

Newsletter

Issue 6, November 2019



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In 2020, ACU Centre for Liturgy experts and leading practitioners will investigate Catholic beliefs about the healing power of prayer and sacraments in this valuable day of liturgical formation. For the current schedule of offerings go to acu.edu.au/pastoral_formation_days. All are welcome. Cost is \$60 (including lunch) and registration is essential. To bring the day to your area or for more information please contact the Centre for Liturgy directly at 02 9701 4751.

Please email us for more information, or to register to hear about upcoming events.

FROM THE DIRECTOR

When Catholics gather to celebrate liturgy, we enact one of the key benefits of our baptism: the right and responsibility to worship God as members of ‘the faithful’ (cf. Canon 214).

In Catholic schools, celebrating liturgy ideally is a central mode of faith expression within a religiously grounded educative process. In this issue we focus on the celebration of liturgy in Catholic school communities. The spotlight article offers a perspective on the way liturgy and prayer can function within Catholic school communities to foster genuine expression of Catholic identity and “renew a right spirit” (Ps 51:10) within our mission endeavours. Prof. Br. David Hall comments on a fascinating recent increase in numbers of school students participating in the sacrament of penance and the benefits they gain from its spiritual, psychological and social effects.

Dr. Anthony Young provides inspirational insight into how a whole-school approach to fostering liturgical music literacy can generate remarkable school and Church spirit through transformative liturgical experiences. As we head into the home strait of the academic and calendar year, may the Spirit provide extra energy to shepherd our school and Church initiatives (especially the liturgical ones!) to successful and satisfying outcomes.



Professor Clare V. Johnson
Director, ACU Centre for Liturgy
Professor of Liturgical Studies & Sacramental Theology, Faculty of Theology & Philosophy

FROM OUR BOARD OF ADVISORS

It is intriguing that at a time when parishes and other Catholic communities are reporting a decline in the participation of the faithful in the Sacrament of Penance, Catholic schools are increasingly reporting the high levels of participation of students in the sacrament, particularly when it is offered in the context of retreats and reflection days.

Schools frequently attend to issues related to relationship fractures and this is often the experience that they bring to the celebration of the sacrament. Among the staff who support students in attending to relationship challenges, pastoral care teachers and counsellors are pivotal. Perhaps it is time for Catholic schools ensure that pastoral care teachers and counsellors understand the place, purpose

and opportunity of the Sacrament of Penance—not to force it on students, but at least to understand that it may be one of the options available to those students who understand and seek the importance of the divine in experiencing and offering forgiveness and mercy. The ACU Centre for Liturgy has significant experience and expertise in helping school educators understand and prepare children and young people for participation in the sacraments and its specialists can assist your school or diocesan community in widening its sacramental literacy.



Professor Br David Hall FMS
Dean, La Salle Academy,
Australian Catholic University



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NEWS AND RECENT EVENTS

Be not afraid: preparing and celebrating sacraments of healing

In October and November, the ACU Centre for Liturgy offered a Pastoral Formation Day on the Sacraments of Healing in multiple locations. Parishioners and pastoral care staff from Mercy Health and other members of Catholic Health Australia enthusiastically engaged in this professional development opportunity and were pleased at the accessible way in which the theological and pastoral components of the day were delivered. Participants found this to be a valuable opportunity to interact with peers in considering what the sacraments of healing bring to the processes of aging, illness and dying, and how important the role of pastoral care workers, clergy and volunteers is in bringing Christ to the bedside of people at moments of great vulnerability.

If you are interested in having this pastoral formation day offered in your area in 2020 please contact the Centre for Liturgy.



Speaking Awesome Words II: Lector Masterclass

Communication is a skill that needs constant attention, especially when proclaiming God's Word. Lectors who read well know that there is always room for improvement. The *Speaking Awesome Words II: Lector Masterclass* is a two-hour interactive advanced training session for lectors. The masterclass builds on the ACU Centre for Liturgy's introductory lector training course: *Speaking Awesome Words*. Lectors will engage with some of the most technically challenging readings found in the Lectionary for Mass. Come and work with the Centre's experienced liturgical specialists who will offer personalised advice and constructive feedback on your proclamation style, in addition to providing helpful strategies for bringing God's Word to life in your parish.

This training program can be run on a weeknight or a Saturday morning or afternoon. **Express your interest online** and we will be pleased to address any questions you may have or to tailor a bespoke extension of this program for your parish.

Centre academics present at Australian Pastoral Musicians Network conference

The 2019 APMN Conference took place recently in Melbourne at the Catholic Leadership Centre. ACU Centre for Liturgy Director Professor Clare Johnson presented "From many into one: nurturing the choral bond" and "Music for Catholic funerals," while Assistant Director Dr Jason McFarland presented "The right way to sing the chants of the *Roman Missal*." Both were delighted to be part of such an engaging meeting of those who foster and lead sung worship in Australia.

Celebrating the Lectionary – Year A

Professor Clare V. Johnson has collaborated with US liturgists and catechists to produce a new Australian version of *Celebrating the Lectionary – Year A* through Garratt Publishing. Ideal for use with Year 5-8 students in school RE classes or parish Children's Liturgy of the Word programs, this book explores Gospel readings for Sundays, solemnities, feasts and holydays (specific to the Australian Liturgical Calendar) through proclamation, reflection and activities. A new Australian version of the Year of Grace Calendar for 2020 is also available to help young people make links between their Catholic faith and their everyday lives. Find out more information at www.garrattpublishing.com.au

some may also practise their faith outside of the school context. Documentary assumptions and practical realities do not always match and attempting to practise the liturgical ideal outlined in official documents can prove challenging in Catholic school communities with practising circumstances so different from those described in Church teaching and law.

But it is important to remember that whenever Catholic groups other than parishes celebrate liturgy, they still celebrate as Church – when schools celebrate liturgy, they become Church in that celebration because at their heart is a group of baptised members of the faithful gathered with the purpose of offering glory to God and becoming holy in God's presence. Such groups identify themselves as Catholic by doing the most important thing that Catholics do: celebrating liturgy. *Sacrosanctum Concilium* #7 explains that "every liturgical celebration, because it is an action of Christ the priest and of His Body which is the Church, is a sacred action surpassing all others; no other action of the Church can equal its efficacy by the same title and to the same degree."

When school becomes Church to celebrate the liturgy it expresses an inherent part of its Catholic DNA. Even though fulfilling the Church's expectations and legislation regarding liturgical celebrations can be challenging, liturgies celebrated by schools should align with what the Catholic Church throughout the world does. This alignment enables the gathered worshipping community to enact here and now the ritual words and actions patterned by generations of Catholics. Like DNA, these sacred liturgical patterns determine how each worshipping assembly develops and what it will become. When schools enact these sacred patterns well as Church, they can realise the outcome of their Catholic DNA and become the body of Christ, nourished in mind and spirit to do Christ's work in the world: feeding the poor, visiting the sick, caring for the earth and achieving their full Christian potential.

Catholic schools play a vital role in providing opportunities for Catholic students to practise their faith in a nurturing environment which reinforces key aspects of their baptismal identity and enables them to embody their Catholic faith in sacred action amid the rest of the

school community which often includes non-Catholics and non-practising student-peers. When DNA behaves as expected, an organism develops to its full, healthy potential. Energising Catholic school communities to celebrate liturgy and prayer well is a challenging task, but one that is worth the effort if this key building-block of Catholic DNA is to enable the school to achieve its full, healthy potential, strengthening its Catholic identity and impelling it to fulfil the other aspects of its Catholic mission.



Professor Clare V. Johnson
Director, ACU Centre for Liturgy
Professor of Liturgical Studies & Sacramental Theology, Faculty of Theology & Philosophy

SHARING GOOD PRACTICE

Fostering liturgical singing in school congregations at Mass

Archbishop Mark Coleridge claims that "no-one sings like St. Laurence's" but it is my hope that our practice is more widespread than he claims.

Our approach has been guided by *Musicam Sacram* 19 which provides that "formation of the whole people in singing, should be seriously and patiently undertaken together with liturgical instruction ...even from the first years of education in elementary schools." Accordingly, in addition to curriculum work, music staff are given class time to choose, teach, rehearse and lead singing at mass with reverence, zeal and competence. Many of our students are 'unchurched' so we rehearse spoken mass responses, music and movement at whole school assembly to enable all students to participate in liturgy regardless of their background. Because the voice of the assembly is paramount, the whole school sings a small repertoire of liturgically, theologically and contextually suitable music for mass as well as a recommended setting of the ordinary to ensure 'full, active and conscious participation'. Students cannot sing what they don't know so new students are taught the school repertoire each year so that they are empowered to participate. Some school repertoire is familiar to parents and parish so that all can sing together on major occasions.



We can no longer assume that students learn to sing at home and therefore large group singing teaching is core business for Catholic schools. Accordingly, our classroom music program involves singing in every music lesson and is compulsory for years five to seven. Sacred music is used for teaching musical concepts wherever possible. Our singing based curriculum has had the desirable consequence of us enjoying healthy numbers of students in 'classroom music' and our senior music results are amongst the highest in the state. To provide for the future, our students are taught to lead sung worship as cantors, organists, pianists, guitarists and players of other instruments as part of a large healthy music program so that full school mass can be led by a worship orchestra and massed choir of 240 voices.

Groups of older students are taught the relevant sections of *Musicam Sacram* and the *General Instruction on the Roman Missal* so they can organise weekly

house level masses and can contribute knowledgeably to the planning of more major masses and rituals. We have found that student formation, education in liturgical music and empowerment to organize have reaped powerful benefits. Students who know what they are doing and who are given responsibility with agency tend to become powerful advocates for the mass. Our hope is that by singing the faith throughout their schooling, our students will come to share the consolations of the faith in their lives.

Keep on singing!



Dr Anthony Young
BA/LLB, DipEd, MMus Stud, PhD, is Head of Classroom Music at St Laurence's College in South Brisbane, which has a strong community singing tradition supported by seven choirs of 240 boys aged 10-17. Widely published, Anthony is Director of Music at St Ignatius Parish (Toowong), a member of the Brisbane Archdiocesan Commission on the Liturgy and a member of the National Liturgical Music Council.

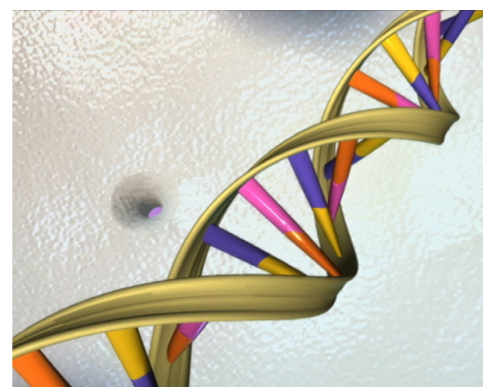
LITURGY SPOTLIGHT

When school becomes Church

Celebrating liturgy and engaging in prayer is part of the DNA of Catholic schools.

DNA is a set of chemical instructions encoded at a cellular level that determines how an organism develops and what it will become. Like DNA, liturgy and prayer done well act as key building blocks in Catholic schools helping to guide the growth, development and spiritual health of Catholic students, shaping and influencing who they will become on their path to maturity.

Church documents on the liturgy often harbour unspoken assumptions about how liturgy is celebrated and by whom. These documents presuppose a liturgy that is celebrated primarily by parishes, on Sundays, in churches, by communities of baptised, regularly practising Catholics. In today's Catholic schools, liturgy is celebrated primarily by members of school communities, on weekdays (sometimes infrequently), in a variety of places that may or may not be churches, by mixed groups, some of whom are baptised Catholics, of whom





Engage our expertise

Can we help you to improve liturgical celebration in your parish?

The ACU Centre for Liturgy provides specialised training and formation workshops for parish ministers and liturgical musicians on a variety of topics.

Would your teachers and religious education leaders like to deepen their understanding of the liturgy?

We tailor workshops and professional development sessions to the specific needs of schools and Catholic education offices.

Would you like to develop your skills as a presider at liturgy further?

We provide specialised professional development sessions for clergy on a range of topics from presidential singing to the art of presiding at worship, and the craft of preaching.

Bring our experts to you

Our academics and specialists are available to deliver keynote addresses, public lectures, and conference workshops on topics of interest to your organisation.

Study liturgy and sacramental theology

Through ACU's Faculty of Theology and Philosophy, we offer academic courses in liturgical studies and sacramental theology, and we supervise Higher Degree Research students in liturgy, sacramental theology and the sacred arts.

Contact us

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The Liturgy Nexus

The Liturgy Nexus is an online network for professional Catholic liturgists and those working in areas related to liturgy, sacraments and the sacred arts. It is a subscription-based, closed network for conversation on liturgical issues, resource sharing and problem solving.

Apply to either Nexus on the Centre for Liturgy website to join the conversation. Membership is granted to applicants who meet the eligibility criteria. The membership fee is \$30 per year (not pro-rated) and can be renewed on or before 1 March each year.

Support our work in rural and low-income parishes

Tax deductible donations can be made via the **Give Now portal on our website**. ACU is a not-for-profit institution and gifts of \$2 or more are tax deductible. You can be assured that 100 per cent of your gift will be applied directly to our essential formative education work in areas of need. The Centre also accepts endowments, pledges, bequests, and gifts in kind.

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