can approach it through theology, sociology, pastoral care, formation (by and for the liturgy), its use of language, music and silence, environment, inclusion, attendance to name but a few. This article will take a pastoral view on whether what we do in the parish liturgy enables everyone to be full and active participants. It will address some questions that can be asked by parish priests and liturgy teams and will highlight different responses that can be initiated within the existing rites so that the celebration of the liturgy may be for everybody.

Memories

My most vivid memory of attending Mass when I was a child and a young teenager is kneeling beside my shopkeeper father as we prayed *Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi...* (Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world...). He knelt, bowed his head, closed his eyes and touched his closed fist to his heart. My dad was participating fully and actively in this precious moment. The reverence, the openness to forgiveness and the assurance of God's love seen in his eyes when the prayer was over remains with me to this day.

A second abiding memory is of myself at nine years of age sitting on the organ stool in the choir loft in the Queensland country church at Chinchilla. I was pumping the pedals at breakneck speed (due to nervousness) and playing the *Tantum Ergo*. Sixty-six years later at the organ in our parish church in Coorparoo, Brisbane, I remember with gratitude that pious little girl who practised and practised that hymn because she wanted to participate fully in the Wednesday night novena.

I learnt that participating in and being at the service of the liturgy was a great joy.

A final childhood story is not about me but about our two boys playing 'Mass' in the lounge room when they were about 4 and 5. I was the coordinator of the music ministry in our parish at the time, and they knew all the hymns and sang away at Mass, in the car and through our house. One day I came in from the backyard to find them sitting at the coffee table with their lunch – sandwiches and a cup of Coke - along with one of our children's Sunday Mass books. As the cassette played *We Remember*, they 'broke' one of the sandwiches and shared it (and left the others) and had a sip of the Coke. I sat on the floor and said, 'Can I go to communion too?' and they both looked at me and shook their heads. The younger one said, 'You don't share with us at your Mass, so you can't share with us at ours'. Even then, they knew they were not fully and actively participating in the celebration to which we had taken them every weekend of their lives.

For Everyone

What, you may wonder, have these memories to do with the question, 'Is our liturgy for everyone'? I think they hold the key to a pastoral approach to this question. They speak of silence, singing, sharing, sacrifice and service; they speak of reflecting, responding, remembering and reverence; of celebrating, community, communion and contrition. Collectively, at one time or another, these elements help '*lead to that full, conscious and active participation in liturgical celebrations which is demanded by the very nature of the liturgy*' (SC 14).

As we consider the reality of participation and the moments that feed it, the most important question we might ask is, 'Who is the faithful person who enters the church to participate in a liturgical celebration?' Responding to this significant question is an important step in pastorally reflecting on whether our liturgy is for everybody. Romano Guardini (1885-1968) suggested that it is the whole person who carries out liturgical activity. Therefore it behoves us to remember that each person who comes to liturgy is different: there is the extrovert, the introvert, the thinker, the dreamer, the 'on-time' and the 'always-late', the sensate, the feeler, the free spirit, the rule follower, the neurodiverse, the elderly, the young, the churched and the unchurched, the anxious, the sad, the happy, the full believer, the questioner, to name but a few.

How then can one liturgy be for all and involve all the different personalities who come to participate? How can each person find in the liturgical action '*the summit toward which the activity of the church is directed, and at the same time the font from which all her power flows*' (SC 10)?

Since the promulgation by Vatican II of *Sacrosanctum Concilium* in 1963, there has been a

genuine effort to renew and adapt the liturgy to invite everyone to participate fully in the sacrifice and celebration. We began by singing *Joy is Like the Rain* and *Kumbaya My Lord* with guitars and tambourines. We added violins and flutes, pianos and organs, and prayed with times of silence and times of riotous clapping and dancing. We returned to moments of great solemnity, we sang *Panis Angelicus*, *Now Thank We All our God* and *Christ be our Light*. Some anxiously clung to the way Mass was celebrated long before the Council. However none of the above engaged all of the community all of the time. So, most parishes settled for a liturgically correct ritual which often neglected the world of symbols. Correct perhaps, but neutral. It is our use of symbols which develops an interior participation of mind and heart combined with the exterior action of saying and doing which together go to the heart of active participation.

Pope Francis recently challenged parishes and liturgists in *Desiderio Desideravi* (45) when he asked how we can once again become 'capable of symbols' knowing how to read them and live them. He affirmed that, whilst the sacrament is efficacious in itself (*ex opere operato*), this does not guarantee the full engagement of people without an adequate way for them to place themselves in relation to the language, rites and rituals of the celebration — a symbolic 'reading' is a living experience, not something observed from afar.



Strategies

What then are our parishes to do pastorally to address this liturgical challenge sixty-one years on from the promulgation of *Sacrosanctum Concilium*? Is the answer less music and singing or more? More bodily movement or more stillness? Less interaction and more silence or rather more inclusion and lay involvement? Should we establish a withdrawal space for those who want it? Should we have a Mass just for those who want silence, or a different language, or those who want to sing and dance, a special Mass for the neurodiverse, or even one just for baby boomers, Gen X, the millennials (Gen Y), or Gen Z?

I think, on the whole, the answer is, No!

There are many theological understandings to discuss and liturgical formation questions to be asked. In this article, from a pastoral perspective, I suggest we ask, 'Who is the faithful person who enters the church to be part of the community and to participate in a liturgical celebration? How do we enable them to find their home in different moments of the liturgy and actively and fully participate in Eucharist?'

The eucharistic celebration is rich in both moments of interior participation of mind and heart, and moments of exterior action of saying and doing things that invite this active

participation. The existing liturgy is rich and full of possibilities to suit a myriad of wonderful people. However, there are problems encountered in various parishes. Many extraordinary and important moments are lost to efficiency, or the cult of the personal devotion that is the preference of the celebrant, liturgy team, parish worker or the chronic complainer. The sacred can be overshadowed by intrusive hyperactive altar servers, celebrants who preside poorly, readers who are not prepared and who do not invite listening, musicians who with the best of intentions sing too much or too loudly, and use music that people don't know or can't sing. All these occur to the detriment of reaching out to give everyone a moment in which they can actively and fully participate.

Different people will resonate with different moments in the liturgy. A sense of community is built into the processions - mainly through singing - and into the Sign of Peace, the Prayer of the Faithful and the shared spoken responses. Forgiveness and contrition are expressed in the introductory rite and the Lamb of God. Reflecting and responding are the key to encountering Jesus in the word and in the Eucharistic Prayer. Silence and personal space for reflection are built into the liturgy after the readings and homily, during the preparation of gifts, and after the community has received communion. There are moments of profound reverence and devotion.

This being said, there are faithful persons who enter the church and are challenged by the sensory overload. These people, for a variety of reasons, often cannot find their quiet, reflective place in an existing parish Mass. For some, this is because the parish has not included the space they need for silence and reflection. For others, often neurodiverse, the activity, singing, moving around, microphones and bright lights play adversely on their senses. Our Parish of Mt Carmel at Coorparoo has taken steps to address this by having a semi-regular Sunday evening celebration of the Mass using a

quieter, more reflective style of prayer, softer lighting— even candlelight - and music in the style of Taizé. This celebration is designed to gently and quietly draw people into the corporate communal action of full and active participation.



Conclusion

Let us, therefore, each Sunday PURPOSEFULLY USE THE EXISTING RITES AND RITUALS to enable each person to enter into their full participatory moments in the liturgy. Let us remember that our bodies are part of the liturgical action. Let us genuflect, stand, sit, kneel, move in procession and reverently

bow. Let us join in the prayers, responses and singing. Let us turn to each other with a smile to offer peace. Let us take time for active silence after the readings, during the Eucharistic Prayer and after the communion procession is finished. Let us use the variety of Eucharistic Prayers at various times. Let us explore the *Directory of Masses for Children* and incorporate it into appropriate celebrations. If we provide a home for everybody, community happens and Christ will be more fully present amongst us.

Participation is possible throughout the year when we follow the ordered weekly flow of the seasons; it is encouraged when a parish celebrates in such a way that people are able to share a greater quiet and reflection, with less sensory overload, or fewer or more softly sung hymns; it happens for others at a family Eucharist where the younger children in the parish play a critical role in the ministry of music and word. This purposeful use of the rites and ritual intensifies in the great seasons of Lent and Advent and culminates as we celebrate the high feasts of the Triduum, Eastertide and Christmas. At these times, we engage the community in special moments that draw us even more deeply into the spirit of the risen Christ and reverence of the Word made flesh.

Let us always remember that the community gathered - be it for the 21st Sunday of the Year or the Easter Vigil - is comprised of a faithful people who are different and who find God in different ways and at different moments. Pastors and liturgy teams, singers and readers, servers and ministers of holy communion, all need to be aware that every moment cannot be for everybody. So let us be brave, generous and adventurous, not afraid to chance offering everybody different moments that enable their full and active participation.

■ Tricia Ryan has been involved for over fifty years as a teacher, liturgist and musician in school, university, parish and diocesan settings.



S SCHOOLS

LITURGY IN SCHOOLS

In an increasingly secular world, the Catholic school is often the only experience of ritual worship that a young person will have. While it is within the mandate of the Catholic school to provide students with an experience of Catholic liturgy, it is important that liturgical celebrations in the school and the experience of worship in the parish context be reflective of the all-encompassing oneness that is the Body of Christ.

But let us, for the moment, consider the school situation.

The religious formation and commitment of staff members: There are some staff members in the school who would consider themselves practising Catholics; there are some who may have, themselves, come through the Catholic system as young people and moved into teaching in an environment they found familiar and meaningful for them. However, there are many staff who would have little or no experience of Church and view the contribution of Catholic schools in terms of social justice and moral values. Also, there are those staff members who are indifferent to the religious affiliation of the school and simply work there because it is a job.

The diversity of the student population: The disparity of cultural, social and religious backgrounds impacts strongly on the religious experience of students both in the teaching of Religious Education (as a

foundational *raison d'être* of the school and as an academic subject), and even more so in the liturgical/religious life of the school. Catholic schools which have a high percentage of 'nominally' Catholic students due to stringent enrolment conditions experience the same issues as a school which opens its doors more inclusively to young people of vastly diverse cultural and even religious backgrounds who seek the security, values and support of the Catholic school.

The constraints of the timetable: In many Catholic secondary schools and to a lesser extent in primary schools, the tyranny of the school weekly timetable is a fundamental operational feature. Gaps in the availability of teachers for particular subjects are often filled with those who may have little professional or experiential background in what is required for this particular subject. The detrimental aspects of this scenario are amplified in Catholic schools where staff members without adequate formation, and without a lived experience of faith and worship, are given the responsibility of teaching Religious Education or preparing liturgical prayer. Those who are responsible for liturgy in schools need not only to have a real experience of parish worship, but also they need the professional formation and training that gives them the skills to be able to make liturgy a rich experience for young people.

It is important for schools to determine who is responsible for making decisions when school liturgies are being prepared. Are the music choices, for example, made by the music staff who may not be familiar with Catholic worship or by those from the Religious Education department who are. It is clear that collaboration between the two is of great importance.

There is an urgent need for formation for all those are involved in preparing and leading liturgies in school settings and for the establishment of guidelines for these people to follow. Having rules in this field that should be observed is like having rules in sports, so that everyone knows what is expected and can participate. It is as inappropriate for someone to say that they can include any song they like at a school liturgy as someone on the soccer field claiming that the offside rule doesn't apply to them! The current situation in many places is like having teachers coach sporting teams when it is many years since they have played that sport themselves – if indeed they ever have – with little interest in and passion for the game and very limited understanding of its aims and structure.

It is frustrating for students and teachers who do attend parish Mass to find that school Masses bear little resemblance to the form of worship to which they are accustomed and which has meaning for them. One teacher of

Religious Education who had prepared a school liturgy for All Saints Day was informed that a psalm in response to the reading was needed. The teacher then submitted a text about five saints which was put together with the suggested response of *God wants everyone to be a saint*. Clearly this person was unaware that a psalm is a piece of Scripture. For the sake of everyone involved, it is vital that gaps in formation be rectified.

Consider two interesting cases.

Case 1: A high profile Catholic secondary school centrally-located, steeped in tradition, strongly charism-based with stringent entry requirements (parish-priest's reference, sacraments, previously from a Catholic primary school).

The 'Ministry Coordinator', for want of a better term, prepares a Mass for a year level, for a before-school morning Mass, or a whole-school Mass. Hymns to be used are introduced to students at numerous school assemblies in the weeks prior so that participation at the actual event can happen more easily. As well as the readings which need to be chosen, there are considerations that pertain to the nature of the liturgical day. This is not an activity for the fainthearted or inexperienced, nor for those who do not possess some liturgical training.

Case 2: A struggling Catholic school which attracts young people largely from low socio-economic conditions, and from culturally or religiously diverse backgrounds; entry requirements are only that families commit themselves to the underlying ethos of the school and agree to engage in the religious life of the school.

Liturgy in this school needs careful and respectful reflection and to be designed in such a way that is faithful to the liturgy itself but also respectful of the individual stories of the young people (and teachers) whose religious engagement might be tenuous at best.

Both situations require that those in positions of planning liturgy or liturgical music be committed Catholics

and that they have the necessary professional training, competence and committed sincerity to be able to prepare vibrant liturgical experiences.

We don't want liturgies with a performance-style approach which turns them into musical-theatre events; the core of liturgy is about a crucified Christ who died and rose to envelop us into the eternal. Nor do we want watered-down liturgy where language and ritual omit or only pay lip-service to essential elements that define who we are as Catholics and what we are on about as a Catholic school.

There is an enormous responsibility to make decisions that will enhance the Catholic identity of the school and those who move within its walls. It is a responsibility also incumbent on authorities who manage and direct Catholic Education to provide growth and formation opportunities for teachers who prepare liturgical celebrations. This is as fundamental as training for Workplace Health and Safety or Safeguarding – allowing students to encounter Jesus in communal prayer and to become familiar with the worship tradition of the Church is core business.

In almost all cases, there will be a significant number of students who are not familiar with the Catholic Mass, and so it is worth considering whether a 'rehearsal' for Mass is possible within the school timetable. If the liturgical life of the school is a priority, then time can be set aside to equip students to participate more actively and meaningfully in celebrations of the Eucharist.

Since the Catholic school may be the only experience that students have of the Church and its ritual celebration, it is paramount that provision be made for rich and dynamic experiences of liturgical worship which lead young people into a deep experience of communal prayer.

■ With thanks to those who have contributed to this article: Judy McGuire, Elizabeth Harrington, Gerry Crooks and Clare Schwantes.



Music and Infant Baptism

by Simone Brosig

... the celebration of Baptism is greatly enhanced by singing—to stimulate a sense of unity among those present, to foster their common prayer, and to express the paschal joy with which the rite should resound ... (Christian Initiation, General Introduction, 33).

The Easter Vigil is where most parishes mobilise their musical resources to the fullest. It makes sense. This is the highpoint of the liturgical year, the celebration of the Resurrection, and the quintessential moment for baptisms. Some parishes celebrate infant baptism at Sunday Mass and therefore have music resources available. But what music is there for baptism outside of Mass at other times of the year?

Many parishes celebrate the baptism of infants throughout the year with a small gathering of family and friends, many of whom have not been to church in years, and without any liturgical music. Celebrating several baptisms together can make the celebration more communal, but infant baptisms can be a bit like weddings in that the people coming for the sacrament may be thinking more about the domestic context than the liturgical. This means that we, as liturgical ministers, need to take the lead on the liturgical side to ensure that the ritual is celebrated as fully as possible.

Why don't we have music at baptisms?

The most likely answers to the question are:

1. The parents aren't church-going and won't sing;
2. We don't have any musicians.

These answers imply that we know and believe music should be part of the baptismal liturgy. If we didn't believe that, then our answers would be along the lines of: *it's not an important occasion* or *singing isn't permitted*. Our answers then, are not reasons for not having music at baptism so much as problems in search of solutions.

Singing the liturgy is normative. As always, I challenge communities to think not of singing *in* the liturgy so much as *singing the liturgy*. Regard music not as an add-on but as integral or built into the liturgy. Doing so, means that even before selecting hymns, we consider first what parts of the liturgical text naturally lend themselves to being sung.

As for the musicians, we need to avoid an all-or-nothing approach. Talented musicians are a precious and rare gift for any parish community. If we have them, they can elevate the worship tremendously. However, singing the liturgy in a way that is ritually effective, can be done fairly simply and with few resources as long as there is intention and planning.

Why should we have music at baptisms?

We start by taking parents and family where they are. Often it means that we cannot expect these participants to know what is going on ritually and to participate with confidence. One response could be to simplify the celebration, making it as pedestrian as possible, both for our convenience and their comfort. The danger then is that we'll leave the parents with the sense that they aren't missing much by not participating in the life of the community. By offering good liturgy with music, we not only honour the Lord and our belief in the necessity of the sacrament but we tap into the beauty and power of music in ritual. It has the potential to draw the parents, family and guests more effectively into

a meaningful and transformative encounter with Christ.

Another response is to seize the opportunity for hospitality and evangelisation by intentionally including members of the parish in the celebration as musicians and also as readers, servers, welcomers and members of the assembly. If the parents and godparents are unsure in their own faith, a relationship with the community becomes paramount. The participation of parishioners demonstrates to the parents who may feel disconnected from the Church, that there is in fact a vibrant community of people in the parish willing to support them and their infant. The parish baptism preparation team might be key players in this endeavour.

What music should we have at baptisms?

The Order of Baptism of Children mentions nine opportunities for singing in the baptismal rite.

Acclamations. A sung acclamation is recommended after the Profession of Faith (renewal of baptism promises) to affirm the faith of the Church (OBC 59). A joyous acclamation is also suggested after the baptism of each child (OBC 60).

Liturgy of the Word. Unusually in the baptism rite, there is normally just one Gospel reading. However, a fuller Liturgy of the Word may be celebrated with a first reading, responsorial psalm and a gospel. In this case the psalm should be sung (OBC 44). The rite does not mention singing when it comes to the Litany of Saints after the Prayer of the Faithful (OBC 48) or with regard to the responses in the Blessing of Water (OBC 55); however, both could be sung to good effect using a simple chant or other melody.

Processions. *The Order of Baptism of Children* presents the liturgy as processional. Each procession offers an opportunity for singing: as the parents and godparents enter the church for the Liturgy of the Word (OBC 42), as they move to the font for baptism

(OBC 52), as they move to the altar for the concluding rites (OBC 67).

Hymns. Finally, three opportunities are offered for the singing of a hymn. The assembled people may sing at the beginning while the children are being received at the door of the church (OBC 35). A reflective song may be used after the homily (OBC 46). And at the end, after the final blessing, an Easter or Marian canticle may be sung.

This entire proposition may seem daunting for parishes that are already struggling to provide musical leadership for Sunday Masses. However, it can be done beautifully with a single cantor of moderate skill, especially if members of the community join in! Set yourself up for success by creating a small repertoire that the music leaders, other ministers, and parishioners can know well. Include the music used in the rite along with the liturgical formation that is part of the baptismal preparation. Provide a worship aid with the responses and melodies. *Catholic Worship Book II* provides suggested hymns and antiphons specifically for the rite of baptism.

How to measure success?

Despite everything we might do to prepare, the question remains: if these are not church-going people, will they sing? I don't think this really matters. It may be their child, but the celebration of the sacrament is a communal celebration belonging to the whole Body of Christ; it is not a private ritual of one family. It is a proclamation of the joy of Easter as we receive another member through the waters of salvation. We have a right and obligation to prepare the most dignified and authentic liturgy we can. And then we hope and pray that it touches all who are present and leads them into deeper relationship with Christ.

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FIRE AND WATER: DEATH AND RESURRECTION

by Tom Elich

Symbols speak with many voices. They uncover many layers of meaning and reveal the sacred in ways which are difficult to express in words. Fire and water seem to be opposites, and yet they can sing in harmony.

The campfire has drawn people together in this land for tens of thousands of years. It was a focus for family and community life – for cooking and eating, for dance, song and story-telling. It provided warmth, both physical and social. The tradition continued through colonial times as explorers and swagmen boiled their billy tea and baked their damper. Today people still gather round a fire – indeed a firepit is often incorporated into an outdoor entertaining space. And at the Easter Vigil, a bonfire is lit as the Church assembles for the night of nights. It draws people together and opens them to the mystery to be celebrated. The Easter candle above all speaks of the risen Christ, wondrously present and living in our midst. We hold our baptismal candles to affirm that Christ lives in us and works through us.

Fascinating as it is to gaze into the flames and comforting as it might be to enjoy its warmth, fire burns. It hurts and destroys. Australian bushfires can be devastating for the landscape and deadly for humans and animals. That is why we are learning the lessons of the ancients about controlled burning. But even as it speaks of destruction, fire promises new life and regrowth. Within weeks, sprouts of green appear among the ash and blackened bush. There is resurrection.

Where there's fire, there's smoke. The fragrance of eucalyptus smoke identifies who we are as Australians. Even in the suburbs, the smell of a log fire stirs the memory and the heart. In traditional cultures, walking through the smoke was a way of engaging with the purifying fire of regeneration. Sometimes this action is even drawn into the beginning of our liturgy.



And then there is light. Until the magic of electricity, fire was our only source of light in the night, whether in the family hearth or atop candles set around the house. The Easter fire blazing in the darkness is a brilliant symbol of Christ the Light, risen from the dark tomb of death. Today the candles we light in church are no longer the means by which the priest reads the prayers in the Missal, but rather serve as a witness to the mystery. They evoke for us a sense of the sacred, the holy and numinous. The Church's use of smoke by burning incense functions in the same way.

For millennia in our land, the creator Spirit has been venerated in water places – at rivers and streams, springs, rock pools and waterfalls. For it is here that life springs forth and life is sustained. By the water, food was always plentiful: roots of the swamp fern and fresh-water rush, bunya nuts, fish, oysters and mussels, edible grubs, ducks, snakes, kangaroo and wallaby, the eggs of ducks and scrub turkeys. And finding water in the desert was nothing short of a life-giving

miracle. Access to water was a matter of life and death for the colonial settlers and explorers. Certainly, our sunburnt land of drought and flooding rains has given powerful depth of meaning to the symbol of water.

Torrential rain, cyclones and flooding are water events, but destructive ones. Living creatures die by drowning; crops and

property are washed away. Water becomes a symbol of life and death, dying and rising. So it is precisely by water that we are joined to Christ. In the water of baptism, the family of the Church is born. Becoming brothers and sisters of Christ and children of the Father by immersion in water, disciples take up their cross and follow Christ to Calvary and to resurrection.

For a land girt by sea, salt water also figures prominently in our

minds and hearts. Not only an enduring source of food through the ages, the sea is also emblematic of our recreation and joy. Surf, sand and sunshine articulate the Australian identity, with most of the towns and cities clustered along the coastline. Water holds together in one symbol both death and regeneration, life and joy.

The lived experiences of fire and water in Australia not only shape the way our liturgical symbols are experienced and received, but also create the context in which we hear the words of Scripture and the liturgy. Whether it be the voice of God speaking in the burning bush or the tongues of fire touching the apostles at Pentecost, whether it be the Breath of God moving across the deep or the water that flows for Moses from the rock in the desert, Australian ears are attuned in a particular way to these biblical symbols. We rejoice in this. The deep meaning of the incarnation tells us that the mystery of God's presence and action in the world is always quite specific. God is with us. Here. Now.

What do you want me to do for you? Pastoral care of the sick and dying

by Judy Norris and John Fitz-Herbert

Jesus' question, *What do you want me to do for you?* (Mark 10:51) highlights the invitational nature of the role of those who provide pastoral care for the sick and dying in hospitals and aged care facilities.

Some time ago many Catholics would not leave home without having some message on their person advising, 'I am a Catholic: in the event of an accident, please call a priest'. The person's faith and the invitation for the Church to administer the sacraments and to pray with them were explicit.

These days such an identification with the Church is rare. Even the number of calls to a priest from families and patients has greatly diminished. It is most often up to the pastoral carer on duty to be the one to approach the sick person. During their pastoral assessment and through forming a relationship with the patient, they discover an invitation (or not) to engage in prayer and sacrament. Very often an openness to engage with the Church's representative, the pastoral carer, is clear. However, barriers to the graces offered by the Church need to be uncovered and burdens lifted to free the sick person from possible hurt, fear or sometimes a sense of guilt and shame. This is often the task of pastoral care.

Casey's journey

As pastoral carer on the oncology ward, I visited Casey. She noted as a Catholic on the patient list I was given. It is out of respect for the patient that the pastoral carer makes known who they are, from what denomination they come, and their purpose in turning up at the bedside uninvited. In fulfilling these requirements, I sensed that I may be welcome to ask Casey if I could sit down. We talked about a few things, and it wasn't long before Casey told me of her incurable cancer and the news that she had a very short time left. She was weak and there were silences. In quietly waiting for what Casey may have wished to talk about, she finally found some words that were most important for her to express. She shared many things she had done in her life which, she acknowledged, were far from the values of her faith and for which she held deep regret. She shared she had not been near the church since she left school. By offering her the uninterrupted gift of silent attentiveness, she felt safe to continue her story. As her tears began to flow, I asked her what it was she wanted most of all at this point in her life. Her answer was 'forgiveness and peace'. I asked her what she believed could bring her this state of forgiveness and peace and

she answered, 'I want to say I am sorry'. Casey had made her confession. I asked her if she would like the blessing of the Church upon her now and for her journey ahead. Too emotional to speak she nodded in the affirmative.

The priest on call visited her that afternoon. Casey died the following day.

It seems often that, when people can be unburdened of their life's regrets and sense of sin, they can surrender into the arms of God. Casey had found forgiveness and peace.

Sharing ministry to the sick and the dying

Priests will readily acknowledge that the lay pastoral carer is essential in reaching those who are seeking God's mercy during times of sickness or when approaching death. The shared ministry enables the sick person to engage with and clearly answer Jesus' question: *What do you want me to do for you?*

The Rites of the Church

Whenever pastoral care of the sick and the dying is being offered in hospitals, hospices, in aged care or nursing homes, or in a person's home, it is important to know and understand the rites and prayers for the sick and dying. There is a wealth of ecclesial wisdom, ministerial guidance and pastoral suggestions in *Pastoral Care of the Sick: Rites of Anointing and Viaticum* (Sydney: E.J. Dwyer, 1982).

It is important to *trust the rites* in the ministry of pastoral care. This means knowing the rites thoroughly through experience in the clinical setting. Ministers will see the range of options available – visits to sick people, communion of the sick, anointing of the sick, celebration of viaticum, commendation of the dying, and prayers for the dead – and will understand the basic human and pastoral difference between a ministry to the sick and the care of the dying.

The rites and prayers should not be delivered in a mechanical way at the bedside. The ritual book certainly doesn't assume the Church's representative in that moment – whether it be an ordained minister or a lay pastoral carer or chaplain – exercises a purely functional ministry, offering merely 'by rote' responses. Care, concern, compassion, and the Shepherd's attentiveness to the one who is sick or dying is what the

Church asks of all her ministers. Pope Francis speaks of *serving people in their humanity first*. Taking the time to find out from those gathered what they want you to do for them, in a gentle invitational way, can open their hearts to the beauty of the rites.

Ministry to Lucy

I was called to visit ICU where Lucy was lying in her bed with a very short time to live, surrounded by her family. The family was able to tell me that the priest had been called to their mother during the previous night.

Even in our increasingly secular society, all hospitals (private and public) still uphold the wishes of the sick and dying in relation to the spiritual care they elect to receive. Priest rosters are in place and often staff themselves will make the call on behalf of a patient whom they know has a faith background.

So Lucy had very recently received ministry from the priest appropriate to her circumstances, and this would have been at the discretion of the priest. The family were not requesting that the priest return at this final stage. I took the chance firstly to ask the family if they knew any of their mother's favourite prayers. Amidst tears one of the adult children remembered they would say the Hail Holy Queen before bed sometimes and they remembered it from school. Together we prayed this prayer as they rested their hands on their mother.

Within this sacred tableau of children honouring the faith of their mother, I began reciting the Prayers for the Dying. To conclude I invited each of them, as they were ready, to mark the sign of the cross on their mother's forehead. I then left them to say their final farewells to their mother.

The changing landscape of hospitals and aged care facilities across Australia

Hospitals and aged care facilities will have different agreements with priests. Many larger hospitals may have full-time priests and lay ministers in the pastoral care/chaplaincy department. Smaller hospitals may rely on the local parish priest who is assigned to a hospital within the parish boundaries.

Aged care facilities may have a resident older priest who agrees (in association with the local bishop and parish priest) to be available for ministry to the residents. This can be a special source of joy for the community. At the same time, many such facilities across the nation rely on the appointed chaplains. In larger parishes such as on the coastline of Australia there could be more than twenty aged care communities within the one parish.

The ministry of the priest

When a priest is called to see someone in any clinical setting, he would be wise to ask for a briefing from the staff member who called him. Essential questions in this briefing include the person's preferred name, their age, their condition, whether they are 'nil-by-mouth' and

who may be with them in the room or by the bedside. In general, it is worth asking if there is anything that the priest needs to know before meeting the person and ministering to them.

A pastoral approach to hospital and clinical staff builds professional rapport between the priest and members of staff. It demonstrates a collaborative response to the needs of the person who is sick. At times it may be that the nurse who briefs the priest is a committed Catholic or even a parishioner known to the priest and this is a bonus when it comes to ministering to the person. The same approach applies to the lay pastoral carer or chaplain who may be caring for the person whom the priest has been asked to see.



When the priest is with the person who is sick and/or their family, he needs to make an almost immediate assessment of what is required both for the sick person and other people in the same room or by the bedside. He needs to be attentive to the non-verbals in the room, to have a 'sixth sense', and to be listening to what is being said and to what is not being said. If he knows the ritual book for the sick and dying, he can then discern what liturgical prayers, rites, gestures and symbols may deepen the experience of Christ the Healer for the person and their loved ones in this moment. After a sacramental encounter with a sick person, it is a good practice to find the ward clerk or ward team leader and ask them to record in the patient's file that the priest has visited and what sacraments may have been celebrated. Where there are multiple priests who are on-call for the same hospital such recording is essential to avoid duplication and doubling up of ministry.

Today's collective pastoral experience suggests that it is more common now than in previous decades that the visit of the priest may be the first time the sick person has encountered a priest. Again, in the first few minutes of conversing with the person, the priest can try to formulate a few pastoral assumptions about the person's relationship with the Church, though this would rarely be voiced to the person. A pastor will need to be sensitive to all requests which may include conversation, prayer, giving communion, celebrating penance, anointing. He will have to make a pastoral judgement whether or not to anoint if he has been told

the person is dying. The practice of anointing may become complicated depending on the expectations and understandings of the sick person and the family. It must be emphasised once again that there is no one rule for every occasion. As we suggested earlier, the Church does not envisage a mechanistic or rote response to the needs of the person.

The role of lay pastoral carers

Pastoral carers and/or chaplains who are lay *are* the face of the Church for many in our hospitals and aged care facilities. They may be there every day or at least once or twice a week. Sometimes there is a team of carers; sometimes it is a single person. We know of one person in a rural aged care facility who has been the sole pastoral carer for over thirty years. She ministers to all residents regardless of their faith or in the absence of faith. This is a most significant reality in many clinical settings across the nation and it is now often the norm.

The priest who has pastoral responsibilities to the same hospital or aged care facility by virtue of his appointment to the local parish is called to co-minister with lay pastoral carers. This can be a rich experience of pastoral ministry for the priest who may feel more supported in the mutual pastoral care exercised in these settings. He will learn to trust the experience, instincts and insights of the pastoral carer as together they navigate Christ's concern for people who are sick and dying.

Know the person, read the pastoral moment and trust the rites

Recently we offered a series of all-day workshops in the Archdiocese of Brisbane for pastoral carers and chaplains. We titled the session: *Trusting the Rites: Pastoral Accompaniment of the Sick and Dying*. We were touched by the commitment of the chaplains and carers to this ministry. We were astounded by their honesty as they described the contemporary realities they are facing in the here-and-now of pastoral ministry.

After listening to their reflections and honouring their ministerial experiences, we believe that further reflection is necessary for the Church as together we face the reality of a patient who has chosen voluntary assisted dying (VAD). Such situations are not for the faint-hearted. We know that this reality was not faced by previous generations of lay and ordained ministers in clinical settings.

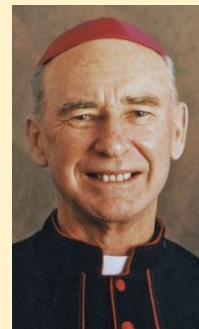
In conclusion, we turn again to Pope Francis' invitation to *serve humanity first*. We are encouraged by the Church to trust the liturgical gestures within the rites in the *Pastoral Care of the Sick*: words that welcome, phrases from sacred scripture, the laying on of hands, anointing human skin with reverence, and tracing the cross with solemnity and meaning as death approaches. *There is a time...* we hear proclaimed in the word of God; we ministers are the ones entrusted with meeting the pastoral needs of the person who is sick or dying in this moment.

■ Judy Norris is director of pastoral ministries with Centacare in Brisbane. John Fitz-Herbert is a liturgist and parish priest in the Archdiocese of Brisbane.



IN MEMORIAM

BISHOP KEVIN MANNING (1933-2024) was bishop of Armidale for six years before his appointment to the Diocese of Parramatta in 1997. He retired in 2010. He was chair of the Bishops Commission for Liturgy from 2004 to 2007. The most visible monument to his liturgical vision is the Parramatta cathedral that was built from the ruins of the fire of 1996. It is undoubtedly the best liturgical arrangement of a cathedral space in Australia and it is richly endowed with major artworks to inspire and create a sense of the sacred.



DR NATHAN MITCHELL died on 31 July 2024 at the age of 81. He was emeritus professor at the University of Notre Dame where he specialised in ritual studies and sacramental and liturgical theology. Respected teacher and poetic writer, he is well-known for his 1982 book *Cult and Controversy: the Worship of the Eucharist outside Mass*, and the 'Amen Corner' which he penned for 21 years in the journal *Worship*. His colleagues honoured his 60th birthday with a Festschrift entitled *Ars Liturgiae: Worship, Aesthetics, and Praxis*. He was also an accomplished musician and linguist.



BISHOP TIMOTHY DUDLEY-SMITH (1926-2024) was a committed old-school Anglican who is known by church musicians as a hymnwriter. Of his 400 hymns, three are found in the Australian *Catholic Worship Book II*: Tell Out, My Soul (213), When John Baptised by Jordan's River (284) and Sing a New Song to the Lord (600). *The Tablet's* Patrick Hudson noted that Dudley-Smith's church was 'established and protestant' and identified by 'decent hymns and dog collars'.



DATE CLAIMER

The next national conference, jointly sponsored by the National Liturgical Council and the Australian Pastoral Musicians Network, will be held at the Hilton Hotel in Adelaide from 1-3 October 2025. The title of the conference is "Pilgrims of Hope: Transformed through Sacrament & Song".

WALSINGHAM FEAST



The Church of England and Wales has a new feast in its local calendar. The memorial of Our Lady of Walsingham (24 September) has been raised to the level of Feast. This is in recognition of its historical importance and a growing devotion at the pilgrimage shrine. The shrine, located in the north of Norfolk, was established in 1061 after a vision of the Virgin Mary, and devotion focussed on the mystery of the Annunciation of the Lord. Both Anglican and Catholic shrines are present in Walsingham, offering the opportunity for ecumenical cooperation. The site fell into disuse after the Reformation but pilgrimage was revitalised in the 20th century.

FOUR PRIORITIES

Pope Francis sent a message to participants on the occasion of the 74th National Liturgical Week held in Italy at the end of August 2024. The theme of the week's reflection centred on the liturgy as the true prayer of the Church which shuns all forms of individualism and division but which rather focusses on the 'we' of the Church at prayer. Pope Francis outlined four priorities.

1. Rediscover the choral nature of liturgical prayer which gives us one body and one voice. *The beauty of the truth of Christian prayer resides precisely in the interweaving of voices which we might call 'chorality'. Every Christian prayer is always made up of several voices, just as every liturgical action is performed by several hands: we are joined to Christ and in Christ we discover all humanity.*

2. Take sacred hymns as an integral and necessary part of liturgical pastoral care, and not just as an ornamental element. In song, *the spiritual union of those in*

communion is expressed, the joy of the heart is manifested, and the communitarian nature of those who approach to receive the Eucharist is highlighted.

3. Counter the frenzy, noise and chatter that undermine us in daily life by valuing sacred silence. *It is an eloquent gesture, a favourable time and fruitful space to remain in the love of the Lord, cultivate a contemplative gaze, give depth to the prayer of the heart and let oneself be transformed by the Spirit.*

4. Promote liturgical ministeriality. This treats ministry not from a functional perspective, but as a service of the liturgy drawing on the diversity of gifts of the Holy Spirit. *It fosters the active participation of the assembly and promotes co-responsibility in the mission, manifesting, in concrete terms, the synodal nature of the Church. Thus may personalism and delusions of protagonism be avoided and a true service of communion be achieved.*

JUBILEE YEAR – PILGRIMS OF HOPE



Over recent decades, a Jubilee Year has sometimes encouraged people to engage in private devotions and prayer (for example, receiving a blessing by entering a cathedral through a Holy Door). For the Jubilee of 2025, the theme of pilgrimage is being highlighted in a broader way. We are being invited to bring hope, to intervene in favour of the poor and homeless; in favour of peace in the world, on our streets and in our homes; to encourage support for the earth as the common home of all people.

Pilgrimage might therefore be organised to places which support those in need such as the homeless, to places which serve as a reminder of historical violence and witness to harmony and respect, and so on. Planning a parish pilgrimage would be a worthy project for the pastoral council or liturgy committee.

PALM ISLAND – 100 YEARS



At the end of July, Townsville Bishop Tim Harris celebrated Mass on Palm Island to mark the centenary of the establishment of a permanent mission there. *This is a day worth celebrating*, he said. *The truth is that the Catholic Church has not abandoned Palm Island or its people. The Catholic Church, through its first missionaries, the religious sisters and priests over the years to the present day, has served and continues to serve with love and devotion. It took six years but at last in 1924 a mission was established on the island and the Eucharist began to be celebrated regularly. This was an historical moment of joy*, said the bishop, *but Palm Islanders have not always had a happy past; so for anything we may have done as Church, I apologise. Our overwhelming desire has always been to do good. Not only on this island, but also on Fantome Island which is where the Church went to care for lepers. It was Jesus who sent us all those years ago. We came with a purpose. We came in his name... We love you and with your permission we will continue to be with you in any way we can.*

BREAD AND WINE

This poem is found in several versions and is variously attributed. It is found, for example, an anthology of Celtic prayer by David Adam, a former miner and Canon of York Minster.

Be gentle when you touch bread:
let it not lie uncared for, unwanted.
So often bread is taken for granted.
There is such beauty in bread,
beauty of sun and soil,
beauty of patient toil.
Winds and rain have caressed it,
Christ often blessed it.
Be gentle when you touch bread.



Be careful when you pour wine:
Let it not be overlooked, disregarded.
So often wine is taken for granted.
There is such beauty in wine,
the sweetness of love,
the power of blood.
Winds and air have caressed it,
Christ often blessed it.
Be careful when you pour wine.

AAL CONFERENCE



The ecumenical Australian Academy of Liturgy is holding its next conference on 14-16 January 2025. The venue is the Ibis Styles Hotel

in Brisbane. Three eminent speakers have agreed to present keynote addresses: Professor Gerard Moore (Principal at Broken Bay Institute); Rev Dr Michelle Cook (Theology Teacher at Nungalinya College and Moderator Elect of the Uniting Church Northern Synod); and Rev Dr Peter Catt (Dean of St John's Anglican Cathedral in Brisbane). The conference program will incorporate a public lecture as an outreach to the local Churches (7pm, Tuesday 14 January).

Details of how to register and costs will be released very soon. Members are invited to prepare short papers on the topic. Contact email: aal.brisbane2025@gmail.com

SYNOD - RECONCILIATION

Forgiveness and reconciliation are key to the nature and ministry of the Church. However, this is not only to think of the Church as the administrator and dispenser of sacramental forgiveness. The Church also needs to ask for forgiveness, acknowledging pain and shame, because we are all sinners in need of God's mercy. To confess is the condition for a new beginning.

The second session of the Synod in Rome in October this year will again begin with a spiritual retreat which will lead into a penitential liturgy. This is not a 'blame game', but rather an opportunity to acknowledge that we belong to those who, by action or omission, cause suffering for others and inflict evil on the innocent and defenceless.



In the name of all the baptised, participants will confess the sin against peace; the sin against creation, indigenous populations and migrants; the sin of abuse against women, family and youth; the sin of using doctrine as stones to be hurled at others; the sin against poverty; and the sin against synodality (the lack of listening, communion and participation).

The penitential liturgy and its prayer for forgiveness looks to the future and seeks a new beginning.

EILEEN O'CONNOR



Servant of God, Eileen O'Connor, has moved to the next level in the journey towards

her canonisation (for her story, see *Liturgy News*, 50/4, Summer 2020). The Archdiocese of Sydney has completed a four-year process of documenting her life's work and collecting testimony of her sanctity. Now the decree and the documentation have gone to the Dicastery for the Causes of Saints in Rome where they will be looking to investigate a miracle which can be attributed to her intercession.

Born in 1892, Eileen died at 28 after a life of extreme pain and suffering. She helped found Our Lady's Nurses for the Poor ('Brown Nurses') who visited the impoverished sick in their homes.

EUCCHARISTIC CONGRESS 2028



The 54th International Eucharistic Congress (held every four years) will be celebrated in Sydney in 2028, a hundred years after it was last held there. Archbishop Anthony Fisher OP expressed his joy that it would be an opportunity for Australians and people from around the world to deepen their encounter with Christ through the Eucharist.

As the source and summit of the Christian life, he said, the Eucharist has the power to convert hearts and stir fervour. The God who dwells among us, Emmanuel, gifts us with his permanent presence through the Eucharist and calls us to follow him so that we might be the salt of the earth and the light of the world. It is my hope that in hosting the International Eucharistic Congress we might renew the sense of solemnity, mystery, welcome and joy in the liturgical life of our city, revitalise our Christian lives, and increase our outreach to those most in need.

Above: souvenir medals from 1928.

OUR COVER



HANDS,
touching hands, reaching out,
touching me, touching you.

Neil Diamond, Sweet Caroline (1969)

Our Cover

Liturgy is not a page with words or texts.
It is the action of the People of God at worship.
Human touch and gesture are a key part of liturgy.

Clare Schwantes (editor), *Mystery and Mission: The Art of Liturgical Celebration*, (Brisbane, Liturgy Publications, 2024) 380 pages, \$39.95.

by James Cronin

There was great enthusiasm last year when 500 people gathered for the 2023 joint conference of the National Liturgical Council and the Australian Pastoral Musicians Network. This book containing the collected papers showcases the great depth of wisdom and knowledge in the Australian church; it provides an excellent source of information and inspiration! You will find the keynote addresses by Timothy O'Malley, Tom Elich, Maeve Louise Heaney and Jason McFarland plus another twenty workshop presentations covering both liturgical music and other liturgical topics.

Bishop Paul Bird offers a practical and comprehensive outline of the 'art of celebrating'. The pace of the liturgy is very important. For example, the Scripture readings and Eucharistic Prayer are sometimes poorly executed. Pauses and silences, not necessarily the same thing, can make all the difference here. It is noteworthy that in his televised Masses *Pope Francis usually sits for some time in silence after the homily and after communion* (p. 147). The pope certainly uses longer silences than any Masses I have witnessed elsewhere! Pauses within the sung parts of the Mass also deserves careful thought and implementation. Anthony Young points out that a good accompanist playing a traditional hymn such as 'Holy God We Praise Thy Name' will *leave a metrical beat of silence between each strophic verse* (p. 98). Delicate but vital distinctions need to be attended to here: on the one hand, playing the whole tune before a hymn is sung can be helpful to

the congregation, while on other hand, for acclamations, a single note is usually all that is needed.

Clare Schwantes sums up her paper on proclaiming the Scripture by urging us to strive to realise our liturgies as corporate affairs: *While there is a sense of personal encounter, this takes place within the social, corporate context of the liturgy* (p. 142). This is expressed in the common postures and gestures of the people. Those who insist on dropping to their knees to receive communion are mistaken in their desire to demonstrate their devotion to the Blessed Sacrament. They should rather be identifying, by their common posture, the real presence of Christ in his Body which is us, together, redeemed sinners all!

The wider context for the celebration of the liturgy is of course the culture of Australian society. Timothy O'Malley identified some of the challenges to a liturgical/sacramental vision. The indictment is that *our time is completely dominated by the compulsion of production, the sort of time we inhabit today is a time without festival. Life becomes impoverished; it freezes into mere survival* (p. 9). I remember growing up in a household where Sunday was truly a day of rest; after Mass, the day was devoted, not to trips to Bunnings for home improvement, but rather to the family lunch, napping, and socialising. The mission of evangelisation today needs to be directed *at an age that has not given up worship but is simply worshipping the wrong things* (p. 14).

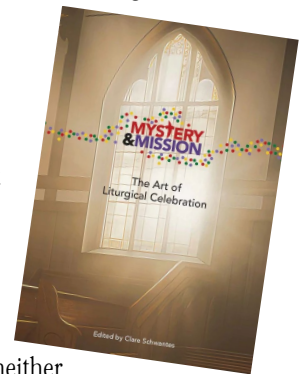
One of the accomplishments of our parish is obeying the Lectionary instruction that 'as a rule' the responsorial psalm should be sung. However, until reading Paul Mason's paper on composing Responsorial Psalms for the new Lectionary, I was unaware of the contentiousness of sung psalmody. There is discord in the English-speaking world about which translation to rely upon. Apparently the United States Lectionary is flawed in its choice of both version and division of verses. At the same time, he fears that Australia will be *overrun with foreign Lectionaries while waiting for our own Lectionary to materialise* (p. 259).

Tom Elich's contribution on liturgical space is especially welcome. He is clear on two matters. Firstly, he points out the inter-relatedness of all the components necessary in a church: altar, ambo, font, nave, reservation chapel. Secondly, he stresses that *the church space should create the sense that the people are present, not as an audience of spectators, but as doers of the liturgy. ...the priest who presides is integrated into the assembly of the baptised. ...No longer ought the priest and other ministers be put 'at the front' as if on a stage* (pp. 242-3). This change of mindset is an ongoing battle since, for some Catholics, not having the tabernacle front and centre in the main space is tantamount to heresy!

Many older churches have neither the money nor the space to provide a worthy alternative but the insight stands: some separation of the tabernacle from the altar is required so that *the consecrated bread and wine are... seen as the fruit of the Liturgy of the Eucharist and [does] not overshadow the unfolding liturgical action from the beginning of the Mass* (p. 248).

Not being a musician myself, I greatly appreciated the articles by Jennifer O'Brien (whose psalm settings are already widely appreciated) and Fiona Dyball. The latter gives fine recommendations for all the sacraments, and a cornucopia of internet links to further resources. Having invested some years ago in copies for our parish music ministers, I was bolstered by her reminder that *Catholic Worship Book II is the official collection of liturgical music for Australian Catholic worship and a great base collection for every school and parish community* (p. 283).

May these papers from the 2023 national convention featuring wonderful Australian liturgists, musicians and composers incite us in our parish communities to engage with the Church's liturgy for many years to come! Highly recommended.





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LITURGY PLANNING CALENDAR 2025



DECEMBER			JANUARY		FEBRUARY		MARCH					
Su	1	Advent 1	◆ 2025 ◆									
M	2											
Tu	3											
W	4		1	Mary Mother of God					AUTUMN			
Th	5		2									
F	6		3									
Sa	7		4									1
Su	8	Advent 2	5	Epiphany of Lord					2	Presentation of Lord	2	Ordinary Time 8
M	9	Immaculate Conception	6						3		3	
Tu	10		7						4		4	
W	11		8		5		5	Ash Wednesday				
Th	12		9		6		6					
F	13		10		7		7					
Sa	14		11		8		8					
Su	15	Advent 3	12	Baptism of Lord	9	Ordinary Time 5	9	Lent 1				
M	16		13		10		10					
Tu	17		14		11		11					
W	18		15		12		12					
Th	19		16		13		13					
F	20		17		14		14					
Sa	21		18		15		15					
Su	22	Advent 4	19	Ordinary Time 2	16	Ordinary Time 6	16	Lent 2				
M	23		20		17		17	St Patrick				
Tu	24		21		18		18					
W	25	Nativity of the Lord	22		19		19	St Joseph				
Th	26		23		20		20					
F	27		24		21		21					
Sa	28		25		22		22					
Su	29	Holy Family	26	Ordinary Time 3	23	Ordinary Time 7	23	Lent 3				
M	30		27		24		24					
Tu	31		28		25		25	Annunciation of Lord				
W	SUMMER		29		26		26					
Th			30		27		27					
F			31		28		28					
Sa									29			
Su							30	Lent 4				
M							31					

ADVENT CHRISTMAS

ORDINARY TIME

LENT

		APRIL		MAY		JUNE		JULY	
Su						1	Ascension of Lord		
M						2			
Tu	1					3		1	
W	2					4		2	
Th	3		1			5		3	
F	4		2			6		4	
Sa	5		3			7		5	
Su	6	Lent 5	4	Easter 3		8	Pentecost	6	Ordinary Time 14
M	7		5			9		7	
Tu	8		6			10		8	
W	9		7			11		9	
Th	10		8			12		10	
F	11		9			13		11	
Sa	12		10			14		12	
Su	13	Passion (Palm) Sunday	11	Easter 4		15	Holy Trinity	13	Ordinary Time 15
M	14		12			16		14	
Tu	15		13			17		15	
W	16		14			18		16	
Th	17	Holy Thursday	15			19		17	
F	18	Good Friday	16			20		18	
Sa	19		17			21		19	
Su	20	Easter Sunday	18	Easter 5		22	Body & Blood of Christ	20	Ordinary Time 16
M	21		19			23		21	
Tu	22		20			24	Nativity of John Baptist	22	
W	23		21			25		23	
Th	24		22			26		24	
F	25		23			27	Sacred Heart	25	
Sa	26		24	Mary Help of Christians		28		26	
Su	27	Easter 2	25	Easter 6		29	Sts Peter and Paul	27	Ordinary Time 17
M	28		26			30		28	
Tu	29		27			WINTER		29	
W	30		28		30				
Th			29					31	
F			30						
Sa			31						
Su									
M									

EASTER

ORDINARY TIME

AUGUST		SEPTEMBER		OCTOBER		NOVEMBER		
Su								
M		1						
Tu		2						
W		3		1				
Th		4		2				
F	1	5		3				
Sa	2	6		4		1	All Saints	
Su	3	Ordinary Time 18	7	Ordinary Time 23	5	Ordinary Time 27	2	All Souls
M	4		8		6		3	
Tu	5		9		7		4	
W	6		10		8		5	
Th	7		11		9		6	
F	8	St Mary MacKillop	12		10		7	
Sa	9		13		11		8	
Su	10	Ordinary Time 19	14	Exaltation of the Cross	12	Ordinary Time 28	9	Dedication of the Lateran
M	11		15		13		10	
Tu	12		16		14		11	
W	13		17		15		12	
Th	14		18		16		13	
F	15	Assumption	19		17		14	
Sa	16		20		18		15	
Su	17	Ordinary Time 20	21	Ordinary Time 25	19	Ordinary Time 29	16	Ordinary Time 33
M	18		22		20		17	
Tu	19		23		21		18	
W	20		24		22		19	
Th	21		25		23		20	
F	22		26		24		21	
Sa	23		27		25		22	
Su	24	Ordinary Time 21	28	Ordinary Time 26	26	Ordinary Time 30	23	Christ King of the Universe
M	25		29		27		24	
Tu	26		30		28		25	
W	27		SPRING		29		26	
Th	28				30		27	
F	29			31		28		
Sa	30					29		
Su	31	Ordinary Time 22				30	Advent 1	
M								

ORDINARY TIME

TABLE of SUNDAYS	Year B	Year C	Year A	Year B	Year C	Year A	Year B	Year C	Year A	Year B
Sunday of Advent 1	Dec 3	Dec 1	Nov 30	Nov 29	Nov 28	Dec 3	Dec 2	Dec 1	Nov 30	Nov 28
Sunday of Advent 2	Dec 10	Dec 8	Dec 7	Dec 6	Dec 5	Dec 10	Dec 9	Dec 8	Dec 7	Dec 5
Sunday of Advent 3	Dec 17	Dec 15	Dec 14	Dec 13	Dec 12	Dec 17	Dec 16	Dec 15	Dec 14	Dec 12
Sunday of Advent 4	Dec 24	Dec 22	Dec 21	Dec 20	Dec 19	Dec 24	Dec 23	Dec 22	Dec 21	Dec 19
Christmas Day	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Holy Family	Dec 31	Dec 29	Dec 28	Dec 27	Dec 26	Dec 31	Dec 30	Dec 29	Dec 28	Dec 26
	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033
Mary, Mother of God	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Epiphany	Jan 7	Jan 5	Jan 4	Jan 3	Jan 2	Jan 7	Jan 6	Jan 5	Jan 4	Jan 2
Baptism of the Lord	•	Jan 12	Jan 11	Jan 10	Jan 9	•	Jan 13	Jan 12	Jan 11	Jan 9
Sunday in Ordinary Time 2	Jan 14	Jan 19	Jan 18	Jan 17	Jan 16	Jan 14	Jan 20	Jan 19	Jan 18	Jan 16
Sunday in Ordinary Time 3	Jan 21	Jan 26	Jan 25	Jan 24	Jan 23	Jan 21	Jan 27	Jan 26	Jan 25	Jan 23
Sunday in Ordinary Time 4	Jan 28	•	Feb 1	Jan 31	Jan 30	Jan 28	Feb 3	•	Feb 1	Jan 30
Presentation of the Lord	•	Feb 2	•	•	•	•	•	Feb 2	•	•
Sunday in Ordinary Time 5	Feb 4	Feb 9	Feb 8	Feb 7	Feb 6	Feb 4	Feb 10	Feb 9	Feb 8	Feb 6
Sunday in Ordinary Time 6	Feb 11	Feb 16	Feb 15	•	Feb 13	Feb 11	Feb 17	Feb 16	•	Feb 13
Sunday in Ordinary Time 7	•	Feb 23	•	•	Feb 20	•	Feb 24	Feb 23	•	Feb 20
Sunday in Ordinary Time 8	•	Mar 2	•	•	Feb 27	•	Mar 3	•	•	Feb 27
Sunday in Ordinary Time 9	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Sunday of Lent 1	Feb 18	Mar 9	Feb 22	Feb 14	Mar 5	Feb 18	Mar 10	Mar 2	Feb 15	Mar 6
Sunday of Lent 2	Feb 25	Mar 16	Mar 1	Feb 21	Mar 12	Feb 25	Mar 17	Mar 9	Feb 22	Mar 13
Sunday of Lent 3	Mar 3	Mar 23	Mar 8	Feb 28	Mar 19	Mar 4	Mar 24	Mar 16	Feb 29	Mar 20
Sunday of Lent 4	Mar 10	Mar 30	Mar 15	Mar 7	Mar 26	Mar 11	Mar 31	Mar 23	Mar 7	Mar 27
Sunday of Lent 5	Mar 17	Apr 6	Mar 22	Mar 14	Apr 2	Mar 18	Apr 7	Mar 30	Mar 14	Apr 3
Passion (Palm) Sunday	Mar 24	Apr 13	Mar 29	Mar 21	Apr 9	Mar 25	Apr 14	Apr 6	Mar 21	Apr 10
Easter Sunday	Mar 31	Apr 20	Apr 5	Mar 28	Apr 16	Apr 1	Apr 21	Apr 13	Mar 28	Apr 17
Sunday of Easter 2	Apr 7	Apr 27	Apr 12	Apr 4	Apr 23	Apr 8	Apr 28	Apr 20	Apr 4	Apr 24
Sunday of Easter 3	Apr 14	May 4	Apr 19	Apr 11	Apr 30	Apr 15	May 5	Apr 27	Apr 11	May 1
Sunday of Easter 4	Apr 21	May 11	Apr 26	Apr 18	May 7	Apr 22	May 12	May 4	Apr 18	May 8
Sunday of Easter 5	Apr 28	May 18	May 3	Apr 25	May 14	Apr 29	May 19	May 11	Apr 25	May 15
Sunday of Easter 6	May 5	May 25	May 10	May 2	May 21	May 6	May 26	May 18	May 2	May 22
Ascension	May 12	Jun 1	May 17	May 9	May 28	May 13	Jun 2	May 25	May 9	May 29
Pentecost	May 19	Jun 8	May 24	May 16	Jun 4	May 20	Jun 9	Jun 1	May 16	Jun 5
Trinity Sunday	May 26	Jun 15	May 31	May 23	Jun 11	May 27	Jun 16	Jun 8	May 23	Jun 12
Body and Blood of Christ	Jun 2	Jun 22	Jun 7	May 30	Jun 18	Jun 3	Jun 23	Jun 15	May 30	Jun 19
Sunday in Ordinary Time 10	Jun 9	•	•	Jun 6	•	Jun 10	•	•	Jun 6	•
Sunday in Ordinary Time 11	Jun 16	•	Jun 14	Jun 13	•	Jun 17	•	•	Jun 13	•
Sunday in Ordinary Time 12	Jun 23	•	Jun 21	Jun 20	Jun 25	•	•	Jun 22	Jun 20	•
Nativity of John the Baptist	•	•	•	•	•	Jun 24	•	•	•	•
Sunday in Ordinary Time 13	Jun 30	•	Jun 28	Jun 27	Jul 2	Jul 1	Jun 30	•	Jun 27	Jun 26
Peter and Paul Apostles	•	Jun 29	•	•	•	•	•	Jun 29	•	•
Sunday in Ordinary Time 14	Jul 7	Jul 6	Jul 5	Jul 4	Jul 9	Jul 8	Jul 7	Jul 6	Jul 4	Jul 3
Sunday in Ordinary Time 15	Jul 14	Jul 13	Jul 12	Jul 11	Jul 16	Jul 15	Jul 14	Jul 13	Jul 11	Jul 10
Sunday in Ordinary Time 16	Jul 21	Jul 20	Jul 19	Jul 18	Jul 23	Jul 22	Jul 21	Jul 20	Jul 18	Jul 17
Sunday in Ordinary Time 17	Jul 28	Jul 27	Jul 26	Jul 25	Jul 30	Jul 29	Jul 28	Jul 27	Jul 25	Jul 24
Sunday in Ordinary Time 18	Aug 4	Aug 3	Aug 2	Aug 1	•	Aug 5	Aug 4	Aug 3	Aug 1	Jul 31
Transfiguration of the Lord	•	•	•	•	Aug 6	•	•	•	•	•
Mary of the Cross	•	•	•	Aug 8	•	•	•	•	Aug 8	•
Sunday in Ordinary Time 19	Aug 11	Aug 10	Aug 9	•	Aug 13	Aug 12	Aug 11	Aug 10	•	Aug 7
Assumption	•	•	•	Aug 15	•	•	•	•	Aug 15	•
Sunday in Ordinary Time 20	Aug 18	Aug 17	Aug 16	•	Aug 20	Aug 19	Aug 18	Aug 17	•	Aug 14
Sunday in Ordinary Time 21	Aug 25	Aug 24	Aug 23	Aug 22	Aug 27	Aug 26	Aug 25	Aug 24	Aug 22	Aug 21
Sunday in Ordinary Time 22	Sep 1	Aug 31	Aug 30	Aug 29	Sep 3	Sep 2	Sep 1	Aug 31	Aug 29	Aug 28
Sunday in Ordinary Time 23	Sep 8	Sep 7	Sep 6	Sep 5	Sep 10	Sep 9	Sep 8	Sep 7	Sep 5	Sep 4
Sunday in Ordinary Time 24	Sep 15	•	Sep 13	Sep 12	Sep 17	Sep 16	Sep 15	•	Sep 12	Sep 11
Triumph of the Cross	•	Sep 14	•	•	•	•	•	Sep 14	•	•
Sunday in Ordinary Time 25	Sep 22	Sep 21	Sep 20	Sep 19	Sep 24	Sep 23	Sep 22	Sep 21	Sep 19	Sep 18
Sunday in Ordinary Time 26	Sep 29	Sep 28	Sep 27	Sep 26	Oct 1	Sep 30	Sep 29	Sep 28	Sep 26	Sep 25
Sunday in Ordinary Time 27	Oct 6	Oct 5	Oct 4	Oct 3	Oct 8	Oct 7	Oct 6	Oct 5	Oct 3	Oct 2
Sunday in Ordinary Time 28	Oct 13	Oct 12	Oct 11	Oct 10	Oct 15	Oct 14	Oct 13	Oct 12	Oct 10	Oct 9
Sunday in Ordinary Time 29	Oct 20	Oct 19	Oct 18	Oct 17	Oct 22	Oct 21	Oct 20	Oct 19	Oct 17	Oct 16
Sunday in Ordinary Time 30	Oct 27	Oct 26	Oct 25	Oct 24	Oct 29	Oct 28	Oct 27	Oct 26	Oct 24	Oct 23
Sunday in Ordinary Time 31	Nov 3	•	•	Oct 31	Nov 5	Nov 4	Nov 3	•	Oct 31	Oct 30
All Saints	•	•	Nov 1	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
All Souls	•	Nov 2	•	•	•	•	•	Nov 2	•	•
Sunday in Ordinary Time 32	Nov 10	•	Nov 8	Nov 7	Nov 12	Nov 11	Nov 10	•	Nov 7	Nov 6
Dedication of John Lateran	•	Nov 9	•	•	•	•	•	Nov 9	•	•
Sunday in Ordinary Time 33	Nov 17	Nov 16	Nov 15	Nov 14	Nov 19	Nov 18	Nov 17	Nov 16	Nov 14	Nov 13
Christ the King	Nov 24	Nov 23	Nov 22	Nov 21	Nov 26	Nov 25	Nov 24	Nov 23	Nov 21	Nov 20

