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AUSTRALIAN ACADEMY OF LITURGY

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THE GOALS OF PARTICIPATION:
PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS
Russell Hardiman

My first duty, a very pleasant one, is to welcome you all here to the Eighth National Conference of the Australian Academy of Liturgy. As President of the Academy I particularly welcome fellow members of the Academy, especially the twenty two who have travelled from the Eastern States - which does say something about how low airfares do encourage travelling. The guests from interstate join ten members of the WA Chapter, for most of whom this is their first involvement in the Academy's Conference.

In addition I welcome the twenty five or thirty people from various churches around Perth and country WA who have responded to our invitation to share something of the Conference. This is the first time that the Conference has operated on this dual level, of sessions with worship and keynote speakers open to the general public and sessions for Academy members for response to and for further development of the keynote topics. As a West Australian, I am very conscious of how our isolation is more than geographic and so I welcome you with a special personal interest in sharing this opportunity to hear and learn from key speakers from other areas while they are in the West.

Another dimension of my Presidential Address, besides the formal welcome to everyone, is in the nature of an introductory talk, an overview of the theme of the Conference.

In choosing the theme we settled on 'Patterns of Participation in Worship: how does liturgy work?: how does liturgy do its work?'. We envisaged this theme as a type of umbrella topic that covers various aspects and stances, particularly the consideration of insights from inter-related interdisciplinary fields, as exemplified in the paper that is to follow on the bimodal paradigm given by Dr Diana Bertolino-Green.

Incidentally, we are not the only ones to have chosen such a theme. The theme of the 1989 national meeting of the Federation of Diocesan Liturgy Commissions held in Pittsburgh USA was 'Liturgy: Active Participation in the Divine Life'. The keynote papers were published in a book of that name by the Liturgical Press, a practice we hope to follow by publishing papers in the *Australian Journal of Liturgy*.

This title actually begs the question as to what is participation. Everyone may have his/her own notion of what is intended in the

phrase 'active participation' or the phrase can be a code word that assumes a certain style of participation. We need first of all to clarify our own idea to work out of a univocal concept. To clarify the concept we state from the outset that the goal of participation is the reality of God's presence revealed in human signs and symbols: in other words, the encounter with the divine presence through human sense experience. Already these phrases open up the debate in the potential ambiguity of language, for the various analogies or images reflect varying models of church and of revelation and of God's presence.

We can also state quite boldly from the start what is not intended by 'participation'. It is not just getting people to participate by doing certain things, whether that be singing, standing, sitting, kneeling. It is not the participation involved when it is presumed six readers is a better form of participation than one good reader, when the numbers game overrides the true sense of ministry for the sake of the community. We would emphasise that active participation in the rites is only half the goal, for the true goal is achieved when active participation in the rites is a step to active participation in the mystery. Participation in the Church is what happens when the community of the church, in its worship, ritualises the very qualities that form it to be church in order to return to the world to give witness to the Kingdom.

So we often hear about 'getting people to participate', when those activities have encompassed standing or kneeling, responding or singing, or even to get people to sit up the front, when so many are unsure of what to do. All of these active forms, these activities, these patterns of worship, are only means to an end. That end is the forming of the individuals who come together for worship to be God's People, to use a biblical image; to be the Body of Christ, to use an image of St Paul; to be the Sacrament of the Church, to use an image of contemporary sacramental theology. In the phrases popularised by Eugene Walsh, the levels of participation unleash the energies of gathering, listening, and responding in order to go out on mission to the world.

In Catholic circles we have been used to the emphasis on active participation especially since Vatican II, but it is a phrase with a history much older. One of my professors at the Liturgical Institute of Sant'Anselmo in Rome, Herman Schmidt SJ, used to describe its use as 'like the response to a litany', because the word participation is used 26 times in the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy.¹ Even further back than Vatican II, Pope Pius X, in the early years of this century,

encouraged the active participation of the laity in the liturgy when he endowed the nascent Liturgical Movement with legislative power in his documents that allowed frequent communion and communion by children at the age of seven and that encouraged the singing of Gregorian Chant as the mode par excellence of active participation.

Still further back there was the use by St Thomas Aquinas, who is well known for the new articulation of christian theology in philosophical language borrowed from the Greeks. Plato explained the perennial problem of how things could be the same yet different by saying that different beings participate in being in different ways and to different degrees. In his discussion of sacraments St Thomas proclaimed that sanctifying grace was a form of participation in the very life of God. He defined the 'character' that certain sacraments impart as participation in the priesthood of Christ, participation in certain functions or responsibilities for the worship of God through, with, and in Christ.

Mark Searle of Notre Dame develops this Thomistic notion of participation to say that the outward sign of the sacrament:

The whole ritual performance points beyond itself 1. to our taking part in the priestly worship offered by Christ to the Father, and 2. beyond that, since that worship implies heart to heart union with God, to participation in the very life of God. ²

He then asserts that at the first level of 'active participation', the level of sight and sound, of movement and gesture, participation means engaged in some appropriate way in the ritual act, not necessarily in a uniform way for all. As the first level, this is merely the appropriate was for becoming engaged at the second level, that is, participating in the Priesthood of Christ. He concludes that we do not own the liturgy, for it is not our work. It is Christ's liturgy and it is our privilege to participate in it and we need to express and foster that awareness in the way we celebrate. ³

We have probably all seen hideous examples of the distortion of the Thomistic theology on the effective causality of sacraments. His famous phrase 'ex opere operato' really needs another word adequately to express his thought: 'ex opere operato Christi', so that it translates as 'from the very work of Christ himself' not just as the automatic result of the action or gesture itself. Likewise, the other part of the dual phrases 'ex opere operantis' needs to read 'ex opere operantis Ecclesiae' to show that the effect comes not from the mere rite itself but because it is the rite carried out with and in and through the Body of Christ, the Church. A fuller awareness of these classic phrases would go a long way to relieving

the problem of how they are frequently shallowly quoted distorting their meaning and leading to a minimalist interpretation of the legal or rubrical requirements for validity.

There can be a similar danger when there is a mistaken enthusiasm for the external, physical aspects of participation as if there were an inherent 'ex opere operato' effect guaranteeing the results, regardless of any internal, spiritual or attitudinal awareness present along with the external. I would venture to assert that across all the traditions, in the plethora of changes of texts, rites, symbols, and music that have been attempted in the last twenty five years, that there has been a rush of enthusiasm for getting people to do new things - whether by way of language, actions, gestures, or furniture. We have tended to objectify these levels of participation as if they were ends in themselves, as if they were the goal intended, as if (to move forward seven hundred years in terminology) the medium is the message.

When it was first established in 1981, the Australian Academy of Liturgy set as one of its goals the study of 'liturgy in the Australian context'. What was intended by this phrase was nothing so gauche as to substitute pie and sauce for bread and wine as the American song was Australianised to 'Football, Meat pies, and Holden cars'. Over the early years the Academy's National Conferences followed this thematic context very closely.

A recent article in the National Priests' Council Newsletter posed the question: 'Why is it so terribly hard being religious in Australia?' by the aptly named Allan Patience of the Victorian University of Technology. He highlights four fundamental aspects that make it hard. First, it is probably the most secular culture in the world. Second, it is a culture that remains extensively populist. Its exponents are anti-intelligent, anti-cosmopolitan, and deeply suspicious of high cultural traditions. Third, the hard culture is deeply xenophobic and racist. Fourth, the hard culture is sexist in a narrowly masculinist way. He then concludes:

This thinking has inserted secularism, populism, racism and masculinism into our hard culture where it lies largely unchallenged and is continually being reproduced in our families, schools, and mass media.. In the context of the hard culture we are often made to feel defensive when we want to express our religious understandings. Religious people are not only marginalised by the prevailing secularism of the culture, but they often fall victim to its populist contempt for intellectualising things, and for being moved by the profound complexity of being

rather than seeking to contain it all within some simplistic formulae or dogma. ⁴

The conclusions of Allan Patience are not dissimilar to those of Mark Searle in analysing the American national scene:

The issue of participation is wider than getting people to join in the singing. It is commonly said that our culture is characterised by pluralism, individualism, the privatisation of religion, and the ideology of intimacy. Of these, the root characteristic is undoubtedly pluralism. Our culture differs from other, older cultures by its lack of homogeneity. This is simply not going to go away. Individualism and the privatisation of religion are the ways human beings have been trying to cope with the rise of mass society with its impersonalism and lack of cultural consensus. However, they represent a first and not very successful response: Individualism and privatisation are not only bad for liturgy and for religion, they are bad for humanity. Thus, the search for modes of social participation appropriate to post-industrial mass society is something that includes but goes beyond participation in the liturgy to include participation in the broader life of the Church and in the life of society. ⁵

These profound cultural factors of the external mode are reinforced by factors of the internal mode, that is the institutional issues of any denomination whose adherents have been formed in one tradition or in one model of spirituality that presumed a stability, not to say an immutable character. Both the external and internal factors magnify the problem of implementing change that touches on values, attitudes, and ideals that are the field of renewal compared to the texts, rites, or techniques that is the focus of reform. This leads to the unexpressed assumption that has recently been challenged by Elizabeth Hoffman.

Where did we get the idea that the incredible changes in the church's self-understanding and expression called for by Vatican II would happen quickly? Who told us that liturgical and ecclesial reform were going to be short, easy projects, able to be accomplished by new books and occasional workshops? We read Fitzgerald's piece and remember that the changes called for are not cosmetic; they entail a new way of being the church.... My response is: Do it well for 10 or 20 or 30 years, continuing the catechesis and inviting people to try the new practice, then see what's happening and how people are responding.... [She quotes a native American saying] 'Think seven generations from now - how will it be for the people living then? What effect will my (our) actions have on them?' Perhaps we who advocate reform in the churches ought to adopt a similar standard. ⁶

The task of this conference is to explore patterns of participation in worship. To that task we now turn.

NOTES

1. *La Costituzione Sulla Sacra Liturgia*, Casa Editrice Herder 1966
2. M. Searle 'Culture' in *Liturgy: active participation in the divine life*, Liturgical Press 1990, p.45
3. *ibid.*, p.46
4. *National Priests' Council Newsletter*, December 1991, pp 1-3
5. M. Searle, *op cit.*, p. 47
6. E. Hoffman, *Liturgy 90*, January 1992, p.11.

WORD AND PROCLAMATION

*Albert McPherson
and the Victorian Chapter*

Introduction

That there is a relationship between scripture and liturgy is regarded by most people as axiomatic, whether they be liturgists or not. This may lead us to take certain matters for granted. Familiarity may then lead not so much to contempt as indifference to the place of scripture within the liturgy, and engender carelessness in our approach to the texts, our use and misuse of them.

Some practical issues might be considered first, including the suitability of the texts we use and the way in which we present them, before moving on to the actual content of the scriptural texts and their impact on the modern church and the world.

1:1 The role of the reader

The minister who is appointed to be a reader should be aware of the importance of the role, and reminded that in the early church readers were a distinct order within the ministry. It should hardly need to be said that the readers should be familiar with the text they are to read, but experience shows that all too often perusal of the passage to be read is left to the last moment, if it is looked at at all.

Readers should always be placed so that they can readily be seen and heard. The matter of posture and movement is raised here for the whole community, especially in informal small groups where the worshippers often sit in a circle without any change in their posture or stance. There is no distinction made between the 'word' addressed to us and the 'word' addressed to God; whether it be 'word' offered to us or 'word' shared amongst us. Even informal worship should hold in mind certain liturgical directions.

In larger, more formal assemblies, the problem is not so significant, particularly when use is made of various adjuncts in sight and movement to stress the importance of what is being done.

1:2 The worshipping community – listening or reading?

The person who reads must do more than merely read. It is God's word that is being read, or rather proclaimed, not just any ordinary word or words. Whilst avoiding pomposity on one hand, or casualness

on the other, the reader should achieve a balance in reading which stresses the significance of what is being read or proclaimed. This raises the issue of whether in our modern church the community has become not a listening community but rather a reading community closely following the printed text whilst it is being read aloud. A further question might be raised as to whether there is too much reading material in general in the pews. There has been in recent years a proliferation of lectionary extracts, lesson sheets, pew leaflets, information notices, special appeals etc. not to mention the missalettes and other devotional booklets, all of which are capable of occupying a good deal of the worshippers' time and distracting them from what is going on. This results in a congregation that is in danger of being individualised, thereby destroying the corporate nature of worship, especially the eucharist.

1:3 The present church and its attitude to scripture

The worshipping community gathered to celebrate the Lord's death and resurrection is the foundation in history of both the formation of scripture and liturgy: both are formed out of this community, and the community itself is addressed by its scripture and its liturgy. This is not merely a factor of history but a dynamic force which still operates or should operate in the church. The community should be examining constantly its attitude to the scripture and its relationship to the contemporary world and society. In this field of study there is much needed co-operation to be sought for between biblical scholars and liturgists. How justified are we in our use of the Old Testament as typological extracts set down for liturgical use? Is the story of Abraham and his unquestioning willingness to assent to the sacrifice of his son Isaac the ideal prototype for the story of Christ's passion on Good Friday? Do we do a disservice to the Old Testament by constantly seeking to 'Christianise' it instead of allowing it to stand forth as 'word' in its own right? For example, are the Psalms not able to be used without being given the Christian ending of the Gloria Patri?

Even in our use of the New Testament the passages of scripture we use in the liturgy are often torn out of their context. At the heart of the eucharistic liturgy, the words of our Lord's institution of the sacrament are placed taken from Paul's somewhat severe lecture to the early church concerning factions and divisions within the community; a focus not at all on faith and unity as the liturgical usage would suggest.

2:1 The faith-community: its past and present

There has always been and still remains a tension between the 'faith once delivered to the saints' and the church's task to be a guardian of that faith and to be faithful to it. But there is also and always the risen Lord standing in the midst of his community of faith at all times saying, 'Behold, I am making all things new'.

Many issues confronting the church are not easily answered by reference to scripture. We all know that scripture can be used to prove or justify completely opposite tenets. By the use of scripture the church has been enlisted to support so-called just wars, indeed has initiated not a few itself: it has by the same scriptures been called to act as peacemaker. A peace movement makes claims upon the church for its support in establishing peace. A social justice movement makes claims upon the church for its support in promoting true and real justice, the pursuit of which might well entail force. Subjected nations and races make claims upon the church for its support in assisting the achievement of freedom, which might well embroil the church in opposition to certain human legal structures. All of these issues can affect the church and its approach to scripture within its liturgy.

A valid liturgy will reflect these tensions within our society and within the faith. Some critics have alleged that an over-emphasis on the sacrifice of Jesus and his death on Calvary are taken by the world as an incitement to violence. The protagonists of non-violence would prefer that the community concentrate on the shared fellowship and the new community of peace, that the new life of the baptised in the eucharistic life should be paramount. But the violence of the world cannot be avoided nor can the inherent violence or aggression in all human nature be ignored.

A century that longs for peace, justice and freedom is also a century that has brought forth more Christian martyrs than any other. As much as it is desirable to be allied to non-violence, faithfulness to the gospel demands that recognition be made of the violence in the human condition, a violence encountered theologically and liturgically on the cross and recalled each eucharist in the element of sacrifice that Christ there made. The blood-letting of Jesus cannot be avoided in the gospel and its liturgical expression.

All human cultures contain some element of sacrifice in their history. It may be back in primitive times, or it may be of more recent origin, but all human cultures find in their history the shedding of

blood in religious, cultic rites. The horrendous wars of this century, the violence at home and in the streets, the carnage on the roads are constant reminders to us that the shedding of blood is never very far away from human experience. In the use of scripture and the formation of its lectionaries the church is called to exercise great sensitivity in many of these issues.

2:2 The principles of lectionaries

The recent development of lectionaries, and the attempt to achieve some ecumenical agreement has been a great benefit to the church. The principle of scripture for *instruction*, to set before the community time after time the story and its ramifications for those who claim to be the followers of Christ, has been much enriched by the restoration of a larger portion of scripture to be read. Movements to extend this scope and to achieve more unanimity are in progress.

The *pastoral* role of scripture stresses the sensitivity needed to use suitable passages for occasions such as weddings and funerals as well as those events and crises that occur in civic and national life.

The *doxological* use of scripture in the lectionaries cannot be ignored as the way the community not only recalls its salvation history but also makes its offering to God.

It is a usage which often fulfils that element of the inexpressible in human experience; not so much the request to make it all plain, but rather to show forth the mystery.

2:3 Difficult scripture and the liturgy

A modern world asks many difficult questions of scripture in order to confront its own great and vexing problems. Here not only the use of scriptures in the liturgy is confronted, but the scriptures themselves and their moral and ethical validity. Many people are highly offended by the writings of the Bible and to listen to them proclaimed in the liturgy increases their anger.

Two courses are available. First by the *process of omission* we simply remove offensive texts replacing them with more suitable discourses. The response to this could be that the issue has not been properly answered, rather just avoided with an element of cowardice in refusing to face human need. Secondly, the *process of inclusion* can be adopted, that is to allow the offending passages to remain but not without some explication of the text to point to its historic setting, its cultural

limitations, its contemporary relevance or irrelevance, or to make any necessary amendment for a contemporary society and understanding.

3:1 The Spirit, the Church, the Liturgy, the Scriptures

What is the relationship of the Spirit to the church, the modern Christian community in a contemporary world, the preservation of the faith once delivered, and the promise of Christ himself to send the Spirit to lead us into all truth?

Over centuries the church has had to explore new ways, not all of them clearly discernible from scripture. For example, nearly every human society would adjure human slavery (even those who tolerate it or practise it) and Christians would aver that in spite of scriptural allowance of the institution of slavery, insight into all human nature as God-given is a greater truth into which the Spirit of Christ has led us.

It is undeniable that God-given human knowledge, skill, technique, learning and discovery has brought about a new apprehension of human nature and the world we inhabit. This in turn raises many questions of the Christian liturgy and the formation of the lectionaries with the texts they employ.

3:2 Problems of lectionaries

How will liturgy, through its use of scripture, respond to modern dilemmas? What is it to say to the growing awareness of the disadvantage of women? Our present texts ignore many accounts of the great women of the Bible for an almost completely male cast-list. Where in the lectionary for the normal Sunday eucharist are to be found the heroic deeds of Esther, Deborah, Ruth, Hagar, Jephthah's daughter? Which is to be the controlling text about the subjection of women to men? The text that clearly gives authority to the male head of the household, or the text that claims that in Christ there is neither 'male nor female'?

What is the response of the church to be regarding human sexuality when much of the scripture deals with courtship and marriage as business propositions or tribal matters rather than individual integrity and such matters as human love and affection? What is to be said in the light of contemporary scientific understanding about the gene component in human sexuality and the question of homosexuality? Is it any longer good enough to reply with first century understanding but lack of knowledge to a twentieth century problem and condition?

What is to be said by the church in its liturgical use of scriptures to

the biological issues of fertilisation; to the medical issues of remedial abortion or life-prolonging medical practices; to the economic and political structures involving the exploitation of races and peoples (our western capitalist systems as well as any other); to the new awareness of ecology and the environment, when many conservationists would blame Genesis for the ruthless destruction of the world's resources – do we adopt the process of inclusion or exclusion?

Jewish people are offended by many scriptural passages used in our liturgy that they consider to be anti-semitic rather than a comment on all human nature, especially it seems that favourite Christian gospel, St John's. Non-Jewish people are equally incensed at Jewish scriptures such as the fiercely anti-Gentile polemics of Ezra/Nehemiah, or the scathing account of the Egyptians in the story of the Exodus.

Third world voices are articulate in their expressions of contempt for the whole theory of any one people, Jewish or Christian, considering themselves to be the chosen people, the special race of God. What does this say to our claims of an all-inclusive God and God's universal love? Races subjected to colonial government do not take kindly to passages claiming that God has given authority to one race to walk in and take over the nation and country of another. Would Yhwh's command to Joshua to go in and take possession of the land and drive out its present inhabitants be acceptable to a congregation of Australian aborigines? How do Christian Arab congregations in Israel react to the same lesson? A constantly evolving and changing world demands understanding by the church, hence the need to revise and scrutinise scripture, liturgy, theology. The need to accommodate or to understand, to accept or disallow, to reject or criticise is never absent. If the world is God's world with his Spirit at work in it, ought we not be prepared as a church, with our worship, teaching and liturgy to meet these changes and be prepared to allow adjustment if we are in proven error?

Conclusion

Scripture permeates the church's liturgy through and through. Not only the lessons from the lectionary appointed (or chosen if lectionaries are not being used) but also in the sentences, the prayers, the hymns, the anthems – scripture or scriptural allusions abound. Hence the importance of this matter of word in the liturgy. Yet, important though it be there is an ephemeral nature about it. 'Words' are there to reveal the WORD. We are part of a process of revealing the eternal WORD; what we do passes, the WORD remains.

MINISTRIES OF WORSHIP

Ronald L Dowling

During this conference we have been considering the question of participation in worship. The purpose of this paper is to discuss the 'people' aspect of liturgy and participation and then to look at how the liturgical assembly can be truly participatory. I do so as a pastoral liturgist who has been involved in pastoral ministry for almost twenty years.

As an Anglican, I have been trained to begin with the Holy Scriptures. In the Bible we often find the words for 'liturgy' and 'assembly' intertwined. In the Hebrew Testament Abraham is called out by God. Some scholars suggest that 'Abraham' is a people rather than an individual. But it is not until after the exodus from Egypt that the Hebrews are called an 'assembly' (Qahal Yahweh) when they are sealed with the blood of the covenant (Exodus 19-24). We should note that the Hebrews were called out by God, that God is in the midst of the assembly, that God's word is proclaimed in the assembly, and that the assembly concluded with the offering of the sacrifice of the covenant.

This pattern is generally followed throughout the Hebrew Testament with the addition that after the exile in Babylon assemblies were called not only in God's name, but also to remember previous assemblies (such as Passover or the Booths). Symbols of God's presence include the cloud, the ark, the Temple and finally, the Torah.

In the Christian (New) Testament, the metaphors for the gathered assembly are many and very rich. The church (ekklesia) is called 'Body of Christ', 'new Temple', 'spouse' and so on. The liturgical assembly is the most expressive manifestation of these. We should note again that God calls the assembly together, that Christ is present in the midst (Matthew 18.20), the assembly prefigures heaven, and the assembly unites all believers, despite their human differences (Jews and Greeks, males and females, slaves and free (Galatians 3). There is one faith, one baptism, one Body, one bread. The assembly is made up of participants, there are no spectators. Baptism is the basis of membership and in baptism all members are commissioned to be 'a holy race, a royal people, God's chosen ones' (1 Peter 2).

So then for the Christian church the basic unit of liturgy is the assembly. Within the assembly abound a variety of gifts (1 Peter 4, Ephesians 4, 1 Corinthians 12-14. Romans 12), and a wide variety of ministries: apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers

(Ephesians 4). There are also leadership roles: deacons (Acts 6) [but did these have a liturgical function?] and presbyters/elders and bishops (Pastoral Epistles). How all this worked out in the life of the first and second century Church is far from clear. The significant feature is that of order. This is an important matter for Paul when writing to the church in Corinth (1 Corinthians 11 etc). The order that is commended is not just the opposite of chaos but is important for it leads to edification and the building up of the community. Any group activity degenerates when there is no leadership nor any to give direction or focus purpose. Order facilitates unity within the assembly. From the beginnings the Christian assembly recognised and used persons with a wide variety of gifts, has recognised and authorised certain persons for leadership roles, and valued order in the exercising of these gifts and ministries. These have all enabled the assembly in its divine work of praising God through Jesus Christ our Lord in the power of the Spirit, in giving thanks for our creation and recreation, and in prayer and service to the world.

So then, who is the focus of, and responsible for the liturgy? The answer must be the assembly of the baptised – the *whole* assembly. Over the centuries, the manner in which these gifts and ministries have been recognised and used has changed and changed again. In the first centuries there was enormous freedom. This gave way to the highly ordered assembly we see portrayed in the early seventh century¹, and in turn became the clericalisation and limitation of the late medieval period and the reformation era, changing again in this century to an emphasis on lay ministry and the importance of the liturgical assembly (this development many would argue flows directly from the rediscovery of the importance and meaning of baptism). This history is well documented and discussed elsewhere and does not need repeating here.²

Within the Christian assembly, then, there are a number of ministries and a variety of ministries, just as there is a variety of gifts. These ministries are to, in, and of the assembly. They are a *service* to one another. In our own time, these ministries include presiding, assisting, together with reading the Scriptures, leading the prayers of the people, making music, serving, administering Holy Communion, ministering hospitality through welcoming or preparing the worship space, and, in some traditions, lay preaching. Let us look briefly at some of these and make a few comments. We begin with lay ministries [deliberately].

1. Readers:

The ministry of the reader is to proclaim the word of God to his/her fellow Christians. The gift of being able to read in public is surely necessary here. The reader should also have a reverence for words, the Word, books and the Book. Not all have this gift. The proclaiming of the Scriptures is not an occasion for pastoral care for this person or that who wants to read, but in fact cannot do it well. It is for those gifted with the necessary abilities (refer to Albert McPherson's presentation during this conference). There is a need in the churches for training and rehearsal.

2. Interceding in the assembly:

This is a very priestly function and ministry. The intercessor should be a person of prayer, and someone who is able to lead prayer in public. Praying for the whole assembly requires sensitivity and a real gift of insight so as to be able to articulate the prayers of and for others.

3. Musicians:

The music ministers are also ministers of the Word. The preparation and choice of hymns, songs, psalms, and other music requires not only the gifts of musical talent, but also the same sort of abilities as the reader, ie a respect for the Word and so on. Training the choir, accompanying the service, setting the musical mood etc require some considerable sensitivity. Not every musician has these gifts. And above all these let the musician put on the sort of humility that sees the music as serving the assembly!

4. Servers/acolytes:

The ministry of the server is to facilitate the flow, rhythm and actions of the liturgy. They serve as 'behavioural' models and are representative of the faithful. Bringing a book, carrying a processional cross, having ready the necessary instruments [cruets, plates, jugs, flasks, towels, candles etc] are very important to the graceful drama that is liturgy.

5. Communion minister:

Many are tempted to this ministry as the 'holy' task - the pinnacle of all lay ministry. This view should be challenged as demeaning to all the

other ministries. For this particular ministry the gift of hospitality is necessary, an ability to care for people and holy things in a gentle manner. It is a very intimate and personal ministry. Those who exercise this ministry must be interested in, care about, and be at ease with others - all sorts and conditions of others.

6. Hospitality ministers:

Whether persons involved in this area prepare the worship space (as sacristans, cleaners or decorators with flowers, banners etc), or are welcomers (ushers, doorkeepers, sidespersons), all require skills, dedication and reliability. The ministry of welcoming is very important in facilitating the gathering and helping people feel at home. For all the baptised, the liturgical assembly is 'home'.

When we turn our attention to the ordained ministry we recognise that the bishop/presbyter/pastor and the deacon have been set aside by official recognition/ordination rites for specific ministries and functions. However, the context of these ministry functions is always the whole assembly. The ordained person focuses for all the baptised the ministry of the priesthood of all believers.

Deacons:

The deacon is set aside to be a model of Christ-like service, both to the church and to the world. The deacon is to assist the presider in the liturgy, to proclaim the Gospel of the Lord, and to present the world to the church in the prayers of the faithful. The deacon is a real go-between person. Increasingly today, this order of ministry is being seen as distinct in its own rite and not a stepping stone to the presbyterate. Future developments in this will be creative in the interface of church and world (at least, we hope they will).

Presiders [bishops, presbyters, pastors]:

The primary role of the presider is to order the liturgical assembly, to recognise and use the gifts of the members of the assembly. The presider models the hospitality of God in Christ, and God's generosity. It is the presider's task to open up the rituals and symbols used in the liturgy [word, bread and wine, water, oil etc] to enable the assembly to enter the mystery of the crucified and risen Christ. The presider serves the assembly. S/he is there first and foremost for the baptised. Leadership

of this quality is a real gift. Unfortunately it is not always high on the agenda of those responsible for choosing and training candidates for ordination.

One of the more controversial discussions about the ordained ministry is its representative nature. The ordained presbyter has been described as 'in persona Christi' [the representative of Christ] on one hand, and 'in persona ecclesiae' [the representative of the Church]. Much of this discussion has centred on the contrast of these two. But surely if the Church is the Body of Christ then the two aspects are not to be contrasted but are complementary. The presbyter is surely the representative of Christ and the representative of the Church. Not only does this apply to the ordained presbyter but also to all who are baptised. In the liturgical assembly each liturgical minister is representative and delegated. This is a central point. Not all read, pray, preside, make music and so on. Each ministry is delegated to certain individuals. These individuals exercise the particular ministry on behalf of the rest of the assembly for the sake of the assembly and for the sake of order. Participation in the liturgy is dependant on these representative and delegated ministries.

This raises the questions:

- a. Who is represented? and b. Who delegates?

The answer to a. must be 'Christ and the Body of Christ' [both] and the answer to b. must be 'the assembly of the baptised.

Often ministry is seen only as a delegation from the presider. This may well be the reason that many people feel left out. There is no ownership of the ministry being exercised and no sense of responsibility felt for those exercising the ministry. The long-exercised clerical ownership of the liturgical assembly has led to this situation. Systems which see some ministry tasks as being delegated from the presider, and some tasks being delegated from the faithful need to be examined, if not challenged. Too often the presider and other ordained ministers are seen not as part of the assembly but almost outside it, imposed by higher authority.

This leads us to propose some principles for ministry within the liturgical assembly.

1. The whole assembly is the liturgical minister because Christ is the minister. Each baptised person and the whole assembly of the baptised, is therefore the minister and responsible for the exercise of individual ministries.

2. All ministries are representative of Christ and of the Body of Christ. The ministries should therefore be representative of the whole Body – old/young, male/female, well educated/little educated, rich/poor, with diversity of ethnic and social backgrounds, marital status, sexuality and so on. These ministries are delegated to individuals, the question of who delegates is very important.

3. Those who exercise these ministries should be gifted for that ministry. Giftedness still requires training, often considerable training.

4. Ministry is always to give glory to God, to benefit the assembly of believers, and to be of service to the world.

Putting these principles into action is no easy matter. Not only does it require a change of practice for many of us, it requires a change of mind-set. It will involve a renewal in our understanding of the meanings of baptism and a renewal of our baptismal practice; it will mean a realisation that baptism, not ordination, is the fundamental sacrament of Church. It will also mean hard, time-consuming work and will not happen quickly. It will require a great deal of mutual trust between lay persons and clergy. Some communities have found that a worship or liturgy committee is a good way forward to ownership of the liturgy by the assembly, especially in its planning, delegating and the taking of shared responsibility for its good order. If such a committee is instigated it too will need to be representative and delegated from and of the whole!

In the assembly of the baptised, each member has been gifted by the Spirit. There is a great variety of gifts. No member of the assembly is ungifted. But then no member of the assembly has all the gifts either. No bishop, no presbyter, no prophet or pastor has all the gifts. We are called into the one Body through the one Spirit for the mutual service we render to God, to one another and to the world.

I believe that participation in worship depends on my being able to see in those who minister something of myself. Then, not only is their ministry directed towards me [amongst all the others of my sisters and brothers in Christ] but I can see myself involved in that service. This is really participation in worship.

NOTES

1. Ordo Romanus 1
2. See, for example, T. Klausen, *A short history of the Western liturgy*, Oxford UP 1969

LITURGY AND THE MEDIA
Common Ground and Separate Paths in Faith-Communication
Clement Hill

Introduction

The last thirty years or so have seen an enormous amount of change in the way we worship – the structures have undergone change, there is now a much more concerted use of image and symbolism; there is much more community interaction and dialogue than ever there used to be. These days, we are much more conscious of the architectural space for worship, as well as the need to create atmosphere and mood. Various alternative forms of communication have appeared on the liturgical scene, such as mime and dance; we are much more aware of special lighting effects, sound systems, canned music, and overhead projection. These are just some of the components of a steady change which clearly demonstrates how much common ground we, as worshipping Christians, share with modern Mass Media production techniques.

But there is another important aspect to consider. Over the same period of thirty or so years, another revolutionary change has been steadily gathering momentum, parallel to liturgical changes. We have steadily become ‘media-conditioned’.¹ We have changed as we have become influenced by exposure to TV, movies, theatrical productions, and various other methods employed by a consumer society. Many people have stopped buying books and newspapers and prefer to watch TV instead. This has all resulted in some profound shifts of perception. I believe, for example, that there has been a steady change in how people understand the functioning of symbol. There has been an enormous shift in the popular approach to subjective knowledge, towards an expectation that in the perception of reality there has to be an emotional experience of personal involvement.

Being ‘media-conditioned’ is not necessarily a disease, and I have no wish to proceed in a negative way or to give the impression that the Mass Media should constitute a panacea of modern decline. But we really have to ask: Should we open wide the doors of worship by adopting, wholesale, the aims and techniques of the Mass Media? Where does our future lie? What are the differences in aims and objectives? Given that there is so much common ground, where do we draw the line? And why? Even though the Gospel message can be so effectively put across with

skilful use of media techniques, is there a theology of Christian communication that should urge us to part company with the Mass Media on certain issues?

I do not intend here to contrast various theories of communication, but merely to give some of my own thinking in regard to some key areas which are shared by both Media Communications and the experience of liturgical celebration. I want to say something about the dominance of the Image today, to address the maxim, 'The medium is the message', and something about the function of imagination and also of Creativity.

The Dominance of the Image

It is now the era of the Image, in which everyone knows that 'a picture is worth a thousand words'. And so many Christian assemblies commonly use overhead projectors, slides, banners, and colourful decoration. Gospel readings are frequently accompanied by miming, especially at Christmas services. The image is certainly powerfully effective in getting any message across. So dominant is this in ordinary everyday life that the print media, books, etc. are on the decline, while the majority of people get their information from the TV screen. I know, in teaching students for the priesthood how to preach, that when they view their preaching efforts on video they can understand in seconds flat what would take me hours to explain verbally. (I still persist!)

However, Marshall McLuhan saw the photo and visual media as 'secure areas of anaesthesia'.² The image is seen as far more comforting, more satisfying, less demanding, non-challenging in contrast to the sound of the voice which can come across as inconvenient, uncomfortable, intrusive, better able to invade a person's space, much more demanding and more uncompromising. My preaching course students have to listen to and analyse the sound of their voice on cassette, and quite a few find that it grates on them. But this effect is largely lost when they see the same thing on video. The Image has conquered. Millions of dollars are poured into producing TV commercials with the best eye-catching images together with finely honed words, drawn together with music perfectly suggestive of the message.

How can we contrast the different functions of Image and Spoken Word? We could begin by looking briefly at the various aspects of verbal communication and see if the Image does the same, or better. I propose to look at seven such functions.

1. Contact: The first fundamental function is to establish a personal

contact with someone. Verbal communication does this effectively, creating a connection in human terms.

2. Information: A certain content of information is conveyed to the mind. This is perhaps the easiest of all these functions to recognise.

3. Formulation: What is meant here is verbal communication's marvellous facility for putting information in such a way that it is within the reach of the hearer's understanding, of teasing the information out or spelling it out. This is done by the way the actual words are put together, and by inflection in the voice, speed, etc.

4. Expression: Here is another dimension of communication. The speaker can give clear indications of personal motivation. Certain emotions can be suggested to the hearer as a good response. People can speak with 'conviction', they can indicate the 'vital' nature of something, or they can manifest shyness, boredom, hypocrisy - a whole range of nuances.

5. Poetic: This is perhaps the most mysterious aspect of verbal communication. Words can be keys which unlock a whole symbolic dimension, or multiple dimensions, and whole universes of associations and transcendent meanings. One word alone could be enough to do this, perhaps to reach back into one's own personal history and make intimate connections, or to open up a new dimension of meaning altogether.

6. Persuasion: The word can be directed at a person's will, to create a mutual acceptance, or in such a way that indicates a certain value so that the other person will be persuaded to accept the communication.

7. Action: Finally, words can do what they say. They have a causal effect and can trigger off changes and even revolutions.

In Liturgy, all these functions come together and flow in a dynamic interaction throughout the whole course of the service, but the process can be clearly seen in the proclamation or revelation of the Scriptures. Hebrews 4.12 comes to mind: 'The Word of God is alive and active, sharper than any two-edged sword: it can seek out the place where soul is divided from spirit, or joints from marrow; it can discern the thoughts and intentions of the heart'.

So, we see how personal **contact** is established between the hearer and the person of the Word; **Information**, the content of the evangelical message, is directed at the understanding. The Message is **formulated**, spelled out, in a way that is unique to the Scriptures. Especially in the

case of public proclamation, definite **expression** suggests a range of appropriate responses. The **poetic** dimensions which the Word opens up are a source of continual discovery and inspiration. Nothing could be more **persuasive** than the Word as it works on the will, and the casual effect it has leads to decisive **action**.

However, when we use the same seven functions to analyse how **Image** functions, as distinct from the spoken word, we can see certain differences and contrasts.⁴ Image is particularly good in **formulation**, where it comes to putting communication within reach of people and helping people to make a range of personal connections. It is also excellent when it comes to **expression**, of conveying dynamic motivation and a range of emotional nuances. And as far as the **poetic** function goes, Image excels in opening up a whole host of associated imagery and symbolic meaning. Image can unlock whole universes of the symbolic dimension in a most intimate way for each person.

As a communicator of **information**, Image again can be extraordinarily effective and we repeat the maxim 'a picture is worth a thousand words'. If we turn off the TV sound and watch the picture we can still learn a great deal of information. But we note here a significant difference: Verbal communication can convey quite specific information and people can 'get the message' accurately and precisely. Image, while certainly able to get across a precisely intended message also simultaneously is liable to convey other messages not necessarily intended. This 'non-specific' information depends upon personal impressions which the Image has evoked in the individual. On the basis of this, we could say that Image on its own is a less accurate, possibly more ambiguous, communicator of information than the Word.

In making personal **contact**, though, Image is poor by comparison. Turn off the TV sound and watch the Image alone; it will be obvious that there is a barrier between you and the person on the screen. In this case the Image can seem very impersonal and even funny. The function of **persuasion**, too, is poor by comparison, since the message gets 'fuzzy', and the nuances directed at the will are not picked up so easily. **Action**, too, suffers because the Image is less confrontational than the Word, less spontaneous because it has to be processed more. Image triumphs in capturing attention, but the Word triumphs in effectiveness. But the two together can form a powerful combination.

Here, though, is the difficulty when we come to apply this to Liturgy and Worship because the Image can easily swamp the Word, precisely

because the Image is more alluring, intriguing, fascinating, engrossing – an extraordinary medium, but a means to what end? The ultimate end or aim of the Liturgy is surely personal **contact** with the Living Word, i.e. the person of Jesus Christ. An adequate response to the person of the Word will depend upon the function of **persuasion**, and the direct challenge to a person's will which this entails. The function of **action** in relation to the Word of God is aimed at a spontaneous and active response. The person is drawn into a kind of confrontation with the Word which then leads to change and growth in one's inner self. But in a Liturgy overloaded with Image, where the Word is somehow submerged, this function of **action** runs the risk of being considerably blunted, of becoming comfortable, passive, and un-responsive.

Even though Image is a marvellous conveyor of information, too much image or image overload will mean that the Word has to compete for attention. It may even get lost altogether. The underlying message may become less structured and precise, much more subjective in interpretation, and ineffective. It ought to be said, then, that in opening our liturgical doors to an avalanche of slides, overheads, and special effects we run a serious risk of flooding the imagination and so jeopardise a full and effective response to the Word of God. I am not anti-image. Far from it, since the Scriptures and the Liturgy have always depended upon it. But there has to be a clear distinction between the aims, objectives, and methods of the Mass Media in contrast to the process and inner workings of the Liturgy. There are large areas of common ground, but there are also areas which call for a parting of the ways.

'The Medium is the Message'

Marshall McLuhan in many ways was the pioneer in drawing together a synthesis of the powerful effects of the Mass Media. He, along with many others, saw that the information or the intellectual content of what you wanted to communicate was only one aspect of the dynamic interaction of sensory perceptions brought into play. Human beings are not only intellect; they do more than just process information. They are also physical beings, and physical reactions are fundamental. The physical senses of touch, smell, taste, visual response, and audio response, are custom-made in each individual through which a enormous amount of information can be gleaned. Then again, human emotional activity is another level; there is a labyrinth of ways by which each individual responds to a range of emotional and feeling stimuli, analysing the message and finding personal motivation.

In fact, the more you study human behaviour and analyse why people react as they do, the less you can be sure that they are all responding to the same content or information. As a consequence, in weighing up all these responses, the original content becomes secondary to the multiple effects it has upon the individual and on the group. In the long run, taking everything together holistically, 'The Medium is the Message'.⁵ In other words, the bottom line is the total effect produced which is likely to have the greatest bearing on the will.

The applications of this theory of mass media communication can be experienced every day. Billions of dollars go into the TV commercials in which the ultimate aim is to exploit every aspect of what Walter Ong termed the 'human sensorium',⁶ that unique custom-built universe of human perception proper to each individual person. Theatre and stage productions, complete with all kinds of lighting, music, and special stage effects, engage the whole person, the bottom line being, broadly speaking, merely 'entertainment'. With TV commercials it is different, even though they can be highly entertaining. The bottom line for commercials, content and effects all lumped together, is simple: buy this, use this, take this or that on board.

But when the same holistic approach and appeal to the senses is applied to a Christian religious service, the bottom line is harder to see. One of the best and most familiar examples of a religious service with full media treatment is Dr Schuller's 'Hour of Power'. It is obvious that the aim here is 'total effect'. Everything conspires to produce an eye-catching orchestration of colours, sounds, space, banks of flowers, flowing water, very good looking presenters and singers (with full make-up, hair-do's - the lot!), careful scripting, impeccable timing, crescendos and changes of mood, high peaks and low. But precise content is secondary to the production of a 'Total Effect' where 'the Medium is the Message'. Here, the content is almost indistinguishable from the effects. Be positive, be in harmony with creation, be confident and secure for, despite its many ups and downs, life is fine. The overall message is non-confrontational, comforting, entertaining, and also fairly passive. Many TV evangelists and Pentecostal Assemblies have taken this road in various degrees and sizeable numbers of people are climbing aboard.

But why point the finger at this as something new? Surely the church has an ancient and continuous tradition of presenting Liturgy in a holistic appeal to the senses? The rituals of the Byzantine and other

Easter Rites literally have their congregations swimming in sound. The senses are stimulated with colourful vestments, icons and frescoes, the play of light from lamps and chandeliers, loads of incense, really evocative music, strong changes of mood and atmosphere, climax and anti-climax. There is appeal to each dimension of the human person: to the intellect, to the physical senses, to the emotions, and to what we can term here the spiritual dimension in which the realm of the transcendent, the wholly 'Other', the unitive, is potentially opened up through interior dialogue and communication.

We should ask then what the difference is between this and a Mass Media production of today. Christian Liturgy has from time immemorial habitually employed a set of traditional structures. These structures emanate from the Scriptures themselves and are a systematic process of opening up both the individual and the community to a particular kind of consciousness.⁷ The easiest example of such a fundamental psychological process can be seen in the universal structure of the Liturgy of the Word. The sequence is Reading - Response - Prayer. 'Reading' here means a public proclamation. The form this has commonly taken calls for the community to focus on a particular spot (e.g. a lectern on a raised platform),⁸ there is a ritual procedure about beginning and ending, and in many cultural groups there is even a rhythmic way of communicating the words, often by musical tone.

All this is to promote an active listening which leads to a particular kind of attention, which in turn is geared to awakening a special kind of consciousness. Sure, the bodily senses are lured but it does not stop there. This Christian consciousness means that the person finds himself or herself in the presence of Christ the Word. There is inner dialogue for here is an active presence. There is a conscious receptiveness, an acceptance of being in special relationship; the need to make certain inner changes is recognised and surrendered to, and a response of love begins to be formulated and there is the need to express it. So the process goes from Reading through Response to a state of Prayer.

The process means that the Christian person comes from a state of inner confusion to clarity about the person and message of Christ the Word, and this is the functioning of the Kerygma or structured communication of the Gospel. Richard Temple, in his recent book on the nature of communication through the Icon,⁹ writes that, ordinarily 'the state of our psychological life is not as well balanced as it could be; our inner life is frequently disordered and chaotic; random thoughts,

daydreams and associations, often coloured by lurid emotions, run on unchecked, creating false fears and inhibiting our interaction with life and disturbing our relations with our fellow human beings.' I identified with that thwn I first read it, and I think that it could well be a good mirror of society today.

There are, of course, hazards and obstacles to the success of this process. Temple writes that the ancient spiritual writers saw two principal factors which conspire to prevent a person from awakening to his or her inner life.¹⁰ The first factor is that of the bodily senses through which a person perceives the world. This means that often ambiguous, confusing, and overloaded messages are received which evoke a host of associations which are difficult to interpret or integrate. The second factor is, as Temple puts it, 'the faculty of mentation which the person mistakes for consciousness'. In other words, people can think that this or that experience puts them in touch with themselves and their world, that their feelings and emotions are seemingly engaged, but which in fact may be a shallow illusion and not the kind of Christian consciousness which is the ultimate response to the prophetic challenge of Christ in the Gospel. Very often the experience viewed in a 'happening' does not lead to effective action or real change.

In the Christian process, the key to rekindling the spark of authentic consciousness is the faculty of 'attention' which leads to real awakening, of confrontation with the Word, and an ever deeper response. The role of the senses here, in the view of Christian tradition, are as a launching pad and not the point of arrival; they are only necessary means to an end where imagery is brought into focus; but the medium is not the Message. And this is the role of liturgical Drama. In using this term, I do not mean 'theatrics', gimmicks, or special effects aimed at hooking people's attention or seeding and exciting the imagination. Neither am I referring to something like a medieval mystery play carrying a timely and moral message.

Drama in the Liturgy channels people towards involvement and discovery for the individual and the group together. It acts as a strong focus of attention on a communal experience. We could say that the function of such dramatic presentation works within certain fairly defined parameters. A person is being communicated to in a certain context, against a background of information already established. In the case of the Liturgy, this context is built up of mainly biblical precedents. But at the same time it also evokes a certain set of associations

with daily human experience. However, the dramatic unfolding of the Liturgy leaves each person free to make in addition their own personal associations and to enter into the experience in their own way, according to their own unique capacity. Through climax and anti-climax, with both high and low peaks of expression, the process is opened up.¹¹

Since today we are so thoroughly 'media-conditioned', we have to ask ourselves what is the difference between media-style entertainment and this Drama of the Liturgy. Here again we could draw on something we discussed earlier about communication through both Word and Image. Entertainment is where Image's drawbacks come to the fore when it is a question of conveying a structured communication of faith-experience. Entertainment throws a much wider net, using Images in great profusion. Entertainment entails far less of a personal act of will and is far less persuasive than the Word. It is less geared to specific action and is more comforting, less challenging, much more passive in terms of response. It makes fewer connections with the kind of consciousness called for by Christian tradition.

Instead, modern media-style presentation almost presents a 'Packaged Deal' in which all the hard work is done for you. Images stimulate the senses and gain your attention. You do not have to conjure up much for yourself. Music creates the appropriate mood, and also an imaginary 'space' i.e. a field for the working of the imagination. A range of emotional responses is suggested to you. Everything is put within easy reach. Really, all you have to do is go along with it, to step on the train and be taken along, full service provided. It seems to me that the faculty of imagination here in this scenario is actually stunted rather than facilitated. When you consider that the Oxford Dictionary defines 'imagination' as the mental faculty forming images of external objects not present to the senses, it leads one to think that people can easily succumb to not 'imagining', since everything is already there to be seen with the eyes and other senses as outward images.

I could explain what I mean with this example: When I was a child, in the pre TV era, I had a very active imagination. If I wanted to make a sword I found a convenient bit of paling fence and imagined the shape which could be fashioned out of it. Silver paper wound around the handle gave it a richness and a nobility. It whistled when it was brandished at the imaginary foe, and I could do a terrible amount of damage with it as long as it remained intact. Media conditioned kids of today, however, come at it differently. The swords of today come in life-

like plastic, perfectly shaped, silvered and bejewelled, complete with fitted sheathes and attached to wide ornamental belts. You don't have to imagine much at all. It is all there in front of you, ready-made. When this meets you at every turn these days, is it any wonder that the art of imagination is in short supply? And anyway, I can assure you, plastic can't make anywhere near the same impression as the good old paling two-hander.

I believe that this retardation in the faculty of Imagination¹² carried over from TV and media conditioning in general, is a problem in many worshipping communities. With the best intentions, with great creative flair and with maximum involvement of people, some communities have succeeded in producing a liturgical celebration that is really alive and thoroughly engaging. However, sometimes this can be a bit too rich and too slick. Frequently a particular theme may be chosen, and every aspect in the presentation – prayers, readings, songs, intercessions, liturgical mime and dance, colourful images projected on a screen, banners, special symbols, a commentary given along the way – is geared to convey that theme. The music chosen provides everything a person may need in the way of emotional response.

When it is all boiled down, what is really left for the individual person to do, everything has really been done. Can the person or the community be said to have been challenged by the Word? The production has been a challenge, certainly, and maybe this has taken all the energy. Has the Word been confrontational? Has there been a movement towards inner change? No one could really pass definitive judgment on this; perhaps there has been a truly evangelical response. But chances are that McLuhan's intuition that the projected image is a secure area of anaesthesia will most likely prove true here in terms of sitting back, taking it all in, enjoying being 'turned on', with less and less real interior demand being made.

I believe that for liturgical celebration to be really authentic, it has to proceed from a conviction about the Christian 'psychology' or inner process of coming to recognise and respond to the Word. The ultimate aim of arriving at an authentic inner consciousness in responding to the Word has to be the starting point, the prime mover in choosing the media for facilitating it. The unbroken Christian tradition of using certain structures for achieving it should be respected. After all, these structures have always been like the bone structure, the skeleton, in the body, without which the body loses its shape.

But we are not about merely repeating the styles and thought-patterns of past generations. The Liturgy is the manifestation of a living Body and there must be organic growth. These basic underlying structures must be developed in successive generations, but organically. There is much room to move, and this is where the creative skills of modern media can be of immense value. But progress is not made by simplistically overloading the liturgical process with a wealth of external imagery, metaphor, and special effects which can keep a person fundamentally on the 'outer'.

Creativity

Adding a welter of imagery and special effects to a liturgical celebration is what many people mean by 'being creative'. So it is important to ask what we understand by the term itself. For some, 'creativity' means employing a strategy to capture the attention or to avoid boredom, and, certainly, experience shows that the attention span today is growing shorter. Others think in terms of 'surprise' or even posing something unusual, some kind of 'paradox', to set up a dialectic for the mind to wrestle with. Still others think that to be creative means to provide some poetic commentary or explanation of what happens in a group activity, and so to open new doors and fresh fields. There is no clear definition of liturgical 'creativity' provided and no guidelines or parameters set, and of course it could be said that to do so would be contradictory to the very notion. It is worthwhile, though, to dwell a little on the approaches taken to the concept of creativity on the Australian liturgical scene.

Among the big 'media-conditioned' philosophical shifts today is the attitude towards 'community' or 'congregation'. Thirty years ago it was much easier to understand 'self-in-community' or of being one of a congregation. Now, however, there seems to be a form of isolationism; instead of a sense of 'congregation', we now have something like a 'collection of individuals'. A paradigm of this is when the TV camera homes in, focussing on a face in the crowd. That person's reactions are recorded, highlighted, given special treatment, and their personal experience takes centre stage. In many ways, media-conditioned people in all kinds of group interaction are expecting increasingly to be touched individually, singled out, given special treatment as if their own personal reaction is the only thing that matters. If they are not touched individually, then the creative process is deemed to be a failure.

One of the problems is that creativity has become very individualistic. This tendency takes on a practical significance in the case of children's

liturgies. American ideas on children's involvement in liturgy have found a fertile ground in Catholic catechetical policies in Australia. The theory is that in order to gain anything concrete and lasting from liturgical participation, each child has to 'own' the process. In practice, this means that the children have to be physically involved with every stage of preparation and actual celebration of the Eucharist. So, some children take time actually to make and mould the candles. Others go out and find flowers and other decorations and plan how to present them. Some may make the bread. It is even recommended that the children might make the vestments which the priest will wear, decorated with their own designs. Other symbols and signs might be invented to express their own ideas about life, to be used possibly in the Procession of Gifts. The children are encouraged to write their own prayers and songs, if possible.

There is scarcely any area in which the children could not be physically involved, and in this way, so the theory goes, they will 'own' the creative process and 'experience' the Liturgy. I know a teacher in a Catholic school who had the Liturgy divided up into a long list of separate jobs. A book was kept in which every job done by each child was strictly recorded, to avoid 'doubling up' and inevitable fights. And the children insisted on it, with trade union passion. But 'when push comes to shove', does this approach to creativity result in a deeper experience? To my mind, it narrows the total experience down to a confined and highly individual field. For the child who makes a candle, the whole creative experience of the Liturgy becomes a myopic one. As the child contemplates that candle burning throughout the celebration, the 'experience' of liturgy has shrunk and its content is reduced to whatever meaning that child wants to express, or state, or have symbolised. I believe this creativity myopia is a real problem area.

The attitude to personal experience underlying this really emanates from a theory of knowledge that has gained popularity in some circles, and surfaces in a kind of 'New Age' theology. Liturgy, for example, is not the re-presenting, re-enactment or regurgitation of objective facts. Each personal coming to knowledge, each subjective experience of reality is a new 'fact', a new creation, a 'novelty', a new building-block towards deeper subjective discovery. Consequently, in applying this to liturgy, each celebration of the Faith-encounter ideally should have the earmarks of new discovery, an element of 'eureka', of surprise. Objective fact, e.g. the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, is only the starting

point, the springboard for launching into a really personal 'construction' of reality. The objective fact is not the reality; what we make of it in our own experience is the reality.¹³

This radically different view may sound exciting to some people, as a way of breaking free from a hide-bound past. Yet in the long run, logically, it seems to me impossible to hold to this theory of subjective experience and still maintain a conviction of truly corporate memorial celebration - with the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus as both its source and its ultimate achievement.¹⁴ And a further problem for liturgists today lies in balancing the expectations of a media-conditioned people searching for a novel and creative 'happening' with the perennial evangelical demands of a truly corporate liturgical process.

The answer, I believe, does not lie in coming up with constantly changing productions, heavy on 'surprise'. I am reminded of a Catholic college, some years ago, where the students put enormous energy and resources into what they believed was a creative approach to the Easter Vigil. 'Creativity' for them meant being 'alternative' - working outside the normal structures. So they devised themes for each year's Vigil. One year it was 'Flowing Water', and the church was festooned with imitation waterfalls. Another year it was the Maypole, although the explanation of this took the form of what Freud would have called 'spiral reasoning'. Another year, the Butterfly was proposed as a central image. It was expected that the liturgy would somehow conform to that theme, and reflect and convey the intended message by its music and imagery. All this was kept as a surprise for everyone on that night.

In the long run, more heat was generated by this approach than light. The decision was made to return to a more simple form of celebration, by pooling resources into a truly creative communication within the customary structures. There was fine creativity in the choice of sung responses, and also the way they were sung. Readers and Cantors were crystal-clear. The creative use of light and dark was sensitive, restrained and just right. Symbolic imagery and decoration was tastefully presented and not overpowering. People felt as though they had been freed from the straitjacket of tight theme and liberated from a suffocating avalanche of external metaphors. They felt free to respond spontaneously, and respond they did. And the sense of communally shared experience was palpable.

'Creativity' here meant providing just enough visual and audio information, and sufficient explanation of the biblical and theological

context in which the celebration was taking place. It entailed proceeding from a sense of the 'psychology' by which people come to a conscious awareness and are attentive to the Word, rather than being distracted from it by a profusion of additional images. And the Word regained its rightful place at centre stage. It was an environment conducive to allowing the imagination to work effectively and for making connections and associations with one's personal daily experience in an atmosphere free of coercion and manipulation. In fact, it had all the earmarks of a deep encounter with Christ which is the underlying definition of the Liturgy.

In Conclusion

As you can see from these reflections, I am not putting forward any neat answers or proposing definitive solutions. I have solved nothing and have not laid down any 10-point plan as a panacea for successful future operation. There are no easy answers to give. In fact, I have run the risk of giving the impression that I take a dim view of the extraordinary age in which we live, with all the new possibilities and perspectives it opens up. It has not at all been my intention to stop creativity in its tracks or to signal a return to some nostalgic 'Golden Age' when we thought that there was no grey area in the liturgical spectrum. And I hope that my words will not be used to justify a slavish adherence to a dry status quo.

But I have earnestly tried to reflect upon method, on how to proceed in exploiting the communication techniques we share with the Mass Media while at the same time clearly recognising the philosophical points of departure. I hope that this differentiation may be a source of confidence and not fear, and that we may proceed with Christ always as the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, in our quest to reveal the liturgy as truly the source and summit of the Christian life.¹⁵

NOTES

1 cf. C. Hill, 'Liturgy at the Crossroads' in *Faith and Culture* No. 17, Catholic Institute of Sydney, 1990, in which the theme of 'media conditioning' is further elaborated.

2 cf. M. McLuhan, *Understanding the Media*, New American Library, 1964, p. 181.

3 The seven categories listed are based on those detailed by Roman Jakobson (USA 1945).

4 Image here refers to the visual image, especially a projected image (TV,

slides, overheads) or as depicted on a banner.

5 cf. M. McLuhan, *op. cit.* pp 23f.

6 cf. W. Ong, *The Presence of the Word*, Yale University Press, 1967, ch. 1.

7 cf. Luke 24. 13-35 (the Emmaus Account) as a scriptural basis for the structure Reading - Response - Prayer. Here Jesus himself proclaims (reveals) the Scriptures to the two disciples, sets up a dialogue of response, and leads into the deeper expression of the relationship achieved through the Breaking of Bread and eventually in the community of disciples gathered in the Upper Room. This structure is universally accepted in liturgies of both East and West and the basic format for the Liturgy of the Word.

8 The early Christians took this custom over from the synagogue, where the raised platform or 'Bema' was the focal point for the proclamation of the Torah.

9 cf. R. Temple, *Icons and the Mystical Origins of Christianity*, Element Books, 1990, p. 6.

10 *Ibid.*, p 5.

11 This is based on a view of Ritual Symbol seen from the standpoint of phenomenology.

12 cf. P. Collins, *More Than Meets the Eye: ritual and parish liturgy*, Paulist Press, 1983, p. 23. 'Imagination is... a power of human knowing. It is an act of the mind. It operates through the languages of image, symbol, story, myth, parable, and ritual. What one comes to know through this cognitive functioning is the reality that is more than meets the eye'.

13 cf. Bernard Lee SM, *Alternative Futures for Worship*, Vol. 1, Introduction to the Series, Liturgical Press, 1987, p. 15-17. Lee summarises what is really Process Theology's view of knowledge and experience, especially as it applies to the Liturgy, as an alternative to the traditional view.

14 Process theology, especially that based on the philosophy of A.N. Whitehead, seems to this writer to be incompatible with traditional liturgical theology centred on the objective encounter with the crucified and risen Lord. While a clear focus on subjective experience is fundamental, Process theology appears significantly to weaken the foundations of a truly objective Christ-centred theology.

15 cf. Vatican II, *Constitution on the Liturgy*, para. 10.

PATTERNS OF PARTICIPATION:
THE TRINITY AND SOCIETY

*Sermon preached by the Most Reverend Dr P.F. Carnley,
at Evensong on Wednesday 5 February, 1992
in St George's Cathedral, Perth
attended by members of the Academy's Conference*

In my teenage years I worshipped at St James' Church in King Street, Sydney – a parish community that was very self-consciously aware of its high standards of worship, particularly its music and the near-military precision of the movement of ministers and altar servers (of whom I was one) in the sanctuary. In those days we were very well drilled and rehearsed – perhaps over-rehearsed.

Apart from being an altar server I was a member of the very vigorous youth fellowship (YAF) which used to meet on a Friday night. I cannot recall the details of any one particular Friday night programme ... except for one which bulks large in my memory.

Fr Gabriel Hebert, a monk of the Society of the Sacred Mission, who in the late 1950s taught theology at St Michael's House, Crafers, in South Australia came to talk to us about lay participation in the liturgy. Even at this point I think I remember his rather eccentric figure – his hooked nose and the white knobbly monkish knees which protruded from under his habit when he hitched it up and dangled his legs over the edge of the table on which he was sitting. Certainly, I remember *him* much more clearly than what he had to say.

I *do* recall, however, that he was very turned on about 'offertory processions' – the participation of the laity in the presentation of the gifts – which he clearly believed was a key focus of lay participation at a very significant moment of the eucharistic action.

During the last week, stimulated by this remnant memory of encounter with Gabriel Hebert in the late 1950s, I took his book *Liturgy and Society* out of the diocesan library to see if what he had to say might give me a point of departure for this sermon. (It is a book that I have not opened for at least twenty-five years.)

To my astonishment I found that it was actually published as early as 1935, and that what he had to say on that evening at St James', King Street, about offertory processions and the involvement of the laity, was already being pushed some twenty years earlier – now nearly sixty years ago.

To my delight, (and perhaps this is more important than lay participation in the offertory), I discovered that the entire book is a forthright attack on theological liberalism, the post-Enlightenment cult of the individual, and the general philosophical underpinning of modern liberal democracies in which the individual is given freedom to do his or her own thing, provided he or she does not encroach on any other individual's right to do likewise. Already this contains within it the seeds of the modern notion of the separation of private and public morality, the isolation of the individual from the concept of community, which I happen to think has modern western liberal/democratic society in big trouble – trouble as potentially disastrous in its implications as the current social fragmentation of Eastern Europe.

In any event, this meant that I re-read *Liturgy and Society* with a good deal of interest. In it Hebert held up the idea of the liturgy as the instrument for the formation of authentic human community – this in the context of the social fragmentation and confusion and the fall-out of individualism of the mid 1930s in Europe of which the existentialism of Jean Paul Sartre was the most extreme form. And that is why the book is called *Liturgy and Society*: The church's liturgy was identified as a social act by which worshippers are brought out of their isolation into fellowship with one another in the Spirit of God. Perhaps that notion has now become so domiciled in our thinking that it does not strike us as particularly new – but what is of interest to me is the idea that liturgy, in its role of the formation of the authentic community of the people of God, is seen as a political instrument...with a unique power to re-make a humane society – and if that need was felt in Europe in 1935, it is felt just about everywhere in the social fragmentation and confusion of today. The gathered worshipping community is the theatre of societal renewal and transformation: In liturgy we re-make society.

It is at this point, of course, that the ordination of women to the priesthood comes into focus as an imperative. In the re-made society of the eucharistic community which is inclusive of all without respect to race, colour, gender, or class, it is intolerable that women should be suppressed and discriminated against.

In any event, it seems to me that were Gabriel Hebert to treat this theme today, his book would contain something that is, in fact, missing from it.

Liturgy and Society is not just a sociological study without theological landmarks, theological trig stations, as it were, from which we might

take our bearings – there is plenty of mention of the worship of God, the mystery of God, and the corporate human response to it. But there is almost no interest in the doctrine of the Trinity. And I want to suggest that if liturgy is an instrument for the re-making of society, surely the fundamental Christian doctrine of God, and particularly our modern interest in the social conception of the Trinity, has something important to say.

When Tom Sutton wrote to me to ask me to say something at this service, he suggested that I might say something about your conference theme of ‘Participation’ ... *or* something about what needs to be held on to at all costs in an age of liturgical change. The Trinity gives me the opportunity to say something about both: The doctrine of the Trinity, it seems to me, is *the* fixed theological datum upon which to keep an eye as we engage in liturgical change, and this precisely because of its relevance to human inter-dependence; it is *the* pattern of participation in community whereby we in liturgy re-make society.

Let me say what I mean. It has often been said that there are three ideal types of human community. First there are those communities which secure their common life at the expense of the individual’s freedom. A common life is sustained by requiring or imposing a conformity of thought and behaviour. A totalitarian state, or a strictly authoritarian regime, such as we hear of in Iran or see developing in Singapore, would be an example of such a community. The unity of the community is achieved, but at the individual’s expense. Unhappily the church in some periods of its history has exhibited the characteristics of this kind of community. Even in some parts of the contemporary church a strict uniformity of view is imposed upon its individual members, to the point where their individuality is absorbed or lost in the life of the whole.

Then at the opposite end of the spectrum, there are those communities which are barely communities at all. Rather, they are very loose associations of individuals, or loose-knit federations of people, who choose to come together in order to achieve some goal or purpose, but otherwise have very little in common. A club, such as a golf club, in which members are locked in bitter rivalry and hate one another’s guts but continue to come together for the purpose of playing golf, would be an example of such a community. It is little more than the aggregate of the individuals who are its members. Some political parties exhibit the characteristics of this kind of community from time to time, and I guess the church has at times experienced its own community life at such a low

temperature as to be little more than a group of individuals who have nothing more in common than the formal pursuit of their individual salvation, which happens to bring them into close proximity from time to time ... for an hour or so on Sundays.

Then between these two extremes there is that kind of community in which a balance is struck between the interests of the group and the interests of the individual – where individuals are free to be themselves and to think their own thoughts, but in which they freely choose to be together in an ever-deepening set of human relationships. This is a community of individuals who unite not by any coercive force or just in some trivial pursuit, but by mutual self-gift.

Now, this third ideal type of community is the ideal which the church seeks to actualise and which I believe we actually glimpse in our concrete experience of life in the eucharistic community, at least from time to time, and especially in its liturgy.

To be a Christian is to be an individual in community, a community in which we experience a sense of individual worth, and community life itself is experienced as a zone of freedom in which we have psychological space to be ourselves, but in which precisely as distinct individuals we freely choose to engage with one another in love and mutual concern, so as to experience that unity of being by self-gift in which we know ourselves to be persons, real persons, and members one of another.

Now, this ideal community is not just something *we choose* as the ideal most appropriate for the church. It is not just an ideal we conjure up as we seek in our liturgy to re-make society. There is a sense in which it is given to us, and in which its actualisation is laid upon us as a constant and unavoidable obligation. The church is not just any kind of community or barely a community; it is of necessity a particular kind of community. For the ideal of community which the church should be, and in which we participate together in human inter-dependence, is given to us precisely in the very central and distinctively Christian doctrine of God – the doctrine of the Holy Trinity.

I suppose when we think of the Trinity we think of the inherited formula – God is three persons and one substance. Just what kind of image that conjures in your mind's eye is anybody's guess. For me it suggests, as I often say, three distressed people struggling to extricate themselves from a very sticky tub of tapioca pudding: For what else can three persons in one substance be?

Perhaps a more helpful way of thinking of God the Holy Trinity was given to us in 374 AD by St Basil of Caesarea (Basil the Great) in his

famous treatise 'On the Holy Spirit'. In this treatise Basil spoke, not of three persons and one substance, but of three persons and one *communion* – three distinct persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, each of whom is not absorbed to the point where all individuality is lost, but who are united in one unity of being. The three participate in the one life. The three are one by virtue of the fact that they share a common will and a common purpose; they are one in a common exchange of love. The ensuing communion of mutual self-gift is the essence of divinity. In other words, the idea of personal inter-dependence, inter-personal communion, is a picture of the nature of divinity.

For example, Basil speaks of the Son doing the Father's will, not as a subordinate who has, begrudgingly, to obey a superior out of a sense of duty, but as one whose own will *coincides* with the Father's will. In him the Father finds his own will reflected back to himself like the image in a mirror. So there is no sense of subordination or unwilling compliance or duress, but a perfect reflection by the Son of what the Father wills ... and yet the Father and Son are distinct persons. This then is the model of true community as distinct persons united in one communion by self-gift, which the church should reflect in its own life and liturgy. This is the ideal that we hold before our mind's eye as we seek to re-make society.

Now there is just one more thing that I want to draw to your attention about the relevance of the doctrine of the Trinity of three persons and one communion for us:

This is that it is not just that the church is meant to *reflect* something of the life of the Trinity in its own life and worship. It is not that the society that is re-made in the liturgy reflects the social Trinity. Rather, the church's inner, spiritual life *is* the divine life of the Trinity. By baptism into Christ we have access to the very life of the Trinity; we are called into it. The gift of the Spirit is the gift of the divine life to us in the church and as people are drawn into the life of the church they are actually drawn into a spiritual communion which is the divine life itself. And that happens particularly in the liturgy. At our eucharistic celebration we enter more profoundly into that communion which is divine and that is why we call it precisely the Holy Communion. It is the communion of the Holy, the communion of God in which we participate.

This means that whenever we glimpse true human community in the life of the church, wherever human individuals are at one, participating together at the deepest possible level, living in harmony and peace of

their own free will, by free choice involved in an ever-deepening association with one another in love and concern by mutual self-gift, then it is that we encounter God. In liturgy our participation is precisely in the life of God.

It is not that the Holy Trinity is some remote God whose life as three persons in one communion we yearn to see reflected on earth in the life of the church; we do not create it by working at it ourselves. It is rather that God, the Trinity of three persons and one communion, eternally dwells with us and calls us into his very own life, to share it, experience it. Thus we are able to say that the community life of the church at its best, when it lives closest to its ideal, provides an actual glimpse of the divine life itself, revealing itself amongst us.

This is why it is that the pure in heart shall see God. That is why whenever two or three agree on earth it is done in heaven (for heaven and earth coincide), and where two or three are gathered in Christ's name, he is there giving access to the divine life of God. But this also means that to deny the importance of the unity of the church or to turn one's back on it, or walk away from it, or cause division in the church, is really a denial of God himself. Enmity and division is a denial of God. Division is not just a sign of human failure - it is a sign of infidelity, a denial of the reality and presence of God in our midst.

I did not begin with a text so let me finish with one, a Trinitarian one: *Our fellowship, our communion, is not just with one another but with God through Jesus Christ our Lord by the gift of the Holy Spirit.* (1 John 1.3, 6-7.)

Dance as Religious Studies 1990
 edited by Doug Adams and Diane Apostolos-Cappadona.
 The Crossroad Publishing Company, New York.
 230pp. \$39.95

No matter how human pre-history is written, or from what standpoint of what intellectual imperialism, whether religious, scientific or aesthetic, the dance becomes the 'unchanging monolith' of primordial beginnings.¹

The editors² claim that this collection of methodological essays is geared to both a practical and scholarly appreciation of the 'art of liturgical dance' (p.9), as well as arranged '...to suggest the wide spectrum and *the underlying unity* of these diverse and varied approaches to understanding dance as religious studies' [emphasis added] (p.10). While the former parts of the double-barrelled claim can be substantiated by the contents, that is, the essays are wide-ranging and are primarily of applied interest, the latter certainly cannot. There is only minimal critical discussion and examination of data in a few of the essays, and there is no explicit statement of what the underlying unity consists.

The reader is left to surmise what the relation is between the methodological essays and the underlying unity; even the bibliographic survey which concludes the volume is ambiguous. Adam simply states:

While several of the following studies disagree on method and interpretation, each remains a source for glimpsing the different dimensions of dance as religious studies. (p. 214)

A clue to the presumed underlying unity is the repeated phrase 'dance as religious studies', which appears to function like a 'carry all bag' for the various strands of study included. For example, historical, etymological, artistic, psychological, theological, and feminist aspects of dance as religious studies are bundled together and merely create a semblance of unity. Neither the book's title nor the arrangement of essays can disguise a fundamental weakness of the volume: that it comprises a mixed bag of ideas *about*, rather than a comprehensive collection of essays *on*, the dance and religious studies.

From the point of view of a normative, social science method in the study of religion, which involves an empirical and comparative study of data from a multi- or cross-disciplinary approach, the methodologies represented in this collection of essays are by comparison slight. There

is minimal critical reference to the wider academic contexts of the various approaches adopted, such as works on philosophical symbolisation, social and cultural anthropological studies of the dance, social psychology and human behaviour, theories of communication, etc. Contrarily, the essays are presented as self-contained units loosely grouped into one of three sections: I. Dance and Scripture, II. Women in Dance and Scripture, and III. Theory and Practice in Liturgical Dance. Section IV contains a chronologically arranged bibliography based on many of the works used in the other three sections.

In terms of the book's layout, the domain of religious studies is both covered by and restricted to the specified sections in which case 'dance' is used as a way of looking at scripture, women in scripture, and the liturgy. In a metaphorical sense, 'dance' is conceived as a mirror to reflect diverse religious interpretations, and as a window to see beyond the human, into the divine, realm. Thus the book's conceptual frame is confined to an arbitrary selection and arrangement of essays that signal some relation to the subjects of dance and religious studies.

The book as a whole attracts the same criticism levelled at the self-contained nature of each essay, which is to say, that as a discrete unit, the book contrives an esoteric discourse which makes little sense in the mundane world of religious studies in general.

This is evident at various points where the authors' and editors' notions of their subject reveal overall reductionist tendencies. For example, the term 'dance' is used to refer to a supposed generic form of human movement, as if 'dance' exists as a primordium unconnected to socio-historical and cultural contexts. When conceived in this way, 'dance' is abstracted from the societies and people by and for whom specific dances are created and performed; thus, 'dance' is reified and treated as a material object rather than as a complex socio-cultural entity.³

Dances are creations of society. Dancing is a creation of human societies, not of individual reasoning and emotion, although the creation of individual dances may satisfy an individual's reason and emotion alike.⁴

In order to recover a theoretical context for a study of 'dance', it is necessary to stipulate whether *the* dance, *a* dance, *dances*, *dancing* or *dancers* or a combination of the same is the subject under discussion.⁵ In the context of the collection of essays under review, such clarification would undercut naive universalist notions about the dance and expose the heterogenous, rather than the homogenous, nature of dances and dancing.

Another marked limitation of the book is the uncritical ease with which traditional and modern dances of western and non-western cultures are aligned and interpreted in a universalist and ethnocentric manner. For example, Taylor states in the introduction to a chapter on the history of symbolic movement in worship:

A natural expression of human beings from the earliest days through *all civilisations, cultures and religions*, symbolic movements [dance] was not grafted on to Christianity in the twentieth century.... Religion was a major part of life among primitive peoples, thus religious dances were a natural way to express religious beliefs. [Emphasis added.] (p.15)

Apart from there being no ethnographic evidence to substantiate Taylor's unsophisticated, origins argument for the dance and religion,⁶ she uses this general reference to symbolic movement, (as a natural expression in all civilisations, etc.), to support her particular claims about the use of dancing Judaeo-Christian tradition. This is a prime example of what Best calls 'the slipperiness of movement, ...which is often revealed in an inadvertent slide from a very general sense of the term to an implicitly more restricted sense.'⁷

Also, in the essay by Apostolos-Cappadona on Martha Graham's influence on liturgical dance and the spiritual quest for the feminine, methodological naivete is demonstrated. The author uses Graham's choreographies and journal reflections as a critique of traditional biblical interpretations of female figures and femaleness. For the author, Graham, '...was able to fuse her oriental nature with her later interests in Greek mythology and Jungian psychology', and thus '...Graham's work and persona became a reflection and a reflector of the modernist ethos'. (p. 119)

While the author refers to some of the possible social and artistic influences on Graham, there is no explanation of how exactly Graham's personal and professional development influenced the spirituality, feminine identity or choreographies of modern liturgical dancers and dances. It is an assumed influence based on the author's endorsement of Graham's fundamental emotive bodiliness by which it is understood a dancer communicates meaning for '... Gesture is the first (language)' and 'movement is the seed of gesture'. (p. 131)

Basically there is no hermeneutic in Apostolos-Cappadona's treatment of her sources. By accepting an 'origins' position on movement and gesture along with the notions that 'the common denominator of

human experience is the human body and the basic instrument of the dancer is her body' (p. 131), the author is locked into a circular argument whereby she begs the question, 'of what does this human body, experience and communication consist, if indeed we are dealing with a social, not a bio-physical, body?'

A central problem of Taylor's and Apostolos-Cappadona's methodology is the lack of reference to the cultural specificity of the various dance periods and idioms of which they speak. Western dance forms, particularly ballet, are as much an ethnic form of dance as the dances of non-western and non-modern cultures. Keali'inohomoku argues cogently for the ethnicity of ballet in the context of an anthropological study of the dance: 'so distinctive is the "look" of ballet, that it is probably safe to say that ballet dances graphically rendered by silhouettes would never be mistaken for anything else'.⁸ Yet so often studies of the dance assume a western supremacy whereby balletic dance forms are unconsciously used as the frame of reference for interpreting the dances of other cultures. The words 'ethnic' and 'ethnicity' are used euphemistically to refer to these other cultures, otherwise called 'primitive', 'savage', 'exotic', etc.

In the context of 'dance as religious studies', western dance idioms, specifically ballet and modern derivatives, are used as paradigms through which the bible, the liturgy, and the feminine are described and interpreted. The fact that a liturgy, a biblical passage, or women's identity are not equivalent entities, and that none constitute the elements of a dance, indicates that the dance is not contiguous with any of them. Consequently, any mapping of the latter onto any or all of the former obscures rather than clarifies any supposed inter-relatedness.

Further evidence of the book's methodological reductionism appears in Adams's bibliographic survey of sources and resources, which is included 'to encourage further work' by liturgical dancers and students of dance as religious studies (p. 12). It has already been noted that the authors make scant reference, if any, to the wider discipline of the social sciences and to research conducted in human movement, the dance, religious rituals, and Christian liturgy during the past fifty or so years. As Adams draws either on the material of the contributors or that of other like-minded writers, the sources and resources to which he refers are exceedingly limited. Indeed, collectively they provide a very narrow and shallow theoretical base from which to examine such a complex and controversial subject as the dance and Christian religion.

By way of comparison, Williams⁹ constructs two bibliographical essays, for anthropological and non-anthropological students of human movement and the dance, not as simple reference lists on the subject, but to orientate students to the intellectual and historical context and the theoretical and methodological diversity of the subject. In each case Williams provides a critical assessment of the literature in order to encourage readers to think about the relative analytic and/or applied value of the material for research in the dance and human movement.

Conversely, while Adams lists the literature under three headings and makes brief comments about the historical period and focus of sets of works, his presupposed notion of an underlying unity precludes any rigorous critique of the material. For example, popular style and academic works are set side by side in the first section, such as Adams and Rock alongside Gruber, or Manor and Morgenstern, while in the other two sections mainly general, or non-theoretical works are included, such as Knox, Mead, Sorell, Deitering, Lyon, and Wise. As a result, Adams's bibliographic survey is not much more than a conglomeration of works of varying value lumped together for the purposes of organisation.

I have indicated three aspects of the book's methodological reductionism: 1. the generic and reified use of the term 'dance'; 2. an implicit ethnocentricity with reference to western dance idioms; and, 3. the hermetic nature of the bibliographic survey. While these represent severe limitations for the study of the dance in the context of religious studies, the most crippling aspect of the book is the underlying presupposition that 'dance' is the primordium of human life, a universal activity of human beings by which humans are linked both to the animal species and the spiritual/religious realms.

Not only has dancing been considered the missing link in evolutionists' arguments and as the origin of religion by theologians, dances and dancing have also been used as metaphors for a notionally complete quasi-religious or aesthetic unity. The dance and human movement have been offered to us as the grounds for a synthesis of all humankind.

10

There are numerous examples of this position in many of the essays, to which I will refer directly, most of which draw on the work of the Dutch theologian and phenomenologist, Van der Leeuw, who argued for a continuum of the sacred and the secular through rhythm and the dance. In the context of a structural, not an evolutionary, understanding

of 'primitive' and 'modern',¹¹ he understands the dance to be a single, unbroken unity between the religious, aesthetic, and profane for 'primitive' culture:

The dance is the most universal of the arts, ... It is an expression of all the emotions of the spirit, from the lowest to the highest.... To dance, one needs nothing, ... nothing at all except one's own body.... Verbal art has just as little need of material or instruments, but it needs thought which is articulated in an image. The dance is its own articulation. In the greatest simplicity it remains constant, century after century.¹²

We find this philosophical position reiterated in various ways by different authors, for example, Adams states, in support of his argument for the reintegration of communal dance in religious practice:

Without dance and other corporate expressions in worship, one could see the relationship with God as opposed to the demands of the community, and therefore withdraw from the community. In contrast to meditation and prayer, dance includes body movement which activity in life does not disturb but continues. *Thus one is led to see the secular in the sacred, all caught up together.* These dynamics are clarified by Gerardus van der Leeuw's suggestion that the separation that leads one to distinguish sacred from profane arises only as the dance diminishes. The reemergence of the dance, he continued, is likely to sweep away separations that the critically minded person created by sitting and not dancing [emphasis added] (p. 39).

In a similar vein, de Sola states: 'Liturgical dance is viewed as a living, moving, breathing epiphany of God and creation.... When bodies sway in unison and arms lift in prayer, the congregation can become conscious in an experiential way through the workings of the spirit that they are a living, breathing family of God' (p. 153). Likewise, Bauer says: 'Dance that reflects the faith and concerns of the community will not assign different values to secular and sacred, but seize God's creative energies and intentions revealed in all of life' (p. 182).

There are several problems with this philosophical view of the dance, but a pervasive weakness is the conflation of elements, levels, and disciplines, such as movement and dance, the spiritual and the human, and theology and art, respectively. In an attempt to overcome a Cartesian mind/body dualism, the authors conflate these various elements to make the body and 'dance' the locus of unity. The instrument of the body assumes a predominate role in communication, as Apostolos-Cappadona says: 'The common denominator of human experience is

the human body. The basic instrument of the dancer is her body' (p. 131). The human body in general, and the body of a dancer in particular, subsumes all things sacred and secular, on heaven and earth, unto itself. The moving body becomes the vortex of life's meaning.

The travesty of treating the dance and religious studies as a monolith denies both fields of discourse access to the vast and interesting semantic differences of culturally specific dance idioms and religious systems. When the dance and all human movement is seen in relation to the people and societies by and for whom it is practised, then the relation of human movement and the dance to speech and the language-using capacities of human beings will be judged as essential. As Williams states: 'The dance, in my judgment, will only become intelligible when it is related to ordinary body languages, to spoken languages in a wide variety of cultural contexts, and when novice and professional writers cease trying to treat it as a monolith'.¹³

In a positive sense, the book represents the consolidation of material on the subjects of the dance and Christian religion which, while having its roots in works from the early to middle periods of this century, stems from *circa* the late seventies and eighties.¹⁴ While it is important to trace the historical development of ideas, on the whole this book does more harm than good to the subjects under discussion because of the untenable premise on which most of the material is based, namely, a universalist notion of 'dance' as an aesthetic, religious expression¹⁵ – a premise which has no leg to stand on in current social science theories and methods.

A curious feature of the book is that, even though many of the authors are or were professional dancers, virtually no critical reflection of the roles and rules pertaining to training and working as a professional dancer in one or more idiom of dance informed their description, interpretation, and explanation of the dance, dancing, dances, or dancers. Apart from the occasional reference to the importance of technique for choreography and performance, no reference is made to the structural features and limitations of the body, the roles and rules that govern specific dance forms, the integration of thought and feeling in the creation, learning, and performing of dances; in short, the many real activities that go to make dancing and the dance a discipline and in western societies an art form.

There is nothing natural, primal, or esoteric about dancing in modern, western societies: it is a highly disciplined activity which

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demands high levels of physical, mental, and spiritual training of people who are members of specific socio-linguistic groups. That it is the same for people in other cultures is an open question, and one that requires careful observation, description, interpretation, and explanation. The task is no less rigorous when done in one's home culture.

A further anomaly in this regard, is the lack of reference to dance notation for recording choreographies, studying and learning dance scores, research in fields of social anthropology and ethnomusicology, etc. To be able to write movement texts of dances and other systems of human actions means that the rhythm of life can be stopped and that dances too can be transcribed into texts available for analysis. In religious studies research method, the use of texts for comparative analysis is central. To have available movement scores of dances as texts for analysis would help to demystify the dance and bring it down to earth where it belongs.

In conclusion, this volume of methodological essays is in the main innocuous, except that many readers unacquainted with the social sciences and analytical methods might ascribe to it an authority it does not warrant. Therefore, it is well to warn the serious student of liturgical dance and the dance and religious studies to steer clear of literature that purports to be sound but is in fact both theoretically and methodologically insubstantial and misleading.

J. Farrell

NOTES

1. D. Williams, *Ten lectures on theories of the dance*, Scarecrow Press 1991.
2. This book and an earlier volume also edited by Adams and Apostolos-Cappadona entitled *Art as religious studies* (1987) come under the general category of theology and the arts, a sub-field on the discipline of the study of religion that derives from existential and phenomenological reflections on religious symbolism in sacred and secular contexts. See for further discussion: M. Eliade, *The sacred and the profane: the nature of religion*, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich 1957; J. Dillenberger, *A theology of artistic sensibilities: the visual arts and the church*, SCM 1986; D. Apostolos-Cappadona, ed., *Art, creativity and the sacred*, Crossroad 1986.
3. For a further discussion see Williams, *op. cit.*, pp 113-115.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 114.
5. Williams makes this distinction in her study of human movement and the dance, where 'the dance' refers to all dances at any time throughout the

world. See for further discussion *ibid.*, p. 113 and H. Fairbank 'Thinking and movement, a critical review of Sheets-Johnstone's article 'Thinking in movement' in *JASHM*, vol. 2 (1983), pp 211-228.

6. See for further discussion, Williams, a social anthropologist and specialist in the dance and human movement, who refutes arguments that make the dance a primordium, *op. cit.*, chapters 3-6.

7. D. Best, *Philosophy and human movement*, Allen and Unwin 1978, p. 20.

8. J.W. Keali'inohomoku, 'An anthropologist looks at ballet as an ethnic form of dance', in *JASHM* vol. 1 (1980), p. 94.

9. Williams, *op. cit.* and '(non)anthropologists, the dance, and human movement' in B. Fleshman, ed., *Theatrical movement: a bibliographical anthology*, Scarecrow/Metuchen, 1986, pp 158-219.

10. Williams, *Ten lectures on theories of the dance*, pp 101-102.

11. See for full explanation G. van der Leeuw, *Sacred and profane beauty: the holy in art*, Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1963, p. 7.

12. *Ibid.*, pp 12-13.

13. Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 114.

14. Adams (1971) and Apostolos-Cappadona (1986) were pioneers in the twin fields of the dance and religious studies, and theology and the arts: that they have edited two volumes in this series suggests a recognition of this.

15. There are also other types of argument presented in some of the essays, for example, etymological studies of biblical texts (see Part I and Part IV), a diagnostic approach to the psycho-social function of the dance in worship (see Part III), and reference to various studies of the dance in different cultures (see Part IV).

EDITORIAL

This issue needs very little introduction. With the exception of the review article by the Revd Jennifer Farrell all the contributions were presentations at the National Conference in Perth in February.

The Conference is introduced in the Presidential Address by Dr Hardiman and is summed up in the report by Fr Dowling. What is published here is not the full proceedings of the Conference. Not all papers were made available to AJL and some presentations were not in a form suitable for publication. Nevertheless, there is sufficient here to give to those who were not able to be at the Conference some idea of the content.

The Australian Academy of Liturgy was formed in December 1982. In the next issue of AJL there will be a recognition of the tenth anniversary of this event.

RWH

Beaumaris Vicarage
Ascension Day 1992

CONFERENCE

Despite the collapse of Compass Airlines, a goodly representation of the members came across the continent to the first national conference to be held in the West. 'Patterns of Participation in Worship' was the conference theme. For the first time AAL opened up its conference to non-members. Evening sessions were open to others to join in this part of the program, which included most of the key-note speakers, some liturgies, and some hospitality. Over 20 people came to the conference as 'day trippers'.

On the first evening, the President, Russell Hardiman, delivered the Presidential Opening Address on 'The goals of participation'. This set the tone for the conference. Dr Dianne Bertolino-Green delivered her paper 'Bimodal nature of the brain and applications in worship'. Using the American Shakers as an example, she described how the two-fold nature of the brain influences worship.

On Tuesday the members' session began with a presentation on behalf of the WA Chapter by Russell Hardiman following on from his address and then Jennifer Farrell (NSW) spoke about the nature of the liturgical event drawing from her current research. The place and influence of the media on worship and worshippers played an important part in the conference. On Tuesday evening, Clem Hill (NSW) spoke about the contrast between participation and observation in modern media and that influence on worship. This was followed up on Wednesday morning with a panel discussion with Susan Mausehart (Curtin University), Greg Harvey (Anglican media) and Pat Cunningham (Catholic Press) in a lively conversation.

Wednesday also produced an interesting discussion on the sociology of worship in Australia led by Sonia Wagner. After a variety of activities in the afternoon, we gathered for Evensong at Saint George's Anglican Cathedral where Archbishop Peter Carnley preached a fine sermon. In the cathedral hall afterwards a discussion on the space for worship was led by Iris Rossen (WA), Tom Elich (Qld) and local WA architect Ron Bodycoat.

This was followed up on Thursday morning by a session again led by Tom Elich on requirements for liturgical space. Also on Thursday morning Iris Rossen introduced a group of local crafters who brought examples of their crafts for use in worship: vestments, icons, silverware,

and furniture. Artists and members spent some time together talking about their work. In the evening Roman Catholic Archbishop Hickey presided at Vespers. Ron Dowling (WA) then presented a paper on the 'ministries of worship'. This was followed by the now-traditional Conference Dinner.

The last morning, Friday, began with the Conference Eucharist, Russell Hardiman presiding and preaching.

A number of members then presented various 'show and tell' items about their own particular work or involvements, and then the Conference concluded with the Business Session. At this session, Russell Hardiman was re-elected for another term as President and Tom Sutton (WA) was elected Secretary. It was left to the new Executive to appoint a new Treasurer cum business manager for AJL.

All in all, the Perth Conference was one of the most successful and enjoyable, confounding those who said it was too far for Easterners to travel! Congratulations and thanks to the Perth Chapter.

Ron Dowling

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