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RECENT STAFF PUBLICATIONS:

Jason J. McFarland. “Processes of Liturgical Change: A Roman Catholic Response.” In *When We Pray: The Future of Common Prayer*, 357-81. Edited by Stephen Burns and Robert Gribben. Bayswater: Coventry Press, 2020.

_____, ed. *Proceedings of the North American Academy of Liturgy. Annual Meeting: Atlanta, Georgia, 2-4 January 2020*. Notre Dame, IN, 2020.

Sharon Boyd. “Liturgy meets culture.” *Catholic Voice*. Archdiocese of Canberra Goulburn (May 2020).

_____. “Celebrating the Triduum.” *Liturgy News* 50:1 (Autumn 2020): 12-14.

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

FROM THE DIRECTOR

During the months-long restrictions resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, the ACU Centre for Liturgy has pivoted its operations to ensure the continuity of its offerings of postgraduate liturgical studies and professional development opportunities for clergy, teachers, and parish/diocesan staff across Australia, using the power of the internet. Our current interesting times have provided new moments for individual and corporate reflection on the ways in which we express and explore our Christian identities both in person and virtually.

For some, compliance with the enforced pandemic lockdown has brought into unavoidably sharp relief the minutiae of close interpersonal relationships which (for those so inclined) can offer the opportunity to reflect on and celebrate (or consider the need for further work on) the daily living out of the Sacrament of Matrimony.

For others, the suspension of the Church’s liturgical practice has provided the

possibility to consider more deeply the fundamental nature of the Sacrament of Holy Orders, and of what the daily expression of priestly ministry consists when personal interactions are steeply curtailed.

This issue of the centre’s newsletter focuses fresh attention on these two crucial expressions of Catholic-Christian sacramental life, as we wait in joyful hope for the chance once more to participate fully, consciously, actively (and in person), in our Church’s central expression of its identity as the Body of Christ in the Eucharistic celebration.



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

FROM OUR BOARD OF ADVISORS

The Sacraments of Marriage (Matrimony) and Holy Orders are described in the Catechism of the Catholic Church as “Sacraments at the Service of Communion.” They bring people together in distinct ways: through loving service to others, both married laity and ordained deacons, priests and bishops actively build up the People of God.

Uniquely, the couple themselves are the ministers in the Sacrament of Marriage, conferring the Sacrament upon one another when consenting to marry before God and the Church.

Pope Francis has stated that those called to Holy Orders “...prolong Jesus’ presence in time, if they do so with the power of the

Holy Spirit in the name of God and with love.” (*General Audience, St Peter’s Square, March 2014*).

Both Sacraments embody the loving example of Jesus in his ministry, and both constitute vocations, involving a call from God and a response from those who have been called.



Josie Ryan
GCTS–Liturgy, MMus, is Liturgist at Loreto Kirribilli and Conductor of the ACU North Sydney Campus Choir



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NEWS AND RECENT EVENTS

ACU Centre for Liturgy Awards Postgraduate Scholarship

The ACU Centre for Liturgy Postgraduate Scholarship for 2020 has been awarded to ACU Faculty of Theology and Philosophy master's student Thomas Cullen. Mr Cullen is grateful to receive the scholarship.

"This opportunity enables me to continue to deepen my understanding of the liturgical and sacramental life of our Church. I am learning how the whole of Christian life is meant to be permeated and marked by the liturgy and the sacraments," he said.

Thomas hopes to work as a pastoral/liturgical coordinator in a parish when his studies are complete, noting, "It is through doing our rituals well that we tell the story of how intimately we are united with God and are aided to be receptive to God's salvific gift and abundant grace in our lives."

Mark Francis visits Australia virtually for postgraduate unit and public lecture

Reverend Professor Mark R. Francis, CSV, President of Catholic Theological Union and renowned expert in liturgy and culture taught the

ACU postgraduate unit THEL620: Liturgical Inculturation as an online intensive live from Chicago on 6, 7, 9 and 10 July 2020.

Nearly 30 postgraduate students undertook the unit, and more than 50 others participated in Professor Francis' lectures as a Professional Learning Seminar.

Professor Francis also delivered the free online public lecture, "The Challenge of Intercultural Liturgy in the Era of Pope Francis", to an audience of hundreds on 20 July. The story of his virtual visit was covered widely in Australian Catholic media outlets.

LITURGY SPOTLIGHT

The preservation and advancement of marriage

The *Order of Celebrating Matrimony* entrusts to bishops the ministry of preserving marriage and advancing it in perfection: "It is for the Bishop...to regulate the celebration and pastoral care of the Sacrament throughout the diocese by organising assistance for the Christian faithful so that the state of marriage may be preserved in a Christian spirit and advance in perfection" (OCM #13).

In local communities this assistance for the Christian faithful is provided by pastors of souls. Pastors are to do this especially, "by preaching, by catechesis adapted to children, young people and adults, and through means of social communication, so that the Christian faithful are instructed about the meaning of Christian marriage and about the role of Christian spouses and parents" (OCM #14).

How can pastors effectively catechise these various groups about the meaning of Christian marriage and about the role of Christian spouses and parents? The *Order of Celebrating Matrimony*, in its new 2016 translation, now includes "The Order of Blessing a Married Couple Within Mass on the Anniversary of Marriage," which may provide an opportunity for catechesis.

The ritual states that: "On the main anniversaries of Marriage, as for example on the twenty-fifth, fiftieth, or sixtieth anniversary, it is fitting to hold a special remembrance of the Sacrament" (OCM #272). One might add that it is also fitting

to hold a special remembrance of the Sacrament on the earlier anniversaries. The first, fifth, and tenth are major milestones for recently married couples for whom the twenty-fifth anniversary can seem beyond the horizon.

As churches in Australia are celebrating fewer marriages, and attendance at those ceremonies is usually restricted to the friends and relatives of the bride and groom, more frequent blessings of married couples within Mass may provide a relevant context for pastors to meet their obligation to instruct the Christian faithful about the meaning of Christian marriage by preaching and catechesis. Frequent celebration of "The Order of Blessing a Married Couple within Mass" may allow pastors to harness the power of liturgical catechesis for, as the Catechism teaches, the liturgy is "the privileged place for catechising the People of God" (CCC #1074).

"The Order of Blessing a Married Couple within Mass" is a thanksgiving for, and renewal of commitment to, married life. It is not the renewal of marriage 'vows' that was the pastoral practice in many dioceses. Catholics exchange 'consent,' not 'vows.' The consent exchanged lasts for the life of the couple, it constitutes the form of the sacrament, and it is not repeated.

"The Order of Blessing" emphasises matrimony and one's spouse as gifts of a loving God, and loving marriage as a locus of personal and spiritual growth. The first words the couple may say are:



Photograph by Giovanni Portelli. Used with permission.

*Blessed are you, Lord,
for by your goodness I took N. as my
wife/husband.*

At the blessing of rings, the priest prays:

*Increase and sanctify, Lord,
the love of your servants N. and N...
...that they may always grow in the
grace of the sacrament.*

The words and actions of the rite, including the witness of the celebrating couple to the joys of marriage, can provide a powerful form of implicit catechesis. The couple witnessing to the joys of marriage may also provide inspiration for other couples.

We cannot leave the preservation and advancement of marriage to our pastors

alone. Those of us who are married have a foundational role to play. Children receive their first, and some of their most influential, lessons about marriage from the behaviour of their parents. At a wedding I recently attended, the groom in his speech during the reception, spoke of all the reasons he was delighted to be married. His list included the quality of his parents' relationship. On the other hand, I had a colleague who said that she was never attracted to marriage because of her lived experience of the thoughtless way that her father treated her mother.

Increasingly young couples are choosing not to marry, and particularly not to marry in the Catholic Church, in part because the behavior and example of those of us who are married has

disappointed them. Let us be open to the grace of the Sacrament each day so that our children may be inspired by the quality of their parents' relationship and let our churches frequently celebrate the grace of the sacrament with "The Order of Blessing a Married Couple within Mass."



Dan McGrath is a sessional facilitator in Pre-Marriage Education for Centacare Brisbane and a PhD Candidate in liturgical theology at Australian Catholic University.

SHARING GOOD PRACTICE

"Bless, sanctify, and consecrate these chosen..."

It should not come as a surprise that many Catholic people can live their entire lives and never attend an ordination liturgy. And if they did attend one, they might wonder what it had to do with them given that the rite and ceremonies attached to ordaining deacons, priests and bishops seem to be an action of whichever order the candidate is being admitted into.

It would be a mistake to think that the lay faithful are simply spectators. Ordination rites take place within the context of a Eucharist, which of course is an action of Christ and his Church, that is, all the baptised (including the ordained) present in whatever order they are in.

After the proclamation of the Gospel when in the ordination of priests, the candidates are presented to the bishop, he asks the following question: "Do you know them to be worthy?" The designated priest responds, "After inquiry among the Christian people and upon the recommendation of those responsible, I testify that they have been found worthy." The bishop then formally 'elects' the candidate, and all present affirm their consent by an acclamation – normally applause in Australia. Thus, ordinations to whatever order are an action of the Church, hierarchically assembled, and each has their own distinct and important part to play in the liturgical action.

In the earliest church documents ordination was understood as setting certain members of the community apart for service to the entire body. The ritual action from the time of the Acts of the Apostles was prayer and the laying on of hands. To this day those ritual actions are core to the ordination of anyone, be they deacon, priest or bishop. By the time of the Middle Ages the rites around



Photograph by Giovanni Portelli. Used with permission.

ordination had accrued extra ceremonial actions that were culturally derived and created a somewhat more dramatic intent to the action. The addition of anointing with Chrism, the vesting of candidates with special liturgical garments, the presentation of the Book of Gospels (in the case of deacons), the presentation of a chalice and paten containing the elements for consecration at the Eucharist (in the

case of priests) and the placing of a ring, bestowing a mitre and the presentation of a crozier (in the case of bishops) all added to the solemnity of setting particular persons apart to exercise a specific ministry, be it one of charitable outreach, the administration of the sacraments, or most importantly the responsibility of teaching and proclaiming the Gospel.

The responsibilities of those ordained to service in the Church is captured in a most pertinent way in the solemn blessing at the end of the rite. From the ordination of deacons: "May God who has called you to the service of others in his Church give to you a zeal for all, especially the poor and the suffering." From the ordination of priests: "May God make you a true pastor who nourishes the faithful with living bread and the word of life, that they may continue to grow into the one body of Christ." From the ordination of a bishop: "...Guide the hearts of people and bishop in such measure that the shepherd may never be without the obedience of the flock, nor the flock without the care of the shepherd."

Attendance at an ordination is an important witness and assent to the action of the whole Church guided by the Holy Spirit who calls forth chosen candidates who are set apart by prayer and the laying on of hands to continue the mission of Jesus Christ.



The Very Reverend Peter G. Williams is Vicar General of the Diocese of Parramatta and a member of the ACU Centre for Liturgy Board of Advisors.

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.

Speaking Awesome Words: One-on-one Lector Coaching

Speaking Awesome Words: One-on-one Lector Coaching is now available via Zoom. This individual opportunity is available to lectors of all skill levels who are eager to improve their liturgical proclamation of scripture. This training is facilitated by the ACU Centre for Liturgy's trained coaches and leading practitioners. Mutually agreed meeting times will be arranged between facilitator and trainee. Go to acu.edu.au/sawonline to register your interest.



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The Liturgy Nexus

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

The Liturgy Nexus for Schools

The Liturgy Nexus for Schools provides a space where teachers and those tasked with preparing liturgies in Catholic schools can ask questions and develop their liturgical expertise to ensure children and young people are nurtured in their spiritual and liturgical lives at school.

To become a member of the Liturgy Nexus or Liturgy Nexus for Schools, apply on the Centre for Liturgy website. Membership is granted to applicants who meet the eligibility criteria. The membership fee is \$30.00 per year, not pro-rated, and can be renewed on or before March 1 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 the essential formative education work done by the ACU Centre for Liturgy in areas of need. Endowments, pledges, bequests and gifts in kind are welcomed.

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