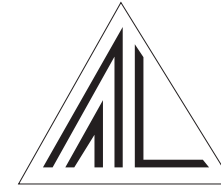




Australian Journal  
of **Liturgy**

VOLUME 17 NUMBER 3 2021



AUSTRALIAN ACADEMY OF LITURGY

# Australian Journal of **Liturgy**

VOLUME 17 **NUMBER 3** 2021

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Associate Editor	Sharon Boyd
Editorial Panel	Robert Gribben Charles Sherlock Marian Free Howard Harris Jason McFarland Barry M Craig

*AJL is the journal of the Australian Academy of Liturgy and exists to further the study of liturgy at a scholarly level, and to comment on and provide information concerning liturgical matters with special reference to Australia. AJL is published twice a year.*

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Cover: The Rothenfels chapel and its furnishings designed by Rudolf Schwarz.  
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# Australian Journal of Liturgy

## Volume 17 Number 3 (2021)

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## Editorial



Who could have dreamt that COVID-19 would still have us firmly in its grasp, worldwide? This year in Western Australia we have had short sharp lockdowns which have been very effective in the control of the virus but have denied us our weekly liturgy. Our Mass attendance has not resumed its pre-March 2020 numbers and from anecdotal evidence it might not resume for some time yet. Therefore, liturgy and pandemics are top of our thoughts.

This issue has a variety of interesting material. Our lead article by Fr Jo Dirks from Melbourne, brings us an interesting historical account. Dirks speaks of Burg Rothenfels, Guardini and the Quickborn German Youth Movement and late in the piece we learn that his uncle was closely associated with Guardini and we get a personal insight into the great liturgist. I have *The Spirit of the Liturgy* by Guardini on my shelf and over the years have delved into it with great joy. What was interesting therefore in Dirks's article was the history of the man and his great service to young people at Burg Rothenfels. One of the people that Guardini deeply influenced at Rothenfels was Karl Rahner SJ. Both of them contributed richly to the development of the Second Vatican Council. The assembly of the information and the copyright procedures were very time consuming for Dirks and the responses from German sources in particular have been very encouraging. This issue will be sent to all of those sources.

Howard Harris has continued the discussion on liturgy and COVID-19 using some of the resources from the previous issue of AJL, among others. He explores the nature of spectatorship as that has been particularly relevant to the move to online liturgy during the pandemic. Harris presents many different perspectives on spectatorship and the way in which it is possible to participate or to be passive. While there seems to be some consensus in the Catholic and Anglican communities that Eucharist requires physical presence within a liturgical space in order to become one in the Body of Christ, there are other options for gathering and over the coming months, even years, it is certain to remain an object of our interest. We must develop ways of retaining our communities during these times of separation and we know that this will continue into the future.

Another area of great interest, particularly from the Catholic perspective, is the Plenary Council being held by the Catholic Church of Australia. The final two articles in this issue specifically concentrate on this topic. While there is some cross over between the two of them, David Orr focusses on an understanding of what is to happen, differing from the second article by Tom Elich and Stephen Hackett. All three members are involved in the Council and I too am a member as a representative from Perth Archdiocese. Our team is large because we have heads of religious orders, seminaries and the University of Notre Dame Australia, plus Rome has allowed for two extra lay people and so two young women from Catholic education have now joined us. There is a similar pattern in other Archdioceses. We have already met several times and one session was to practice the method of discernment that is going to be the process through which decisions are made. The meeting last November where this process was practiced, had an astounding result and all the people present felt an overwhelming sense of the Spirit drawing us into deep consideration of what the Church in Australia will be in the future. Elich and Hackett focus on the writing that has already been published and the possibilities that it offers. We will meet in a multi-modal format from 3-10 October 2021 and then again in July 2022 in Sydney. The conclusions will be written up and presented to Rome for ratification and what is finally presented will then be binding on the Church in Australia. There is much valuable material on the website <https://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/>

It is good to hear from the Victorian Chapter that progress is being made towards the conference in Melbourne for January 2022 and we sincerely hope that it can be face to face. Keep checking our website for details.

Our book review comes from Robert Gribben, lifetime member of the AAL and much respected academic. He reviews Charles Sherlock's latest book and of course Charles is also a life member and greatly respected academic. It is wonderful that this journal can give insight into the work of these respected men. We always look forward to material from our members.

May the coming months see us freed from COVID-19 and able to be more closely engaged with each other, but also with the many lessons that we have needed to learn.

Easter blessings on you all

**Angela McCarthy**  
Editor

# Burg Rothenfels, Guardini and the Quickborn German Youth Movement

Jo Dirks



**Jo Dirks** joined the Blessed Sacrament Congregation in 1960. In 2019 he completed 50 of priestly service. His passion for research, scholarship, and liturgy are epitomised in a return to his birth country with spectacular results. Spectrum Publications are now preparing a collection of his recent poetry for publication.

## ABSTRACT

*This article describes that among the various German youth movements after the First World War it was the Quickborn movement that witnessed an exceptional development. This was due to a chain of circumstances that included the acquisition of Burg Rothenfels, the presence of Romano Guardini as mentor to youth, the creation of a new worship space by the architect Rudolf Schwarz, and the flow of gifted people under Guardini's leadership, such as Karl Rahner.*

The German theologian Karl Rahner SJ famously said that, 'It is a widely known fact that the Rothenfels experiment was the immediate model for the liturgical reforms of Vatican II.<sup>1</sup> Rahner, before he entered the Jesuits, made a retreat at Burg Rothenfels under the direction of Romano Guardini in 1920.<sup>2</sup> 'There I was influenced positively in many ways that affected my future life, especially as that was where I first met Romano Guardini at Castle Rothenfels.'<sup>3</sup> This fourfold association of Burg Rothenfels, Quickborn, Guardini and Rahner is made also by Andreas P. Batlogg SJ.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Kühn, Thomas, 2007. "Romano Guardini: The Teacher of Teachers" in *An Architecture of Immanence: Architecture for Worship and Ministry Today*. By Mark A. Torgerson. Grand Rapids, Michigan: William. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 34.

<sup>2</sup> Cooper, Adam G., 2014. *Naturally Human, Supernaturally God: Deification in Pre-conciliar Catholicism*. Fortress Press, Minneapolis.

<sup>3</sup> Kühn, *Romano Guardini*, 47, 48.

<sup>4</sup> Batlogg SJ, Andreas P., 374. "Selbst-verständlich katholisch: ein indiskutables Verhältnis zur Kirche". In *Die Kirchenkritik der Mystiker: Prophetie aus Gotteserfahrung. Band III, von der Aufklärung bis zur Gegenwart*. Ed. Mariano Delgado und Gottfried Fuchs.

Before proceeding further, it would be helpful to know the general situation in Germany in 1919. This is sketched out in the next few paragraphs that follow. The source is the Centenary brochure of Rothenfels/Quickborn which occurred in 2019.<sup>5</sup> The German Youth Movement Quickborn came into existence after the internal, national debacle at the end of World War I. There was turmoil after the armistice was signed to end the proceedings on the battlefield. One of the first casualties was the resignation and exile of Kaiser Wilhelm.

The new political landscape was marked by the coming to power of the SPD, the Social Democratic Party, and its leader Friedrich Ebert, who was born in Heidelberg. This meant quite an upheaval, with a Rhinelander and not a Prussian, at the helm of the new government. The Empire had collapsed and its place was taken by the new Weimar Republic. Ebert became President of the Weimar Republic.

## Romano Guardini

Romano Guardini was a first-rate mind and a natural leader in the German youth movement. He was born in Verona, Italy, in 1885. 'Guardini grew up mostly in Mainz, where his father was Italian consul. His education, however, was German and he decided to stay in Germany as an adult. His 'European' rather than nationalist spirit was recognised in the conferral of the Erasmus Prize on him in 1962.<sup>6</sup> Guardini was a Catholic priest, author, and academic. He was one of the most important figures in Catholic intellectual life in the 20th century. He began his university studies at Tübingen and was ordained a priest in 1910. By 1915 he had completed a doctorate on St Bonaventure. Guardini was interested in the liturgy. He became friends with the abbot of Maria Laach monastery Ildefons Herwegen OSB. Guardini wrote a brilliant book *Vom Geist der Liturgie* in 1918 (The Spirit of the Liturgy) which became a key work. His approach to the liturgy was philosophical and psychological. He lamented the Kantian elevation of ethics over knowledge, of Kantian reason and Nietzschean will over logos.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Centenary Publication of Burg Rothenfels, 2019.

<sup>6</sup> Misner, Paul. "Guardini, Romano." In *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 198-199. Vol. 16. McGraw Hill, Washington DC, NY, 1974.

<sup>7</sup> Guardini, Romano. Trans. by Ada Lane. *The Spirit of the Liturgy*. Sheed & Ward Inc. New York. 1953 202-203.

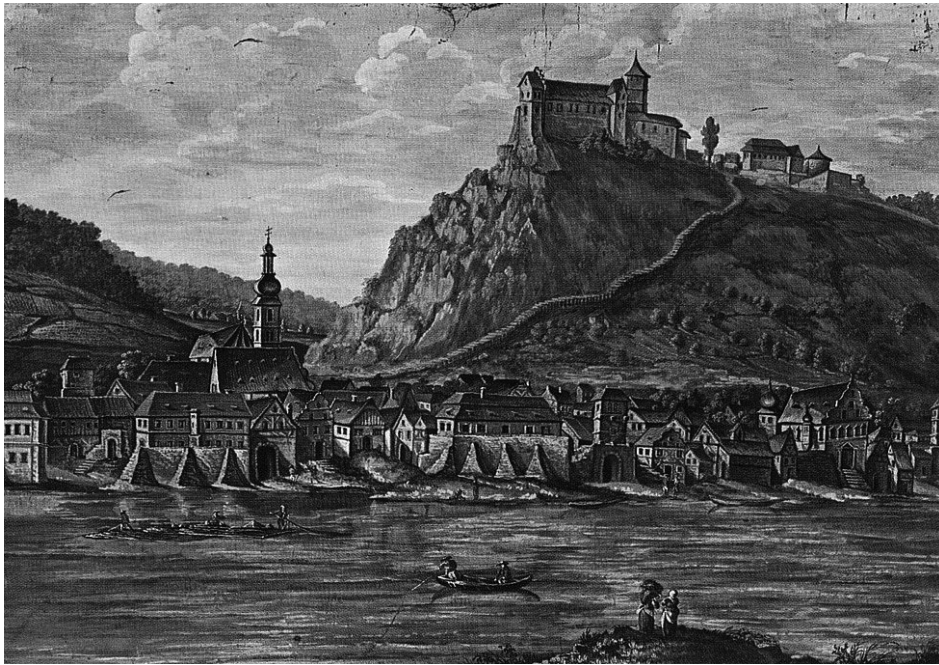


Fig. 1. Castle and town of Rothenfels. Painting from 1790. Burg Rothenfels overlooks Rothenfels on the Main River between Frankfurt and Würzburg, or more specifically, between Marktheidenfeld and Lohr.<sup>8</sup>

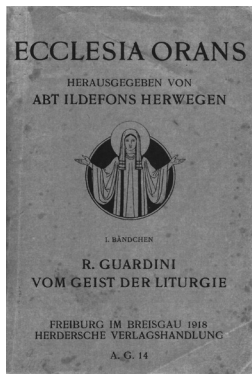


Fig. 2. The Spirit of the Liturgy

[It] is particularly difficult for modern people, who find it so hard to renounce their independence ... Humility by renunciation<sup>9</sup>. He notes that for some, life is constant flux and their inability to live symbolically, essential for creatures who are called to unify the spiritual and the physical '... the sense of cohesion and the power of discrimination – are essential to the creation of symbol'.<sup>10</sup> Guardini also railed against the Enlightenment stating that a work of art has no purpose but a meaning.<sup>11</sup> Christ is the Logos, divine Wisdom personified. The Church and her liturgy play at becoming children of light, much as King David danced before the Ark, to the contempt of Michal, his wife.<sup>12</sup> *The Spirit of the Liturgy* was important because it first appeared

<sup>8</sup> Permission given by Burg Rothenfels Buchhandlung to reproduce.

<sup>9</sup> Guardini, Romano, Trans. by Ada Lane. *The Spirit of the Liturgy*. Sheed & Ward Inc. New York. 1953. 144.

<sup>10</sup> Guardini, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, 167.

<sup>11</sup> Guardini, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, 174.

<sup>12</sup> Guardini, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, 183.

in a time of great confusion, lack of clarity, and incertitude. It breathed a calmness and conviction on account of its philosophical methodology, its masterful grasp of the key elements of the liturgy, its lucid exposition, and its concise brevity as a teaching tool. Ildefons Herwegen OSB, the abbot of Maria Laach monastery, an influential centre of liturgical renewal in Germany, was so impressed he made Guardini's book the first in a series of books on the liturgy, *Ecclesia Orans*. No wonder then that Guardini is regarded as the father of the liturgical movement in Germany.

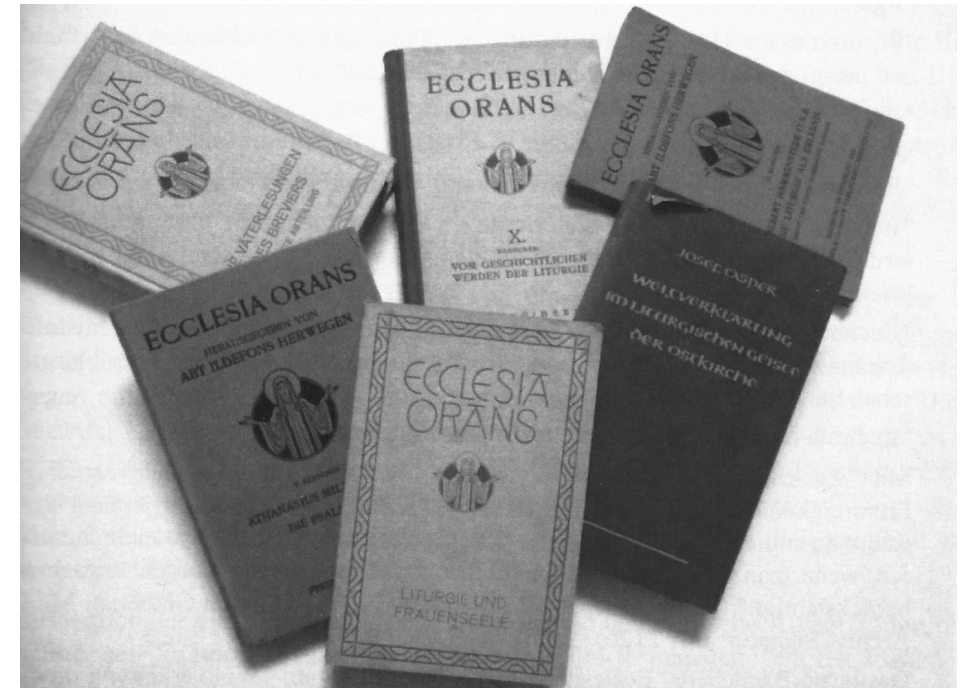


Fig. 3. Ecclesia Orans. Guardini was the first in series.<sup>13</sup>

Whilst in Mainz, Guardini was tasked by his bishop to work with the youth movement *Juventus*.

A unity in receptivity for nature, natural life of culture, spiritual and religious gathering. Experiences with freedom and self-understanding were certainly at the heart of our life then to which Guardini led us, he conveyed with his especial giftedness for the here and now, indeed gifted us (Unknown German source).

<sup>13</sup> Figures 2 and 3 used with permission from the publisher © Abt-Herwegen-Institut Maria Laach e.V.

The key principles of Guardini for his youth work are evident: nature, spiritual and religious gatherings, freedom and self-reliance. He completed his qualifications with a further dissertation on Bonaventure at the University of Bonn in 1922. During this time, he had begun his chaplaincy work with Quickborn. 'From 1923 until 1945 Guardini had his permanent residence in Berlin, though he also kept a room at Burg Rothenfels, a medieval castle near Würzburg, where Catholic youth from all parts of Germany gathered for retreats and conferences.'<sup>14</sup> Guardini spoke of the Grail which the knight Percival found in the holy castle Montsalvat and in Rothenfels castle, the house of wood and stone, as the image of the invisible castle which alone encompasses the Grail.<sup>15</sup>

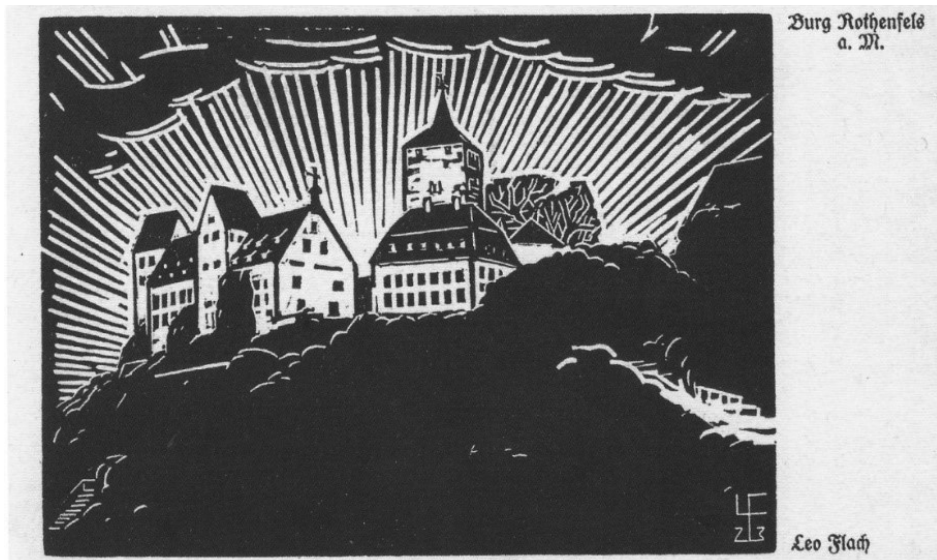


Fig. 4. 'An ancient house on rocky ground is elevated into a visionary place, the Grail Castle, with the power of the radiation' (Guardini).<sup>16</sup>

## Burg Rothenfels

Burg Rothenfels dates from 1150. The key is its central location in Germany. Located on the navigable Main River, it is thereby linked with the Rhine in a westerly direction and courtesy of a canal with the Danube in an easterly direction. The local family that ran the castle did not have an heir in 1500. They lost possession of the castle in the dispute to the diocese of Würzburg. The parish church was originally built in the

<sup>14</sup> Krieg, Robert, 109, 2004. *Catholic Theologians in Nazi Germany*. London: Continuum.

<sup>15</sup> Quoted from the Centenary Publication of Burg Rothenfels, 2019. *Wo wir Gast und Gastgeber sind. Burg Rothenfels – Seit 100 Jahren unsere Burg*. Verlag Königshausen & Neumann GmbH Würzburg, 14.

<sup>16</sup> Linocut of Burg Rothenfels. Reproduced with permission of Burg Rothenfels am Main. 15.

15th century, below the castle, serving both Rothenfels and Bergrothenfels. It was renovated in 1610/1. The Baroque tower of the church dates from 1750. At the time of the Napoleonic secularization, the castle passed into the hands of the Löwenstein family. After World War I the Quickborn Movement acquired the castle as a Catholic youth formation centre and as a Youth Hostel Association facility.

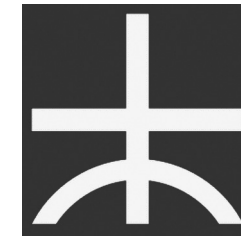


Fig. 5. Quickborn Logo<sup>17</sup>

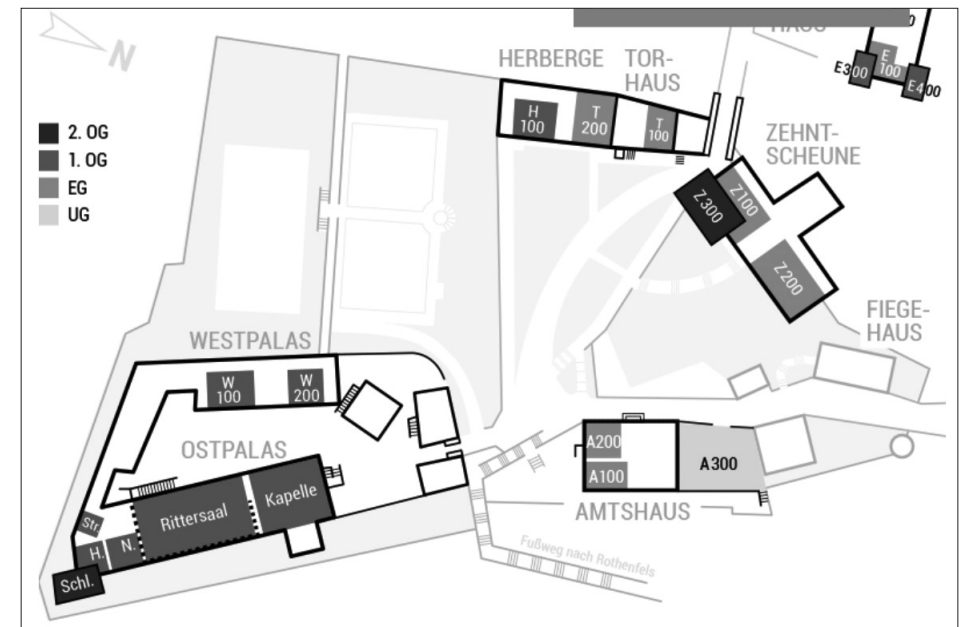


Fig. 6. Map of Burg Rothenfels<sup>18</sup>

The map of Rothenfels Castle clearly shows the location of the Rittersaal and Chapel in the left-hand corner of the site. The Guardini Room is located between the Herberge and the Torhaus.

<sup>17</sup> Quickborn Logo. Reproduced with permission of Burg Rothenfels am Main. 17.

<sup>18</sup> Reproduced with permission of Burg Rothenfels am Main.

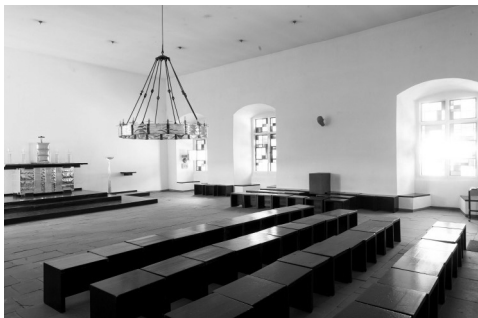


Fig. 7. Rudolf Schwarz designed the Rothenfels chapel and its furnishings<sup>19</sup>

The castle is built in a circular fashion. The gatehouse guards the entrance. The chapel is built over various dining rooms and has one uncluttered simple space. This is the chapel where Rudolf Schwarz began his distinguished career as a church architect. Guardini had invited Schwarz to spend time at

Burg Rothenfels after finishing his studies at Berlin University. Schwarz accepted and spent six months in residence at Burg Rothenfels,<sup>20</sup> What emerged was a simplicity of design, the removal of distractions, the whitewashed walls, the removal of pews, the introduction of simple seating which mirrored the elegant dignity of the altar at the centre of the design. Deceptively simple, what is remarkable is the creative simplicity, yet liturgically it all worked.

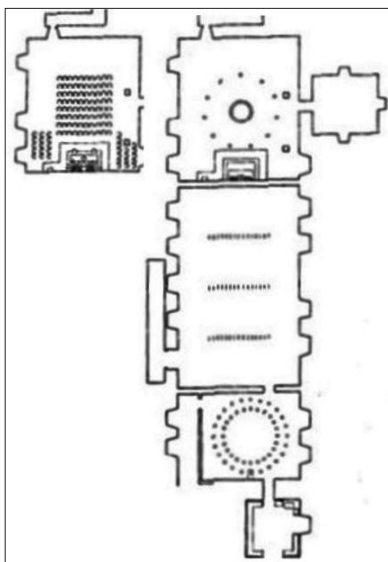


Fig. 8. Worship arrangements at Burg Rothenfels, 1928<sup>21</sup>

‘Plans of three schemes for the arrangement of the chapel. Note the liturgical ordering in which the assembly is gathered around three sides of the altar and priest, who is indicated as celebrating facing the people. Other liturgical furnishings such as the ambo are not shown, the emphasis clearly being on the ordering of the gathered assembly rather than the arrangement of the sacred furnishings.’<sup>22</sup>

Prominent in the chapel today is an artwork of the head of the Madonna, preserved after the Nazis destroyed what they could on seizing control in 1939. When the Nazis seized control the Madonna statue was broken up as degenerate art. However, the head was able to be saved, and re-installed after the war. Continuing clockwise around a courtyard,

there are accommodation floors in contiguous buildings until the gatehouse is reached once more. Outside the castle complex is a cluster of buildings which include road access and more accommodation sites through various buildings. It is here that a room has been set aside honouring Guardini’s work with Quickborn. It is basically an archive of Guardini’s writings. It is also an excellent coffee shop, something not to be taken for granted, as neither in the village below, nor the castle above, can the public purchase refreshments.



Fig. 9. Rudolf Schwarz designed Rittersaal, at Burg Rothenfels



Fig. 10. Rudolf Schwarz<sup>23</sup>

## The Quickborn Movement

The strength of the youth movement among the Protestants was in the north of the country. There were several players in the field of Catholic youth after the World War I in 1919. There was the Neudeutschland Movement, the Marian Congregations (Jesuit schools), the KJD (Katholische Jugend Deutschland) and Quickborn. Neudeutschland flourished in the Rhineland. Quickborn had been founded earlier for boys and girls; lacking episcopal approval, it nonetheless used small group discussions effectively.<sup>24</sup> Unlike their youth movement peer groups, Quickborn regarded itself as not led by adults or by clergy; it drew its members from middle class high school students.<sup>25</sup>

## Guardini and Quickborn

By 1924, Guardini was active with a spiritual focus in the Quickborn Movement.<sup>26</sup> Guardini took control of Quickborn’s journal, *Die Schildgenossen*. He led Masses where the youth stood in a circle and faced the priest, sang hymns in German, not

<sup>23</sup> Both images reproduced with permission.

<sup>24</sup> The classic English language work on the German youth movement is Walter Lacquer’s work, *Young Germany, A History of the German Youth Movement*. London: Transaction, 1962.

<sup>25</sup> Lacquer, *Young Germany*, 71.

<sup>26</sup> Tyldesley, Michael, 2003. “The German Youth Movement.” Being chapter one of *No Heavenly Delusion? A Comparative Study of Three Communal Movements*. Liverpool studies in European regional cultures: Liverpool University Press. The movements are the Bruderhof, the Kibbutzim and the Integrated Movements.

<sup>19</sup> Reproduced with permission of Burg Rothenfels am Main.

<sup>20</sup> Kühn, “An Architecture of Immanence”, 34.

<sup>21</sup> Stephen Paul Hackett, 2011, *The Architecture of Liturgy: Liturgical Ordering in Church Design; The Australian Experience in Perspective*. Thesis submitted for Ph. D, University of NSW, Sydney, (48/480), 95.

<sup>22</sup> Adapted from R. Schwarz, 2007. *Kirchenbau: Welt vor der Schwelle*, Schnell & Steiner, Regensburg, 40-4.



Latin, discussed the daily scripture readings, and a new vision of youth at the service of a Western humanism. Although he accepted a chair of philosophy in Berlin in 1925, he spent as much time as possible at Burg Rothenfels. Sadly in 1937, after the publication of *The Lord*, Guardini was stripped of his licence to teach and in 1939, the SS seized control of Burg Rothenfels. Guardini wrote his autobiographical memories of these years in 1945. They were not published until 1984 after his death.<sup>27</sup>



Fig. 11. Guardini Plaque Burg Rothenfels



Fig. 12. Romano Guardini

### Walter Dirks and Guardini

Both my uncle and aunt on my father's side belonged to the Quickborn movement. My aunt Clara Dirks was a secondary school teacher. She remembers Quickborn well, giving movement and direction to her life.<sup>28</sup> Walter Dirks, a newspaper editor, (co-publisher with Eugen Kogon of *The Frankfurter Hefte*, 1946, which started political reflection afresh after the war), was author of many books. Uncle Walter became a personal assistant or secretary to Guardini. But before that occurred, he notes some experiences. In a memoir of juvenilia he describes himself as 'a singing stutterer'.<sup>29</sup> His father was not by nature a dominant personality and his frailty was compounded by a later heart condition. He describes his mother Luise, as a strong woman but he says she did not use her power over him, especially about becoming a priest. He notes that during the civil unrest after World War I, he and a friend decided to slip through a cordon of militia. He was wearing a 'Litevka', a Polish officer's informal jacket used in the German army until 1920, given him by Guardini a few weeks before. But the two

were apprehended by the militia. In the morning the commanding officer asked the youth, 'Is Luise Dirks by any chance your mother?' On hearing the affirmative reply, he smiled as he said. 'Then you can't be a reactionary'.<sup>30</sup>

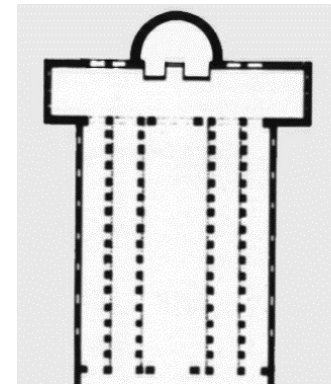


Fig. 13. Two Part Space

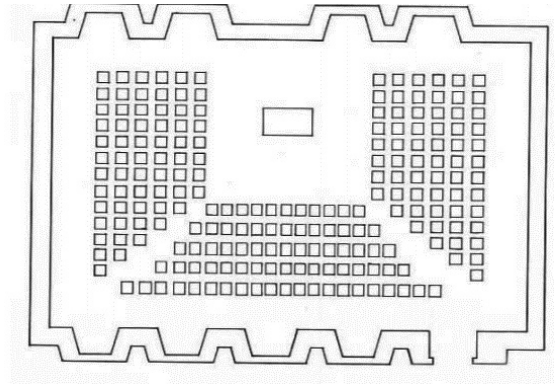


Fig.14. Rothenfels Unified Space<sup>31</sup>

Dirks wrote this evaluation of Guardini's impact on him and his fellow students as follows:

He taught us to stand and kneel and sit, fold our hands; he taught us, that body and soul are one entity, and much more: that the experience of this wholeness, which we had made in the life of the youth movement in an elementary way and against most of the received forms also of church life that we learnt to practice were outlined and affirmed just so by the liturgy. This significance of the bodily gestures led directly to an understanding of the symbol. With it was the regaining in the modern world one of the threatened basic exposition of the liturgical consequences or better: newly acquired out of one's own experience.<sup>32</sup>

Walter Dirks looks back with gratitude to his mentor on receipt of the Romano Guardini Prize of 1981 from the Catholic Academy of Bavaria. In 1923 he was secretary to Romano Guardini in Potsdam (Berlin) and undecided about a career in journalism. '*Der Drang die Welt zu verbessern, war erst mit dieser Bewegung in mir*

<sup>27</sup> Krieg, Robert. Ed. 24, 1995. *Romano Guardini: Proclaiming the Sacred in a Modern World*. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications.

<sup>28</sup> Author Interview 1971 with Clara Dirks.

<sup>29</sup> Dirks, Walter, 1983. *Der Singende Stotterer. Autobiographische Texte* München: Kösel Verlag, 37, 43.

<sup>30</sup> Dirks, *Der Singende Stotterer*, 68.

<sup>31</sup> Rev. D. Foy Christopherson, 13. "The Place Where We Worship". In *Worship and Liturgical Resources Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. Revised 6/2010

Based on material in *A Place of Encounter: Renewing Worship Spaces* by D. Foy Christopherson, Augsburg Fortress, Minneapolis, ©2004. [www.aplaceofencounter.com](http://www.aplaceofencounter.com) [https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Formation\\_The\\_Place\\_Where\\_We\\_Worship.pdf](https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Formation_The_Place_Where_We_Worship.pdf)

<sup>32</sup> Dirks, Walter. 34-35. "Das Gesetz der Form - Walter Dirks über Romano Guardini", 2010. In Max Oberdorfer, *Romano Guardini - Zeugnisse eines grossen Lebens*. Matthias Grünewald Verlag, Ostfildern.

gross geworden.<sup>33</sup> (The yearning to make the world a better place grew in me in the first place with this movement). Guardini encouraged him to accept the problematic 'nur schreibend einmischen'<sup>34</sup> (only engagement by writing).

He acknowledges his debt to Romano Guardini in different ways: for having helped in overcoming his doubts, for his anticipatory obedience. He relates a meeting with Guardini at the close of his life, when the old professor told him. 'I would like to ask, why do the innocent have to suffer?'<sup>35</sup> Dirks himself wrote a seminal work, *Die Antwort der Mönche*, after World War II outlining the contribution of religious during the Dark Ages and beyond, beginning with St Benedict in the preservation and promotion of Western civilization.<sup>36</sup> The Benedictine movement gave an alternative to the power of the sword. Francis rejected the new found wealth of the middle class to be free of possessions to praise the glory of God. Dominic sought the intellectual life in total freedom. Ignatius created an elite who vowed total obedience to the Pope, as the vicar of Christ. The Peace Movement is the late fulfilment of the Catholic Youth Movement of the 1920s.

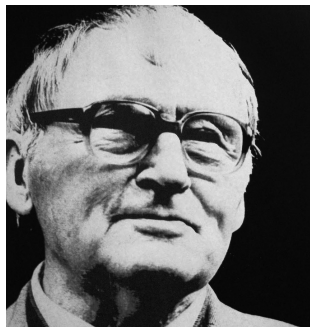


Fig. 15. Walter Dirks<sup>37</sup>



Fig. 16. One of the dining rooms at Burg Rothenfels

## After World War II

Burg Rothenfels was returned to the Church after World War II and it continued as a place of formation for young people. Guardini himself accepted a chair of philosophy at Tübingen from 1948 before moving on to Munich University. When the time came for his retirement, efforts were successfully made to have him succeeded by Karl Rahner. The latter became professor at Munich in 1963.

<sup>33</sup> Dirks, Walter, 1983. *War ich ein linker Spinner? Republikanische Texte – Von Weimar bis Bonn*. Kösel Verlag GmbH & Co. – München.

<sup>34</sup> Op. cit., 12.

<sup>35</sup> Krieg, 25.

<sup>36</sup> Dirks, Walter, 1952. *Die Antwort der Mönche*. Verlag der Frankfurter Hefte, Frankfurt am Main. Translated by Daniel Coogan, *The Monk and the World*, David Mackay Company Inc., New York, 1954.

<sup>37</sup> <https://ais.badische-zeitung.de/piece/02/6b/1b/74/40573812-h-720.jpg> Reproduced with permission.

In the 1980's Jorge Bergoglio began a doctoral dissertation on Guardini but did not complete it. As Pope Francis, Bergoglio quoted Guardini more than any other modern thinker who was not pope in the encyclical letter *Laudato Si'*, all taken from Guardini's *The End of the Modern World*, (German 1950; English 1998). 'I am convinced that Guardini is a thinker who has much to say to the people of our time, and not only to Christians,' Francis said in November 2015.<sup>38</sup> Twenty five years after Guardini's death, the first conference on his life and work took place in the United States of America. Called *Romano Guardini: Proclaiming the Sacred in a Modern World*, it was held at Notre Dame University from 7-8 October, 1994. The proceedings were published in a collection of articles which showed how Guardini had prepared the Church for Vatican II and also how the spirit of Guardini's vision can be lived out in the Church today.

## The Spirit of the Liturgy Centenary

Stefan K. Langenbahn from the *Abt-Herwegen-Institut* of Maria Laach Abbey designed the centenary exhibition. It bore the title *The Spirit of the Liturgy: 100 Years of Romano Guardini's 'cult book' on the Liturgical Movement*. In ten stations with many facsimiles, the emergence of the work was sketched out on placards and text-impulses and at the same time the challenge of the meaning of the questions for the present was put: How can the old, received liturgy be delivered and expressed to believers? Are today's people still 'capable of worship'? The travelling exhibition was shown in Munich, Cologne, Trier, Maria Laach and from 3-6 April, 2018, it was in Burg Rothenfels.<sup>39</sup>

## The Burg Rothenfels Centenary

When the centenary of Burg Rothenfels came up in 2019 it was celebrated by special festivities and scholarly proceedings.<sup>40</sup> The Association of Friends of Burg Rothenfels compiled a 130 page souvenir edition. One article entitled *100 Jahre – 100 Namen* contains in its list of 100 names those who were influential in the history of the castle: Romano Guardini, Rudolf Schwarz and Walter Dirks are my selections.<sup>41</sup> As this article makes plain, many other names could have been selected.

The beatification process for Guardini (who inspired both Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis) opened on 16 December 2017 in the Munich cathedral. Emil Nolde, a German Expressionist painter much admired by Guardini, and whose life roughly

<sup>38</sup> <https://cruxnow.com/news-analysis/2018/02/romano-guardini-helps-shape-spirit-papacy/>

<sup>39</sup> <https://www.burg-rothenfels.de/unser-profil/liturgie/wanderausstellung-romano-guardini/>

<sup>40</sup> Centenary Publication of Burg Rothenfels, 2019. *Wo wir Gast und Gastgeber sind. Burg Rothenfels – Seit 100 Jahren unsere Burg*. Verlag Königshausen & Neumann GmbH Würzburg.

<sup>41</sup> Authors were Albrecht Busch, Claudia Hamelbeck, Wolfgang Rückl, Dr Mathilde Schaab-Hench.

covers the same period, produced this work, shown below, a polyptic on the life of Christ, shortly after Guardini was ordained a priest, in 1911.

### Why is Guardini important?

There are various realities that come together and coalesce, a felicitous synchronicity. Guardini's giftedness was as a caring, compassionate man, with a sharp, outstanding intelligence. His writings invariably hit the mark with their insightfulness and relevance, ranging from *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, (1918), *The Church and the Catholic*, (1923), his philosophical theory of polar opposition, the seedbed of fruitful works on Revelation and other theological topics, *Der Gegensatz*, (1925), then his most famous work on the life of Christ, *The Lord*, (1937). His appointment to a personal chair of philosophy in the University of Berlin in the 1920's meant he was in the forefront of his new country's thinkers and intellectuals. He was a dynamic leader for a lost generation of German youth after World War I through his personal involvement with Quickborn and Burg Rothenfels. After the War he returned to academia with professorial appointments at Tübingen and Munich Universities. He influenced both Cardinals and then Popes, Josef Ratzinger and Jorge Bergoglio. The legacy of the Second Vatican Council has been somewhat obscured, and acknowledgment of Guardini's role in preparing for the Council would help to clarify his position. The ultimate accolade would be the successful outcome of the beatification process.

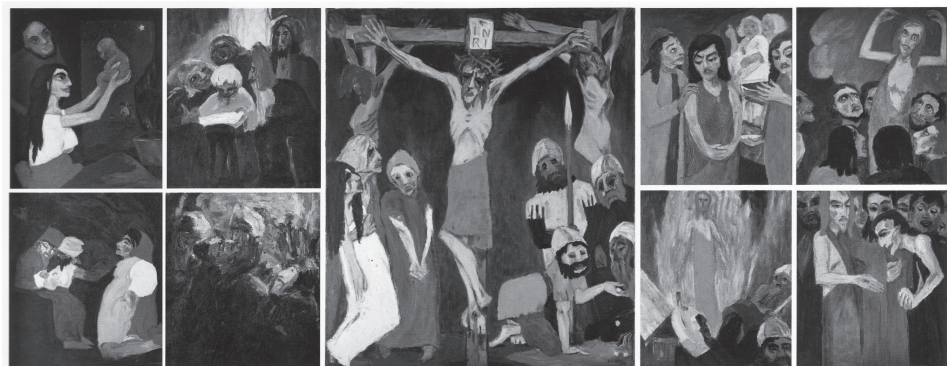


Fig. 17. Emil Nolde, 1867 – 1956. The Life of Christ (1911-12), Polyptic<sup>42</sup>

<sup>42</sup> 1. *The Birth of Jesus*. 2. *Jesus in the Temple*. 3. *The Holy Family*. 4. *The Arrest of Jesus*. 5. *The Crucifixion*. 6. *The family of Martha, Mary and Lazarus*. 7. *The Ascension*. 8. *The Resurrection*. 9. *The risen Christ and Thomas*.

<sup>43</sup> This painting was in the "Degenerate Art" Exhibition in Munich during the Nazi era, 1937. Used with permission from the publishers © Nolde Stiftung Seebüll.

## Spectators are not always passive

Howard Harris



**Howard Harris** worshiped in Anglican churches in Sydney, the Fiji Islands and Adelaide after graduating as a chemical engineer. After a time in industry, he completed a PhD in philosophy and taught ethics in a university business school. He has taught in Adelaide, Melbourne, Singapore, Hong Kong, Malaysia and online. He is secretary of the International Society for Business, Economics and Ethics. Now retired, he is an adjunct associate professor at the University of South Australia. One of his early activities in retirement was the completion of a Masters degree in theology with a focus on liturgy.

### ABSTRACT

*One oft-mentioned learning from the pandemic is that liturgy 'is not a spectator sport' and that being a spectator is somehow less than full participation. This may unintentionally set aside the importance of the human capacity for seeing and other aspects of spectatorship. This paper shows that there are forms of spectatorship which might enhance participation in the liturgy or in the worshiping community – Holy Scripture calls on us to use our eyes, to look; the power of the visual arts in liturgy is often praised; interior engagement remains the aim of many devotional practices. While in some circumstances the dis-engaged spectator may be seen as 'missing out', in others a dis-engaged spectator might be just what is needed. Some may find spectatorship the only way to avoid harassment or unwelcome observation. The paper also traces the emergence of the concept of 'strangers or silent spectators' as the seeming opposite to 'full, active participation' and explores the relationship between spectatorship and participation.*

### Introduction

COVID-19 brought many changes to liturgical worship.<sup>1</sup> Among the many responses was one where celebrations of the Eucharist were streamed live or recorded for later viewing – online celebrations often involving the celebrant and few if any others. These online services were liked by some, who explained

<sup>1</sup> McCarthy, Angela. "Liturgy and Covid-19 in Australia: A Strange Mix." *Australasian Catholic Record* 98, no. 1 (2021): 54-65.

'how content they were that now they could attend Mass every day without leaving their lounge rooms,'<sup>2</sup> while others felt that the services did not 'satisfy the faithful's spiritual hunger for the Eucharist'<sup>3</sup> and could be described as 'a one-sided, theatrical spectatorship,'<sup>4</sup> or that satisfaction with this 'viewing the mass' approach might indicate a less than full understanding of what liturgy really requires.<sup>5</sup> Some thought that 'it feels like going through the motions.'<sup>6</sup> The catch-phrase, 'liturgy is not a spectator sport,'<sup>7</sup> was taken up by some.<sup>8</sup> Like many catch-cries there is some truth in the slogan, but it would be a mistake to take it too far.

Not all instances of spectatorship are the same. There are many categories of spectatorship, often related to levels or types of participation. Although there are reasons why on-line versions of the Eucharist which involve passive spectatorship or do not involve any active participation can, and I believe should, be seen as less than satisfactory, that does not mean that all forms of spectatorship are unacceptable or that only the highest level of participation is appropriate in every circumstance. This paper is a response to the negativity about spectatorship in discussion of post-COVID worship. It will show that there is more than one sort of spectator; and then, in the context of history, look at the sources of the view which plays down the role of spectators. That leads to consideration of various aspects of seeing, the concept and practice of interior engagement, and concludes with a discussion of the ways in which spectatorship might enhance worship rather than be a deficiency.

## Categories of spectator

Various categories of spectator can be distinguished. The first distinction is between those who are dis-engaged and have no desire to be engaged in what it is they are viewing, and those who are viewing with the intent to become engaged or to be more engaged. Within these two main divisions further distinctions can be made on the basis of prior experience. Some have never been other than spectators, some have been deeply engaged in the activity they now view as a spectator, some watch so as to learn and enjoy having been instructed by informed and effective teachers, even if they themselves have never participated in it. Some understand that there is an opportunity for participation.

<sup>2</sup> McCarthy, "Liturgy and Covid-19 in Australia," p.55

<sup>3</sup> Kildea, Jeff. "A Tale of Two Pandemics: The Impact of Spanish Flu and Covid-19 on Religious Observance." *Australasian Catholic Record* 98, no. 1 (2021): 3-16, p15.

<sup>4</sup> Collins, Kristen R. "Observed without Sympathy: Adam Smith on Inequality and Spectatorship." *American Journal of Political Science* 64, no. 4 (2020): 1034-46. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/ajps.12544>, p.1034.

<sup>5</sup> McCarthy, *op cit*.

<sup>6</sup> Eastwood, Michelle. "Reflections on Zoom Church." *Australian Journal of Liturgy* 17, no. 2 (2020): 83-84.

<sup>7</sup> DiMarzio, Nicholas. "Vatican II Encouraged Good Liturgy." *The Tablet* (Brooklyn NY), 6/3/2013 2013. <https://thetablet.org/vatican-ii-encouraged-good-liturgy/>.

<sup>8</sup> See, for instance, Campbell, Colleen, "Full, Active, Conscious: Liturgy and Life" Frank S. Donio and Kate Fowler eds. *Ad Infinitum. Catholic Apostolate Center*, 22 April, 2020, and Harris, Howard. "Spectators Are Not Always Passive." Presentation at Australian Academy of Liturgy National Online Meeting, Melbourne VIC/online, 16 January 2021. A further example is at note 49.

The archetypical example of the dis-engaged spectator is often taken to be a bystander in the Kitty Genovese incident, where a woman was killed in a New York street, seen, apparently by more than 30 residents who did nothing.<sup>9</sup> They are bystanders, 'not malicious, but not innocent either.'<sup>10</sup> They were, we might presume, distressed by what they saw and their distress was noted in many of the stories written about the incident and the psychology that lay behind the individual responses. In a separate group of dis-engaged spectators are those observers at a display of skill or ability who look on happily, although still disengaged. They may be onlookers – watching the creator of instant portraits on the esplanade, watching an ice-skater, gymnast or ballerina with prodigious jumps and turns, watching a movie in the theatre or at home.

Distinct from these are those who have experienced what they now watch; for example, the former player watching the game on screen or at the ground. This is a broad category as the extent or level of participation by the spectator does not need to match the skill or qualification of those being observed. In some cases, the spectator will not have the requisite qualifications or resources. Yet the former go-cart racer watches a Formula1 motor race from a different perspective to that of a spectator with no motor racing experience, the person who has attended a celebration of the eucharist will watch the online portrayal of a eucharistic celebration from a different perspective to that of a viewer with no eucharistic experience. Thus, there are three groups of dis-engaged spectators – the onlooker, who can be either distressed or happy, and the former participant.

In the second, engaged category, are those who watch as a step in a plan to become engaged, those who watch to learn, and those for whom observing is a role or task. In the same way that elite players may observe closely the techniques employed by competitors or champions, a person who seeks to become more fully engaged in a pursuit may choose to observe those who are already participants. A young player may watch a coaching video, a budding chef may read the books of Escoffier, Elizabeth David, or Stephanie Alexander, someone wanting to find out more about Christianity might watch Christian video shows, talk to Christians, or observe their behaviour. Like catechumens, they are engaged spectators, watching with an intention to become participants.

Some may watch to learn about the activity or skill, perhaps from a capable commentator, even though they have no intent to participate. The watching may be deliberate or accidental and the ability of the commentator to explain the activity to

<sup>9</sup> Gansberg, Martin. "38 Who Saw Murder Didn't Call Police." In *Vice & Virtue in Everyday Life*, edited by Christina Sommers and Fred Sommers, 51-54. Fort Worth TX: Harcourt Brace, 1993.

<sup>10</sup> Bunbury, Stephanie. "No More Mr Nice Guys." *The Age* (Melbourne VIC), 16/1/21 2021. <https://www.theage.com.au/culture/movies/no-more-mr-nice-guys-promising-young-woman-puts-the-romcom-out-to-grass-20210112-p56tkn.html>.

a neophyte will vary also. To give a personal example, I recall seeing on television an equestrian event where the Duke of Edinburgh was the commentator, where he took care to describe the challenges which horse and rider would face in the next element of the event and pointed to the indicators of success to watch for (and then noted what had, or had not, been achieved). It has remained in my memory. I learnt something about show jumping, even though I have never ridden a horse nor have any intention of taking up competitive horse riding.

Some spectators deliberately choose to observe rather than participate. They are not bystanders. Some may want to avoid social situations where they are subject to unwanted personal stress, whether due to concern about privacy and other aspects of civil liberty or because of their personal circumstances. Others may be undertaking a task which requires them to be dis-engaged and being a spectator may be the way in which that is achieved. This latter group will include the now widely accepted notion of the independent observer, the impartial spectator that goes back at least as far as Adam Smith.<sup>11</sup>

That gives seven categories, summarized in Table 1. First three groups of dis-engaged spectators, those disengaged but distressed, those happily observing with no past experience, and those who are happily observing an activity of which they have prior experience; and then two groups of engaged spectators, those who watch as a step in a plan to become engaged, those who watch to learn, and finally two groups of deliberate observers, those undertaking the role of independent observer and those seeking privacy. Although this categorisation, based predominantly on the extent of engagement, is appropriate for this paper, other classifications are possible. Guttman draws attention to 'the political functions of spectatorship, about the social role of spectators, about their gender and class' as factors to be considered.<sup>12</sup>

**Table 1: Categories of spectatorship**

Category	Sub-group	Example
Dis-engaged	Distressed bystander	Kitty Genovese
	Happy onlooker – no experience	Opera go-er
	Happy onlooker - past participant	Attending sport
Engaged	Want to become (more) involved	Instructional videos
	No interest in ongoing participation	Guided tours
Task-oriented	Uncertain about engagement	Privacy
	Independent observer	Magistrate, auditor

The foregoing paragraphs have shown that 'spectatorship' can be, and has been, linked to a events and activity in a number of different categories. Some, but not all of these can be linked with types or levels of participation. For example, there is that level of participation, also a form of spectatorship, which involves attendance at the event, in person, or as reader or viewer, but without any engagement beyond presence. However, there is not always a one-to-one correspondence between categories of spectatorship and types and levels of participation. The independent observer is a spectator, and in one sense is barred from being a participant, yet in the research methodology known as 'participant observation' the observer might also be a participant.<sup>13</sup> The level of participation which involves the active engagement that one might associate with the first responder, the performing artist, or the fully engaged participant in the Eucharist is less easily described as spectatorship. That may have contributed to the negativity associated with the 'liturgy is not a spectator sport' catch-cry.

All spectatorship involves looking.<sup>14</sup> Various types or levels of engagement and participation may be associated with that looking. The sacred texts of Christianity provide examples where the action of looking, what might be called spectatorship, is commended. Christians are called to look and to see, to use their eyes. Jesus himself, in response to questions about his identity, tells the disciples of John to go to John and to tell John what they have seen (Lk7:22).<sup>15</sup> Further examples can be found in the gospels, epistles, psalms and prophets.

<sup>13</sup> There are a range of research methodologies where the researcher is also a participant. See for instance Strauss, Anselm, and Juliet M. Corbin. *Basics of Qualitative Research: Grounded Theory Procedures and Techniques*. Newbury Park CA: Sage Publications, 1990 and Revans, R.W. "The Nature of Action Learning." *The International Journal of Management Science* 9, no. 1 (1981): 9-24.

<sup>14</sup> Onions, C.T., ed. *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary on Historical Principles*. 3 ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1944. sv spectator: "one who sees...; a beholder, onlooker, observer."

<sup>15</sup> Scripture quotations are from the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV).

<sup>11</sup> Smith, Adam. *The Wealth of Nations*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1970. First published 1776.

<sup>12</sup> Guttman, Allen. *Sports Spectators*. Columbia University Press, 1986. doi:https://doi.org/10.7312/gutt06400, p.2.

But happy are your eyes because they see... Many prophets and saints desired to see what you now see

(Mt13:16)

...you before whose eyes Jesus Christ was openly displayed upon his cross (Gal3:1)

Then Elisha prayed and said, 'O Lord, please open his eyes that he may see.'

(2Kg 6:17)

Seeing is something that Christians are called to do. Other traditions extend a similar importance to the capacity to see and to the benefit of careful sight. For Confucius, the leader should take care, 'when looking, to see clearly',<sup>16</sup> or as some other translators put it:

There are nine things the gentleman<sup>17</sup> turns his thought to: to seeing clearly when he uses his eyes,

The superior man<sup>17</sup> has nine things which are subjects with him of thoughtful consideration. In regard to the use of his eyes, he is anxious to see clearly.

(Analects 16:10)

While in the Qur'an there are a number of references to the importance of looking:

The best of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you (49:13)<sup>18</sup>

It is not the eyes that are blind, but the heart (22:46)

Some faces that day will be radiant looking at their Lord (75:22)

The practice of spectatorship has been researched extensively in the field of sport – who comes, who reads the books, who watches the games, who becomes a paid-up member. Studies have shown that participation in a sport is linked to active spectatorship, to attendance, to subsequent expenditure on the team, to reading and watching habits. That research introduces a further category, the mediated spectator, the person who reads or hears an account of the match in the media rather than attending the event or performance.<sup>19</sup> The distinction made in some sports research between the spectator and the 'emotionally committed 'consumer' of sports events' or 'fan'<sup>20</sup> is akin to the distinction between the engaged spectator and the happy but dis-engaged spectator in the earlier categorisation. The sports research also

provides empirical support for the idea that identification, the extent of psychological connection, with a team (or church or belief system) can be linked to the length and depth of association, and to positive evaluation of future performance.<sup>21</sup>

## History

Among the early examples of spectators are the masses who packed the Roman Colosseum, the crowds at pagan festivals linked to movements of the sun or other heavenly objects, and the worshippers in highly decorated temples.<sup>22</sup> There were spectators at the first Olympic Games. Early ethnographers in Central Australia reported that native dances were often performed before specially assembled groups.<sup>23</sup> Looking and seeing are important in many stories of the Old Testament, for God, for the Israelites to come close to their God, and for the Israelites themselves. During creation 'God saw that it was good',<sup>24</sup> while at the Red Sea Moses says to the rebellious Israelites, 'stand firm and see the deliverance that the Lord will accomplish for you.'<sup>25</sup> Moses raises his staff and stretches out his hand over the sea, in actions meant to be seen. When, later, the travelling Israelites are beset by serpents, it is those who look upon the bronze serpent on a pole who recover.<sup>26</sup> In New Testament times, the baptism of Christ, the Transfiguration, the events of the Day of Pentecost and many of the resurrection appearances involve spectators.<sup>27</sup> By the Middle Ages the capacity to engage the spectator through the senses was well-developed. The vernacular mystery play, stained glass windows, spires and painted altar pieces are designed to be seen, and to teach. The Way of the Cross, following the Passion journey of Christ in Jerusalem, initially combined physical effort and visual stimulation so that full engagement required both action and spectatorship. Over time a rather passive spectatorship overtook the aspects of pilgrimage so that today the Oberammergau Passion Play is a spectacle.

<sup>16</sup> All quotations are from section 16:10 of the *Analects* of Confucius. The first version is from the Simon Leys translation, the second from DC Lau and the third from the Legge translation.

<sup>17</sup> The terms "gentleman" and "superior man" are both translations of the Chinese *junxi*. For further discussion see Harris, Howard. "Professionalism: MacIntyre and Confucius on Exemplary Figures." *Australian Journal of Professional and Applied Ethics* 10, no. 1&2 (2010): 3-9.

<sup>18</sup> Quotations from the Qur'an are from the English interpretation by Pickthall, *The Qur'an*. London UK: Folio Society, 2008.

<sup>19</sup> Guttman. *Sports Spectators*.

<sup>20</sup> Guttman. *Sports Spectators*, p.6.

<sup>21</sup> Beknache-Assollant, Iouri, Patrick Bouchett, and Marie-Francoise Lacassagne. "Spectators' Identification with French Sports Teams: A French Adaptation of the Sport Spectator Identification Scale." *Perceptual and Motor Skills* 104 (2007): 83-90, p.83,87.

<sup>22</sup> Dornen, Peter F., and Thomas Henry Garrett James. "Egyptian Art and Architecture." In *Encyclopedia Britannica*, n.d. <https://www.britannica.com/art/Egyptian-art>.

<sup>23</sup> See for instance, Kenny, Anna. "Early Ethnographic Work at the Hermannsburg Mission in Central Australia, 1877-1910." Chap. 7 In *German Ethnography in Australia*, edited by Nicolas Peterson and Anna Kenny, 169-94. Canberra ACT: ANU Press, 2017.

<sup>24</sup> Many times in Genesis 1.

<sup>25</sup> Ex14:13

<sup>26</sup> Num21:8

<sup>27</sup> Lk3:21, Mt17:1-8, Acts ch2, Jn ch21

The widely accepted notion of the independent observer, the ‘fair and impartial spectator’<sup>28</sup> goes back at least as far as Adam Smith, and perhaps to the Stoics<sup>29</sup>. Judges, jurors, independent observers are expected to be aware of what is going on, but not to be (beneficially) engaged.<sup>30</sup> The figure of Justice, set to impartially adjudicate, to look at situations in a certain way, adorns many courthouses – a spectator held up before spectators. Yet the very image is not passive but engaged, in weighing and if provided with a sword in fighting, and even for Smith, virtue comes ‘as the spectators strive to participate.’<sup>31</sup>

The impact of entertainment and technology on spectatorship habits has been examined extensively,<sup>32</sup> and technology ‘might also help explain today’s relative submissiveness.’<sup>33</sup> Thus, examples of spectatorship can be found stretching over millennia, and these examples range across the many categories of spectator outlined above.

### Passivity and Response

The historical examples include both passive and engaged spectators, showing that spectatorship has a capacity that ‘both opens up and closes down possibilities of the formation of our humanity,’<sup>34</sup> and that while there is a danger that ‘the audience may fall into passive spectatorship, and the performance may devolve into mere entertainment,’<sup>35</sup> this is not inevitable. In more recent times the concept of ‘spectator’ has narrowed to the point where it seems that the term is limited to the dis-engaged or passive observer. This section considers the emergence of the passive view of spectatorship.

As the Christian Church developed through the Middle Ages a passive spectatorship had become established in many places in relation to the Eucharist. This was one of the pre-reformation abuses addressed by reformers. Even so, by the twentieth century concern about passivity was once again widespread. The early twentieth

century Anglican commentator, Dom Gregory Dix, noted that the introduction of the low mass, said by the priest, came to ‘exclude the people from all active share in the liturgy’ so that ‘the people’s part was to ‘hear’;<sup>36</sup> Pius XI expressed concern in 1928 that those attending the Eucharist ‘should not be merely detached and silent spectators,’<sup>37</sup> and in the documents of the Second Vatican Council concern is expressed that the faithful ‘should not be...strangers or silent spectators’ at the Eucharist.<sup>38</sup> Thus spectatorship had come to be seen as ‘incomplete’ especially in relation to the Eucharist. By the twentieth century the concept of passive spectatorship was well-established in liturgical writing over a broad spectrum.

In the secular West, the notion of the passive spectator was reinforced by the failure by bystanders or onlookers to engage in incidents such as the killing of Kitty Genovese on a New York street in 1964.<sup>39</sup> The incident became emblematic of the callousness or apathy of life, especially in big cities. The notion of the passive spectator has been invoked in the recent COVID-19 situation, with newspaper articles declaring that the outbreak ‘is a pandemic not a spectator sport.’<sup>40</sup>

These Christian and secular trends to some extent reinforced each other and spectatorship came to be seen as ‘incomplete’, especially in relation to the Eucharist. Once recognised, the concept of passive spectatorship brought forth many responses. A reaction against the remoteness of much medieval worship is discernible in both Reformation and counter-Reformation.<sup>41</sup> The so-called Liturgical Movement was both a call to greater participation and evidence of the extensive response passive spectatorship.<sup>42</sup>

Although there is evidence of a Liturgical Movement in France as early as the seventeenth century, it was a conference early in the twentieth century that brought form and impetus to the movement in Europe and then to the United States and beyond.<sup>43</sup> The conference call for ‘full and active participation of all people in the Church’s life and ministry, particularly in the liturgy’ was particularly persuasive and

<sup>28</sup> Smith, Adam. *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*. Edited by D.D. Raphael and A.L. Macfie. Oxford UK: Oxford University Press, 1976. 1759, p110.

<sup>29</sup> Jones, H.B. Marcus Aurelius, the Stoic Ethic, and Adam Smith. *Journal of Business Ethics* 95, 89–96 (2010). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-009-0349-9>; Waszek, Norbert. “Two Concepts of Morality: A Distinction of Adam Smith’s Ethics and Its Stoic Origin.” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 45, no. 4 (1984): 591–606. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.2307/2709375>.

<sup>30</sup> A similar approach can be seen in the ‘original position’ adopted in Rawls’ *Theory of Justice*.

<sup>31</sup> Smith, *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, p.23.

<sup>32</sup> See, for instance, Hou, Jenny Zhengye, and Jim Macnamara. “Beyond a “Spectator Sport”: Social Media for University Engagement and Community Building.” *Asia Pacific Public Relations Journal* 18 (2017).

<sup>33</sup> Kildea, Jeff. “A Tale of Two Pandemics: The Impact of Spanish Flu and Covid-19 on Religious Observance.” *Australasian Catholic Record* 98, no. 1 (2021): 3–16, p.15.

<sup>34</sup> Begbie, Jeremy, in the Introduction to Taylor, W. David O. *Glimpses of the New Creation: Worship and the Formative Power of the Arts*. Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans, 2019, p1.

<sup>35</sup> Hartog, Paul. “Taylor’s “Glimpses of the New Creation: Worship and the Formative Power of the Arts” (Book Review).” *The Christian Librarian* 63, no. 1 (2020): Article 27. <https://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/tcl/vol63/iss1/27>.

<sup>36</sup> Dix, Gregory. *The Shape of the Liturgy*. Westminster UK: Dacre, 1945, p14f.

<sup>37</sup> Pius XI. *Divini Cultus: On Divine Worship*. La Crosse WI: Adoremus, 1928. <https://adoremus.org/1928/12/on-divine-worship/>, s9. The Latin ‘non tamquam extranei vel muti spectatores’ could also be translated as ‘strangers or silent spectators.’

<sup>38</sup> Paul VI. *Sacrosanctum Concilium: Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*. Rome IT: Vatican, 1963. 1891. [https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist\\_councils/ii\\_vatican\\_council/documents/vat-ii\\_const\\_19631204\\_sacrosanctum-concilium\\_en.html](https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19631204_sacrosanctum-concilium_en.html), s48.

<sup>39</sup> See note 9.

<sup>40</sup> Hull, Crispin. *Canberra Times*, 9/1/21 and *Newcastle Herald*, 9/1/21

<sup>41</sup> Chupungco, Anscar J. *Handbook for Liturgical Studies: Introduction to the Liturgy*. Collegeville MN: Liturgical Press, 1997, p.154.

<sup>42</sup> Chupungco, *Handbook for Liturgical Studies*, p.168.

<sup>43</sup> Pecklers, Keith F. *The Unread Vision: The Liturgical Movement in the United States of America, 1926–1955* Collegeville MN: Liturgical Press, ch1.

the movement was not confined to the Roman Church, with notable impact in other Christian communities.<sup>44</sup> The call to a more active engagement by those looking on could also be discerned in the increasing interest in and engagement with icons.<sup>45</sup>

The Second Vatican Council promoted participation, and *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, approved by the Council, seeks and promotes ‘fully conscious, and active participation’,<sup>46</sup> and urges pastors to work with zeal and patience to ‘promote the liturgical instruction of the faithful, and also their active participation in the liturgy both internally and externally’.<sup>47</sup>

Apart from these responses, which seek to alleviate or temper passive spectatorship, a further response is discernable, in that in seeking to alleviate passive spectatorship the unintended consequence is to give prominence to passive spectatorship. This has led to a narrowing of the understanding of ‘spectator’ as a category or description, as exemplified in the headline ‘The Mass: Not a spectator event’.<sup>48</sup> That a passive spectatorship ought to be avoided does not mean that looking is somehow inherently wrong or cannot be a part of active participation. The narrow view has gained a certain currency even though the formal documents and the occasional media piece show that this miss-understanding is not universal. The qualification in statements such as ‘the Mass was not meant to be solely a spectator sport’,<sup>49</sup> are easily missed. The narrow view of spectatorship may have been exacerbated by the constraints of ‘worship under lockdown’ as congregations and worship leaders have grappled with the inescapable problem arising from Zoom with ‘its inevitable remoteness, its happening at a remove’.<sup>50</sup>

Despite the extensive response, seeking to promote participation, some passivity remains. Although this may be most obvious where face-to-face worship is prohibited by COVID-related constraints, where the regular worshipper was a passive spectator in face-to-face worship, they are likely to remain so in online worship.<sup>51</sup>

<sup>44</sup> See, for instance, Billington, Raymond J. *The Liturgical Movement and Methodism*. London UK: Epworth, 1969; and Fenwick, John R.K., and Bryan D. Spinks. *Worship in Transition: The Liturgical Movement in the Twentieth Century*. New York NY: Continuum, 1995.

<sup>45</sup> Cuneo, Terence. “If These Walls Could Only Speak: Icons as Vehicles of Divine Speech.” Chap. 6 In *Ritualized Faith: Essays on the Philosophy of Liturgy*, edited by Terence Cuneo, 106-25. Oxford UK: Oxford University Press 2016, p.108.

<sup>46</sup> SC:14 That is the Vatican translation, another is “full, conscious and active participation” [http://archive.cwatershed.org/media/pdfs/15/12/18/00-19-54\\_0.pdf](http://archive.cwatershed.org/media/pdfs/15/12/18/00-19-54_0.pdf)

<sup>47</sup> SC:19.

<sup>48</sup> Gibson, David. “The Mass: Not a Spectator Event.” *The Catholic Sun* (Syracuse NY), 19 June 2019. <https://thecatholicsun.com/the-mass-not-a-spectator-event/>.

<sup>49</sup> DiMarzio, *The Tablet*, 2013.

<sup>50</sup> Gribben, Robert. “Eucharistic Absence.” *Australian Journal of Liturgy* 17, no. 2 (2020): 71-79, p.72.

<sup>51</sup> Kildea, Jeff. “A Tale of Two Pandemics: The Impact of Spanish Flu and Covid-19 on Religious Observance.” *Australasian Catholic Record* 98, no. 1 (2021): 3-16. McCarthy, Angela. “Liturgy and Covid-19 in Australia: A Strange Mix.” *Australasian Catholic Record* 98, no. 1 (2021): 54-65.

## Positive spectating

Both the responses to passivity and the classification of spectatorship presented earlier show that although a narrow view of spectatorship in worship and liturgy has gained some recent traction, spectatorship has a capacity that ‘both opens up and closes down possibilities’.<sup>52</sup> Among the more positive views are those that consider the spectator as independent observer, as seeker or learner, or as experienced participant or fan somehow prevented from continued active participation. Each of these is considered in turn.

The public or community view of the spectator is positive where the spectator contributes to the moral, social or financial capacity of the community. Spectators are often praised or desired for their independence and ability to judge dispassionately, and the dis-engaged spectator can be just what is needed. Judges, jurors, independent observers are expected to be aware of what is going on, but not to be (beneficially) engaged. The civic leader envisaged in Plato’s *Republic* would have this capacity to judge dispassionately, ‘to be...keen of sight’.<sup>53</sup> In the eighteenth century both Adam Smith and David Hume<sup>54</sup> saw such a ‘judicious spectator’ as the ideal citizen, skilled, valued, reasonable, engaged, and toward the end of the century the newly founded newspaper, *The Observer*, promised to be ‘unbiased by prejudice, uninfluenced by party’.<sup>55</sup> Contemporary society continues to be committed to this notion of an independent observer, as shown by the creation and continued existence of independent anti-corruption watch-dogs in Australia and overseas. For instance, the Victorian legislation describes the function of the Commission with the words ‘identify, expose and investigate’.<sup>56</sup>

In the context of Christian worship, spectators can provide comment about the effectiveness of particular activities as an introduction to the faith community or as opportunities for worship. This feedback may come from an observer who is an inexperienced seeker or from an experienced participant no longer able to take part as a result of changes in circumstance.

Some spectators will contribute to worship and the life of the Church by their questions – ‘Go and tell John what you have seen’,<sup>57</sup> was the response to a question from spectators. The informed spectator can also provide feedback. Many have looked around, at the online offerings of others and drawn the attention of those responsible

<sup>52</sup> Begbie, see note 35.

<sup>53</sup> Plato, *Republic*, 484c. In the Jowett translation: ‘the guardian who is to keep anything should have eyes rather than no eyes.’

<sup>54</sup> See Smith, *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, III.3.4; and Hume, *Treatise on Human Nature*, III.3.1

<sup>55</sup> Bourne, W. S. (1791, 4 December). First Issue. *The Observer*, p. 1. Capital letters removed from 1791 text.

<sup>56</sup> Victoria, Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission Act 2011 No. 66 of 2011, s15(2)(a)

<sup>57</sup> Lk7:18-22



for worship in local communities to examples that might be relevant for them. That could be a plus for the local community as it adopts better-suited forms of worship, and for the individuals as they take part in debate, ask questions about worship, engage in worship.

Worship may be arranged so as to attract or encourage seekers.<sup>58</sup> This group includes those who have little or no knowledge of what is being observed – be that a football code, a religious faith or a political movement – and those who have had some experience and want to deepen their knowledge. It also includes the regular worshipper, regularly engaged at the Eucharist, who now finds herself unable to take part in the usual way and seeks after some way to restore or retain the past experience of the eucharist as an occasion to worship God in adoration, to make an offering to God, an offering that is worthy because it is an offering of the consecrated elements.

The Church has encouraged certain aspects of spectatorship because beauty can contribute to worship. Art is praised in the Vatican II documents for its contribution to liturgy and worship, and online the worship is often presented in beautiful spaces, with singing, vestments, music, and carefully read text.<sup>59</sup> Many seekers have commented on the particular closeness to God available in certain places; places which for them enhanced the closeness to God, church buildings for instance. Consistent with this acknowledgement of the contribution of art is the increasing interest in icons. Icons have been important elements of Christian worship in Eastern and Orthodox traditions and are growing in importance in the Western tradition. They have to be viewed, seen with eyes (or their presence felt some other way), they can be ‘vehicles of divine action.’<sup>60</sup> In simplistic terms if they are to help us draw near to God, they need us to look, to be spectators.

One specifically Christian form of active engagement at a distance is the particular form of prayer known as interior engagement. This is mentioned in the Rules of many confraternities,<sup>61</sup> orders and societies, in the *Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius Loyola, and in the reflections of saints such as Teresa of Avila and Julian of Norwich.<sup>62</sup> This is neither passive nor uninformed. Some would say that those involved in interior engagement cannot be considered spectators. That depends on how one defines spectators. If to be a spectator means that one is not present in the same place, not involved in the actions of the event, not physically present around the same table,

then someone practicing interior engagement is a spectator. Although ‘spiritual communion’ is encouraged by some groups,<sup>63</sup> especially when physical attendance is not practicable, others consider spiritual communion to be an oxymoron. The debate continues and is not taken up here.

Some experienced participants may have spectatorship forced upon them, through changes in health or circumstance, be that the regular worshipper no longer able to attend without assistance or the former volunteer no longer able to read, mow, clean or whatever. For them, the spectatorship of the online service may be a welcome and valuable reminder of the now inaccessible worship they once knew. The visual and other cues they once recognised as participants now serve to prime or prompt their participation at a distance. The consistency of structure in Christian worship and liturgy may facilitate this for those who move between worshipping communities. In that case spectatorship may be temporary and sustaining. It may ‘support and maintain our relationship with God’ while absent from the home community.<sup>64</sup>

Spectatorship might also be an attractive option for those whose worship experience has been unattractive, allowing those who experienced boredom, discrimination or sexual abuse to seek out an alternative worship experience which avoided the earlier difficulty. Those living on the fringes of the community might also feel more attracted to such a worship experience. For individuals in any of these groups worship at a distance may be safer than venturing into a space where fears of discrimination, harassment or even physical violence might be engendered. Un-engaged spectatorship may be the most effective way for the Church to provide a refuge from the scrutiny and surveillance commonplace in contemporary society,<sup>65</sup> although anonymity is not easily assured.

The consideration has mainly been from the perspective of the individual – the impact of visual arts, the links between spectatorship and prior participation, the practice of interior engagement. The individual spectator can also contribute to worship, spectators can enhance worship. Perhaps most obviously it is a way to keep contact with those no longer able to join in the celebration around the table at a given time. This may be those less mobile due to age or infirmity, or those who have moved away.

<sup>58</sup> Bunyan, J. (2020). Sunday Morning Prayer. *Australian Journal of Liturgy*, 17(2), 118-126, p124.

<sup>59</sup> See, for instance, *Australian Journal of Liturgy*, 16(2).

<sup>60</sup> Cuneo, Terence. *Ritualized Faith: Essays on the Philosophy of Liturgy*. Oxford UK: Oxford University Press 2016, p.2.

<sup>61</sup> Anon. *The Manual: Of the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ with the Objects and Rules and the Laws as Revised in 1934 and 1951*. 4 ed. London UK: Faith Press, 1954.

<sup>62</sup> See, for instance, Ignatius of Loyola. (1951). *The Spiritual Exercises* (L. J. Puhl, Trans.). Chicago IL: Loyola Press; Teresa of Ávila. (1957). *The Life of Saint Teresa of Ávila* (J. M. Cohen, Trans.). Harmondsworth UK: Penguin Books; Julian of Norwich. (1998). *Revelations of Divine Love*. London UK: Penguin.

<sup>63</sup> anon. “Act of Spiritual Communion: Which May Be Used by Those Who Are, through Necessity, Absent from Church at the Time of the Holy Eucharist.” In *Before the Altar: The Devout Christian’s Manual for Attendance and Communion at the Holy Eucharist, Sacrifice and Sacrament*, edited by Robert J. Wilson, 103-04. London UK: Mowbray, 1960.

<sup>64</sup> Kim, Jonghyun. “Virtual Worship Service and Physical Worship Service on Spiritual Formation.” *Australian Journal of Liturgy* 16, no. 2 (2018): 92-101, p.101.

<sup>65</sup> Collins, Kristen R. “Observed without Sympathy: Adam Smith on Inequality and Spectatorship.” *American Journal of Political Science* 64, no. 4 (2020): 1034-46. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/ajps.12544>, p.1044.

## Conclusion

The vilification that spectators have been subjected to by some, the categorisation of spectators as inherently dis-engaged, as non-participative on-lookers, is incomplete to say the least. To the extent that spectatorship keeps the faithful engaged it is to be commended. The Christian community has a place for spectators, for visual arts, for those who cannot be at the community meal. That said, dis-engaged spectatorship does occur. It is not a sign of community. It is a salutary reminder that those who are dis-engaged spectators when they are in the pews will probably be dis-engaged spectators online. Realising that spectators can be valuable members of the community can lead us to a clearer understanding of the community.

Once the contribution and legitimacy of spectators is accepted, then the role of technology can be more clearly examined.

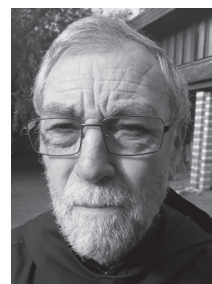
## Acknowledgement

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# Liturgy and the Plenary Council 2021

David Orr

**Editor's note: the following two papers are specifically about the Catholic Church of Australia holding a Plenary Council. As with all major Councils, this is of ecumenical interest as well because changes will affect the whole Catholic community and where there are interactions with other Christian communities.**



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## ABSTRACT

*From a wide process of consultation around Australia in preparation for the coming Plenary Council various resources have been prepared for the sessions to be held. This paper uses and critiques this material to show that liturgy could be a helpful focus to address much of this material. By focusing upon liturgy, the Council could help to lead the Church into the future.*

**I**n the concluding chapter of his recent book, Frank O'Loughlin<sup>1</sup> writes: 'Liturgy is not an isolated part of the Church's life distinct from all the other strands of that life. It is not mere ritual! It is where we become who we are!<sup>2</sup>' This invitation clearly announces the significance of liturgy in the forthcoming Australian Plenary Council.

<sup>1</sup> Fr Frank O'Loughlin was a lecturer at the Catholic Theological College in Melbourne for over fifty years. He also served as director of the Diocesan Liturgical Centre in Melbourne.

<sup>2</sup> Frank O'Loughlin. *Gathering the People of God. Renew the Liturgy – Renew that Church.* (Bayswater: Coventry Press. 2020) 115.

Liturgy is the central source of spirituality in the life of the community. It provides real contact with the very Mystery of Christ<sup>3</sup> – in fact it is the sacramental encounter with that very mystery of Christ. In the liturgy all participants are called to play their part – none is ever spectator at liturgy.

Through the path of Christian Initiation the person is drawn into the life of the Church. By the waters of Baptism the person is clothed in Christ; in Confirmation the person is conformed to the image of Christ the Priest by the gift of the Holy Spirit.<sup>4</sup> Then in the Eucharistic celebration they are able to exercise their priesthood by proclaiming the great works of God and by offering acceptable sacrifice.

If liturgy is at the heart of the life of the Christian, what place should it then have in the discussions of the Plenary Council?

Preparation for the Plenary Council began with a broad consultation with the Australian Church. It is reported that 222,000 participants were involved in making 17,457 submissions. The National Centre for Pastoral Research summarised these submissions in their report in March 2019.<sup>5</sup> From this submission, six National Themes for Discernment were developed by a variety of writing groups established by the editorial committee of the Plenary Council.<sup>6</sup> It will be from the discussions that occurred around these six themes that the *Instrumentum Laboris*, to aid discussion at the Council, was developed.<sup>7</sup>

In the past Councils have not seen liturgy as a focus of their work. They have tended to be focused on significant social issues of their day. The first Australian Provincial Council in 1844<sup>8</sup> did include among its aims: ‘worthy Eucharistic and sacramental liturgies.’<sup>9</sup> They did produce specific decrees which ‘dealt with the administration of the sacraments in general and individual sacraments, particularly Baptism, Mass and Eucharist, Penance and Matrimony (with much detail and strict record keeping).’<sup>10</sup> But generally, the Councils would rarely address liturgy in their agenda.<sup>11</sup> At most

they may have given directions regarding particular liturgical practices: whom one should marry, or who should be baptised. They may have addressed contemporary social issues but would not connect them to the liturgical life of the community.<sup>12</sup>

The past experience of Councils has been a gathering of clerics: Bishops and Priests (both secular and religious). There have been opportunities to expand their number, but only for the clerics; the laity was not included.<sup>13</sup> To be a real consultation of the Church it is important that the lay faithful be included in the assembly.<sup>14</sup> Fortunately, this has been addressed in the constitution of the Plenary Council 2020 by including both religious men and women, and the lay faithful. It is expected that the laity will have the opportunity ‘to express their opinion on those things which concern the good of the Church.’<sup>15</sup>

The coming Plenary Council could take up O’Loughlin’s invitation to make ‘liturgy the central source of spirituality in the life of the community’. It could take up the invitation of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy to place liturgy as the ‘right and duty of every baptised’<sup>16</sup>. In this context they would have to seek to provide education for the community on a full understanding of priesthood which would include all the baptised. By their Christian initiation the baptised enjoy rightful access to all liturgical celebrations. There certainly is a need for liturgical education at all levels of the Australian Church. Often, we still find the liturgy is the preserve of the ordained and not of all the baptised.<sup>17</sup>

After Vatican II almost all dioceses in Australia took up the call for liturgical commissions as part of the normal structure of a diocese.<sup>18</sup> Now however there are few commissions still existing. The Diocesan Liturgical Commission set up in the Archdiocese of Melbourne is a good example of this demise.<sup>19</sup> The Commission was set up in 1964; at its height under the leadership of Frank O’Loughlin (from

<sup>3</sup> “The mystery of Christ occupies a central place in the celebration, because Christ continues to work his wonders in favour of his People”. Pietro Angelo Muroli. *The Mystery of Christ in Time and Space. The Christian Celebration.* (Rome UPI. 2020) 37.

<sup>4</sup> “Christian Initiation: General Introduction” n. 2 in *Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults.* (Sydney E J Dwyer 1987) x.

<sup>5</sup> <https://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/themes/about-the-themes/> Accessed 23rd April 2021

<sup>6</sup> <https://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/continuing-the-journey-of-discernment/> Accessed 23rd April 2021

<sup>7</sup> <https://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/instrumentum-laboris/> Accessed 23rd April 2021

<sup>8</sup> Peter Wilkinson. “First Australian Provincial Council, 10-12 September 1844”, *The Swag.* 2017. 25 4 20-23.

<sup>9</sup> Wilkinson, *The Swag.* 20.

<sup>10</sup> Wildinson, *The Swag.* 23.

<sup>11</sup> An overview of the work of each past Australian Council is given by Peter Wilkinson in a series of articles in *The Swag:* 25 3 2016; 25 4 2016; 26 1 2017; 26 2 2017; 27 1 2018; 27 3 2018; 28 1 & 2 2019.

<sup>12</sup> *Plenary Council 1937: Joint Pastoral Letter* is still accessible and interesting for its social justice bent, clearly inspired by the very recent circumstances of the Great Depression. (Nick Brodie. “A help to the world: the 1937 Plenary Council”. *Eureka Street* 11 September 2018). “For all its 685 dos and don’ts, the 1937 Plenary Council revealed the Church not as a sanctuary from the world, but as a help to it.”

<sup>13</sup> Cf Peter Wilkinson. “Preparing for the 2020 Australian Plenary Council” in *The Swag* 25 3 12-13. He lists the number of clerics that have attended Councils in the past.

<sup>14</sup> John Warhurst makes a clear statement on the importance of all the Church being included in the work of the Plenary Council. “Australia’s Plenary Council needs the Catholic community” *La Croix International* 23rd April 2021. Read more at: <https://international.la-croix.com/news/religion/australias-plenary-council-needs-the-catholic-community/14172>.

<sup>15</sup> Vatican Council II. *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy.* 1964. N. 14..

<sup>16</sup> Vatican Council II. *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church.* 1964. N. 37.

<sup>17</sup> Thomas O’Loughlin “Clericalism — visible and invisible” *La Croix International* December 14, 2020. Read more at: <https://international.la-croix.com/news/religion/clericism-visible-and-invisible/13497> Accessed 23rd March 2021.

<sup>18</sup> *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy.* 44.

<sup>19</sup> Deidre Brown & Paul Taylor *The Influence of the Liturgical Movement on Music in Key Australian Dioceses Following Vatican II.* (DLC Melbourne 2012) 28ff.

1977 to 1991) it included ten employees who provided both liturgical training in the Archdiocese and published extensively many liturgical resources. The Centre then merged into the Office of Worship in 1995. Finally, it became part of the Office of Evangelisation in 2003. A similar transition into the Evangelisation work of the Archdiocese is now reflected in many dioceses. Consequently, the education for liturgical ministries is no longer provided in dioceses with the consequential loss of good liturgical practice in parishes. The Council could take the lead and help to restore Liturgical Commissions to the normal structures of dioceses.

Linked with restoration of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions could be that the Council provide liturgical formation and tertiary education for another generation of liturgists.<sup>20</sup> Liturgists would still be needed for formation in the seminaries of the country. This education could be done by setting up bursaries so that people could be educated in the academic discipline of liturgy – this may require studies at overseas institutions. The Plenary Council could address the need for an Institute of Pastoral Liturgy and provide financial support for liturgical formation and training.<sup>21</sup>

The Plenary Council Discernment Paper, *Prayerful and Eucharistic*, does report some suggested areas of liturgical interest that have been received in their original data collection. These are contained in their paper and cover the following topics:

1. ease the conditions of the 3<sup>rd</sup> rite of Penance
2. look at the priesthood of the baptised laity
  - what part they could have in liturgical ministry
3. call for formation
  - to better accompany life's journey
  - ongoing formation
  - more formation of faith today
4. equipping for mission

While these issues have been named, how can they be addressed in the discussions of the Plenary Council?

All of this topic falls under the opening article on the Nature and Purpose of the Plenary Council: "The Fifth Plenary Council of Australia aims to bring to fuller realisation within Australia the vision of the Second Vatican Council regarding

<sup>20</sup> "So far as possible the commission should be aided by some kind of Institute for Pastoral Liturgy". *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, 44.

<sup>21</sup> Fortunately, the Australian Catholic University has established a Centre for Liturgy in its program. (cf <https://www.acu.edu.au/about-acu/institutes-academies-and-centres/acu-centre-for-liturgy> Accessed 23rd April 2021) but without local Diocesan Liturgical Commissions to implement their teaching and formation, many parishes will miss out on their contribution.

the nature and mission of the church'.<sup>22</sup> As a way to achieve this task the Thematic Discernment Paper 3 was prepared. It is entitled: *How is God calling us to be a Christ-centred Church in Australia that is Prayerful & Eucharistic?*<sup>23</sup> This paper preposes the following areas for discussion:

1. This paper begins with the invitation of Vatican II to 'full conscious and active participation' of God's people in liturgy. This requires a liturgy whose language is accessible to the people. This calls for a revision of the texts currently being used by the parishes. The call for liturgies that nourish the communal life of the church while being open and welcoming to all. Respondents in the initial consultation called for good preaching and beautiful music.
2. Australian society is complex and rapidly changing. People are often stressed and pressured. In the context of a competitive, consumerist and secular society, the innate human desires for love, safety, belonging and connection remain fertile ground for experiences of faith.
 

The family is the usual birthplace of faith and the Church recognises that parents are the first and foremost educators of their children (*Gravissimus Educationis*, 3). Many positive efforts have been made to support Catholics' knowledge of and engagement with scripture, and in particular the gospels.
3. At Emmaus, the Risen Lord offers Eucharistic hospitality and expands our understanding of the Eucharist as seen in the accounts of the Last Supper. Like the two disciples, when we come to the Eucharist we are often a community of the disillusioned and disheartened.
 

'Unless we train ministers capable of warming people's hearts, of walking with them in the night, of dialoguing with their hopes and disappointments, of mending their brokenness, what hope can we have for our present and future journey?'<sup>24</sup>
4. At Eucharist, we gather together as one body, unified as God's people, and extend a welcome to all. Our parish and connected communities face the challenge of supporting people to incorporate the Gospel into their daily lives. Intimate prayerful communities and experiences help people to engage deeply with scripture, God and one another, thus complementing attendance at Sunday Eucharist.

<sup>22</sup> *Fifth Plenary Council of Australia, Statutes and Regulatory Norms*. 6 November 2020. Article 1.

<sup>23</sup> <https://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/continuing-the-journey-of-discernment/> Accessed 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2021

<sup>24</sup> Pope Francis, *Meeting with the Bishops of Brazil, Rio de Janeiro*, 28 July 2013. [http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2013/july/documents/papa-francesco\\_20130727\\_gmg-episcopato-brasile.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2013/july/documents/papa-francesco_20130727_gmg-episcopato-brasile.html) Accessed 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2021

Collaborative pastoral leadership can energise the faithful. The image of Church as a 'field hospital' offers a challenge for us to become a community which offers people space to rest, heal and recover their vitality (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 46).

To meet the needs of God's people for forgiveness and healing, many Australian Catholics challenged the Plenary Council to ease the conditions on the celebration of the third rite of the Sacrament of Penance.

The paper then goes on to name the following areas:

**Participation:** When the Second Vatican Council described prayerful and eucharistic participation, God's people were encouraged to take up the call to 'full, conscious and active participation' in the sacramental and daily life of the Church (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 14).

Many Australian Catholics challenged the Plenary Council to look at the priesthood of the baptised laity (1 Peter 2:9) and to consider what part they could have in liturgical ministry.

More expressions of ministry for lay people, especially women, would enrich our sacramental life.

**Formation:** When we are formed in the Gospel, God's people recognise Jesus in daily life. God's people would appreciate more formation in faith today, with integrating prayer and life.

**Mission:** The challenge will always be there to connect our prayer with action for justice, hearing 'both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor' (*Laudato Si'*, 49).

## PROPOSALS FOR CHANGE

Drawing upon the material received in the initial consultation, various practical proposals have emerged. These have been collected by the appointed committee under the four topics in the Theological Vision of the Plenary Council.<sup>25</sup>

### Community

1. Review and re-imagine the model of parish and connected communities
  - a. Implement a renewed emphasis on local communities
  - b. Equip each of our Church communities and organisations to support the creation of small communities of faith and life

- c. Further develop formal ministries of hospitality and welcome within the life of the Church
  - d. Learn from the experiences of our faith communities during the COVID-19 pandemic
2. Implement collaborative structures of pastoral leadership to reflect the partnership of the clergy and laity
  - a. Implement a new collaborative model for the leadership
  - b. Prioritise the establishment of parish pastoral councils
  - c. Prioritise the establishment of diocesan pastoral councils
3. Ease the conditions and limitations for the celebration of the third rite of the Sacrament of Penance.
4. Encourage communal discernment as a privileged way of making important decisions in the life of the Church.

### Participation

1. Expedite and implement a review of the current translation of the Missal
2. Implement a revision of the Lectionary
3. Implement a collaborative model of ordained and lay sacramental ministry
4. Develop further liturgical and prayerful events which are not dependent on clergy.

### Formation

1. Renew the sacramental life of the Church to facilitate the participation and formation of God's people across life's transitions.
2. Proactively teach people to pray in our modern world.
3. Invest in ongoing national and local formation opportunities for the people of God.
4. Improve how we form and equip clergy as shepherds of the people of God.

<sup>25</sup> <https://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/continuing-the-journey-of-discernment/> Accessed 25<sup>th</sup> March 2021.

## Mission

1. Encourage greater links between Eucharist and mission in the community.
2. Implement pastoral strategies to engage with disillusioned, drifting, wounded and isolated members of our community.

All these four topics can be included under liturgy. How can this vision be implemented by the Council without having liturgy as the central focus?

## Instrumentum Laboris

‘This *Instrumentum Laboris* (working document) seeks to offer an account of what the People of God have expressed.’<sup>26</sup> In reflecting upon the six Thematic Discernment topics identified they sought to identify ‘what it means to be a Christ-centred Church that is open to conversion, renewal and reform; a Church that is inclusive, participative and synodal; and a Church that is prayerful and Eucharistic.’<sup>27</sup>

Looking through the material already presented in this article it could be asked: ‘how faithful have they been in providing access to what has been expressed in the original contributions?’. Throughout the *Instrumentum Laboris* they have only mentioned the following areas which impinge upon liturgy:

- The suggestion for a wider availability of the Third Rite of Reconciliation, mentioned in many submissions to the Plenary Council, indicates a desire for a renewed sacramental life.<sup>28</sup>
- Preaching is another area that many see as needing renewal to enhance openness to conversion and formation for Christian living.<sup>29</sup>
- ‘Both the priests and their bishop jointly bear the responsibility of fostering a spirit of cooperation and mutual respect and support as they seek to be ‘enablers’ of the priesthood of the whole Church’.<sup>30</sup>
- In some rural and isolated parishes in Australia lay women and men lead Sunday liturgies in the absence of a priest. This reality might provoke discussion about how the Church in Australia best provides support for parishes such as these.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>26</sup> No 3 Continuing the Journey *Instrumentum Laboris* (Working Document) for the Fifth Plenary Council of Australia. 2021. <https://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/instrumentum-laboris/> Accessed 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2021

<sup>27</sup> *Instrumentum Laboris*, 105.

<sup>28</sup> *Instrumentum Laboris*, 47.

<sup>29</sup> *Instrumentum Laboris*, 48.

<sup>30</sup> *Instrumentum Laboris*, 120.

<sup>31</sup> *Instrumentum Laboris*, 124.

- ‘One of the challenges for the Plenary Council might well be that of determining how we might better welcome God’s people to the Eucharist and assist them to understand what this sacrament offers, entails and asks of those who receive it.’<sup>32</sup>
- ‘A dimension of this formation must be the ethical and missionary implications of the Eucharist for the Church’s communion of faith.’<sup>33</sup>
- ‘The human, social and economic impacts of the pandemic will be a significant factor shaping the Church’s mission in the years ahead.’<sup>34</sup>
- ‘Recognising the ‘signs of the times’, the development of theologically sound resources, including digital forms of accompaniment such as podcasts and other online media, can support the People of God in learning to pray within the tradition of the Church and in their daily lives.’<sup>35</sup>

While these suggestions have been raised, a process to implement discussion is not given. Again, liturgy could provide a valuable source for this discussion.

## Other issues arising

With the delaying of the Plenary Council, other pastoral issues are beginning to emerge that could be taken up by the Council.

- Just prior to the consultation for the Plenary Council, a document was released by Rome on the authority of the Episcopal Conference to approve liturgical translation.<sup>36</sup> While the topic of liturgical translations was raised in the consultation, it does not seem to have emerged as a pressing issue for the Plenary. The Australian Episcopal Conference has been authorised by the Holy Father to be responsible for the faithful translation of liturgical texts. The Plenary Council is a good opportunity to listen to the concerns of the faithful regarding current liturgical texts.
- Recently Pope Francis has released an Apostolic Letter providing access for women to the minor orders.<sup>37</sup> He affirms the source of minor orders as being Baptism and is not limited to preparations for major orders. Therefore, women

<sup>32</sup> *Instrumentum Laboris*, 137.

<sup>33</sup> *Instrumentum Laboris*, 138.

<sup>34</sup> *Instrumentum Laboris*, 173.

<sup>35</sup> *Instrumentum Laboris*, 142.

<sup>36</sup> *Magnum Principium*. Clearly directs that vernacular translation pertains to the local Episcopal Conference and not any other agency. ‘It pertains to the Episcopal Conferences ‘to faithfully prepare versions of the liturgical books in vernacular languages’’. n.3 Rome 2017. <https://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/en/bollettino/pubblico/2017/09/09/170909a.html> Accessed 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2021.

<sup>37</sup> *Spiritus Domini*. Rome 10 Jan 2017. 2021 ‘These lay ministries, since they are based on the Sacrament of Baptism, may be entrusted to all suitable faithful, whether male or female’. [http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/motu\\_proprio/documents/papa-francesco-motu-proprio-20210110\\_spiritus-domini.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/motu_proprio/documents/papa-francesco-motu-proprio-20210110_spiritus-domini.html). Accessed 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2021.

can be liturgically admitted to the minor orders. This change indicates the future for the discussion of women in ministries within the official church that arises from their Baptismal priesthood. It would be helpful if the Plenary Council could support this discussion by ensuring its implementation.

- Pope Francis has instituted a new commission to study women deacons.<sup>38</sup> If women were to be included in the diaconate, then this would provide them with the opportunity to preach regularly and officially in the Church. This topic has been raised in the consultation and should be included in the discussions at the Plenary.
- While the unique contribution of the indigenous culture is acknowledged<sup>39</sup> and 'the recognition of past failures and present needs should only reinforce our determination to serve and advocate on behalf of those at the margins.'<sup>40</sup> *Instrumentum Laboris* sees 'the Plenary Council as an opportunity for the Catholic Church in Australia to make a public response to the *Statement from the Heart* and increase opportunities for collaboration with local Indigenous communities around the country'.<sup>41</sup> It then closes with suggestions for *Renewing our solidarity with First Australians*.<sup>42</sup> but without specific reference to ritual inclusion. The Plenary could look at providing a culturally appropriate Eucharist for the indigenous rural communities – to build upon the work that has already begun.

## Conclusion

The ground has now been laid for the Plenary Council. The cry of the people for faith formation in the baptismal priesthood, the development of a Church that is open and accepting of diversity, for a liturgy that is well served by preaching, music and ministries to connect life with its liturgical celebrations is evident throughout the preparatory work for the Council. If liturgy could be a focus for the Council, it would be possible to respond to the many issues that have been raised in the consultation. This will require a deep appreciation of the priesthood of the faithful. It would be possible to include liturgy as a central focus for the discussion of the Church into the future. Liturgy could serve as a fruitful focus for discussion to take the Church into the future.

The *Instrumentum Laboris* closes with the promise of Christ: 'I am with you always',<sup>43</sup> We need to move forward with this security of Christ journeying with us. May we be alive to this promise as we gather in Council.

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<sup>38</sup> <https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2020-04/pope-commission-women-deacons.html>. Accessed 13th March 2021.

<sup>39</sup> *Instrumentum Laboris*, 39-40.

<sup>40</sup> *Instrumentum Laboris*, 176.

<sup>41</sup> *Instrumentum Laboris*, 179.

<sup>42</sup> *Instrumentum Laboris*, p. 64.

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<sup>43</sup> *Instrumentum Laboris*, p. 35 ff.

# The Fifth Plenary Council of the Catholic Church in Australia: the Emergence of Liturgical Themes

Tom Elich and Stephen Hackett



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## ABSTRACT

*The Catholic Church in Australia is preparing for a Plenary Council, its first since 1937. The impetus for a Plenary Council began at the beginning of the current millennium, in the call of Pope John Paul II for the Church in each place to prepare a plan for the 'program of the Gospel' attentive to the local context, and in the desire of Pope Francis that the Church become truly synodal for the sake of its life and its mission. The preparatory process for the Plenary Council has sought the input of Catholic and wider community, which has been provided via opportunities for listening, dialogue and discernment. This article sets out the journey of the Australian Catholic community to the Plenary Council and draws forth the liturgical content to date of the preparatory process. The key task remaining in the lead-up to the two general assemblies of the Plenary Council is to discern what the Holy Spirit is saying in the rich yet diverse input that has been received. There will be another chapter of the story to be written at the conclusion of the Plenary Council; and perhaps a further chapter to be written some years hence when the fruits of the Council are finding expression in the life, worship and mission of the Church in Australia.*

## Setting the Scene

Thirteen years ago, Australia's Catholic bishops began a conversation towards holding a Fifth Plenary Council of Australia. For churches of the Eastern and Reform traditions, a national synod or council may not seem especially significant; such ecclesial gatherings are a regular feature of church mission and governance. Yet this has not been the case for the Roman Catholic Church, which last held a Plenary Council in 1937. The initial inspiration for a Plenary Council drew upon the call of Pope John Paul II in his Apostolic Letter *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, 'At the beginning of the new millennium'<sup>1</sup>, for local churches to formulate detailed pastoral plans through which 'the programme of the Gospel' would take root anew in each place and context. He exhorted 'the Pastors of the particular Churches, with the help of all sectors of God's people, confidently to plan the stages of the journey ahead, harmonising the choices of each diocesan community with those of the neighbouring Churches and of the universal Church.'<sup>2</sup> The bishops soon recognised that the Catholic Church in Australia was not ready for a Plenary Council, so they instituted a 'Year of Grace' which began at Pentecost in 2012 and concluded at Pentecost a year later. The 'Year of Grace' also drew inspiration from *Novo Millennio Ineunte*. It was less about doing anything and more about contemplating the face of Christ, so that by encountering him in prayer in new and more focussed ways, the Church might receive fresh life and purpose through, with and in him.<sup>3</sup> Then came the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, which, for its span of five years, became a singular focus for the Catholic community, as it did for other churches and institutions. The momentum for a Plenary Council for a time seemed dormant. In 1965, the Second Vatican Council had heralded a rediscovery of synods and councils, urging that national plenary councils, provincial councils and synods 'flourish with fresh vigour'.<sup>4</sup> That same year, Pope Paul VI had inaugurated as a permanent institution of the Church an international Synod of Bishops. On the occasion of its fiftieth anniversary, during an ordinary general assembly of the Synod of Bishops in 2015, Pope Francis spoke of the synodality of the whole Church, explaining that, 'A synodal Church is a Church which listens, which realises that listening "is more than simply hearing". It is a mutual listening in which everyone has something to learn. The faithful people, the college of bishops, the Bishop of Rome: all listening to each other, and all listening to the Holy Spirit, the "Spirit of truth"'

<sup>1</sup> Pope John Paul II, Apostolic Letter, 'Novo Millennio Ineunte' (2001), para. 29, [http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost\\_letters/2001/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_apl\\_20010106\\_novo-millennio-ineunte.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_letters/2001/documents/hf_jp-ii_apl_20010106_novo-millennio-ineunte.html)

<sup>2</sup> Pope John Paul II, 'Novo Millennio Ineunte', para. 29.

<sup>3</sup> 'Year of Grace – an Overview', <https://www.yearofgrace.catholic.org.au/>

<sup>4</sup> Second Vatican Council, Decree Concerning the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church, 'Christus Dominus' (1965), para. 36, [https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist\\_councils/ii\\_vatican\\_council/documents/vat-ii\\_decree\\_19651028\\_christus-dominus\\_en.html](https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19651028_christus-dominus_en.html)



(*Jn 14:17*), in order to know what he “says to the Churches” (*Rev 2:7*).<sup>5</sup> The Australian bishops who participated in that assembly of the Synod of Bishops returned home and brought with them renewed impetus for a plenary council. In 2016 the Catholic bishops of Australia decided that the time for a Plenary Council had come. The preparation for, the celebration of and finally the implementation of the Fifth Plenary Council of Australia would be informed by the initial inspiration as envisioned 15 years earlier by Pope John Paul II in *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, by the searing grace of the Royal Commission, and by the synodality of the whole Church as set forth by Pope Francis. Pope Francis had observed at the time of the fiftieth anniversary of the Synod of Bishops that the ‘journeying together’ which is at the heart of synodality, ‘is an easy concept to put into words, but not so easy to put into practice.’<sup>6</sup> The task of finding ways to foster an authentic listening to what the Holy Spirit is saying to us today, and of enabling the members of the Catholic community to listen attentively to each other, was entrusted to a facilitation team, which proceeded via questions that were crafted so as to prompt listening, dialogue and discernment.

## Preparing for the Plenary Council

The first phase of the preparatory process towards the Plenary Council, called ‘Listening and Dialogue’, commenced at Pentecost in 2018 and concluded on Ash Wednesday in 2019. It began with the question, ‘What do you think God is asking of us in Australia at this time?’ and participants were encouraged to repeat the listening and dialogue process as often as needed to attend to all of the answers to the question that had surfaced. The fruit of this first phase was a total 17,457 submissions received from individuals, groups and organisations which collectively represented 222,000 people.<sup>7</sup> The submissions from the first phase were processed by the National Centre for Pastoral Research which, through a thorough analysis and filtering of the diverse topics that were raised, presented a final list of themes to a group of laity, religious and clergy called together to discern the thematic areas that would be the focus of the second phase, called ‘Dialogue and Discernment’. Six thematic areas were ultimately discerned and these gave rise to the next question, which was articulated in each of the six thematic areas: ‘How is God calling us to be a Christ-centred Church in Australia that is...’

1. Missionary and Evangelising?
2. Inclusive, Participatory and Synodal?
3. Prayerful and Eucharistic?
4. Humble, Healing and Merciful?
5. A Joyful, Hope-filled and Servant Community?
6. Open to Conversion, Renewal and Reform?<sup>8</sup>

Each of these questions was first taken up by a Discernment and Writing Group, with each of these groups appointed from applicants from around Australia inclusive of laity, religious and clergy. These groups each produced a thematic paper and these are foundational for the ‘Dialogue and Discernment’ process in which people are presently engaged. The six thematic papers<sup>9</sup> have a similar structure:

First, reflection on the data and theme;  
 Second, the pastoral reality;  
 Third, theological vision;  
 Fourth, major challenges; and  
 Fifth, questions and proposals.

<sup>5</sup> Pope Francis, Address at the Ceremony commemorating the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the institution of the Synod of Bishops (2015), [http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2015/october/documents/papa-francesco\\_20151017\\_50-anniversario-sinodo.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2015/october/documents/papa-francesco_20151017_50-anniversario-sinodo.html)

<sup>6</sup> Pope Francis, Address at the Ceremony commemorating the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the institution of the Synod of Bishops (2015).

<sup>7</sup> The report on the first phase, ‘Listen to what the Spirit is Saying: Final Report for the Plenary Council Phase 1: listening and Dialogue’, is published online at <https://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/FINAL-BOOK-v7-online-version-LISTEN-TO-WHAT-THE-SPIRIT-IS-SAYING.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> ‘Snapshot’ reports on each of the six themes have been published online as follows:

1. Missionary and Evangelising - <https://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/PC2020-snapshot-report-1MISSIONARY-final3.pdf>
2. Inclusive, Participatory and Synodal - <https://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/PC2020-snapshot-report-2INCLUSIVE-final.pdf>
3. Prayerful and Eucharistic - <https://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/PC2020-snapshot-report-3PRAYERFUL.pdf>
4. Humble, Healing and Merciful - <https://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/PC2020-snapshot-report-4HUMBLE-final.pdf>
5. A Joyful, Hope-filled and Servant Community - <https://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/PC2020-snapshot-report-5SERVANT-final2.pdf>
6. Open to Conversion, Renewal and Reform - <https://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/PC2020-snapshot-report-6RENEWAL-final2.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> The six thematic papers have been published online as follows:

1. Missionary and Evangelising - <https://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/PC2020-thematic-papers-1.pdf>
2. Inclusive, Participatory and Synodal - <https://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/PC2020-thematic-papers-2.pdf>
3. Prayerful and Eucharistic - <https://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/PC2020-thematic-papers-3.pdf>
4. Humble, Healing and Merciful - <https://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/PC2020-thematic-papers-3.pdf>
5. A Joyful, Hope-filled and Servant Community - <https://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/PC2020-thematic-papers-5.pdf>
6. Open to Conversion, Renewal and Reform - <https://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/PC2020-thematic-papers-6.pdf>

## Liturgical content

As is evident in the titles of the six thematic areas, there is considerable intersection between them. While it might at first seem that the thematic area that would deal with liturgy is the third, 'Prayerful and Eucharistic', in fact all of the thematic areas addressed aspects of the Church's liturgical life from their distinct standpoints. This becomes clear in the questions and proposals set forth in each thematic paper, which are brought together here:

### Missionary and Evangelising

- *Collaboration with other religions:* That the Church in Australia celebrate the UN-established Interfaith Harmony Week in the first week of February, with an approved Mass for Interfaith Harmony Sunday on the first Sunday of February.
- *Evangelisation:* That the Church establish short annual programs for priests and deacons to enhance preaching in an evangelical manner that relates the Gospel to people's lives.
- *Marriage and Family:* That a marriage catechumenate be activated nationwide, led principally by married couple parishioners in collaboration with parish clergy, that covers all stages of marriage formation throughout life.
- *Role of Women:* That dioceses, parishes and Church organisations promote qualified lay women and men to exercise their gifts and talents in various ecclesial community settings, including preaching in the liturgical context.
- *Women Deacons:* That the Church continue to examine the possibility of a female diaconate as was indicated by Pope Francis after his reception of the report from the Commission he created in 2016.
- *First Nations Peoples:* That NATSICC, in partnership with the National Liturgical Commission, lead the incorporation of appropriate aspects of First Nations peoples' spirituality into liturgical celebrations, especially for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday.
- *Education:* That the Church encourage Catholic adults to undertake tertiary and other courses in theology and faith development, either face-to-face or online, to enhance their ability to serve the Church in a variety of roles.

## Inclusive, Participatory and Synodal

- *General:* That the whole body of the faithful find appropriate ways to identify and include individual persons who are seeking community, yet find themselves in need at the edges... persons living in remote locations, who are homeless, without income, in prison, new arrivals, aged persons, people with mental illness, differently abled persons, people of diverse sexual orientation and persons who feel isolated or excluded in other ways...
- *Women:* That the Council take whatever steps are within its power to ensure that translations of Lectionaries, Missals and Sacramentaries include and respect both women and men... [and that the Council note local concerns about] allowing women to be lectors and acolytes and the inclusion of women to the permanent diaconate and priesthood...
- *Young People:* That [the Council] give practical encouragement for the participation of young people in the various ministries of the Church...

### Prayerful and Eucharistic

- *Community:* Further develop formal ministries of hospitality and welcome within the life of the Church: to prioritise the engagement of all who participate in sacramental programs, to nurture our communal relationships of support for one another and to reach out to the wider community.
- *Penance:* Ease the conditions and limitations under which the local bishop may permit the celebration of the third rite of the Sacrament of Penance.
- *Liturgical Books:* Expedite and implement a review of the current translation of the Missal to promote an expression of prayer that is inclusive and understood by all people. Implement a revision of the Lectionary that is accessible and considers inclusive language alongside accuracy.
- *Ministry:* Implement a collaborative model of ordained and lay sacramental ministry which draws forth the gifts of all the baptised. Implement the commissioning of capable and suitably trained lay people to specific ministries within the Church's sacramental life. This would include Baptism, preaching on the Gospel, blessing and witnessing marriages on behalf of the Church and officiating at funerals.

- *Lay Leadership:* Commission and call appropriately trained lay people to lead Liturgies of the Word with or without the distribution of Holy Communion. Provide formal approval and encouragement for suitably qualified lay women and men to break open the Word within the community, supporting parishioners to share reflections on the Word out of their experience. Encourage liturgical events in response to communal matters of special significance (bushfires, floods, droughts, war, grief, pandemic).
- *Sacramental Preparation:* Implement national stage- and age-related steps for full inclusion in the community through the Sacraments of Initiation that recognise the understanding required for these sacraments. Begin by surveying dioceses across the country to investigate why different ages were chosen previously. Recommend that sacramental preparation of children be led by qualified educators working with the parents and the children. Equip small local communities within a parish to educate and assist parents through the sacramental processes being undertaken by their children. Encourage local Church communities to develop new liturgical and prayerful experiences that meet transition moments in peoples' lives.
- *Lay Formation:* Encourage dioceses to prepare programs to form God's people in prayer and discernment. Expand the reach of spiritual formation for liturgical ministers, musicians and educators who lead prayer and worship. Train liturgical musicians through sponsorships and scholarships within local dioceses.
- *Clergy Formation:* Consider how the formation of priests accompanies that of the laity. Ensure priestly formation is comprehensive, ongoing and reviewed regularly across the lifespan, including ongoing liturgical formation to assist priests in their service as leaders of liturgical prayer. Ensure seminarians have the best possible training for ministry, including substantial formation as leaders of liturgical prayer.
- *Mission:* Review the Dismissal Rite to consider an expanded and more frequently used prayer or solemn blessing over the people. This could equip priests and laity alike to more purposefully live out our calling as a Eucharistic community on mission in daily life. Humble, Healing and Merciful.
- *National Apology for sexual abuse:* In addition [to a national apology or pledge], some kind of acknowledgement through the liturgy, such as a dedicated Mass for the healing of all those hurt by sexual abuse in the Church, could be a powerful means of ongoing healing.

- *Pastoral Care:* Develop a robust plan and structure for the growth of pastoral care in every diocese... Such grassroots pastoral care is a means to engage people in the sacramental life. Non-practising Catholics will not necessarily come back to the Church for the sacraments alone. A robust framework of pastoral care that is relevant to people's needs and attentive to their human flourishing can be a bridge for people to engage in the life of the Church.

### Joyful, Hope-filled and Servant Community

- *Ministry:* Develop structures and processes to fully embrace the broad demographic of the parish and engage all parishioners in witnessing to God through parish life. Activities might include hospitality, bereavement, preparation for Baptism, Marriage and other Sacraments, social events, outreach in charity and work for justice or youth ministry.
- *Women:* Initiate and resource a robust dialogue about the role of women in the Church, to consider the role of women in formal leadership within the parish and the broader Church, and to explore their exclusion from ordained ministry and many liturgical roles...
- *Ordination:* Promote and develop the ministry of permanent deacons, as servants to those on the peripheries and as enablers and leaders of others engaged in these ministries. Review, from an Australian perspective, the ordination to the priesthood of married men.
- *Service:* Co-responsibility will require ongoing training and formation for all parties, priests as well as laity, in building trust and the appreciation of ministry as a gift of service to the community.
- *Eucharist:* Initiate a national forum for all sections of the Church to deepen our shared understanding of Christ's presence in the Eucharist, in ourselves and in others; of how this presence connects all elements of our Christian calling, worship and service; and of how the Mass and Eucharist nourish the hope and joy that is a foundation for our service to the world; to develop formation programs around these matters for all parts of the Church, and provide opportunities for parishes and communities to reflect on the intimate unity of Sacraments, prayer, ritual and service offered to those in need.

### Open to Conversion, Renewal and Reform

- *Ministry:* How can a greater range of ministers –ordained and lay – be recognised, trained, deployed and evaluated in order to enliven local faith communities...?

## The Journey Continues

The COVID-19 pandemic has necessitated that the two general assemblies of the Plenary Council be set back a year, to October 2021 and July 2022. While perhaps disappointing for those eager for renewal and reform, the additional year that this has added to the preparatory process has provided time for further listening, greater research, and much deeper delving into the gift of the Holy Spirit to the Christian community which is discernment. Indeed, it is the art of discernment that sets the Plenary Council apart from so many other types of gathering in which the agenda is played out more as an exercise of ecclesial business or politics.

Will all of the questions and proposals relating to the liturgy receive specific attention during the Plenary Council? Perhaps not. Yet there are common threads running through the questions and proposals that are sure to receive attention, as they can be identified not only in the context of liturgy but in other areas of Church life and mission as well, such as the role of the laity and especially of women, marriage and family, empowerment for ministry and service, co-responsibility in mission and governance, and enabling people to exercise their rightful baptismal place in the Church. The gifts of the laity and of women in ministry, the vital necessity of formation and training both for the ordained and the laity who exercise ministry, the importance of reaching out to those who might otherwise feel excluded or remain on the fringes of the worshipping community, the value to be found in living as disciples of Jesus with a sense of mission, and the limitless capacity of the Eucharist to gather up all of this and more, are key concerns which are to be found in many of the proposals and questions that have clear liturgical content.

What remains to be done to fruitfully bring the preparatory phase to completion is essentially the work of discernment. The data has been gathered and analysed; its offerings are rich yet also diverse. It is only through discernment that the voice of the Holy Spirit can be heard clearly. Indeed, the great gift of the Plenary Council to the Catholic Church in Australia may well in due course be found, not in a set of decrees, but in the members of the Church community, laity and clergy alike, becoming more synodal by learning to listen and learning to discern. Which would, of course, transform the way in which the liturgy is understood and celebrated.

## ACADEMY REPORTS

### PRESIDENT'S REPORT

When I first joined the Academy at the turn of the millennium, I never imagined that I would be sitting in the 'big chair', so to speak. And yet here I am, your President for the time being and until the next National Conference. My 'promotion' to the role of President was not something I had contemplated, and it has come about only because Doug Morrison-Cleary decided during 2020 to stand down from the role for personal reasons.

In conversation with the National Council, it was determined that the most appropriate course of action for the short period until the next National Conference was for the remaining members of the Executive to redistribute the various roles among themselves. And so, for the time remaining in the term of the current Executive, those roles are held by myself (as President), David Nelson (as Secretary), and Jason McFarland (as Treasurer). Supported by the other members of the National Council, we will do our best to guide the usual range of Academy activities until next year.

And speaking of next year, the preparations for a National Conference are well under way in the care of the Victorian Chapter. Speaking personally, and I suspect on behalf of many others, I am looking forward to being able to meet *in person* for our Conference in 2022, to enjoy both good conversation and good company. Some thought is already being given to what might be possible if, God forbid, the COVID-19 situation deteriorates and in person gatherings once again become a casualty.

Further information about current plans for the next Academy Conference can be found on our AAL website, but it is hoped that registrations for the 2022 National Conference will open in coming months. If you have recently changed appointments or contact details, it may be advantageous to let your Chapter Convenor and the Executive know, so that you do not miss out on being notified about Conference related matters. The Executive can be contacted via email on [liturgy.australia@gmail.com](mailto:liturgy.australia@gmail.com).

The National Council is in the process of finalising the recruitment process for the next Editor of the *Journal*. As you would be aware, Angela McCarthy has signalled her intention to step down from the role, a role she has filled admirably for a goodly span of years, positioning the *Journal* well for the future as a journal of significance. The intention is for the next Editor to take up their appointment with effect from the next National Conference.

One of the tasks that the rejigged Executive has been entrusted with is the review and renewal of the Constitution of the Academy, both to include some items that have been identified as missing and to better reflect the current state of the Academy and technological advancements. The task of reviewing and drafting a suggested new Constitution is an interesting one, and I would invite any members of the Academy who might have suggestions about what a new Constitution might look like to forward their thoughts to me (email: [andrew@doohan.id.au](mailto:andrew@doohan.id.au)). The National Council hopes to have a new draft of the Constitution available for discussion, amendment, and adoption by the time of the National Conference in 2022.

**Andrew Doohan**

## VICTORIA CHAPTER REPORT

### Chapter meetings

Since the last AJL the Victoria chapter has held three meetings. Two of these were regular chapter gatherings, and the third was an online national meeting.

We had the pleasure of welcoming Tanya Wittwer from South Australia for our November 2020 meeting, to speak about her paper, *Pastoral Considerations for a Pandemic* (<https://hail.to/laidlaw-college/publication/z0YvCh2/article/PCCADzg>). We were joined by 35 members and guests, and the discussion raised some interesting points for further reflection. Tanya noted that pastoral recovery from the 2020 lockdowns and closure of churches from worship is going to be a slow process, likely to take ten years. Another point raised in the conversation was the parallel between Covid and bushfires.

During her presentation Tanya referenced a study that will be of interest to readers of AJL, *Worship in a Time of Pandemic: A Survey of Congregational Practices* (<https://pandemicworshipsurvey.blogspot.com/>). This is a fascinating resource, which illustrates geographical and demographic differences in how local churches responded to lockdown. I think it's interesting to note the variety in the use of online worship services, either as pre-recorded video or live using a stream to a video platform, or through video conferencing on Zoom. There is a perceptible city/country divide in use of (and possibly access to) online technology.

For our March 2021 meeting we were joined by Dr Jenny O'Brien from the Office for Worship in the Archdiocese of Adelaide. Jenny is well-known to many of our long-standing members, and it was a real joy to welcome her as a colleague from our South Australian chapter.

Jenny joined us to speak about two recent documents from Pope Francis, his encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*, released in October 2020. This was followed in January with a motu proprio, *Spiritus Domini*, which updated canon law to permit women to participate in worship as readers and acolytes. For those of us coming from other traditions the update of canon law marks a point of ecumenical convergence, where women have been performing these roles for many years.

Jenny's presentation invites us to consider how, as liturgists, we are called to "reconsider the way in which our liturgies not only engender a greater sense of community within the assembly of the faithful but also turn the faith community outwards to embrace all communities, local, national and international."

### AAL National Online Meeting

On 15-16 January 2021 we hosted a national online meeting. This was a place-keeper for the live conference we had been expecting to host, now deferred to 2022.

There were two parts to the meeting. On Friday 15 January we gathered for a virtual convivium. The South Australia chapter joined in force from a single location, providing life from a live party. Using the breakout rooms function on Zoom proved a real treat, since this allowed people to mix and have conversation in smaller groups.

On Saturday 16 January we gathered for a day of discussion using Open Space Technology, facilitated by Nathan Nettleton. This was an enjoyable experience (yes, it's possible with online meetings!), aided by a platform that facilitated easy movement between discussion groups. Three papers added to the scholarly content of the day, including one presentation offered from a participant in New Zealand.

There is a book of the conference, which you can find here: <https://app.box.com/s/cg54lod5ioq2ohfp4rszaoa44ylydz65>

### Comings and Goings

Congratulations to Colleen O'Reilly, who was awarded AM in the Australia Day honours list in recognition of her distinguished ministry in the Anglican Church of Australia.

Congratulations to Leanne Earl, who recently completed her Masters of Education.

## Vale

Two long standing members of our chapter have died since the last AJL went to press.

Maria George passed away after a lengthy illness in October 2020. Covid restrictions meant her funeral was live-streamed from St Peter's Catholic Church, Bentleigh East.

Rev Philip Newman, a longtime vicar of St John's Anglican Church, Toorak, passed away in aged care in April 2021. His funeral was held at St Paul's Cathedral.

### **Kieran Crichton**

[doctor@kierancrichton.com](mailto:doctor@kierancrichton.com)

## BRISBANE CHAPTER REPORT

The Brisbane Chapter meets on the first Tuesday of every month from 10:00am to noon. This is a change from our evening meetings. It is impossible to find a time that suits everyone but in general the morning is better attended than the evening time.

We begin with a short liturgy prepared by one of our members and for most meetings we have a topic to discuss, sometimes a book chapter or a paper written by a member. At our most recent meeting those of us who attended the Conference were able to report both on the format and on the sessions that we attended.

Unfortunately, due to holidays and an unexpected lockdown, we decided not to meet in April. At our next meeting we will discuss the paper on hymns that was presented at the Conference.

As usual we had a very successful end of year function at the home of David and Marcia Pitman.

### **Marian Free, Brisbane Chapter Convenor**

[marianfree@gmail.com](mailto:marianfree@gmail.com)

## NSW CHAPTER REPORT

The NSW Chapter is gearing up for our first in-person gathering since March 2020. It is hoped that over the next few months arrangements can be made to once again meet in person.

Until then the Chapter members have engaged online with the AAL National Online event in January 2021 and it is anticipated that a number of members will join in with the ACU online presentation featuring Kevin Irwin. The ACU Centre for Liturgy are presenting: 'Liturgy and Sacraments in a COVID World: Renewal not Restoration', an online public lecture by Monsignor Kevin W. Irwin on Monday 17 May from 10-11.30am (AEST) via Zoom.

### **David Nelson, NSW Chapter Convenor**

[liturgy.cathedral@cdob.org.au](mailto:liturgy.cathedral@cdob.org.au)

## SOUTH AUSTRALIA CHAPTER REPORT

The chapter has not met face to face since the virtual convivium on the eve of our one day conference in January. SA was in the fortunate position of being able to join together in person for that pre-conference gathering and we all enjoyed being able to see each other in a form other than framed by a screen. It might not have been quite what the Victorians intended, but we enjoyed the time together with other members across the country.

The Victorian Chapter's online meetings have been a very welcome addition to our Chapter life in recent months. Last November, Associate Professor Dr Tanya Wittwer from Adelaide, contributed her paper on "Liturgy and Pastoral Considerations during a Pandemic". Dr Jenny O'Brien, Catholic Office of Worship in SA, was the speaker for their March meeting, presenting on "The Liturgical Implications of Fratelli tutti".

Our plans for this year are still a little free form. Each of our members has been active in a range of ways with publishing or contributions to their own tradition's liturgical life.

For an update on our local South Australian activities please get in touch via [roy@uniting.com.au](mailto:roy@uniting.com.au)

## WEST AUSTRALIA CHAPTER REPORT

As I write this, Western Australia are entering into their second, hopefully short, lockdown for 2021. Whilst we have not suffered in the way many parts of Australia have, there is certainly a feeling in our local population of remaining vigilant, and for many quite anxious, in the face of our current situation.

Western Australia has always had a small AAL chapter, and this remains at the beginning of this year. Our members come from a wide variety of denominations and interests in liturgy, and we have until recently, being unable to meet in person, but hope this may happen as the year progresses. Members have enjoyed the online offerings of other chapters – for which we thank them most significantly. The physical desert that separates us from our East coast brothers and sisters can sometimes also be a desert of “unknowing” – so we are always grateful to be in touch with what is happening elsewhere and to learn from your reflection and experience.

Long-standing AAL member, WA chapter convener, past president and editor of the AAL Journal Angela McCarthy, retired from her Senior Lectureship in theology at Notre Dame Fremantle at the end of 2020. We continue to be grateful for Angela's many years of service to AAL and her energy in keeping the liturgical life of Western Australia connected and resourced – and we pray in retirement she will continue!

**Chris Kan, WA Chapter Convener**  
[ckan@sacredheart.wa.edu.au](mailto:ckan@sacredheart.wa.edu.au)

## BOOK REVIEW

Reviewed by **Robert Gribben, Melbourne**

***Australian Anglicans Worship, performing APBA***  
**By Charles Sherlock.**  
**Mulgrave: Broughton Pub., 2020.**  
**ix+433pp.**

This is a monumental book, its size rightly conveying its scope and its learning. Every Anglican reader will find their liturgical experience and understanding illuminated, challenged and enhanced; every non-Anglican will discover many things they did not know about their own tradition and will have been introduced to the fundamental principles of Christian worship, historically, theologically and in practice. This represents a lifetime of study and experience by one of Australia's finest liturgical scholars, written always in an ecumenical spirit, and with occasional mischievous side remarks. It draws on decades of work within the Anglican Liturgical Commission with esteemed colleagues. It is also a personal book: you will get to know Charles Sherlock better, as he honestly and respectfully addresses contested issues in his own and other churches. There is wise advice for both young and old players about 'performing' the liturgy, one of Charles' strong interests. Every practising liturgist should have copies of other churches' worship books on their shelf; it will help to have APBA (=A Prayer Book for Australia, Broughton Books, 1995) - the 'red prayer brick' - open on your desk. This is a commentary on every part. It helps that the Contents page itself is detailed, so you can find your way to the section you are interested in; and there is an index. Each chapter ends with 'Further reading'.

No review can do this encyclopaedic commentary justice. Let me mention some personal highlights. I welcomed the introduction in chapter 7 to 'The Ministry of Prayer': What makes prayer Christian? What is the purpose of Intercession? We learn much about Collects, an Anglican gift. What do the oft-repeated responses bring to our worship? And some profound words on the meaning of 'Blessing'. Chapter 10 will take many well beyond inherited perceptions of Christian initiation, rites much needed in this post-Christian era. The tripartite Part E on the Eucharist deserves to be published on its own, except that would miss the point of its place in the whole. Here we benefit from Charles' active part in the ARCIC dialogue. There is an intelligent re-telling of the liturgical debates from the beginning of the modern liturgical movement about the shape, flow and purpose of the Great Prayer of Thanksgiving, including 'Sensitive issues in eucharistic celebration' (246ff) and another '...in administering Holy Communion' from which both presiders and participants will benefit. Issues

concerning the eucharist within weddings and funerals, and with the sick and dying are gently considered. Also of ecumenical interest are sections of the Anglican Ordinal and on the Articles of Religion.

My copy now has pencilled notes, question- and exclamation- marks all over it. The work invites engagement, it challenges opinions thought settled, it opens dialogue, significantly within Anglicanism, but in the *oikoumene*. It exemplifies the importance of an Academy of Liturgy where scholars and practitioners meet together to share their gifts.

## AJL addresses

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Email: [angela.mccarthy6@bigpond.com](mailto:angela.mccarthy6@bigpond.com)

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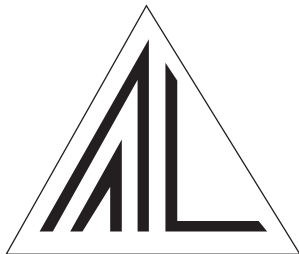
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