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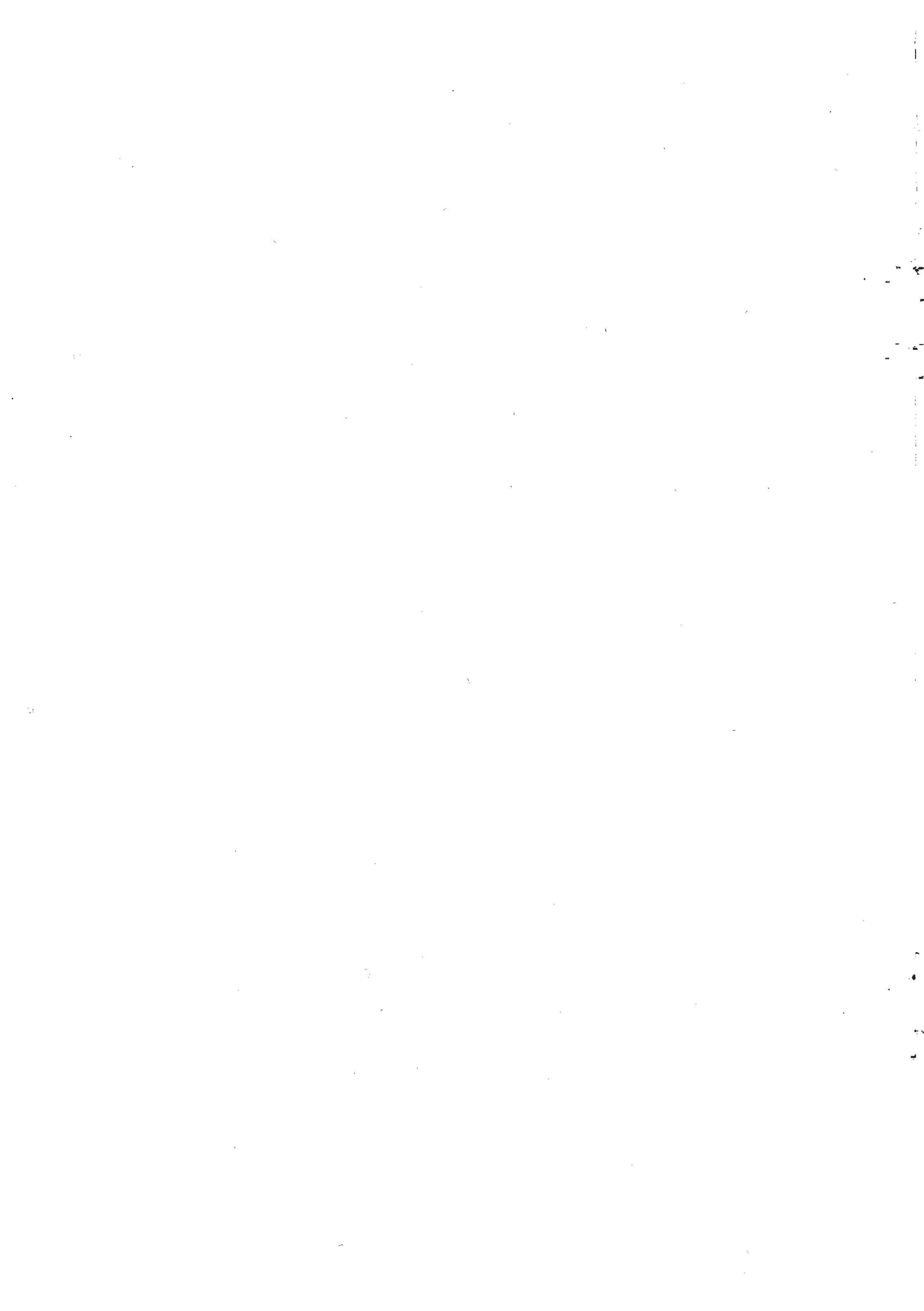

AUSTRALIAN JOURNAL OF LITURGY

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R. WESLEY HARTLEY
EDITOR

GRAHAM HUGHES
DAVID ORR, OSB
ASSISTANT EDITORS

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 each May and October.

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EDITORIAL

The Australian Academy of Liturgy was formed in 1982 with the aim of furthering the study of Christian liturgy in Australia. To do this it brings together liturgical scholars from the various Christian traditions, throughout Australia and beyond. The Academy comments on liturgical matters and raises questions of importance for liturgy, focusing particularly on the understanding and development of liturgy relevant to Australian society.

The annual conference has been the main means for furthering the aims of the Academy. Now the journal will enable further scholarly exchange and provide for the dissemination of news and information on liturgical matters. The Academy has aimed to make its deliberations and findings available beyond its own memership and the journal will be a major instrument in doing this.

AJL will fill a gap as there is no other scholarly journal on liturgy in Australia. It will be ecumenical in scope, drawing from and contributing to a wide variety of Christian traditions. It will focus on Australia and the work of Australian scholars, complementing the international journals, but will not be narrowly or exclusively Australian.

AJL is a service to members of the Academy, but is designed for those beyond the Academy as well. It will be a welcome spin-off if the journal helps to broaden and strengthen the membership of the Academy. Contributions to the journal are invited from members and others. A particular request is made for reports of current research.

In this issue we publish three papers read at the 1986 Conference. These have been introduced by David Orr in his report of the Conference. It is pleasing to note that we can begin with a list of contributors who are neither exclusively male nor exclusively clerical. The papers are published substantially in the form in which they were read at the Conference.

In addition to general articles each issue of AJL will contain a "News and Information" Section. What are planned to be two continuing series are begun in this issue. "Developments in Liturgy" will focus on the work of liturgical commissions. "Studies in Liturgy" will report on opportunities for study and research in liturgy in various centres in Australia. Other reports will also be included in this section of the journal. David Orr has particular responsibility for this section.

An essential requirement of any scholar is to know what is being published in his field and book reviews serve this need. A prominent feature of the journal will be book reviews. Graham Hughes is the Book Review Editor.

R.W.H.

St. Barnabas' College
Eastertide 1987

LITURGICAL PRAYER: AN ART FORM

Gregory Manly

It was at our meeting last year in Melbourne that the description 'art form' was introduced: by Fr Peter Steele, in his paper on the Eucharistic Prayers. It gave me a real thrill when I heard him, since it spoke to, and confirmed, an idea which I have had for a while now; and in that time, in all the courses Anneliese and I gave together, the praying of liturgy as an art was basic to the content and methodology of all we did. You can imagine, then, with what pleasure and conviction I accepted David Rankin's offer to take this segment of the Conference.

Before I begin I would like to expres how dependent I am on others for what I will offer to you this morning; and two people in particular, both of whom are here with us: Anneliese and Robert Gribben. To fail to do this would be an act of ingratitude, if not dishonesty; and I would not want to start my time with you without acknowledging what they have given to me in my own liturgical — and also personal — formation over many years now.

I come, then, to engage in this pleasurable activity this morning, first in this paper; and then, after morning tea, in the Discussion period. In that second period, I would like to lead into your discussion with an introductory activity: this will be in the nature of something experiential. Why I choose to do this will be evident from this paper.

In speaking of Liturgy as an art form, I will dwell on what is meant by an 'art form', and then how this applies to liturgy. I am hoping that these will provide some material for our session on Thursday, 'Looking to the Future'.

Why make the point that liturgy is an art form?

If liturgy has always been considered as an art form in the liturgical movement and in liturgical practice in the churches, this paper would have a different thrust and tone. For I am starting with the premise that liturgy has not been considered as an art form, or as an art form in the correct sense; and this has had significant consequences, both in the celebration of liturgy on the part of both the congregation, and the Presiding Celebrant and other ministers; and in those activities engaged in in liturgical education, or to improve liturgy, such as liturgy courses; liturgy aids; liturgical centres; liturgy commissions; and most noticeably in the training of liturgical ministers.

Having made that statement, I will leave the development of it until later: until I speak about what we mean by calling liturgy an art form.

Art Forms

Let me commence with some concrete examples of an art form: I mention painting, sculpture; singing, acting, dancing; playing the piano, or any instrument; house decoration, flower arrangement, clothes designing.

Also helping situations:

— sitting listening to a person and 'hearing' all that they are communicating;
— being 'with' someone in a way that they experience that I am accepting them, am there 'for' them;
— responding to what a person is feeling with *my* feelings.

Why are these entitled to be called art forms? An answer to this question requires us to look at what is needed to make 'an art form': What makes anything a work of art?

Let me give this brief analysis of the 'ingredients' of an art form in this way: The first requirement is a person, who is an artist, who has an EXPERIENCE. Then what the artist experiences, what he or she sees and feels, is captured or expressed in a FORM (that is through some medium e.g. visual, sound, words, etc). This is the 'work of art'.

'An' Experience

It might be helpful if we look at this idea of the 'artist having an experience'. For this we need to consider for a moment the difference between 'experiencing' and 'having an experience'.

We are experiencing all the time, as long as our senses are functioning. This ordinary experience is continuous; *all* seeing, *all* hearing, *all* touching and sensation by a person is that person experiencing. It does not matter whether the person is aware or not of what is affecting him or her, nor in what way he or she is affected. It goes on without break.

The first characteristic of AN experience, on the other hand, is that it does not go on all the time; it is in the nature of an episode, of greater or lesser length. But it is something complete in itself: an event with a beginning and an end. We can talk about 'before' that experience, and 'after' it.

Its second characteristic is its emotional quality: there is always noticeable feeling of some kind in the event. It has this impact on a person because what happens is such — that is, what strikes the person, the circumstances making up the situation what the person hears and sees and the sensations in the body are of such a character — that they awaken and evoke the person's feelings. Without feelings there is no experience. According to Rollo May

> the person sees sharper and more accurately when the emotions are engaged. Indeed we cannot really see an object unless we have some emotional involvement with it.[1]

Hence a good description of an experience is 'seeing with feeling'.

The Expressive Form

The immediate instinct of someone after an experience is to *express* it. They may use words, written or spoken (how many telephone conversations are of this kind!); they may use colours and shapes, or musical sounds. There is created by the artist an 'expressive form'.

Susan Langer, the renowned philosopher of art, sums this up well when she writes: 'art is the creation of forms symbolic of human feelingfulness.'[2]

They are the first group of elements in an art form: a person, an artist who has an experience, and given expression to it in some form. A work of art has been created.

However, an art-experience has two moments. First there is what I have been describing, the experience leading to expression in the artist. Secondly, there is the participation in that expressive object by a 'perceiver' who sees it, hears it, participates in it.

A person who, by seeing or hearing, shares in a work of art, becomes involved in activity similar to what took place between the artist and his or her experience that gave birth to the work of art. As the artist surrendered to the experience in order to create the art work, so the perceiver surrenders to the expressive qualities of the art work. Through a sympathetic participation in the art work, the perceiver 'gets inside' the form, and the form in turn 'gets inside' the perceiver. The result is that the perceiver shares in the experience of the artist from which this work of art resulted.

In participation persons also 'see with feeling'. There is a seeing which far surpasses mere recognition and observation. The art work works its power on the perceiver, shaping his or her experience by the form of its expressive content. Meanings and feelings are disclosed to the perceiver which may differ from and even surpass those of the creating artist; the perceiver can be said to create his or her own art work. (May I just remark, in parentheses, that this is well illustrated in Scripture, with its power to elicit deeper and deeper faith from all believers of all time).

Referring to both the creator of the work of art and the perceiver, Bennett Reimer writes:

> Aesthetic perception is an active, outgoing, 'doing', which intensely involves the person in the aesthetic qualities of the thing being regarded. The aesthetic quality of the thing, in turn, 'worked on' the perceiver as he becomes aesthetically involved in it, as it does on the creator as he is shaping it. The 'doing' becomes an 'underdoing' as reaction takes place to what is perceived.'[3]

'Great' Art

Relevant to our consideration of an art form is the question, what makes a work of art great, or greater than others? First and foremost there is the intensity of 'being present' on the part of the artist: an aesthetic perception which brings

about a heightened experience out of ordinary experience. It is the mystery of human creativity: something new is brought into being out of the old and the familiar. As one author puts it, 'Being so intensely caught up in the experience, a heightened form of consciousness is spawned.'[4]

Something also happens in the process of creating the expression of his or her experience by the artist, to make the art great. There is a reciprocal interaction between artist and medium, whether that medium is the sound in music, or the words of poetry, or the movements and gestures of drama and dance; or the paint, the stone or glass or whatever material in the plastic arts. In working the medium, the artist is not only forming the aesthetic expression. As he or she explores the potential of the medium, the work of art is, at the same time, forming the artist. This imbues the material with the very intensity and depth of the artist's spirit. 'Both the creator and the work created become transformed.'[5] A work of art is great according to the degree of interaction between artist and the chosen medium.

'ARTIST' and 'artist'

Has a person, then, to be an artist to be a perceiver? I would like to make the distinction betwen artist with a capital 'A', and artist with a small 'a'. The former is such as I have just been describing. The artist with a small 'a' is one who may not have the gift of creating an expressive object in a medium, but he or she will have the gift of sensitive perceiving: the ability to 'see more' and feel more in heightened consciousness and experience.

This applies to all of life. Living is an art form; anyone who is present to life is an artist — with a small 'a', of course. I quote a reflection on such a person:

> There are artists whose medium is LIFE itself
> and who express the inexpressible
> without brush, pencil, chisel or guitar.
> They neither paint, nor dance.
> THEIR MEDIUM IS BEING.
> Whatever their hand touches has increased *life*.
> They *see* — really SEE — they are artists of being *alive*.[6]

It is this being-alive quality of the artist that is needed in people to participate, rather than observe, in liturgy.

Liturgy an art form

To avoid causing confusion in what follows, it would be worth while for me to mention some pre-suppositions in regard to liturgy; and what I have in mind in speaking about liturgy:

First, I am, of course, speaking about *celebrations* of liturgy.

A second point: what is all-important in celebrations of liturgy is the congregation's *participation:*

a third: participation is people *praying* the liturgy:
and a fourth: prayer is a religious experience; for us an experience of God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

So, the question: how is a gathering of people, led to pray by ministers, who are presided over by a Presiding Celebrant, involved in an art form?

Liturgy, like art, takes the ordinariness of day-to-day life and expresses it in a form that heightens and intensifies the ordinary experience so that it becomes *an* experience. It has those characteristics of an experience which I mentioned: it has a very definite beginning and ending; there is the sense of heightened consciousness and expression of life which is both 'this-worldly' and 'other-worldly'.

As I started to explain, what is meant by an art form with 'a person, an artist, who has an experience', so now I start with a People: our Judeo-Christian People. Our interest in them, and our being one of them, is because of their experience of the world. They had a special, definite and unique experience of God. Their experience of reality was a faith-experience.

This experience they expressed in myths and rites and laws; preserved for us in writings and rites. They gave us texts, scriptural and ritual: texts which are ministered — 'served-up' — to the congregation. These are the media from which the artist-ministers create, compose and choreograph liturgy. At the same time, the artist-ministers must be engaged in an ongoing encounter with the world; there is an encounter between texts and times. Patrick Collins writes:

> Liturgy is like poetry in that by infusing words with passion and import, they are formed into forms of feeling. Liturgy is like drama in that ritual action is a species of dramatic performance, the acting out of story. Liturgy is like dance in that it involves choreographed movements and gesture in space. Liturgy is like music in that it reflects, in its ritual rhythms, the tensions and resolutions of sound which is the matter ordered to form by composers and performers of music.[7]

As in the case of all works of art, for the form of liturgy, the ritual, to become fully an art form, there must be people who respond to it and are engaged by it: people who, perceiving-participating become involved, and are 'worked-on' by the ministered ritual. There is a heightened expression and experience of Presence: such as modelled for us, for example, in the experience of Isaiah. The Mystery of Christ and the Chruch is expressed and experienced; and this is what the liturgy is intended to do, according to the Constitution on the Liturgy, in an 'outstanding way'.

To quote from Patrick Collins again:

> If the aesthetic power of ritual does its deed on artist and perceiver alike, not only has a work of art been formed but both creator and participants have been reformed and recreated in the perceiving as well. Nothing, nothing at all, can remain totally the same, including our relationships with others in justice as well as in love.[8]

View of liturgy in the past/present

That liturgy has not been treated, or even considered, as an art form, is clear from past and present concerns about liturgy; or what liturgy courses, committees, commissions aim at; at what they spend time and effort. There is little or no emphasis on religious experience; or the experience of the congregation at all. Liturgy is considered primarily as a text; words are so important, and the expression of ideas.

This trend is evident in no less than the Constitution on the Liturgy. In its opening sections its concern and thrust are evident from such phrases as 'a sacred action surpassing all others', 'full, conscious and active participation ... the aim to be considered before all else'. From halfway through Chapter One, however, the focus changes; beginning with the section on The Reform of the Sacred liturgy concern is on the *text* and rites: their restoration, regulation, revision, adaptation etc. This interest was fortified by the work of the Consilium, who concentrated on giving us *new rites*. As a subject in seminaries, liturgy was to be treated after the manner of other subjects on the curriculum: all of which get academic treatment. Specifically mentioned are theology, history, law, spirituality.

Basic, not 'added'

The insistence that liturgy is an art form is not an appeal to *add* this as a new dimension to our current concept of, and attitude towards, liturgy. To view liturgy as an art form is not *one other view* we can take of it, in addition to other ways of looking at it. It is basically and of its essence an art form; if it is not treated as such in all activities of the Liturgical Movement, it is something other than liturgy which is being dealt with. Consideration of liturgy as an art form is not something *missing* for completeness; anything else is a misconception.

In corroboration of this, I would just refer to the opening of the Constitution of the Liturgy, where liturgy is referred to as an expression and experience of the mystery of Christ and the real nature of the Church. If our celebrations of liturgy are to be such 'expressions' and 'experiences' they have to be in a form that is suitable to create this possibility of expression and experience. Namely, an aesthetic form of expression!

On this point Patrick W. Collins writes:

> The word 'added' is the key to the problem that surfaces (in celebratiaons of liturgy). And it is the key to the experiential problems we face in parish liturgies today. We tend to see the arts as something 'added' to the ritual as luxuries, as extras. They are nice but you can get along without them ... Art is the very core of the expressive forms that comprise liturgy ... Liturgy *is* an aesthetic expression and experience. Liturgy *is* art ... Art is a quality of *all* experience.[9]

He then adds that 'a radical transformation of consciousness must take place

before liturgical scholars and practitioners can approach the worship experience as an aesthetic experience'; he even speaks of the need of 'a conversion' towards the aesthetic.[10]

Why this is the situation is not surprising in view of some of the factors that infleunced attitudes towards liturgy. For example:

(1) Shortly after the beginning of the The Liturgical Movement in 1909, with its interest in the people's participation, a new interest appeared: an apologetic thrust. Because of the opposition to what the Liturgical Movement was doing, a new phase began, with efforts now focused on what could be called an 'apologetic' for liturgy. It gave us such notable writers as Dom Odo Casel, Josef Jungmann, Jean Danielou, Louis Bouyer, and others; and such periodicals as *Worship* and *La Maison-Dieu.* The interest was in the history of rites, the theology of worship, including the theology of salvation and the Church, as well as the theology of the sacraments and ministry.

To this day, these are the elements, and this is the approach, which have received emphasis as a means to prepare priests and other ministers in liturgy, as well as helping the congregation to participate: an approach, however, which is not suitable for dealing with an art form.

(2) This approach was of course very acceptable in the Church in our Western world — the Catholic Church, at any rate — because of the traditional acceptance of the psychology of St Thomas, with the primacy he gave to the intellect. This was, and is, very evident in our seminaries and theological colleges; it was the underlying basis of religious education before the comparatively recent catechetical movement; it is, I think it is true to say, the firmly held attitude of the most influential elements in all our churches.

A flicker of awakening

Those who hold to this view of liturgy, that it is to be treated basically as an art form, cannot claim that this is a movement very alive and flourishing in the Church. It is far from being that. However, there are flickerings of awakening. There is a definite movement away from what has been for a long time in the academic world.

The recent visit to Melbourne of Monika Hellwig led me to have another look at a paper she delivered in 1983 at the College Theology Society. The title of the paper is 'Theology as a Fine Art'. What she says about theologians must surely apply to liturgists. She says:

> Just as the talent of the graphic artist is not primarily in manual skill but in a habit of vision, so it seems to me that the talent of the theologian is not in the first place in the mastery of argument but in *vulnerability to experience.* And even as the power of the poet does not reside mainly in the craft of the wordsmith but rather in a certain immediacy of presence to the reality that gives itself to human perception, so it is, I

think that the persuasion carried by a theologian is not founded in the rational or literary finesse of the presentation but in the quality of the theologian's own *experience of reality.*[11]

There is a movement today, not to reject systematic theology, but to realise that it is only a commentary on the original event — 'secondary process thinking'. The tendency is to get closer to the way the first event was first transmitted: by way of myth, metaphor, and story.

This is echoing the thought of William James, who wrote his classical work on religious experience almost a hundred years ago: 'I do believe that feeling is the deeper source of religion, and that philosophic and theological formulas are secondary products, like translations of texts into another tongue.'[12]

I have already referred more than once to Patrick W. Collins and his book *More Than Meets the Eye.* His thesis is that the key to the experience of liturgy is the 'imagination'. By the imagination he is not referring to fantasy, but 'imagination as a power of human knowing ... which operates through the languages of image, symbol, story, myth, parable and ritual. What one comes to know through this functioning of the imagination is the reality that is more than meets the eye. It is the mystery of life.'[13]

This is a man who makes the comment that, in the quest for clear understanding and easy participation, our liturgy has become excessively verbal. 'Active participation', he writes, 'seems to have permitted comprehension and communication but diminished the communion with God experience.' He has no hesitation in saying that 'the conciliar goal of clear expressive forms in liturgy, leading to ease of comprehension and participation by the community, stands in need of review and reform.'[14]

I could quote also a liturgist who has visited us in Australia several times: Jake Empereur. He suggests that liturgical experience ought to be displayed less in terms of levels of logic than in terms of levels of the imagination, and says, 'Hopefully the age of reason in liturgy has passed'.[15]

And finaly Ken Meltz, who says: 'Our liturgical renewal has not fully succeeded because it has lost sight of what could be called the "affective" dimension of liturgy.'[16]

On the wrong train!

As I hope you will have discerned, I am raising a question. You may think that I am raising several questions: but no, only one question. At present that question is not, what would be the consequences for me/us if we choose to change? nor, how would you go about following up this view of liturgy? The one question I want to raise is, and I give it in alternative forms: should we change?; are we called to change?; or better, will we decide to change?

I liken our situation in the liturgical movement today to being on a train, and

— perhaps with something of a shock — realising that we are on the wrong train, going to the wrong place. We may be most unwilling to change trains: this one is comfortable; I feel very much at home in it; I have got to know the people and made friends with them. We may have feelings, or even reasons, against changing.

Maybe we liturgists are not going in the opposite direction to the right one; but we certainly are not going to arrive at our desired destintion — giving the congregation the help they need to participate — by continuing the way we are going.

We cannot change trains while the train is still in motion; we have to wait until it arrives at a station and stops. Fortunately for us we are here at a station at this annual condference. Not just a station: we are at a junction, and the train we need passes through here.

NOTES

1. R. May, *The Courage to Create* (W.W. Norton, 1975), p. 49.
2. S.K. Langer, *Feeling and Form* (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1953), p. 40.
3. B. Reimer, *A Philosophy of Music Education* (Prentice Hall, 1970), pp. 80-81.
4. P.W. Collins, *More Than Meets the Eye* (Paulist Press, 1983), p. 66.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 69.
6. Anneliese Reinhard, Unpublished reflections.
7. Collins, *op. cit.*, p. 98.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 95.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 57.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 58.
11. M.K. Hellwig *Theology as a Fine Art* (Michael Glazier, Inc., 1983), p. 8.
12. W. James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, quoted by W.J. Bausch, *Storytelling: Imagination and Faith* (Twenty-Third Publications, 1984), p. 10.
13. Collins, *op. cit.*, p. 23.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 12-13.
15. J. Empereur, *Modern Liturgy*, Vol. 10, No. 2 (March 1983), p. 12.
16. K. Meltz, quoted by Bausch, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

BARRIERS TO AN AUSTRALIAN SPIRITUALITY

Elizabeth Cain

In beginning this article I have to admit to a difficulty. It is that of approaching the topic of Australian spirituality in this way. It seems that we may be searching for barriers before we have named in any way adequately the Australian understanding of what an Australian spirituality might be.

However, in whatever way we may move toward a definition of Australian spirituality, it is true to say that Australian people, knowingly or unknowingly, are living it.

For the purpose of this paper we may understand 'spirituality' as the search for meaning within a context, as a search for the Aboslute within human life, or as the relationship of person, community or nation with the living God. And, as is true of any mode of spirituality, many strands form the fabric of that search.

Of these strands or formative influences whether historical, social, cultural, political or economic, the most primal must surely be that of relationship between people and land. For a people's attitude to the land that has mothered them is intrinsic to the dimension of spirit or its absence in human life, and, indeed, any ecological awareness is at its heart spiritual. As that awareness shapes itself, we may recognise in the Australian context a sharp differentiation between land and natural life as vessel of the sacred and therefore to be reverenced, or land as something to be 'consumed' and therefore to be mastered and exploited. The movement from the arrogance that exploits to the humility that worships and nurtures is in our own day one of the great signs that the Australian heart is indeed changing.

We may locate some of the aspects of such a change of heart if we consider the characteristics of an authentic spirituality. Essentially it expresses a relatedness to the Absolute, so that the awakening transcendent dimension in the human psyche gradually comes to be the determining factor in human action. A true spirituality presupposes a right sense of oneself, a valuing of that self, a capacity for self-transcendence and to be a person for others. It embraces the whole of life and honours the life of interiority. Its awareness is sacramental or symbolic, whether this be expressed as mindfulness, compassion, faith or love. It is to be attuned to the 'godedness' in human existence and to have 'an instinct for mystery'.

The religious awareness which is planted deep in every human being has its fullest expression in the language of the symbol and the living of a symbolic life. In our context the great paradigm of life lived as relationship to the sacred is the Aboriginal 'Dreaming'. For in the 'Dreaming' life and the living of belief are one,

and the symbol not just a word or thing, but a living aspect of life fraught with meaning and opening out the energies of life held within it.

As Jung says, it is the symbol which mediates between conscious and unconscious,[1] and it embodies something of the reality of our most profound encounters with God. It is indeed the great mediator which moves between the seen and the unseen, between time and eternity, between human and divine. The language of the symbol touches into the essence of uniquely personal experience, and at the same time enables that experience to be given universal dimensions. It speaks of time, but also locates time in its timeless origins. It is never exhausted, but opens up level after level of insight.

Australia is amazingly rich in primal symbols, the desert, the sea, the bush, the centre, the city, to mention just a few. Traditionally the desert has been that experience of the Absolute, of no boundaries, of nakedness and essentialness, and the sea of undefinability, mystery, depth and paradox. The sea is one of the great symbols of the unconscious, that unknown and limitless aspect of the human psyche, that in us which Jung says is 'the medium of the religious experience'.[2] And of the Australian bush it has been written that 'a feature of a good deal of Australian writing has been its willingness to use an exploration of the bush as an analogy for the exploration of the individual soul. The bush becomes a metaphor for the self'.[3]

In many cultures the city has been the sacred centre and dwelling-place of the divine. Perhaps it would hardly seem to be that in the Australian culture. In any case it would be most valuable to explore the symbol of the city in one of the most highly urbanised countries in the world.

Indeed, the whole country is mandalic, roughly round and edged by city and shoreline, containing innumerable opposites, and having a sacred centre.

Or, again, whether we know dying and new birth in our lives in the burnt eucalypt putting forth fresh new leaves, in the cane-fires that burn and purify to what is essential, or in blinding sun, it is certain that Australia is extraordinarily rich in primal symbols, so that the religious experience in this context may not be easily evaded.

Perhaps one of the great barriers to the conscious living of a spiritual journey that is uniquely Australian would be an out-of-touchness with the symbol, an awareness that is blunted to the sacred, and a blindly materialistic orientation.

In any exploration of the nature of the spiritual journey in the Australian context it is important to honour the foundational and pivotal place of the 'Dreaming' for all Australians. For the Aboriginal Australian is both root and 'other' to the white Australian, and each is, as it were, the shadow of the other. In the formative shape of the journey on our continent, neither can be complete without the other. In the 'Dreaming' we have an inherited mythology, a sacred story and an articulation of a spirituality born of the union between land and

people. They are stories that are archetypal and, as such, true stories for and of all people.

But, we might ask, what of the Australians I know, those who live in the same street or share the local laundromat? How do they relate to this religious awareness? Such awareness is *per se* directed to the Absolute and has countless modes of expression. For some it may be the faithful living out of love, for others the nurturing of creativity, for some the practice of compassion of pure-seeing-awareness, for others the struggle to unbind the chains of oppression in their own and others' lives. It is to live in some measure *sub specie aeternitatis* in whatever way that is believed or experienced.

It is true that many Australians are living some of the aspects of 'what religion is', and this is perceptible in, for example, the fine sensitivity and compassion for the little one, or in the courage of a true creativity that challenges the prevailing work ethic. Les Murray recognises one aspect of it when he writes, 'The ability to laugh at venerated things is at bottom a spiritual laughter, a mirth that puts tragedy, futility and vanity alike in their place'.[4]

In many Australians, however, while there is a gut level awareness that 'there has got to be something', the gods of our society are idols. Bruce Wilson names three of these idols as the progressivity that places ultimate value in an upward mobility of material possessions and social opportunities, the cult of the individual who is on the whole self-centred and unaware, and the sexual idolatry which disguises the fear of death and the loss of spiritual hope.[5] In *Can God Survive in Australia?* Wilson writes, "The religion of most Australians today is an uneasy synthesis between a firm commitment to life in the everyday world as the ultimate reality, and a vague sense of God and the whole supernatural dimension of traditional religion".[6] However, nothing that is said is the whole truth. Les Murray comments on the fact that while it is bad form to 'talk religion', Australians will talk spirituality for hours on end.[7]

Another touchstone of a truly lived spiritual awareness is the relational quality of life between male and female. We may think of these in the broader terms of masculine as the active, outgoing, achievement-oriented awareness, and the feminine as the receptive, nurturing, ruminating principle of life. We may also reflect on male-female relating within the individual person, between persons, and in society. Where there is manipulation, oppression, or any form of devaluing of one by the other, to that degree spirit is being blocked. Where, on the other hand, there is love, reverence, mutuality and equality, the flow of spirit is released.

We could perhaps name innumerable barriers to the spiritual journey in the Australian context, one being that in the Australian consciousness being human and being religious are factually split apart, or that the person and teachings of Jesus have been misrepresented in the lived out value system. It could be to

recognise that material affluence speaks out most loudly out of a spiritual void, or that the apathy which is part of the Australian mode is a form of death. Whatever the nature of the barrier to a true spirituality, it is part of what Veronica Brady describes as 'the Great Refusal'.[8]

In *Crucible of prophets* Brady addresses 'Australians and the question of God'. Her way of approach is through the literary tradition, and she does in fact show that though there are barriers to an Australian spirituality, the search for God in the Australian context has been ongoing, intense and poignant.

Perhaps all the barriers to an Australian spirituality are faces of the one great barrier, and that barrier is the fear that holds person and nation back from taking the risk of meeting the living God.

Patrick White would say the ones who break beyond fear and risk love are the riders in the chariot, or those who have come through the storm to the stillness of its eye, those who risk the journey through the desert, or those who, like Stan Parker know themselves as a living part of the Tree of Man, and have the capacity to see that the ordinary is indeed extraordinary. They are the little ones, the fringe-dwellers, those who have, in White's words, that 'instinct for mystery'.[9]

As Brady writes, 'The people we most need now may well be mystics'.[10] And as the very nature of mysticism is to be hidden from the eyes of the curious, and hidden most of all from the persons themselves, it would not be surprising that to many unselfconscious Australians the treasure is being revealed right now.

NOTES

1. *Psychological Reflections*, ed. C. Hull.
2. *Ibid.*
3. H.P. Heseltime, *The Literary Heritage*.
4. L. Murray, "Some Religious Stuff I Know About Australia", in *Persistence in folly* (Angus and Robertson).
5. R.W. Wilson, *Can God Survive in Australia?* (Albatross Books, 1983), chapter 4 "The Religion of Most Australians Today".
6. *Ibid.*, p. 101.
7. Murray, *art.cit.*
8. V. Brady, *A Crucible of Prophets: Australians and the Question of God* (Theological Reflections, 1981), chapter II.
9. Cited *ibid.*, p. 76.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 112.

(These notes, which are incomplete, were not in the original version of the paper but were kindly supplied later by the author. Ed.)

LITURGY AS PRAYER

Dorothy McMahon

Kenneth Leech has described prayer as 'opening ourselves out to God in a process of liberation and awakening'.[1]

My own definition of prayer would be the waiting of our whole person, body, mind, heart and soul, in the hopeful expectation of an experience of the presence of God which may come like a warm light — in the one moment revealing to us who we are, often in a new perspective, and bestowing upon us the unconditional grace of God. As a Christian, I believe that, although private prayer is desirable, the fact that we are called to be the Body of Christ invites a model of praying which is based on community. I suggest to you that it is in community that we experience the Spirit of God flowing among us and between us, revealing that the resources for abundant life lie in the whole Body.

As we pray together we are open to the discovery of these resources and the transfer from one to the other of enlightenment, power, courage, energy, forgiveness, healing and love. As we experience this possibility in the presence of God, the total of our resources is linked with and expanded by the endless resources of God for life and creativity — as in the feeding of the five thousand.

If we place alongside that understanding of prayer, or something like it, the concept of the liturgy as the work of the people arising out of their reality, you can see the possibility of a cycle within worship — a cycle in which the liturgy becomes both the naming of our reality before God and the creating of a spirituality which makes us open to perceive our reality in the presence of God. The naming of our reality can lie in the written liturgy, the hymns and the ministry of the Word. The experience of the presence of God can come to us in the environment of the prayers, in the ministry of the Word and in the presence of Christ in the Eucharist.

All of this can be seen as prayer and I would like to explore with you today whether liturgy, as most of us experience it, is in fact enabling us to enter into that vital sort of encounter with God, which is prayer.

What are the significant factors in determining whether liturgy is truly prayer for the people?

In attempting to name some of those factors, I am not suggesting an order of importance.

1. The Liturgy as Corporate

The Body of Christ at worship is not intended to be, as in some other great religions, a collection of individuals who meet and go through their private

devotions together. It is rather the time when we model our profound understanding of community in Jesus Christ.

If we look at the Eucharistic liturgy of most of our mainstream Christian churches, I think we would agree that we have attempted to write them for corporate worship. I will challenge that, in one respect, in a moment. But, if we ask ourselves whether the flow of the prayers of the people towards each other in the dynamic of the liturgy is really, in practice, working most effectively, I would suggest that it is not.

Why do we *say* the words of community but mostly sit looking at the back of each other's heads? If our churches are sparsely attended, how often do we see people scattered in lonely alienation all over the church?

Of course there would be a resistance to the changes which bring people closer to each other where we can daringly see each other's faces, but if we believe in what we are doing surely we must struggle with that. Prayers which become part of the great flow of the resources of God among us are released in us when we enter into real and costly engagement with each other in the liturgy.

Clericalism is, I believe, another factor which separates us from our corporate prayer and worship. I suggest to you that a large part of the worship of the church is now more like a performance with a relatively passive and often critical audience. On the one hand, in the more Catholic/Orthodox traditions, we often have wonderfully robed priests doing dramatic and mystical things in a removed space up front while the people watch and occasionally offer their responses. On the other hand, we of the non-conformist Protestant churches are often even more sacerdotal in that the congregations frequently give no responses, not even the 'Amen', and the liturgy is extempore or composed by the minister. This often leads to a 'listening to' rather than 'participating in' prayer and a watching of worship and assessing of whether the performance of the minister measures up to expectations. None of this, I believe, creatively encourages the flow of prayer in powerful and intimate community.

Our hymns also leave much to be desired in relation to expressing the power of the corporate — very few of them reflect the concept of community, either in terms of its possibilities, or the difficulty in achieving it. Many hymns are highly individualistic and few deal with concern for the neighbour.

2. The Liturgy as Inclusive

If the liturgy is prayer we are concerned to name the reality of people and to enable them to see their reality. In recent years there has been a focus on the need for inclusive language in all areas of life, including liturgy. This is only part of a longing for liturgy which tries to reflect more fully the reality of all who participate. I will explore what it might mean to include the reality of male and

female in the hope that it might model other forms of inclusiveness where we recognise things like our multiculturalism, disabled and able.

If I select femaleness and maleness it is because that is obviously part of the most basic reality, outside our humanness, for all groups of people. What would it mean to affirm the reality of both women and men in liturgy? Obviously we are in a transition phase in relation to inclusive references to people in the writing of liturgy — for some we affirm their reality when we use generic terms and for others when we are careful to refer to both men and women specifically or avoid gender references at all. I suggest to you that given the language guidelines issued by major publishers and in much of the media now, we are moving towards the view that "generic" language has broken down for us, and will need to adapt our liturgical language. Even now, corporate prayer has been impossible for many people because they experience exclusion in this respect.

But the exclusion goes far deeper than the words of the liturgy. Because most liturgy has been prepared and led by men, I believe we have largely excluded the ethos of the female.

John V. Taylor in his book *The Go-Between God* says

> The male element in our human nature is a creature of the air, good at making definitions, keeping the lines clear and distinct and establishing public relations. The female element in us is of the water-life, so our dream symbols tell us, and is more conscious of the underlying unities, more intuitively aware of the real presence of things. Our first birth brings us into the air and its clarities.
>
> It can be argued that I am confusing the second birth with a return to the womb, as Nicodemus did. I am.[2]
>
> Beneath the high altar of St. Peter's, Rome, at the level of the pre-Constantinian cemetery, there is a mosaic depicting Christ as the young Apollo in the chariot of the sun. It was a natural choice of imagery for that Graeco-Roman world, but one that was fraught with danger for the church. It was one thing to proclaim Christ as the Logos and Light which enlightens every man, and to experience the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of Truth, for these are concepts deeply rooted in the prophets' faith in the God who has acted. It is quite a different thing to identify either Christ or the Spirit with the philosophers' abstraction of rationality and enlightenment.
>
> In the Levantine world the masculine Apollo had won his long struggle for supremacy over the older cult of the Great Mother. It was the victory of a god who is above and beyond, over a god who is deep within, the victory of the sunlight over the subterranean mystery, of a patriarchal over a matriarchal society, of an urban over an agricultural way of life, of analytical thought over ecstatic insight, of consciousness over the unconscious.[3]

This is not to call for liturgy which is sentimental or highly subjective. It is to say that our liturgy, in inadequately reflecting the wholeness of the creation in its maleness and femaleness, often has about it a sterility which is alienating — it impedes the flow of prayer which comes from and speaks to the femaleness in each one of us.

It lacks the deep groanings of the creation in its labour pains and the dancings of the joy of bringing to birth new life. It rarely feels for the inarticulate intuitions

and dim glimpses of a flow and rhythm of existence which tie us in with the elemental dimensions of the creation — the earth, the water, the blood, the tears. It rarely celebrates the God who is immanent and intimate, affirming the hopes and impulses towards good and love and nurturing that lie within us. It rather points us into space and towards otherness and objectivity. It distances us from grief (other than the grief of guilt) and lacks the passion and vividness which is the nature of our life.

As we persist with this sort of liturgy we are not only often intensely boring but we fail to witness to the Gospel which sets the whole scenario for our prayer. The Good News is that we are called into life — free, joyful, struggling, painful, passionate and whole. How can we reach towards that in prayer if the liturgy is carefully bland, restrained, and framed in a way which conveys the message that we worship and pray with our mind and little else?

Our imagery for God also indicates whether we are prepared to open to people their whole reality or not. The almost total maleness of our imagery for God does damage to the reality of God and the reality of the people. I believe the fact that we are now so fixed into the image of a male God indicates we are involved in something approaching idolatry. It means that the femaleness in us is inhibited from reaching towards the femaleness of God and the salvation of the Christ can be diminished because people find it hard to believe that Christ in reality bore *all* our sorrows and assumed, and therefore saved, all our life. It can be, and often is, a diminishing of the hope that rightly belongs to us and leads to a mistrusting of the Divine which we falteringly find within us.

3. The Liturgy as Wholistic

If prayer is the presenting of the whole person to God and the answer to prayer the redemption of the whole person, then that should be reflected in liturgy.

I suggest that one of the reasons for the unchanging nature of Eastern Orthodox Liturgy is that, in this respect, it can be very satisfying. There is a healthy sensuousness about it which moves beyond the self-conscious efforts in some more recent liturgy which indulges in much hugging, touching and imposed superficial relationship. The honouring of the senses in sight, smell, sound, touch and movement can awaken us to the whole life that is ours and the whole life that we bring before God for salvation.

Probably because we have for so long focussed on the body as primarily sexual and sexuality as a source of our worst forms of sinfulness, I suggest that we have rarely explored what it means to bring our whole person before God.

The contemplative stream of spirituality, now, I believe, emerging as part of the renewal of the whole church, understands something of this in its recognition of the necessity to prepare the body for prayer by centering — the relaxation of the body and the focusing on the very breath which is the rhythm of our life. This

awareness has been regarded as relating to the prayer of those especially called to a life of contemplation and is rarely offered to the faithful in corporate worship. Given the frenetic nature of most of our life in this day and place, I cannot understand why we have not seen a necessity for far more reflective spirituality in liturgy. Indeed the whole idea that in prayer we wait on the insights of our God as well as offering what we understand about ourselves, is almost ignored in most liturgy.

We also largely ignore the fact that the God who created us made us laughing people — how frustrating it must be for that God everlastingly to receive our solemn, sober rites. The medieval mystery plays from the craft guilds of England understood something of that and recognised that within the absurdities of our life often lies profound truth.

4. The Liturgy as Honesty

There was a time when I thought that some of the Psalms should not have been included in the Biblical canon — they were so violent and angry and I felt revealed a primitive relationship with God.

Now, as I daily experience the pain of the people and as I have made contact with my own pain and anger, I know why those Psalms are there and I am deeply thankful for them. As I work, in a very modest way, in the area of spiritual direction, I reach for the Psalms to release people towards the naming of their reality before God.

Then I look at the liturgy of our day and I ask myself where are our Psalms — our song of pain and anger and lament?

I know we use the milder Biblical Psalms to some extent but, because we have not written our own and our prayers almost never reflect that part of our life, most people do not identify with them.

We are so skilled at prayer which brings us before God as unworthy sinners. But where in our liturgy do we cry out in anger that life has dealt us pain, that we are sinned against and that we cannot understand where God is in it all? And yet is this not the fundamental question for most people — the seemingly unanswerable question alongside which we bravely and fearfully take our stand in faith?

In my experience, most of the people outside the church are waiting longingly for us to name our pain and anger and our confusions about reality so that they may see us as human like they are. We often think that we have moved beyond the God of the Jews and yet they have much to teach us about the absolutely confident relationship with God — one which dares to respond to reality with honesty and openness, which is not held into making the responses which we think we ought to make.

Sometimes I think we teach people through the liturgy that God is more fragile

and less loving than we are and could not cope with the truth of who we are and what we feel.

The other side of that is that, if we dare to name the enormity of the tragedy of our life with its lack of answers and solutions, we are freed to proclaim with absolute faith that God is at the bottom of every abyss and the presence of God is enough to save us. But the rigour of the Job and the Habukkuk is rarely with us and we tippy-toe around in our spirituality and do not ask for the faith and hope that exists in glorious freedom without signs and rewards and solutions.

When do we dare to say liturgically that the fig tree will not blossom and the vine will not bear fruit but we will exult in the name of the Lord who will set us in the high places?

As we are prepared to do this, our liturgy comes down from ten feet up in the air and settles into our earthiness with the incarnate Christ. We understand again that life is about crucifixion and resurrection patterns instead of reward and punishment. Of course the one place where this is usually reflected is in the centre of the Eucharist. But what if we never actually wrench apart the bread in the powerful symbol of the brokenness from which life emerges? What if we simply place upon the tongues of the people the hygienic tasteless wafers which melt in their mouths like pieces of nothing and symbolise neither the brokenness nor the nourishing generosity of God? Or what if we hand around pre-cut quarter inch squares of white bread, so neat and ordered, and tiny glasses of sickly sweet grape juice which symbolise nothing of the bitter sweet reality of life or the grand vision of our common life with each other and God?

How does any of that name the reality from which our prayers may take flight?

5. The Liturgy as Mystery

When we set people free to pray, I believe we release them from the mystique and the magic and enable them to enter into the mystery of God. So often we have created a mystique around those who pray and have given people the message that there are hierarchies of spirituality (this is not to say that there are not particular spiritual gifts). Or we have set prayer up as a sort of magic which works if we have the right formula — enough faith, the right techniques, enough goodness.

The mystery of God is surely something else — it has to do with a wonder and holiness into which we all can walk; with a confident naming of 'otherness' in a culture which is self-conscious about such naming; with a confident expectation of miracles which come to us like gracious gifts, and with the creation of liturgical environments which image for people both the surrounding love of God and the hopeful call to live the life of the Kingdom in the world.

Truly to offer to people the mystery of a God who is higher and deeper and wider than anything which we can understand, unnamable, and yet among us in intimate involvement, invites them to pray thankfully and trustingly.

6. The Liturgy as Theology

In a gathering like this, I am assuming that I do not need to make obvious statements about the need for a sound theology in relation to both the content and shape of liturgy. I will simply say that I believe it is necessary because the spirituality of the people is always in the process of formation in liturgy. We give multitudes of subtle messages to people about the nature of God, the nature of the church and the Christian life. Obviously the content of our prayers, for example, conveys to the people the narrowness or the breadth of our life as Christians. I would like to take just one example of a spirituality-shaping moment in the liturgy which concerns me:

In most liturgies with which I am familiar, there is a language in the confession and reconciliation which speaks frequently of forgiveness of 'sins'. The repetition of this concept, I believe, teaches people that we are to list our sins before God and to keep on working at sinning less, almost as though one day we might not have any to confess and not need forgiveness. On the other hand, if we say 'forgive us our sin' then we are assuming that the human condition itself is one of sin and we will always be dependent on the grace of God. I am aware of the Lord's Prayer at this point, but I still question whether all our liturgy needs to reflect that concept.

7. The Dynamic of Liturgy

Obviously there is an appropriate dynamic involved in good liturgy. I suggest to you that the leaders of liturgy need to be close enough to the people to be aware of the nature of the dynamic that is required on each occasion.

At one moment the prayer and life of the people can be enabled and enriched by a rhythm and flow which leads them firmly on and up and out into the world. At other times, the need is for space, reflection and waiting on God. Then again there may be a time of a sort of cherishing, comforting renewal for the wounded people of the Kingdom. Unless we are sensitive to the corporate need, liturgy can be a sort of violation and a barrier to prayer. We will never meet every individual need of course, but the liturgist who stands close enough to the people should be able to pick up the general need. Sometimes that need can be met in the wording of liturgy but more often it has to do with spaciousness in the pace, tone of voice or speed and style of movement. It is an acknowledgement that good liturgy is not in any sense static — it moves creatively with the life-flow of the people and is part of the Word for them at that moment.

In Conclusion

The understanding of liturgy as prayer requires us, I believe, to be part of a continual reflection on whether, or not, what we are doing in worship enables us to approach our own reality in the presence of God. If it distances us from that reality then prayer is not truly taking place. Part of that enabling process is for

the liturgy to present God to us in a way which enhances our desire to approach that God in all our human frailty.

Underlying it all must be an integrity, an authenticity, which those experiencing worship can recognise and own.

NOTES

1. K. Leech, *True prayer* (Sheldon Press, 1980), p. 3.
2. J.V. Taylor, *The go-between God: the Holy Spirit and the Christian mission* (SCM, 1972) p. 40.
3. *Ibid.*, pp. 50-51.

NEWS AND INFORMATION

DEVELOPMENTS IN LITURGY: 1. THE UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA

The Assembly Commission on Liturgy was formally appointed at the Inaugural Assembly of the Uniting Church in June 1977. Prior to the Inauguration, it had been operating from January 1976 as a church worship committee of the three former churches in the process of uniting. The commission is based in Adelaide and Liturgy is the only one of 10 agencies of the Assembly that is located outside either Sydney or Melbourne.

Prior to the Inauguration, the worhsip committee prepared resources which would be needed immediately after union took place, in particular, commissioning services for elders and members of parish council. By late 1977, orders to the ordination and induction of Ministers of the Word were also ready for use. Since then, there has been a systematic writing of other orders of service for the new church. *Holy Communion* was the first to be published in a laminated booklet, followed by revisions of the earlier *Commissioning Services*, then *Baptism and Related Services, Marriage, Funeral*, revisions of the earlier services of *Ordination* and *Induction* of a Minister of the Word, and finally *Faith and Renewal* — a book of four orders for the reaffirmation of baptism. These eight laminated booklets of provisional orders of service were published between 1979 and 1984 and hundreds of thousands of copies have been sold.

However, the Third Assembly in 1982 instructed the Commission on Liturgy to publish 'a comprehensive collection of services and other resources for worship', and this has been the primary goal of the commission over the last five years. In 1983 the commission decided to share some of the revisionary work with others groups in the church, in particular the doctrine and liturgy committees in each of the seven state synods. By way of a quarterly newsletter, contact is maintained through an appointed liaison person with the fifty-five presbyteries, and many of the liturgy groups at presbytery level have assisted the work of revision by field-testing and evaluating drafts of both revised and new services.

The commission hopes that this long revisionary process will conclude by the 30 September 1987 — the date by which all material must be in the hands of its publisher, the Joint Board of Christian Education. During this year, all final drafts must be presented to the Commission on Doctrine and then to the Assembly Standing Committee — the body which will authorise the commission to proceed to publication.

Uniting in Worship is to be the name of the first service manual of the Uniting

Church. It will be published in two books of the same name. Book 1 will be for the use of the people. It will include ten outlines of services most frequently used in worship, the complete text being printed only at those parts of the service where the congregation responds. The book will include a variety of other resources for congregational use: a selection of psalms for responsive reading (those appointed in the 3-year lectionary); creeds and statements of faith; canticles; litanies; prayers we have in common with other Christians; and great prayers of the church.

Book 2 will be for the use of ministers, lay preachers, elders and leaders of worship. It will contain the complete texts of orders included in Book 1, with cross-references to the appropriate pages and section numbers in Book 1. Pastoral services such as *Marriage* and *Funeral* and the services of *The Ordinal* will be published only in Book 2. This book will contain the 3-year lectionary readings and collects and an anthology of prayers for use in leading worship.

Some of the features of *Uniting in Worship* will be:

1. The form of the 3-year lectionary will be *Common Lectionary* of the Consultation on Common Texts of North America. A 3-year cycle of collects will be included with these readings.
2. Several new services, not previouslsy published, will be included. They are: *A Service of Healing, Thanksgiving for the Gift of a Child, Ordination of a Deacon* and *Induction of a Deacon.*
3. All the texts of the creeds and prayers included in *Prayers We have in Common,* (I.C.E.T., 1975) will be those of the English Language Liturgical Consultation which hopefully will be finished by August 1987.

The Handbook is to be the title of the third publication. Intended primarily for ministers, lay preachers and elders, it will help to introduce the other two books to the church. Possibly in July 1988, a person will take up a 3-year postion of *Worship Consultant*. This person's function will be not only to help introduce *Uniting in Worship* to the church but to stimulate creativity and imagination in worship through the conducting of workshops and seminars on worship in presbyteries and parishes.

Grant Dunning

STUDIES IN LITURGY:
1. TERTIARY COURSES IN ADELAIDE

The Flinders University of South Australia offers a 3½ years undergraduate degree of Bachelor of Theology which includes a number of topics (subjects) related to liturgy. These include "Sacraments", "Liturgy: Theology, Symbol and Celebration", "The Eucharist in History and Tradition" and "History of Liturgy". The honours degree of Bachelor of Theology (1 year after BTh) may also be taken in liturgical studies as can the research degrees of Master of Arts, Master of Theology and Doctor of Philosophy. Those who teach the undergraduate topics are also available to supervise research. They include Dr John Gaden, Fr Ray Hartley, Dr Brian Jackson, CM, Dr Robert Simons, CM and Dr D'Arcy Wood. Austudy allowances are available for eligible students doing the BTh course while Commonwealth and Flinders University Research Scholarships are offered for the postgraduate degrees.

Adelaide College of Divinity offers three diploma courses which include liturgical studies. The Diploma in Ministry (3 years undergraduate) and Diploma in Pastoral Studies (1 year postgraduate or concurrently with BTh) include the topic "Liturgy and Worship" taught by Fr Hartley, Dr Jackson and Dr Wood. There are also related topics in homiletics and spirituality. The Diploma in Divinity (a part-time external course for parish clergy and others who have completed a basic theological training) includes "Studies in Pastoral Liturgy" and "Worship, Preaching and Australian Society" taught by Fr Anthony Kain and the Revd Dean Brookes respectively.

Each of the theological colleges and seminaries in Adelaide has other (mainly practical) courses in liturgy which are not part of the degrees and diplomas listed above. Luther Seminary has some subjects in liturgy as part of its Bachelor of Theology degree. These are taught by Dr Elvin Janetzki and Dr Maurice Schild.

Any enquiries about courses at Flinders University or Adelaide College of Divinity may be directed to:

The Dean,
Adelaide College of Divinity,
P.O. Box 217,
BELAIR, S.A. 5052.

R. Wesley Hartley

CONFERENCE 1986

Since the decision to provide formal structures for the Australian Academy of Liturgy in December 1983, the annual national conference has been the focal point of the life of the Academy. Each year the Conference has alternated its meetings between Sydney and Melbourne — this year (1987), it will return to Adelaide which was the host city for the floating of the idea to form an Academy of Liturgy. The annual conference has been the only real opportunity for members of the Academy to interact with one another.

With the first formal conference in 1984, in Sydney, the topic of the Australian cultural context of liturgy was raised. It was an exciting conference — with papers presented by Chris Harris on the "Nature of Ritual", Jim Tulip on "Literature and the Australian Context", Peter Malone on "Images of God in Australian Films" and Rosemary Crumlin on "Art and the Australian Context". These papers and the interchange of the members touched a deep yearning in the members of the Academy: to incarnate liturgy into our culture!

To sustain this yearning, the Conference of 1985 in Melbourne, tried to reach out into the traditional and the experiential in liturgy. The papers included those by Robert Gribben, "Trimmin' the Trimmins", Frank O'Loughlin, "Ritual and Symbol", Anneliese Reinhard, "An Experience of Listening" and Peter Steele, "Eucharistic Praying". Also included in this Conference was a sampling of work being done throughout the world by other liturgical bodies to which Academy members were either members or contributors. This session highlighted the diversity and richness of the work of many of the members of the Academy. However, it was the paper by Peter Steele which set the topic for the 1986 Conference by presenting the Eucharist as an art form!

Returning once again to Sydney, the Academy tried to attract a wider representation of its members by holding the Conference earlier in the year — although success in anything ecclesial in 1986 was to be overshadowed by the events of November. However, the members who did attend spent four days trying to unlock the riches of "Praying Liturgically".

Three of the papers presented to the Conference are reprinted in this issue of AJL — those by Dorothy McMahon, "Liturgy as Prayer", Greg Manly, "Liturgical Prayer: an Art Form", and Elizabeth Cain, "Barriers to an Australian Spirituality". On the first evening, Dorothy provided in her paper a refreshing reminder that liturgy is prayer. For some, her paper left the lingering question of what it means to say the liturgy is prayer. The following morning, Greg was to take up explicitly the issue raised by Peter Steele at last year's conference: liturgy as an art form. Greg's paper was very much a reference point for the rest of the conference. Unfortunately, the experiential content of his presentation (which followed his written paper) cannot be included in the

publication of his talk — for it could only be experienced. His presentation provoked many questions and did leave us ever more thirsting for the answer to the question of the previous evening: what is prayer in liturgy? While many of the members were eager to pursue the issues of the morning's paper, the programme was followed. In the afternoon, Elizabeth Cain presented her paper on "Barriers to an Australian Spirituality". This paper continued to keep alive the issues of previous conferences: the alienness of religion in Australian culture.

The following morning had been planned as an opportunity for the laity — the 'con-celebrants' of liturgy — to talk of their experiences in praying liturgically. Entitled "View from the Pew", the workshop did not realise its potential because of the narrowness of the ecclesial sample — all contributors were drawn from the Roman tradition of liturgy. However the nagging question of the previous day continued to intrude — even if it was not adequately addressed.

The afternoon session was given over to the business side of the Academy and the election of the new Executive. Out of this session was born the decision to publish this very journal for the promotion of liturgy in the Australian Churches. With the publication of this edition of the Journal, another chapter has been begun in the life of the Australian Academy of Liturgy.

The final day of any conference can often be tedious and unrewarding. For those of us who stayed on, our final day proved to be a pleasant and unexpected source of encouragement. Louis Weil, past president of the North American Academy of Liturgy and present lecturer in Liturgy, was invited to talk on the topic of "Praying Liturgically" as he has just published a book on that very topic. He provided a much needed statement on our need for mutual support between the various Churches in the area of liturgy: "at least once a year to know that we are not crazy!".

Even though Louis came as a stranger to the final day of the Conference, he did speak very strongly to the need for liturgy to be prayer. In the past reform of liturgy, he said, we have looked to the mechanical elements (the books, the music, the rituals) to provide the answers to our problems. The need today is to address the dimension of prayer in liturgy. The liturgy needs not to be just the context of prayer, but the very content of prayer: to move from being a coinciding of individual pieties to a corporate piety. We need to look beyond the surface issues of what has to be done ('the ceremonial facade'), to what is experienced (prayer). We need to move beyond explaining liturgy to the very experience of liturgy.

Our understanding of liturgy is drawn from our model of Church: 'is liturgy', Louis asked, 'ritual acts, overseen by professionals for the gaze of essentially passive observers' or 'a genuinely community act with diversities of ministries which are essentially complementary and those of us who are ordained see ourselves as servants even though we are exercising a role of leadership'? To

achieve this shift in emphasis, a conversion is needed: a transformation of attitudes. To enable this there is need of liturgical catechesis: not just of show us our way through another book, but to show us the connections — to grasp how liturgy relates to what the Church is: gathering Christians together to pray because that is fundamentally related to what it is and what it means to be Christian!

With these words of encouragement and synthesis, the Conference closed. The work of keeping this flame alive among the members was entrusted to the new executive of the Academy with its preparation for the 1987 National Conference.

David Orr

BOOK REVIEWS

THE ART OF PRAYING LITURGY

by Gregory Manly and Anneliese Reinhard; Spectrum Publications, Melbourne, 1984. pp. i-iv + 475 Paperb. $A17.95.

This book brings a significant contribution to the current discussion on worship and liturgical practice for three apparent reasons: first, it is an Australian publication written from an Australian perspective at a time when most of our thinking about liturgy is shaped by North American or British ideas and practice; second, the authors offer their insights after many years of research and teaching in theological education and parishes (besided, they are members of the Australian Academy of Liturgy — what better credentials do you need?!); and third, the book offers a different approach to the study of liturgy in that it invites the reader to practise the art of praying as it relates to liturgy. For this reason the book provides a basis for understanding a 'spirituality' of worship.

The authors' aim is clearly stated at the beginning:

> Our aim in this book is to help people to experience their celebrations of the Eucharist and all liturgy, with more meaning, more prayer, more life and more joy (p. 1).

The accent is on people's *experience* of liturgy and the book is structured in such a way as to teach the reader *how* to experience life and liturgy more fully through a series of exercises. The format and purpose of each section and chapter is explained progressively and the exercises are incorporated throughtfully so as to enhance the text. The artisitc layout of the book is visually and aesthetically very pleasing. In so far as the book provides competent and sensitive direction in the art of praying liturgy it should be viewed not so much as a theoretical text but rather as a workbook on the way to pray liturgically.

The central focus of the text is expressed in the view that 'there is nothing in life that is not in liturgy' (p. 67), a view which challenges the notion that sees a dichotomy between life and liturgy. The authors begin with an 'holistic' conception of life and liturgy which they express in this way: 'the "ME" in liturgy is the "ME" in life' (*ibid.*). This premise becomes the basis for reflection onthe art of praying liturgy from various perspectives. I will isolate three perspectives which I believe make a distinctive comment on life and liturgy.

The first perspective is found in Chapter 10 of Section Three, in which our understanding of liturgy is anchored in this one principle: 'A person's prayer depends on the person's ability to *see more*' (p. 148). I found this chapter to be the most sensitively and carefully sculptured in the whole book because the text itself enables the reader to experience what the writer is talking about, which is to say, 'seeing more'. The skilful direction of Anneliese Reinhard (p. 149) leads the

reader to 'see more' by attending to the examples and exercises, and to understand the importance of 'seeing more' for life and liturgy. Anneliese states: '"Seeing More" results in responding deeply. I respond to the depth of my seeing' (p. 153).

The second perspective is related to the first and deals with the way people *respond* in life and liturgy. The point is first brought to the reader's awareness in the chapter preceding that on 'seeing more', in the context of 'Responding to the Word of God in the Readings' where it is stated, 'The congregation's response is of the greatest consequence' (p. 138). This assertion stems from the realisation that 'we do nothing in life but resond; everything we do is a response' (*ibid.*). And so it is essential that people discover how this dynamic operates within the human psyche and community in relation to the God who is perceived to be present in life and liturgy. Consequently, the process of responding is examined and explored through a series of exercises and examples which demonstrate the integral relation between 'seeing more' and 'responding'. This process is called 'framing'. 'Framing' involves taking a 'slice of life' and placing it in a frame, by the use of the imagination, for the purpose of eliciting a deep response. Or as the writers describe it:

> We FRAME an event
> in order to SEE and SEE MORE
> so as to RESPOND —
> to identify the response
> made in the heart (p. 169).

The process of 'framing' is important because as people 'see more' and 'respond deeply' to what they see, *prayer* happens (*ibid.*).

The third perspective which offers itself for reflection is liturgy as *communal prayer* (ch. 6). In this chapter the theological and behavioural reasons are given for our needing to understand liturgy as a communal activity: 'Communal prayer can be understood as an activity in which in our praying along with others, we fulfil Christ's command to love one another, by acting in a loving way towards them' (p. 82).

Although there are other fine insights in the book including chapters on Liturgical Experience and Symbols, on Praying the Liturgy of the Hours, and on Evaluating — Planning a Eucharist, the above three perspectives suggest that praying liturgy is a communal activity in which the people gathered are enabled to participate in the 'event' of liturgy, as it is 'framed' in time, through the process of 'seeing more' and 'responding deeply' to the God who is revealed as the author of, and sustaining presence in, life and liturgy.

Although the book is inviting us to 'see more' and to 'respond' more deeply to life and liturgy, I found myself hindered and distracted from that task on two accounts: by the unquestioned acceptance of the structure of the liturgy and of

the language for God and people. With reference to the first, it would have been especially valuable for the authors to have examined the way in which the process of 'seeing more' challenges the given structure of the liturgy (p. 241) so that a more incisive treatment of the dynamic of liturgy could have been offered rather than what appears at times to be a far too simplistic apprisal of all the 'given' parts of the liturgy. Simiarly, the language of prayer in liturgy was left unchallenged (pp. 111-114). Men and women in our time have 'seen more' in the way language structures relationships and defines reality so that it is imperative that our terminology for God and the community reflects this enlarged and inclusive view of the world and God.

Apart from these criticisms which dim in the light of the authors' refreshing approach to the study of liturgy I consider this book worthy of a place among the central texts for those wanting to learn how to make liturgy work as an 'experience'. It would be particularly valuable as a manual on liturgy for use in theological education and by ministers working with laity in the parish context.

The Art of Praying Liturgy is a major contribution to the ongoing discussion of liturgy and personally I found it deeply satisfying and pertinent to the task of ministry.

Jennifer Farrell

ONE VOICE

edited by Douglas Galbraith and Juliet Hoey; Brisbane, The Royal School of Church Music (Queensland Branch). Two issues per year, approx. 26 pp. per issue, $6.00 per year.

The new magazine, *One Voice*, is a venture initiated by the Queensland branch of the Royal School of Church Music to address the needs and issues of church music in the Australan church. In the first issue, the editors offer many reasons why an Australian journal on church music is required. They say:

> The current debates on "theology under the Southern Cross' or "liturgy in an Australian context" remind us that church music in Australia and New Zealand may have characteristics which need to be particularly addressed. (Lent issue, 1986, p. 4).

The three issues to date have provided thought-provoking articles about the state of music in the church as well as offering stimulating information on music in worship and suggestions as to how it may be improved. The diversity of the authors' traditions and of the subjects explored is offered as one of the rationales for the magazine (*ibid.*).

Douglas Galbraith, one of the editors, has written a series running through the three issues so far produced called 'The Bits in Between', in which he invites 'the

worship-weary musician to look again at the "rest" of worship — the unadorned speech and actions and silences (if you're lucky) which consitute the "bits in between" the music' (Lent, 1986, p. 6).

Denis Hoey contributes a challenging, if not scathing, essay on 'Hearing Things' (Pentecost, 1986, pp. 7-10), taking to task church musicians (choristers and choir directors in particular) who do not bother to develop their musical aptitude and aural accuracy. He undertakes to 'blow our minds' (p. 7) and concludes:

> The conductor must be a better musician than any of the choristers. He must have done his homework, and he must never ask any chorister to do what he himself is unable to do ... do develop your ear, develop your reading skill, and develop your concentration ... Add a sense of humour and you will succeed — but not next week.

The short article by Brian Krahnert, 'The Ancient of Days', explores the ways of getting the best out of aging voices and wards off the cynical query, 'Is there a way?' by offering four points to consider in reaching appropriate decisions in each pastoral context (though he does admit that the time may come when a choir will need to be 'pensioned off') (Advent, 1986, pp. 11-12).

There are many more stirring, humorous and enlightening articles and reviews contained in the pages of this new and much needed magazine on church music in Australia.

One Voice is a must for students of church music and theology, musicians and ministers in the parish, and for the libraries of our various theological and musical institutions. Subscriptions and enquiries can be directed to: The Editor, *One voice*, 21 Normanton Street, Stafford Heights, Qld. 4053.

Jennifer Farrell

LITURGICAL DANCE: AN HISTORICAL, THEOLOGICAL AND PRACTICAL HANDBOOK

by J.G. Davies; London, SCM Press, 1984. pp. xviii + 268. Paperb. £9.95 (about $A24.00)

ACTIONS GESTURES AND BODILY ATTITUDES

by Carolyn Deitering; Saratoga, CA, Resource Publications, 1980. pp. 96. Paperb. $US9.95.

Professor Davies gives as the 'whole intent of this book' his wish to provide positive answers to two questions: Is this new element (liturgical dance) intelligible to the Christian community? And, Is it valuable for its life? (p. 127). There can be little doubt that by the conclusion of his book Profesor Davies has

given us copious reasons to answer his questions with a resounding 'Yes!' He has also given us some very good ideas about how we may introduce dancing to congregations who remain suspicious of the power and immediacy of this medium, or who see it as 'nice' but strictly from the point of view of spectators and who at any rate are not going to 'make fools of themselves' by getting up and partaking in liturgical movement.

As attention is increasingly given to the subject, this book is assured of a definitive place. Part of the reason for this is already stated in the subtitle — the book brings together the crucial dimensions of any discussion in liturgy: history, theology and pastoral practice. What cannot be stated in a title, however, is guaranteed by the stature and commitment of the author. There are probably not many better known names in liturgiology in the English speaking world; but Professor Davies' academic eminence is here coupled with an impressive practicality and care for the people for whom liturgy exists, namely worshipping congregations and their ministers.

The book is divided into the three sections suggested in its subtitle but these are traversed by strong thematic threads.

One of these themes has to do with the long-standing nervousness about, and hostility toward, the human body on the part of the church hierarchy, notwithstanding a persistent and subversive love of dance by its members. Davies shows how this body-spirit dualism leads into, and is powerfully reinforced in, the Cartesian split between a perceiving consciousness and an observed object, in which fiburcation the body becomes an object of study rather than the form through which consciousness is expressed, with all the devastating effects which have ensued from this in our modern culture. A second theme in Davies' book is the consequent need for theology and the church to move beyond this doubt about the body and to recover the ancient biblical perspectives which see humanity in psycho-somatic wholeness. In this Davies draws on much recent insight, first, about the power and the capacity of media other than rational discourse for communicating awareness not reducible to spoken language and, secondly, about the affective quality of a medium in which *what* is being expressed is at one and the same time the *medium* of its expression: 'The dancer *is* the dance *is* the joy' (p. 135). The profound importance of these for liturgy is shown at point after point. Indeed, as Davies proceeds, the surprising awareness dawns on the reader that, given the centuries-old dispute of the church with dancing, we live in a period in which for the very first time a book on liturgical dancing can be written by one of the church's professors of theology and received by its people.

I found two points of contention with Davies, neither of them sufficient to diminish the power and beauty of his exposition. I believe his understanding of 'sacrament' and 'sacramental' needs much more careful definition. At these

points I recalled some of my uneasiness with his earlier *Every-Day God.* And, secondly, in emphasising the identity of the expresion and its vehicle I think he tends to overlook what S. Langer (for example) has called the 'illusion' of all artistic expression: the dancer does not dance in the knowledge that her lover has been killed, but *as if* that were so. The importance of this for liturgy seems to me to lie in its preservation of the necessary 'metaphor' which attends worship. However it was for Moses, the rest of us only ever speak and act 'as if' we are face to face with God; in fact the reality always surpasses us. But these are minor points of dissent from an undoubtedly important work.

Whereas Davies is an academic with a strong interest in the practicality of liturgy, Carolyn Deitering is a dancer who has established herself as an authoritative and helpful author in the subject of liturgical dance.

Notwithstanding their slightly different North American and British accents, the two books complement each other very nicely. In fact one of Davies' descriptions of liturgical dance, 'movement-prayer' (e.g., p. 160), is the phrase used throughout Deitering's book to describe her subject. This book is as emphatic as Davies' that there are many levels of human awareness not capable of expression in spoken language but which can be communicated in other forms. Of these, movement, gesture and bodily attitude are clearly primary for Deitering.

Her book consists in a series of 'movement-prayers' which begin with the reader (who is more or less assumed to be a leader of worship) undertaking very simple exercises in the privacy of his or her room and progressing to movements in which whole congregations can participate.

The text is gently written and offers a spirituality of its own and is complemented by the attractive lay-out and engaging photographs.

Graham Hughes

CHRISTIAN WORSHIP AND ITS CULTURAL SETTING

by Frank C. Senn; Philadelphia, Fortres Press, 1983. pp. xi + 148. Paperb.

Frank C. Senn is a Lutheran teacher and pastor whose name appears regularly in the established North American journals on liturgy. He was a professor at Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago and is presently pastor of Christ the Mediator Lutheran church in that city. In his preface he records his indebtedness to his former teacher, Aidan Kavanagh, then of the Liturgical Studies Department of Notre Dame University, and he is clearly conversant with liturgy and theology in the 'Free Church' tradition. Frank Senn thus combines within himself a wide experience, denominationally, pastorally and academically.

It is out of this experience and reflection that he has now written a book on the interace (as the vogue has it) of 'cult' and 'culture'.

There will be little argument that the interplay between these two, that is, between the values and perspectives we bring to our worship from the culture in which we are immersed and, *vice versa*, the ways in which religious forms of expression have themselves shaped that culture, is a pressing one. This is true for all of us. For Roman Catholics seeking to live into and out of the *aggiornamento* of which the Second Vatican Council was itself both the sign and a most powerful stimulus, for people of the Uniting Church who like to say, a trifle smugly and with some exaggeration, that they are the first indigenous church in Australia, and for all Christians trying to work out the ways of being truly Australian and truly Christian, the conversation between 'faith' and its cultural context has to be as clear as it possibly can be.

Frank Senn's contribution is thus both timely and apposite to our Austrlian situation. It is also helpful. But not splendid. One gains the impression that the author is a competent and learned teacher of liturgy but that he lacks the acuity and depth that would make his book more than another good text book. In fact Senn dedicates his book to his former students and one may be forgiven for suspecting that it represents one of his lecture courses polished up for publication. Thus there are many good historical references and not a few bits of judicious liturgical wisdom. For these the reader is genuinely grateful.

In the end, however, Senn seems never exactly sure what is the nature of the relationship between 'cult' and 'culture' (as he felicitously calls them). In the first chapter he seems to establish to his own satisfaction that 'cult is finally the dynamic catalyst that produces culture' (p. 8.) and, with reference to Christianity and culture, goes on: 'We know that Western language, drama, music, and the arts received impetus for their development from their original use in the Christian cult' (*ibid.*). However, in other places he can speak of the 'give and take' between culture and religious ritual (p. 38) and in yet other places he is clear that the ritual is as much influenced by prevailing cultural mores as otherwise (e.g., pp. 48-51). Ultimately, then, we have to be content with a faintly warmed over version of H. Richard Niebuhr's *Christ and Culture* (pp. 90-94) which, however magnificent this was in the 1940s, is scarcely scintillating fare today.

For myself I was appreciative of the chapter on 'The Piety of Worship' in which the history of the divorce between liturgy and spirituality is traced and some suggestions offered about how these might be reintroduced to one another. On the debit side, I chafed from time to time at Senn's capacity still to use the generic 'man'.

As his students no doubt have done, I was glad to learn from this teacher's insights. I still need help, however, with the subject he chiefly wished to expound.

Graham Hughes

CONTRIBUTORS AND REVIEWERS

Elizabeth Cain works with adults in exploring aspects of the Christian spiritual tradition especially as it is enlightened for the modern person by some of the insights of depth psychology.

The Revd R. Grant Dunning is Minister of the Enfield-Walkerville Parish in Adelaide and Secretary of the Commission on Liturgy of the Uniting Church in Australia.

The Revd Jennifer Farrell is Minister of the Uniting Church Parish of Rockdale in Sydney.

The Revd R. Wesley Hartley, Editor of AJL, is Deputy Warden of St Barnabas' College, Adelaide and Dean of Adelaide College of Divinity. He teaches liturgy for ACD and The Flinders University of South Australia.

The Revd Dr Graham D. Hughes, Assistant Editor of AJL, teaches liturgy and New Testament at United Theological College, Sydney.

The Revd Dorothy McMahon is Minister of Pitt Street Uniting Church, Sydney.

The Revd Gregory Manly, CP was a seminary lecturer for over thirty years, many of them at Yarra Theological Union, Melbourne. Among his publications are *Commentaries on the Readings of the Lectionary* (with Robert Crotty) and *The Art of Praying Liturgy* (with Anneliese Reinhard).

The Revd David Orr, OSB, Assistant Editor of AJL, teaches liturgy for the Catholic Insitute of Sydney.

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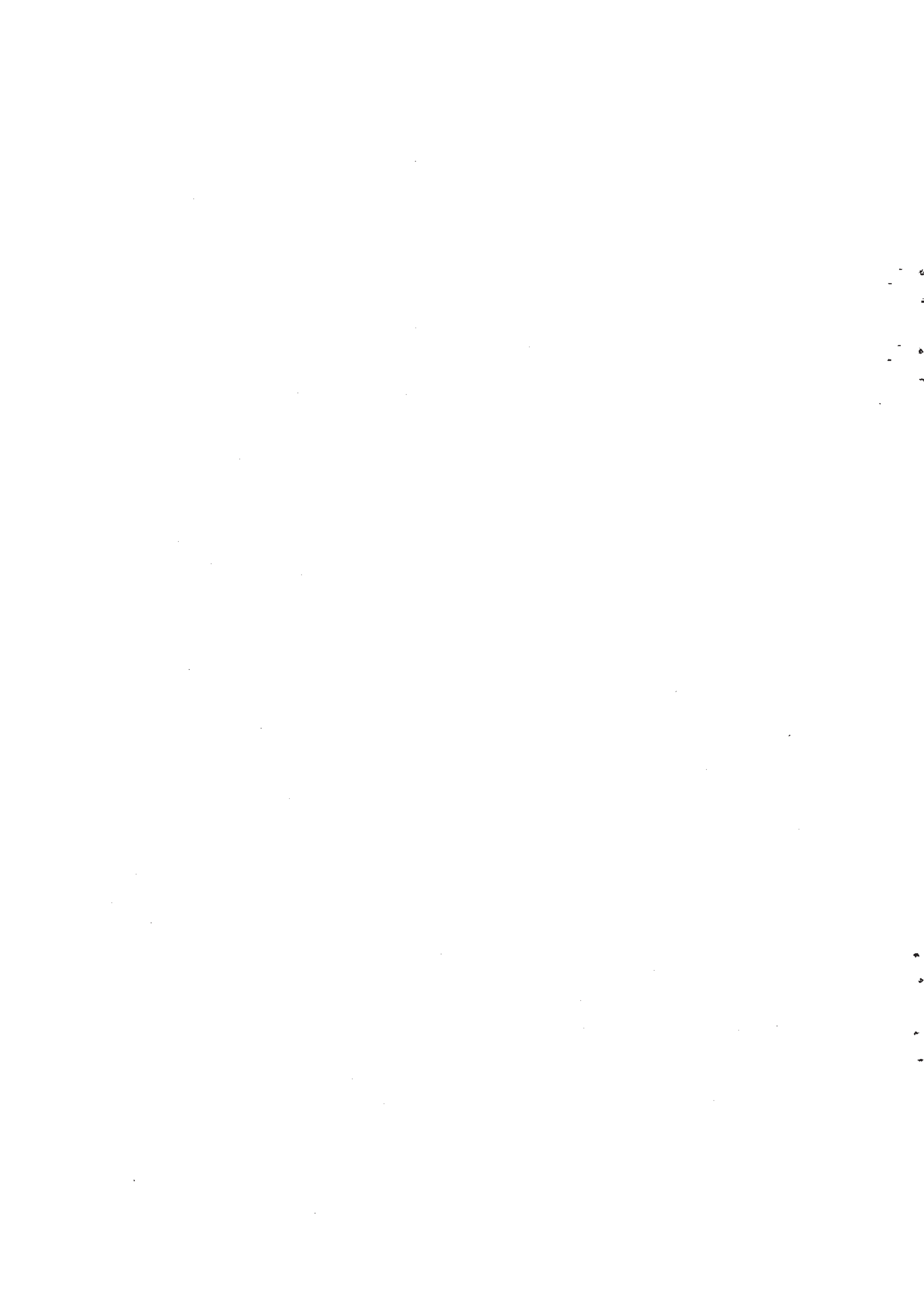

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