

AUSTRALIAN ACADEMY OF LITURGY

AUSTRALIAN JOURNAL OF LITURGY

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AUSTRALIAN ACADEMY OF LITURGY

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

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The Right Revd Stuart M Smith, now retired, was Assistant Bishop of Adelaide 1992-1998.

Editorial

This issue of *Australian Journal of Liturgy* is noted more for its variety than for any thematic unity. There is a good spread across the Christian traditions (Anglican, Baptist, Roman Catholic and Uniting Churches are represented), and a diversity of subject matter and approaches. For the first time we have coloured pictures. It is a good issue with which to bow out.

This is my last issue of *AJL* as editor. I was appointed the foundation editor in 1986 and Volume 1, Number 1 was published in May 1987. I have appreciated the opportunity given to me by the Academy to be the editor and have enjoyed the mixture of fulfilment and frustration that has gone with the territory. However, I have decided that 15 years is enough and now someone else can have the opportunity.

There has been tremendous technological change over the 15 years. At the beginning I would take 'hard copy' (although we didn't call it that then) to Flinders University Press. It would be type-set there and I would pick up the galley-proofs for checking. Desktop publishing was coming in and from the beginning of Volume 2 (May 1989) type-setting and design of the journal has been done by John Baumgardner on his PC. At first he had to type everything, but then copy began arriving on disk. Over the last few years most copy has come by e-mail and this has become the usual method of communication.

John is to retire early next year and so has decided that this will be his last issue of *AJL* as Assistant Editor. I want to thank John for his contribution to the production of the journal over the years and all that he has done as Assistant Editor of *Australian Journal of Liturgy*. I acknowledge also the help of Alison Baumgardner who has done a tremendous lot of proof-reading.

Apart from three issues which were posted from Otira when there was an attempt to set up an on-going Academy Secretariat in 1992-93, I have been responsible for putting every copy of every issue into envelopes, labelling and mailing. In this I have had help from my daughters, Susan and Kathryn, who became particularly adept at sorting the copies into mailing zones. I hope that the Academy will be able to make some arrangement so that the new Editor is not mail clerk as well.

I acknowledge also the help of others with the journal: Graham Hughes and Charles Sherlock as Book Review Editors; Tom Knowles and David Orr as Assistant Editors; Robert Gribben, Russell Hardiman, Carmel Pilcher, and Paul Renner as members of the Editorial Panel. The various secretaries of the Academy have maintained the address list and provided address labels when needed.

Of course, there would be no journal if people had not been writing and sending in their contributions. To all who have written articles, reviews, and reports: 'Thank you'. I am particularly grateful to those who have written things at my request to be part of a series or collection of articles. And, I must say, that I remember with particular appreciation those who have got their contributions in on time!

Until a new Editor is appointed (and a new address advised), please continue to send material for publication to me and I shall pass it on. Apart from material which might emerge from the Academy Conference in January the cupboard is bare. Please give the new Editor a good start by sending something in.

RWH

Strathmore Vicarage

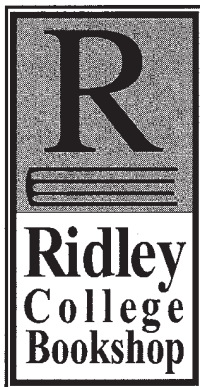
Holy Cross Day 2001

Catholic members intend to take up the authority and aim on the document with their bishops.

ELLC, at its meeting in Berkeley following Societas had to face the grave situation that ICEL, its major partner and the provider of its secretariat, was withdrawn as a result of *Liturgiam authenticam*. It has decided to continue with its ecumenical consultative work, since it already has Roman Catholic members in its national member associations. I have stepped down as Chair after four difficult years, and am succeeded by Fr Kevin McGinnell, chair of the Joint Liturgical group of Great Britain and Dr David Holton (Canada, now of the Czech republic) has taken over ICEL's role as secretary. I am confident that we will continue to be of use to the English-speaking churches of the world, but the loss of ICEL's participation is serious on both sides. ICEL's place has been kept open against the day when the real status of this document is clarified, and/or the present mood in Rome changes.

– Robert Gribben

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but St Gregory's wants to demonstrate the wideness of 'God's friendship'. Below, the contemporary congregation dances in the same way – from the room of the Word to the room of the Table, a circle dance drawing perhaps on ancient Greek forms, perhaps on the American Shakers. Tibetan gongs, Ethiopian crosses, Syrian hats, liturgical umbrellas from both, and an enormous enthusiasm both engaged and repulsed some members of the Societas. Some objectors stood outside by the huge rock font over which water flows – a font you do not pass on your way into the church (baptism is an exclusive sign which St Gregory's does not demand.) St Gregory's raises as many questions as it answers (and its apologia for its work, both liturgical and missiological, is full of scholarly argument), but – for what it is worth – it is also the fastest growing congregation in its communion.

The Societas next meets in August 2003 at Hoeven, a town near Utrecht in the Netherlands. The theme is 'The Saints'. The new President is Dr Yngvill Martola, a Finnish Lutheran scholar, and the President-elect is Dr Jean-Claude Crivelli of Switzerland. Fr Anthony Cain continues on the Council. In 2005, Dresden/Meissen looks likely as the venue; and the Societas will consider Australia (again) for 2007. The one item of controversy was a discussion of the recent Roman instruction on translation *Liturgiam authenticam* (May, 2001). This document re-affirms Latin as the defining culture of the Church of Rome, and requires translation of texts and of the Scriptures to conform with Latin style and meaning. It is strangely dissonant with recent policy and practice where the receiving cultural context has been taken with great seriousness. It is especially a set-back for the International Commission on English in the Liturgy (ICEL) – though it has implications for French and German commissions as well – and it seems seriously at odds with both the Vatican II Decree on Ecumenism and the 1993 Ecumenical Directory. ICEL has been a major partner with national ecumenical associations in the translation of common texts for the liturgy since 1969 (ie through the English Language Liturgical Consultation, ELLC, and its predecessor, the International Consultation on English texts, ICET.) Professor Horace Allen, a distinguished Presbyterian scholar at Boston and a former chair of ELLC believed that thirty years of ecumenical work on liturgical translation had been set at nought. The members present of Societas passed a motion of thanks and support to ICEL, and some Roman

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The Doctrine of the Spirit and Baptist Worship: A Kiwi Pastor's Perspective

Steven O'Connor

At the heart of the classic Baptist vision of the church is the doctrine of the Spirit. The way that Baptists understand the working of the Holy Spirit has direct ecclesiological and liturgical implications. While these implications are not always fully realised the Baptist vision still has something valuable to offer to the wider church family.

The ecclesiological distinctives of Baptist life such as confessors' baptism, autonomy, and congregational responsibility flow from the Baptist insistence that the church is a spiritual entity, the *koinonia* of the Spirit, consisting of those who have been 'born again' by the Spirit. The church is made up of regenerate believers who have voluntarily committed themselves to God and one another to carry out the mission of Christ in specific ways. At a minimum, the commitment to one another extends to gathering together to worship God, and to attend to God's Word.

In order to ensure the purity of the church, that is to make sure it is only the regenerate who decide on the will of Christ for a congregation, Baptists have advocated confessors' baptism. While most Christian churches see Baptism as the rite of entry into the church, Baptists believe that only those who have personally responded in faith may be members of the church. Baptism is reserved for those who have made a voluntary confession of faith, and who have decided to commit themselves to a life of discipleship in Christian community. All baptised members of the body of Christ are spiritually competent and able to relate directly to God, so long as other criteria of discipleship are met. The local congregation is able under the direction of the Holy Spirit, to discern the will of God for its life and mission and enabled to carry out God's will.

It follows in Baptist ecclesiology that each local congregation is sufficient in itself to be the church. All the required gifts are present within the

the wider faith. At this level, marriages and funerals do not fit the definition of 'rites of passage'. The 'ritual process' thesis does not really describe the fundamental tensions. Dr Bell wondered if 'inculturation' was in fact merely an example of the 'localisation' of Christianity, and that there might be a gentler relationship between the tribal and the Catholic: to 'loosely embrace, rather than try to change or transform'.

The other major addresses continued the exploration. Two German scholars, Professor Ansgar Franz, of the Ruhr University, Bochum, and Dr Hans Krech, Oberkirchenrat of the Lutheran Church of Thuringia and supervisor of the liturgical work of the German Evangelical Churches, were hard-pressed to read their excellent papers in the space of a single session. Dr Franz investigated the differences between Christian funerals in the former West Germany and the secular rites of the former East, and Dr Krech with the current marginalisation of death in society. Similar contrasts in relation to marriage rites were explored by Dr Elizabeth Parmentier, Professor of Practical Theology at the Protestant Faculty at Strasbourg. Fr John Baldovin SJ gave his reflections in the concluding presidential address, 'The Varieties of Liturgical Experience'. It was rich fare indeed.

As usual, there was a welter of short communications and case studies from amongst the 200+ participants. I heard papers on the Greek Orthodox critique of cremation, an examination of hymns old and new in weddings and funerals, the blessing of marriages and gay alliances in the Netherlands, a new eucharistic prayer for a wedding, and a study of psalmody in early Christian prayer. There was more: from coronations to art exhibitions (on death and dying, Switzerland), new ordination rites, divers aspects of the life of St Thomas Christians in India, and the influence of new understandings of the grieving process on funeral rites. In French, English and German, as you wish. The Congress Eucharist took an unusual form in a visit to St Gregory Nyssen Episcopal Church in San Francisco – after a day of tours to a variety of places from Spanish Missions to Napa Valley wineries. St Gregory's combines deep influences of Orthodox liturgy with contemporary Californian culture, a giddy mix at times. Notable aspects are the iconography which adorns the walls – in Byzantine style, where you may see Queen Elizabeth I dancing with Malcolm X, with Mahatma Ghandi a partner or two from St Seraphim of Sarov (and his bear). There are plenty of undoubted Christian saints there,

Societas Liturgica 2001

Congress XVIII of the international society for liturgical study and renewal gathered in the beautiful campus of Santa Clara university in southern California. The 'Mission Church' of the university is one of the original churches of those courageous and foolhardy Franciscan missions of the late 18th and early 19th centuries, one of more than twenty in the region. This church was a great place to 'do liturgy', and there was a particularly rich fare in words and music.

The theme was 'Life-cycle liturgies', with the emphasis on marriage and death rites. The keynote address 'Ritual Tensions: Tribal and Catholic', was given by Catherine Bell, professor in the Religious Studies department in Santa Clara university itself. Her studies in ritual theory are well-known and published by Oxford. She began with a critique of the work of the late (Christian) anthropologist Victor Turner, and particularly of his lack of reference to the political and social context of his own work in the 1950s amongst the tribes of (now) Zambia. This omission is a warning that too much can be claimed from particular cases, and generalisations need careful watching. Turner's ritual thesis is too neat, and when he applied it to the liturgical changes of Vatican II, he found the Roman Church's actions violated his understanding of ritual tradition. Theological categories do not appear to have influenced his judgement.

Dr Bell then turned to marriage and funeral rites, which she sees as examples of 'tribal religion' rather than of 'salvation religion' (e.g. associated with initiation). The tribe is very much concerned with marrying and dying as a way of maintaining the group and the family. It has little interest in the wider implications of theology, and the rites had better be tailored to the local needs, or trouble will ensue! Dr Bell gave examples from both the church and Japanese Buddhism. She noted that a great deal is asked of the religious practitioner at this point, and wondered if adequate attention had been paid to the 'sincerity' and personality of the priest in this context, who had to make the connections. She also noted the way in which local demands force the 'tailoring' of both wedding and funeral rites to individual needs, with the pastor again being at the fulcrum. The tension is between the particular culture and its values and those of

congregation. The gathered congregation is able to read and interpret the Scriptures for itself, as well as decide on its own patterns of worship, discipleship and mission. The local congregation is autonomous and not subject to any outside human authority be that an ecclesiastic agency, or the state.

With the belief in the spiritual competence of all believers (often referred to as 'the priesthood of all believers'), Baptists have concluded that it is better to entrust the discernment of the will of God to the whole congregation than to a select leadership. While Baptists have always acknowledged the value of an 'ordained'¹ ministry set apart to preach, teach and give pastoral care, they have never said that it was essential to the life of the church. Any member with the recognised gifts is able to do the work of ministry or part thereof. The competence of any 'minister' is a matter of the discernment of the whole body, and not of the individual. From the beginning Baptists have expressed their belief in congregational responsibility in the practice of their worship services and in their gatherings to discuss more mundane business matters. In the former case, opportunity was given in the church services for several prophecies and for several people to lead in prayer or respond to the prophecies and sermons, or contribute in other ways. In the latter case, business meetings were run 'democratically' with the ideal being that following prayer, Bible study, and discussion, the mind of Christ would be discerned through consensus.

Baptist ecclesiology is closely linked with the doctrine of the Spirit, which recognises the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit among those regenerate believers gathered in Jesus' name. The Spirit is seen as the Spirit of the church not in the sense of being the perpetual gift of the divine institution, but as the divine life-force of the present gathered community of believers. Baptist theologian Stanley Grenz writes,

Since Pentecost, then, the Spirit enjoys a new identity. He is the 'vicar of Christ,' the mediator of the presence of the risen and exalted Jesus within His community. The Spirit teaches, leads and empowers the church on the Lord's behalf. In so doing, he is the Lord at work in the believing community.²

It is the liturgical implications of the relationship between the Spirit and the gathered community of believers within Baptist ecclesiology that I now turn to briefly.

***Koinonia* of the Spirit and worship**

The Baptist doctrine of the Spirit has not been fully worked through in the actual practice of worship among many New Zealand Baptist churches. If Baptists truly believe that the church is *koinonia* of the Spirit it follows that the Spirit should be encountered in and through the gathered body, rather than in and through what happens on and emanates from the platform. Baptists believe themselves to be a spiritual community, which gathers to engage in spiritual worship. Ideally this means that the Spirit is active in the community when the community gathers for worship, in spirit and in truth. (The Spirit is also active as members of the body exercise the gifts of the Spirit for the common good of the body or in service to the world.) Spiritual worship is body-life worship, that is it is worship in which all members of the body are engaged spiritually. Members of the body contribute to the worship by using their gifts in worship preparation, and active participation. Some members will prepare for worship by practising music, others by writing a sermon, or preparing liturgical material and so on. Preparation for the service should also include prayer and meditation. Within the service all members are encouraged to engage actively in the proceedings. This involves the inner disposition of the heart, a preparedness to contribute to open times and a willingness to sing enthusiastically, and respond passionately. Worship leaders have a responsibility to encourage both the preparation for worship and the participation in worship. Obviously certain vehicles are more useful than others in facilitating the latter, depending upon the context that the congregation finds itself in. The particulars of how this works out remains the responsibility of the local congregation.³

Spiritual worship: singing and 'liturgy'

Some of the emphases that Baptists held to be important in one generation were abandoned or modified in latter generations. The use of particular forms of worship and the way they are prepared changes but a closer look reveals an unchanging concern for 'spiritual worship'. In this section I will show how the seventeenth century opposition to hymn singing and the use of prepared texts reveals a principle that is consistent with the modern Baptist practice of singing hymns and using prepared materials.

Baptists have had a fine reputation as great singers of hymns. The two most important parts of Baptist worship for a long time have been the

in Christian Initiation, Marriage and Funerals; and finally a Code of Good Practice for clergy.

Each set of guidelines has a general introduction; theological and liturgical essays; and practical pastoral guidelines covering a comprehensive range of circumstances in which rites are performed and pastoral care exercised. Much of the material is based on canons of General Synod, diocesan ordinances and episcopal guidelines (these last two being from the Diocese of Melbourne).

This being the case, the reader can expect to use the book with confidence. It is a safe guide to all who have pastoral and liturgical responsibilities in the three broad areas covered, based as it is on carefully deliberated legislative acts of the Anglican Church of Australia at national and diocesan level over the past twenty years or so, as well as the experience, reflection, theological competence and compassionate common sense of its writers and editor.

One or two caveats. Readers in dioceses other than Melbourne will need to be aware that ordinances and guidelines in their diocese may be different from those in Melbourne (the term 'Vestry, for example, denotes something different in Adelaide from what it does in Melbourne). Secondly, the introductory material throughout the book is generally a model of clarity and sound reasoning, but occasionally this reviewer found difficulty in following the sense (as in the sentences beginning 'If baptism... in line 17 of page 33).

But, these caveats aside, this book is a wise and reliable guide in those areas of pastoral ministry it covers.

– *Stuart Smith*

that editorial modifications may be needed as language usage and culture change, he is far from uncritical of clumsy editorial work following what he labels 'the Ugly Truth Theory'.

In all, this book is a source of significant comment and analysis concerning congregational song. However, without in any way denigrating the views expressed in this book, there will be those who will think it over wordy. To them, it may read like a PhD thesis before it has been pruned for publication. Arguments are sometimes over-extended: the reader is already convinced but the lecturer goes on. This is surprising for one who is such a fine 'wordsmith' when it comes to writing hymns in which there is never a superfluous word. Or again, one never becomes restless or impatient when attending a workshop conducted by Dr Wren. He has a wonderful ability to engage his audience. There is the danger that an author writing a book about a topic close to his heart may sometimes become lost in his own thoughts in the privacy of his study.

Having said that, nothing would reduce the value of what this book says. If some readers find it a little lengthy, they could skip and still find the gems it undoubtedly contains. Dr Wren is a man who cares about congregational song and does all he can to nourish it, and for that we are truly thankful.

—Lawrence Bartlett

A Pastoral Handbook for Anglicans: Guidelines for Pastoral Ministry in the Diocese of Melbourne, Charles Sherlock, Editor (Acorn Press 2001), xiv + 250 pp.

This handbook is the successor to *An Anglican Pastoral Handbook*, published in Melbourne in 1988. The new book was seen to be necessary because of changes during the past decade, particularly in the relationships between church and society; in theological understanding; and those changes marked by the ordination of women and the authorisation of *A Prayer Book for Australia* in 1995. Dr Sherlock has worked with a group of seven other members of the clergy in the preparation of this Handbook. After an introductory section there are chapters containing guidelines for pastoral ministry

singing of hymns and the preaching of sermons. This has not always been the case. Early in the seventeenth century, the Father of the English general Baptists, John Smyth, was adamantly opposed to the singing of hymns, on the basis that hymns were prepared texts that could interfere with the Spirit's activity.⁴ Smyth would not even allow the Bible to be read in his services, as the English Bible was a fallible translation of the originals.⁵ For Smyth, worship was the time to put away all books and depend totally on the Spirit to guide. Underlying Smyth's disregard for hymnody and other prepared texts was not a dislike for texts *per se*, but a deep desire to have worship that was led by the Spirit. Later Baptists retaining the same desire for spiritual worship found that prepared texts did not necessarily interfere with the Spirit's activity. By the end of the seventeenth century the singing of hymns was common in English Baptist churches⁶ and many preachers were using sermon notes if not full scripts for their sermons.⁷ In part, the opposition to the use of prepared texts was for the reason that such worship was thought to be of the 'established church', from which the Baptists had separated themselves. Baptists were in principle, opposed to any outside authority imposing the style or content of a local congregation's worship. This was felt to be unspiritual. Any 'liturgical' material came to be regarded with suspicion. 'Set songs' were as bad as 'set prayers' or even 'set sermons', and might lead to them.⁸ While the practice of singing hymns became commonplace, the practice of using set prayers continued to be derided. It is ironic that the criticism that set prayers result in 'vain repetition', and the claim that prepared prayers or litanies are unspiritual, has not been levelled at the songs that Baptists repetitively sing, which are nothing more than set prayers and prepared liturgical texts that are accompanied with music.

There have been some changes in practice with respect to hymnody and other set texts among New Zealand Baptists. Firstly, there has been a marked movement away from the *Baptist Hymn Book*⁹ with its many traditional hymns to the use of more contemporary songs. In many churches the singing of 'hymns', as in old hymns, is seen as a mark of being 'out of touch', 'not modern', while the advocates of the hymnbook often criticised the modern songs as being theologically inadequate and at times heretical. The worship wars as expressed through the pages of *The New Zealand Baptist* have often been seen as a battle between lovers of hymns and lovers of choruses. I contend

that the issues are much deeper than that and that a general hunger for something richer and deeper in worship has been reduced to calls for more of 'my style' of music.

The use of other prepared texts is becoming more common, though still not universally accepted. In 1985, Dr. Terry Falla became a lecturer at The New Zealand Baptist Theological College. He had previously edited a book of *Responsive prayers and readings for contemporary worship*.¹⁰ This book proved popular among his students, legitimated the use of prepared texts in their minds and made way for use of the same within the churches that graduates were called to. While prepared prayers are still not common in a majority of Baptist churches, I am personally aware of twelve churches in the Auckland region who use prepared resources on a regular basis.¹¹

Underlying the changes in practice, with respect to the songs that are sung and the prayers that are prayed in our churches, is the conviction that the words that people write outside of their own gatherings (be that prepared prayers or contemporary praise songs) may be used by the Holy Spirit to evoke and express worship in the gathered community. Most Baptists now realise that the desire of our forbears to have truly spiritual worship is not necessarily negated by the use of prepared texts. To permit the singing of songs, but not the use of other prepared liturgical material on the basis that it may inhibit the Spirit's activity is inconsistent. The fact that most Baptist churches use very few prepared texts in their worship apart from songs is probably more the result of ingrained practices rather than a continuation of Smyth's position.

As far as I am aware, all Baptist churches in New Zealand use prepared texts in worship usually in the form of song and sermon and, as noted above, a number of churches are using other prepared liturgical texts. The historic reservations about using some forms of set texts are no longer felt in our context. However, the divide between texts that are sung and texts that are read or prayed seems still to exist and have a strong influence on attitudes to such material. This may be in part due to attitudes that relate Spirit activity with spontaneity. This will be explored in the next section.

Spirit activity and spontaneity

Baptist ecclesiology begins with the belief that the church is a spiritual entity made up of regenerate believers who have covenanted together to serve God and one another. The church is the body of Christ that

Book Reviews

Brian Wren, *Praying Twice, The Music and Words of Congregational Song* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2000) 0 664 25670-8, Limp, pp ix + 422

When Brian Wren speaks about hymns, one sits up and listens. As a hymn writer, he is and has been at the cutting edge of English-speaking hymnody since his early days with the Dunblane group forty years ago.

Dr Wren argues that congregational song is indispensable, but he is not unaware of threats to it both from the secular world of entertainment and the restless hunger within the church for attractive novelty. He offers practical suggestions as to how congregational song can be encouraged and repertoire enlarged.

When it comes to 'contemporary worship music', Wren is neither gullible nor snobbish. He urges that it deserves 'a critical welcome' with both words being equally weighted. He provides an incisive set of criteria for 'assessing the lyrics of congregational song'. Those carry the weight of one who submits to the same discipline he prescribes for others. His comments on choruses, etc are charitable, but one is not convinced that he is entirely at home in this field. He does however offer useful suggestions as to how these pieces may be used.

Wren's comments on issues of gender in language help explain why many editors and hymn writers today are sensitive about this issue. As part of this, he explores the effect of Kingship metaphors in the language of worship and suggests viable alternatives.

His technical analysis of hymn poetry as a form is impressive. In the midst of this, one finds delightful throw-away lines, such as 'singers of hymns need poetry that will express their faith and enable them to be truthfully themselves in the presence of God'. The man has a way with words!

When he tackles the question 'why do they keep changing the good old hymns?', Wren is at his best. His expertise and wide reading provide compelling answers. For example, he catalogues and analyses the editorial changes made to the favourite known today as 'Hark, the herald angels sing'. This is most informative. However, whilst accepting

- 18 Although *Lumen gentium*, the Vatican II constitution on the Church, names chapter two 'The People of God', its very next chapter is called 'The Church is Hierarchical'. To accept the former but reject the latter cannot be in keeping with Catholic theology.
- 19 Ratzinger, 'Christ and the Church' in *A New Song* p. 30.
- 20 Mannion, in editorial of *Antiphon* Vol. 4 No. 3, 1999 readily accessible at www.catholicity.com/Cathedral/scl/editor4~3.html
- 21 *Catechism of the Catholic Church* ## 1138-1141.
- 22 Bernard McElligott OSB, 'Active Participation' in *A Voice for all Time: Essays on the Liturgy of the Catholic Church since the Second Vatican Council* (ed. Christopher Francis & Martin Lynch), (Bristol, Association for Latin Liturgy, 1994) pp 18, 20.
- 23 Steven J. Schloeder, *Architecture in Communion: Implementing the Second Vatican Council through Liturgy and Architecture*, (San Francisco, Ignatius Press, 1998) p. 39.
- 24 Schloeder, *Architecture* p. 44.
- 25 Karl Gustav Fellerer, 'Liturgy and Music' in *Sacred Music and Liturgy Reform after Vatican II: Proceedings of the Fifth International Church Music Congress, Chicago-Milwaukee, August 21-28, 1966* (Rome, Consociato Internationalis Musicae Scarae, 1969) p. 85.
- 26 *O sacrum convivium*, antiphon for second vespers of Corpus Christi.

AAL Conference 2002

Techno-doxology

technology and liturgy in dialogue

The Queensland chapter of the Academy is looking forward to hosting the 2002 conference in Brisbane, from 14th to 17th January. Our venue will be The Bardon Centre <<http://www.thebardoncentre.com.au/>> with a more modest accommodation alternative at Mercy Place, just across the road. We plan to have keynote papers presented by local experts, with responses from Academy members, dealing with issues of:

Identity – the concepts of self and community, especially as mediated by technologies of communication, and some of the implications of this for the practice of worship;

Text – the production of texts, from manuscript to websites, and how this affects our understanding of the rites we use; and

Place – engineering and architecture, and their influence on the spaces in which we worship.

Plan now to attend! Registration details will be mailed to AAL members, or may be obtained from Inari Thiel, 5 Setaria Court, Cornubia Qld 4130, <inari@me.gu.edu.au>.

carries on the work of Christ in the world. As such, the body attends to the voice of the Spirit in its midst to discern the will of Christ. From the beginnings of the Baptist movement there has been a strong emphasis on the immediate presence of the Spirit among the gathered people. This emphasis was so strong in the early part of the seventeenth century that, as noted above, all the books were put away before 'spiritual worship' began. Coupled with the doctrine of the spiritual competency of all believers there was an expectancy that the voice of the Spirit would be heard and affirmed by the many voices contributing to the worship service, be that in preaching, prophecy, discussion or prayer. It was often assumed that the Spirit spoke primarily, if not exclusively, through the spontaneous utterances of the inspired speaker. Some contradictory practice with respect to facilitating spontaneous expression suggests that there is now some ambivalence about the importance of spontaneity within our churches. On the one hand, there is evidence to suggest that for many Baptists the spontaneous remains more 'spiritual' than the prepared, yet the opportunities for spontaneous expression and the quality of spontaneous expression leaves much to be desired.¹² In the mid-part of the twentieth century it was common place for the pastor to lead the whole service. The general exceptions being that the secretary would read the notices and that two deacons would give thanks for the bread and wine at the communion table. Baptists would seldom use a pre-written prayer, but might use prayer notes, and would sometimes quote a verse of a hymn or a passage of Scripture in their prayers. The deacons' prayers, while sometimes clichéd and formulaic were generally spontaneous. The number and type of prayers offered in a service were limited, consisting of, but not always including, opening prayer, pastoral prayer, sermon prayer and closing prayer or benediction. Prayers of confession, adoration, and intercession were less common. Overall the opportunities for spontaneity were limited to a few prayers offered by a select few people.

With the advent of the charismatic movement in the sixties and seventies, came new emphasis on spontaneity and body-life ministry. Open times of prayer and praise became more common and some churches encouraged and experienced ecstatic utterances such as words of prophecy, words of knowledge, words of wisdom and messages in tongues. This new spiritual activity invigorated some churches and split others. Current practices by New Zealand Baptists

suggest that this emphasis was not continued. In many churches, open times of prayer are rare and ecstatic utterances are infrequent. Pastors have reported that it is difficult to get people to pray in open times of prayer and that the silence can be embarrassing. 'Off the cuff' prayers have been criticised for their clichéd nature, for their lack of imagination and inspiration and their theological deficiencies. I contend that our forbears emphasis on spontaneity, while a little one-sided, is an emphasis that needs to be kept and held in tension with good preparation of worship.

That Baptists in one era could be opposed to singing, while other Baptists in another era made singing the major component of their worship seems at first contradictory. This contradiction can be resolved when the historic emphasis is probed to discover the underlying value, which is the desire to have 'spiritual worship'. It seems to me that spiritual worship may include or exclude prepared texts and it seems evident that prepared texts may have a number of advantages over spontaneity that may enhance Baptist worship.

For example, the current difficulties in getting people to pray or prophesy and the inadequate content for much public prayer I think point to a crisis of spiritual formation among our people. Our people are not competent to speak out loud in public worship because they have not been trained, either through formal catechesis or by the example of experts in the language who lead fluently in their prayers. My own experience indicates that the use of well-prepared litanies and prayers read responsively by the congregation or led by a member has the flow on effect of helping people to express their worship to God clearly when the opportunities for spontaneous expression are provided. The immediate experience of the Spirit's presence is not hindered by the use of prepared materials. The training in the skills of prayer by the use of well-constructed prayers rather increases the sensitivity of the congregation to the Spirit's presence.

Conclusion

Classic Baptist ecclesiology offers to the modern church some distinctives that are worth retaining. This Baptist vision of the church implies certain ways of engaging in worship. While Baptists retain the prerogative to exercise their liturgical freedom as the spirit leads, for the sake of consistency between Baptist worship and theology certain implications need to be reckoned with. The way Baptists envisage the

NOTES

- 1 Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Man in History: A Theological Study*, (London, Sheed and Ward, 1968) p. 38.
- 2 J. D. Crichton, *The Once and the Future Liturgy* (Dublin, Veritas Publications, 1977) p. 138.
- 3 Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, 'In the Presence of the Angels' in *A New Song for the Lord: Faith in Christ and Liturgy Today* (New York, Crossroad Publishing Company, 1996) p.129.
- 4 Ratzinger, *A New Song*, p. 142.
- 5 Alexander Schmemmann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*, transl. Ashleigh E Moorhouse, (London, Faith Press, 1966, reprinted 1970) p. 57.
- 6 Ratzinger, *A New Song*, p. 142.
- 7 Jean Danielou SJ, *The Bible and the Liturgy* (Indiana, University of Notre Dame Press, 1956) p. 135, quoting from St John Chrysostom's *On the Incomprehensible* PG XLVIII, 734 C.
- 8 Lucien Deiss C.S.Sp, *Springtime of the Liturgy: Liturgical Texts of the First Four Centuries*, transl. Matthew J O'Connell (Collegeville, The Liturgical Press, 1979) p. 194.
- 9 Deiss, *Springtime* p. 160.
- 10 Gregory Dix OSB, *The Shape of the Liturgy* (London, Dacre Press 2 ed. 1945) p. 188.
- 11 Austin Flannery OP (ed.) *Vatican Council II Vol I: The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents* (Collegeville, The Liturgical Press, 1975) *Sacrosanctum Concilium* # 8.
- 12 Edmund Bishop, *Liturgica Historica: Papers on the Liturgy and Religious Life of the Western Church*, (Oxford, OUP, 1918) p. 19.
- 13 Bishop, *Liturgica Historica* p. 19.
- 14 J.A.Jungmann SJ, *The Mass of the Roman Rite: its origins and development (Missarum Sollemnia)* transl. F. A. Brunner (New York: Benziger Brothers, 1951; replica edition Westminster, Maryland: Christian Classics, 1986) Vol. 2 pp. 127ff.
- 15 J.A.Jungmann SJ, *Public Worship* transl. Clifford Howell SJ (London: Challoner Publications, 1957) p. 128.
- 16 Ratzinger, *A New Song* p. 142.
- 17 M Francis Mannion, in editorial of *Antiphon* Vol. 3 No. 2, 1998 readily accessible at www.catholicity.com/Cathedral/scf/editor3~2.html

benefit from technical and spiritual formation from time to time. Regular diocesan music festivals could serve to introduce worthy music and to present it at a liturgy incorporating the best available movement, reading and preaching.

Liturgy is not something we create. The end result of thinking this way is that liturgy becomes entertainment. Prayerful participation, *participatio actiosa*, or 'integral participation' can only result when liturgy planners avoid adding ever-changing, unexpected elements that serve only to alienate congregations from prayer. The liturgy is not a venue for making chosen individuals feel important as they represent this or that group in unnecessary parades of people. Our focus must be on God as we participate in the heavenly liturgy. When we truly grasp this, our prayerful participation will bear the fruits of a deeper relationship with God, a desire to live out faith in our daily lives and a concern for those who most need our help.

Since the Age of the Enlightenment, church music has developed independently from art music and popular music. Vocal music in the liturgy is of three-strands; monody, polyphony and classical harmony. While much of today's concert music and popular music seems far from beautiful, the best of church music remains detached from these trends.

Fortunately liturgical literature is now receiving overdue attention. There are signs of a movement away from the minimalist language of the prayers in the current missal. Recent re-workings of the collects show leanings towards a Cranmerian beauty in expression while conveying more accurately than before, the meaning of the original Latin texts.

Good modern Eucharistic hymns are easily found. We need to encourage some of our musicians to dare to embrace some of the best and most ancient hymns too, even if the texts include 'thee' and 'thou'. Hymns with a good Eucharistic theology can create a heightened awareness of our involvement in the heavenly liturgy. Useful older examples are 'Ye watchers and ye holy ones', 'Let all mortal flesh keep silence' (from the Liturgy of St James), 'Alleluia, sing to Jesus', 'Lord enthroned in heavenly splendour', 'Ye holy angels bright', and 'O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness'. They help us appreciate that eschatological aspect of Eucharist recalled in the Corpus Christi antiphon: 'O sacred banquet in which...a pledge of future glory is revealed'.²⁶

church as *koinonia* of the Spirit implies that worship 'facilitators' will recognise the spiritual competence of all believers and work to encourage a full range of expressions of the gifts of the Spirit in preparation of and participation in worship. The desire for 'Spiritual' worship, which lies behind various Baptist historical emphases in the expression of worship, strongly suggests that Baptist worship should allow space for spontaneous expression. However, this should not limit the activity of the Spirit to spontaneity nor deny the church of the richness available in using prepared liturgical materials.

NOTES

- 1 I am not convinced that 'ordination' sits well with Baptist ecclesiology. Baptists do not recognise a clerical class, as such, who have entered into 'Holy Orders'. Baptism remains the only ordination in which all the faithful are commissioned as ministers.
- 2 Stanley J Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God* Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1994. 484
- 3 Further discussion on this point will be made in Section four.
- 4 Other reasons were offered to oppose singing as well. For one it was seen as being worldly. It might also mean that non-Christians would join the singing and thus pollute the worship. Singing may have been dangerous in that it attracted the attention of the authorities at times when the church needed to be underground.
- 5 A record of an *ordo* contained in a letter from 1609 notes that 'We begynne with a prayer, after reade some one or tow chapters of the Bible then gyve the sence thereof, and confer vpon the same, that done *we lay aside our bookes*' Emphasis mine. McBeth, *The Baptist Heritage: Four Centuries of Baptist Witness.*, *The Baptist Heritage* 91. Helwys, somewhat more moderate than Smyth, was also opposed to the use of books in worship. 'All books even the originalles them selves must be layed aside in the tyme of spiritual worship' from a letter quoted in H. Leon McBeth *The Baptist Heritage: Four Centuries of Baptist Witness*. Nashville: Broadman, 1987.92
- 6 *ibid.*, 93-95
- 7 *ibid.*, 93
- 8 *ibid.*, 94
- 9 *The Baptist Hymn Book* London: Psalms and Hymns Trust, 1963.
- 10 Terry Falla *Be Our Freedom Lord: Responsive Prayers and Readings for Contemporary Worship*. Adelaide: Lutheran Publishing House, 1981

Music

The *schola cantorum* or choir exercises its own liturgical function within the assembly. Its task is to ensure that it sings becomingly the parts that are proper to it, and that it encourages the active participation of the people in the singing. This also applies, in its own way, to the musicians, especially the organist.²¹

It is the function of a cantor or choir director to lead and sustain the people in singing. If there is no choir, it is up to the cantor to lead the various songs, with the people taking the parts proper to them.²² An appropriately talented and trained cantor should sing the psalm or the other biblical song that comes between the readings.²³

Introduction to the Mass

There is provision, after the opening liturgical greeting, for the priest, deacon, or another minister briefly to introduce the faithful to the mass of the day (IIIGIRM § 50).

Penitential invocations

The penitential rite is introduced by the presiding celebrant, though the invocations are able to be offered by a suitable minister.²⁴

Other ministries inside the sanctuary

Other ministries inside the sanctuary include carrying the missal, the cross, candles, the bread, wine, water, and the thurible. As with acolytes, lay women and men may be deputed to act as special ministers of communion.²⁵ They cannot act as 'ordinary' ministers of communion, a function that is reserved to the ordained.

Ministries outside the sanctuary

Excluding the ministries associated with music, there are a number of functions performed outside the sanctuary.²⁶ Commentators provide explanations and commentaries with the purpose of introducing the faithful to the celebration and preparing them to understand it better.²⁷ Others minister through greeting the congregation at the church entrance, seating them, directing processions, or taking up the collections. The third edition of the General Instruction also adds here the office of sacristan (IIIGIRM § 105a).

- 4 This tank has been used many times in Mt Carmel parish for emersion baptism of adults.
- 5 For the last seven years at Mt Carmel, we have used ashing as a symbol of repentance throughout Lent. For the year of Jubilee we marked ourselves every Sunday from the bowl which stood in front of the altar.
- 6 This was a reference to the liturgical season, ie Lent.
- 7 This was a reference to the motif I used on the Lenten altar cloth (fig. 2).
- 8 I used black cloth tape to mark out the stars.
- 9 These shapes were built to my specification (in MR MDF) by IN-WOOD, a Brisbane company of furniture manufacturers. I used half of my research allowance to fund this part of the project.
- 10 The printed phrases were produced to my specifications (in adhesive vinyl) by Design Craft, a Brisbane signwriting firm.
- 11 The text was compiled by the parish pastoral associate.
- 12 This is a reference to the sanctuary of Mt Carmel.
- 13 In the design of the fifth star banner, the star was at the centre of the three pronged cross.
- 14 A reference to the way the advent wreath was built up over the four weeks of Advent.
- 15 A reference to the forecourt at Mt Carmel.

public domain during the year 2000. The pyramid assemblage, which was situated in the forecourt, was visible to passers-by. It provided a link with the public celebration and an open invitation to the wider community.

What next?

In the next part of my project I will explore the relationship between pleasure, reflection and meaning in the reception experience. Further, I will critique traditional theological aesthetics in which 'beauty theory' continues to be the dominant paradigm. Traditional 'beauty theory' aligns the good, with the spirit, the mind and the masculine. In opposition it aligns sin, with the body, the senses and the feminine. So in traditional theological aesthetics creation is the site of sin and matter needs to be transcended for redemption to take place. For feminist theologians creation is the site of redemption. I hope to propose an alternative aesthetic to 'beauty theory' that I call 'the joy of living' in which all aspects of human experience are valued: sensual, emotional, intellectual, spiritual.

NOTES

- 1 Pope John Paul II designated 2000 a Year of Great Jubilee (beginning at the first Christmas mass of 1999). The year was, therefore, linked to the extensive jubilee tradition of Judaism. The Jewish tradition is described in Leviticus 25:8-12 which proclaims every fiftieth year a hallowed year in which prisoners are freed and the people are urged to take time off, to revisit their birthplaces and reconcile relationships with family. The Christian celebration of Jubilee was in line with the mission statement of Jesus in Luke 4:18-21 where he quotes from Isaiah. In this passage the Jubilee is pictured as freedom from oppression, poverty, and illness. The Year of Great Jubilee 2000 combined these two traditions and their themes of rest, return, healing, reconciliation, justice and celebration. Internationally, the church's focus was on seeking forgiveness for past wrongs done in the name of the church, and the cancellation of the debts of third world countries. For the Australian church the major justice issue was reconciliation with indigenous Australians.
- 2 These selections came from the Focus Group Report in second chapter of my thesis.
- 3 I use the term 'assemblage' to refer to one part of a whole seasonal liturgical installation. The flood figures assemblage was situated on the floor of the sanctuary near the altar.

THE ROLE OF A BISHOP COMING TO A CONGREGATION

The role of the bishop in the liturgy

The revised Instruction has brought out more forcefully the role of the bishop. It has done this chiefly by introducing numbers IIIGIRM § 22, 25 and 387. The emphasis now falls on the bishop as chief steward of the mysteries of God in the particular church entrusted to his care. The primary task of the bishop is set out: 'However, his primary task is to nourish the priests, the deacons and the faithful with the spirit of the sacred Liturgy' (IIIGIRM § 387). The bishop is called to exercise genuine spiritual oversight in accordance with the renewed liturgy: 'Therefore the Bishop must be resolved that priests, deacons and the lay faithful always grasp interiorly a genuine sense of the liturgical texts and rites, and thereby are led to an active and fruitful celebration of the Eucharist.' (IIIGIRM § 22). In detail, he is responsible for governance of concelebration, altar servers, the distribution of communion under both kinds, and the construction and ordering of church buildings (IIIGIRM § 387). As a member of the national Conference of Bishops, he also has an active role in decision making. The principle of pastoral necessity and responsiveness should not be forgotten here.

The bishop presides over the community gathered in prayer: 'The ministry of the bishop, the high priest and presiding member of the community gathered for prayer, has always held and still holds first place in the Church.'²⁸

The function of a bishop in particular celebrations of the eucharist

The function of a bishop in a particular celebration of the eucharist is set out succinctly in the General Instruction:

Every authentic celebration of the eucharist is directed by the bishop, either in person or through the presbyters, who are his helpers. Whenever he is present at a Mass with a congregation, it is fitting that the bishop himself preside over the assembly and associate the presbyters with himself in the celebration, if possible by concelebrating with them ... to express in a clearer light the mystery of the Church, which is the sacrament of unity. Even if the bishop is not the celebrant of the eucharist but assigns someone else, he should preside over the liturgy of the word and give the blessing at the end of Mass. (IIIGIRM 59)²⁹.

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- 20 IIGIRM 96; IIIGIRM § 135.
- 21 IIGIRM 63; IIIGIRM § 103.
- 22 IIGIRM 64; IIIGIRM § 104.
- 23 IIGIRM 67; IIIGIRM § 102.
- 24 The Latin text reads *Deinde sacerdos, vel alius minister idoneus, sequentes, vel alias, invocationes cum Kyrie eleison profert. Missale Romanum 1975, (MR 1975), 448. The official English translation reads (or another suitable minister), adding brackets*
- 25 IIGIRM 68; IIIGIRM § 100.
- 26 IIGIRM 68; IIIGIRM § 105.
- 27 Preferably the commentator does not stand at the lectern.
- 28 Sacred Congregation for Bishops, *Directory on the Pastoral Ministry of Bishops (Ecclesiae imago)*, 22nd February, 1973, 75.
- 29 The new Instruction retains this, adding emphasis on the dignity of the bishop himself by specifying that he wear the pectoral cross, stole, and cope over an alb (IIIGIRM § 92).
- 30 IIGIRM 153, 157; IIIGIRM § 199, 203.
- 31 IIGIRM 155; IIIGIRM § 202.
- 32 IIGIRM 156; IIIGIRM § 206.
- 33 Sacred Congregation for Rites, *Rite of Concelebration*, Introduction, 7 March, 1965: Vatican Polyglot Press, 1965, 4.

predisposes the members of the assembly to spectate rather than participate because all the action takes place in the sanctuary. The sanctuary, therefore, is the celebrating space. I have tried to subvert this tendency by using installation material to redefine the celebrating space to include the space occupied by the assembly – wherever that might be.

By placing artwork among the assembly and in the gathering space I try to activate those spaces so they too become part of the celebrating space. Defining and redefining the space to foster participation in the liturgy is an important aspect of my role as a liturgical artist. One example is my reinterpretation of the traditional Advent wreath.

Being a Southern hemisphere artist who is using Northern Hemisphere liturgical material means that I often need to reshape traditional images to make them relevant for my community. In the Advent of the Jubilee year, I made the wreath into a gathering circle. After reflecting on the stone circles of the ancient peoples of Europe and the earthwork *bora rings* of Aboriginal Australians, I shaped our wreath into a gathering circle of light – light being the central symbol of Christ at Christmas.

The four candles, each with their own circle of greenery, were placed at four stations around the perimeter of the assembly space. In addition, each station had a star banner hanging above it and these represented the four main stars of the Southern Cross constellation. The community, therefore, was gathered within a circle of earthly and celestial light. At Christmas the fifth candle (the Christ candle), with another star banner, was placed at the centre of the assembly so that the light of Christ shone out from the centre of the community. In this way the assembly space was converted from ‘spectator space’ to ‘celebrating space’. As one parishioner said: “the idea is to use the whole lot as sacred space, not just up there¹² – it’s the incorporation of everything.”

5. Evoking Responses

Explanations short-circuit the process of interpretation. The practice of liturgical art is not about explaining the multivalent symbolic material with which liturgy is replete; instead, my aim is to explore a variety of ways of imaging liturgical material hoping to evoke responses from the assembly. I frequently strive to evoke pleasure in the hope that reflection will follow.

The cross, always prominent in the Lent/Easter liturgies, was used in a variety of ways at Mt Carmel during 2000. There were three major

for a community Jubilee/Lenten reflection. In chronological order the phrases read: 'Our dreams for the new era'; 'Our fears for the new millennium'; 'We acknowledge the sins of a broken world'; and 'We recognise the signs of healing in a fractured world'. The fifth star was left vacant during Lent, but at the Easter Vigil the fire stand was placed in it.

Every Sunday the community remained outside for the gathering rite among the pyramids. After mass, parishioners were encouraged to write their comments on the blank sides of a pyramid. There was no trouble about filling one pyramid each week since the response, especially from children and young adults, was very encouraging. Everyone was urged to participate: those too young to write were asked to draw and those who spoke no English were invited to write in their own language. One parishioner commented:

I was surprised by the way people responded to writing on the pyramids because you could hardly get near them sometimes there were so many people anxious to write their thoughts. I thought they were very interactive symbols for both children and adults. I was very surprised at how people responded and just openly wrote and read what every body else had written and just moved around quietly, wrote their own thing.

As each pyramid was filled I added rainbow colours around the comments hoping that this would make some visual connections between the pyramids and the artwork inside. I also listed and classified every comment and did a content analysis to identify the recurring major themes. I posted brief notes of the weekly results of this research in the parish newsletter.

A mass for the forgiveness of sins was celebrated on the Monday of Holy Week and quotes from the pyramid comments were used in the text of the liturgy.¹¹ In addition, I made four pyramid/rainbow banners, covered in quotes, which were hung that night in the assembly space. My aim was to make more connections between the inside and the outside of the celebrating space and to draw the concerns of the parishioners into the action of the liturgy.

4. Inclusive definition of the celebrating space

Images can be used to unite the sanctuary with the assembly and gathering spaces and to create focal points within the space, eg at the font, ambo and altar. The interior arrangement of Mt Carmel

A Feminist Practice of Liturgical Art

Jenny Close

The very name 'liturgical art' implies that this is a purpose-driven genre: its main purpose is to facilitate greater participation in the liturgy by the assembly. Further, art can enhance the assembly's experience of liturgy by helping to make it relevant, enjoyable, thought provoking and spiritually enriching.

I work as a liturgical artist in the Catholic Archdiocese of Brisbane and my usual task is to make seasonal liturgical installations for my parish: Our Lady of Mt Carmel, Coorparoo. I work *mostly* within the Lent/Easter and Advent/Christmas seasons; but I am often commissioned to make or enhance liturgical environments for conferences and special events in the wider community of the Archdiocese.

By training, I am a painter: my first degree was in painting in the late 1970's. Since then I have studied feminist art theory, liturgy and theology as part of my postgraduate work in the 1990's. I am currently working on a doctoral thesis entitled *A Feminist Understanding of Liturgical Art* and this article is a small part of that project.

As a practicing liturgical artist and a feminist, I know the need for a conceptual framework for understanding what I am doing. A feminist practice requires a framework that is inclusive and firmly grounded in human experience. The construction of such a framework is the subject of my thesis; but it is also vital to my practice as image-maker for my faith community.

In this article, I aim to describe what it means to be a feminist artist working in a parish liturgical ministry and what it means to work from within, as a committed member of the parish community. It should be obvious, therefore, that I have a dual interest in this project: I care about the ongoing development of my practice, but I also care about how it affects my community. I have a sense of responsibility and commitment that, in liturgy-speak, is an integral part of 'ministry'.

The principles, which I outline here, emerged from my practice during the last decade of the twentieth century. To date, the year 2000, the Year of Great Jubilee¹, has been the most significant year for my practice of liturgical art. During the Easter season of 2000, and while

the Lent/Easter installation was still extant, I arranged four Focus Group discussions with twenty-five parishioners of Mt Carmel in order to learn about their reception of the artwork. This data proved to be a crucial part of my thesis. In order to illustrate the ideas expressed in this article, I have selected a few of the reflections² I gathered from parishioners involved in the Focus Group process and some photos of the Jubilee installations.

One thing I need to stress from the outset is that *often* the subject matter of my work is not explicitly feminist, but my methodology is. Therefore, the issues I mean to address here are related largely to methodology rather than to content.

Inclusive and holistic approaches

A feminist practice of liturgical art requires inclusive and holistic approaches. These approaches are not compatible with Dualism, a system of thought that divides things into categories of opposites where one is valued over the other, eg the mind over the body. Dualism creates hierarchies in which 'power over' is the norm.

Inclusive approaches allow for the sharing of responsibility. This means that I look for ways to invite community interaction with the work in the hope that no individual or group is marginalised. It also means that the community takes an active role in the meaning making process.

By 'holistic', I refer to those approaches that assume relationships between things rather than separations. Using holistic approaches means devising images that reflect the interdependent relationship of the various aspects of human experience including the sensual, emotional, intellectual and spiritual. It also involves images that make connections between our everyday experiences and our liturgical experiences.

Over the years I have identified seven ways in which the aims of a feminist practice of liturgical art can be achieved. These include the production of artwork which: (1) is integrated into the action of the liturgy; (2) is planned, made and interpreted collaboratively; (3) is interactive; (4) evokes responses from the community; (5) is life-relevant and life-enhancing; (6) defines the celebrating space in an inclusive way; and (7) reaches out beyond the parish community.

One parishioner described her interpretive process to me in the following terms:

I thought what is Jenny trying to say? And I'd stand back and try to be objective about it, and then I thought what was your basic message you put there according to the season⁶ we are in, and then as I come back each Sunday ... what does this mean to me, does this reflect my faith? Particularly with the hands⁷, I started thinking about reconciliation and about the Sea of Hands and about being down in Sydney on the wall in front of Parliament house ... and I thought of the hand of God reaching out. Every time I look at it I think of something else, which is why I guess I enjoy it so much.

This parishioner's reflections show that she was aware of my role as artist in the community. Further, the artwork evoked memories of her own experiences and those associations directly influenced her understanding and enjoyment of the work.

The expression and communication of meaning, rather than interpretation, is the work of the liturgical artist. It is my responsibility, therefore, to be artistically skilled, theologically informed, and spiritually mature (or at least to be progressing in those aspects of my life) so that I am able to make images which are life-relevant and life-enhancing for my community.

3. Interactive Installations

I am aware that most meaning-making happens during the interaction between the artwork and the celebrating assembly. Consequently, I am committed to making opportunities for this interaction. It is important that everyone in the community is welcome to participate: no one should be discouraged or excluded because of age, gender or cultural differences. I seek to engage the senses, imagination and intellect in pleasurable, thought provoking and prayerful interactions with the artwork, in the context of the liturgical action.

The most interactive part of the Jubilee installations was the pyramid assemblage (figs 3-4) which was situated in the forecourt of Mt Carmel and visible from the street. The five stars of the Southern Cross were marked on the floor of the forecourt.⁸ Blank, white, three sided pyramid shapes⁹ were placed in four of the stars. Each pyramid had a phrase that was printed at the base of its three sides.¹⁰ These phrases were used, one each week for the first four Sundays of Lent, as a focus

Collaborative planning

Planning liturgies at Mt Carmel is a collaborative experience. Our liturgy committee for 2000 consisted of four people: the music coordinator, who also acted as liturgical overseer; the parish priest, who was presider for most of the liturgies; the parish pastoral associate, who was wordsmith for the group; and me, the image maker. The flow of ideas in this group directly influenced my work.

Collaborative making

There were many occasions where collaborative efforts made a real difference to the experience of liturgical art at Mt Carmel. The design of the tripod-stand (fig. 2), for example, was a collaborative effort. I drew the original sketch which defined the shape, but Rick Dalmau (a fellow parishioner and a builder by trade) suggested the materials, designed the mechanism that held the structure together and supervised its construction by a company called IN-WOOD.

Since its construction in 1999 the stand has been used to hold bowls of ash for Lent⁵, of fire for the Easter Vigil and of water for infant baptism. Some interesting connections were suggested by these various uses between penance and baptism, and between the dangers and creative potential of both fire and water.

Working collaboratively is an integral part of my practice of liturgical art. I have found that, despite its difficulties, collaboration is a stimulating and challenging way of working. There is richness in shared wisdom and it gives me access to a range of skills, techniques and materials well outside my own area of expertise. Furthermore, it fosters a sense of ownership of the artwork within the community. Developing a trusting and generous relationship with collaborators requires some compromises on my part, however. I have to give them room to be creative and that is not always comfortable because this means that I don't have total control over what is happening.

Collaborative making of meaning

The content of liturgical art, ie the liturgical meanings and references, have always been of prime importance to my practice, but I have long suspected that the members of the community interpreted the images through the lens of their own life experience and faith journey. I have come to the conclusion that the expression and communication of meaning, rather than interpretation, is the work of the liturgical artist. Interpretation of the images is largely the role of the community.

1. Integration of art & liturgy

Liturgical art is at the service of the liturgy, it is a ministry. Its tasks are to enrich the experience of liturgy, to focus attention on the liturgical action and to create a sense of continuity within seasons and across the liturgical year.

The first reading for the first Sunday of Lent 2000 was the rainbow reading from Genesis which is part of the flood epic: the world is destroyed by the primal and chaotic waters until God offers a covenant of hope, signified by a rainbow, to Noah and his descendants. Here there are natural links between the positive power of the rainbow and the destructive, chaotic waters of the flood. The sign of hope arises from the very medium of destruction: a rainbow appears when the rays of the sun are refracted and reflected in drops of water. It is the infusion of light that tames the primal chaos; but both chaos and order are present in this sign of hope.

In the flood figures assemblage³ (fig. 1) I made use of an interesting paradox in the rainbow image. The figures flowed out of a water tank⁴ and onto the floor of the sanctuary towards the assembly space. A relationship between the flood and baptism, between the primal and the saving waters, was suggested. Here also was a play on seemingly opposite elements: negative/positive, dark/light, chaos/order, male/female.

My intention was to make the imagery an integral part of the whole liturgical experience. It is not uncommon for members of the parish to notice what I am trying to do; for example, the following comment was made in the course of a Focus Group discussion:

I thought Jenny is portraying something here, that she wants to capture our attention, that she wants to direct us toward one of the themes [of the liturgy] ... I know you did the artwork in Advent and then Christmas so I realise that one flowed into the other and you added over and above. We were preparing and now here we were actually celebrating and I thought God has entered our world!

2. Collaboration

At Mt Carmel, the responsibility for planning, making and interpreting liturgical art is shared (in varying degrees according to the needs of the time) under my stewardship. One of the advantages of collaboration is that it fosters a sense of community ownership of the work.



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3

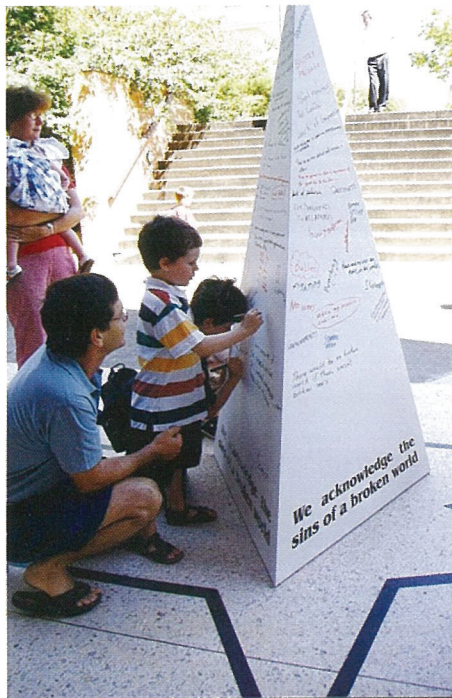


Figure 4

