

Liturgy



A magazine to support liturgical life in parishes, schools and faith communities.

Produced by the Catholic Diocese of Auckland, Liturgy Centre



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The Liturgy Centre - Te Kawe Ritenga Tapu

Mission Statement

To resource and energize our faith communities to participate fully, consciously and actively in the liturgy and so take up Christ's Mission.

MISSION MAP

Mata kaupapa Mihinana

The Diocesan Mission Map is the guideline for the communities, of faith communities, that make up the Diocese, to guide them in building a strong and authentic mission-focused Christian community.

Through the Diocesan Mission Map, Bishop Stephen Lowe and Bishop Michael Gielen urge all the baptised in the Diocese to follow Pope Francis' call to reach out beyond their parish, ethnic community and school boundaries to bring the good news and the love of Jesus to all. Particularly through:

**Strengthening our Catholic communities for missionary discipleship,
Building up the spirituality of our young people,
Caring for the poor.**

Cover image :

Children preparing to listen to the Word of God, Holy Trinity School, Takanini.

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Liturgy

*The quarterly magazine of the Liturgy Centre,
Catholic Diocese of Auckland*

March 2022

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From the Editor

I enjoy a walk. The 3.5km coastline between Maraetai and Umupuia is stunning. In December, the entire coast glows red with pohutukawa blossom, but really, it is no less beautiful at other times of the year. I walk the beach, not the road, which means avoiding high tide, unless you want to swim. Yes – I did, just once.

I often have a bag tucked into my back pocket so I can collect errant plastic before the fauna of the coastline become entangled or think it's their food. Last week's haul was more copious than usual, the normal stuff; plastic bags, drink bottles, bits of rope and twine.

Walking is much like meditation I find. A rhythm forms, a mantra matches pace with my footsteps. 'Peace,' is good. I find I can hold Ukraine as an intention within, while the mantra of peace gives shape to the longing that I feel, that you feel, that so many feel and long for at this time. We are overwhelmed by a sense of horror as one country crushes the oxygen supply of another. Walking is good.

I reach the end, then stop to consider my haul. A thought about the Eucharistic Prayer starts to form. An echo of these

words ruminates: 'It is truly right and just, our duty and salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Father most holy, through your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, your Word through whom you made all things ...' a familiar preface to the Eucharistic Prayer. I find myself wondering about the correlation between giving thanks for 'all things' and living amongst 'all things'.

The Eucharistic Prayer, is our thanksgiving prayer. Eucharist – to give thanks. The Eucharistic Prayer calls us, not just to a sense of gratitude in the liturgical moment, but to live with a sense of gratitude each day. An attitude of gratitude cannot be separated from an attitude of care. Gratitude and care are interwoven. We care for what we are grateful for. We are grateful for what we care for.

In the Eucharistic Prayer, we pray in gratitude for all that is. Gratitude then spills over into care ... for all that is. This great prayer of the Church challenges us not to be indifferent to how we live on the earth. It challenges us to be caring about the state of our beaches, our roadsides, our waterways, our climate, our atmosphere, so that we can pray in a heartfelt way, 'it is truly

right and just, our duty and salvation, always and everywhere to give' thanks to you God who has 'made all things.' When we picnic in the heart of beauty, a spirit of gratitude shelters us, and leaving a drink bottle, a chip packet or an ice-block stick to the whim of wind and tide is contrary to the nature we are growing into.

Liturgy is a matter of words, but words must retain and bear the weight of meaning. If words become disconnected from meaning, boredom ensues and irrelevance is risked. A prayer of gratitude requires a spirit of gratitude and this spirit of gratitude needs to spill over into the days between, spanning the time and space from one liturgy to the next. We don't wear one garment for life and another for liturgy. They are one and the same.

'Because liturgy is a matter of language and gesture it is most sensitive to destruction by dishonesty. Hence honesty, a linking between what we say and what we do is a fundamental quality both in the liturgy and between liturgy and life.'

Thomas O'Loughlin
The Rites and Wrongs of Liturgy.

So, there it is. Linking what we say during the liturgy and what we do

during the week is fundamental. Liturgy, as we know, is the work of the people. Part of that work is the work of between times, between this liturgy and the next. Thanking God, who 'made all things', invites us to use 'all things' with conscious, considerate, sustainable care.

Taking a walk is just one more opportunity in a week of opportunities to care and to wrest gratitude from the shade of a pohutukawa lamenting the blemish of plastic stuffed among its roots. For care and gratitude are interwoven - we are grateful for what we care for. I hope it will not be long before my next walk, or yours.

Judith Courtney



The walk's end.

Knowing Our Story, is a series of stories compiled by Manuel Beazley, about the land or whenua on which our Tamaki Makaurau-Auckland churches are built. We cannot exist separate from place. We live and dwell in a place which has a history, a story behind it. Knowing the story adds wholeness to our being, and our being there.

Waiuku

St Anthony's

*Manuel is the Vicar for Māori in the Catholic Diocese of Auckland.
He is of Ngāi Tupoto, Te Rarawa and Ngāti Kaharau, Ngāpuhi descent.*

Waiuku is situated where a significant portage route existed between north and south, the name of the portage, Te Pae o Kaiwaka. The southern-most tip of the Manukau Harbour is only 10km by foot to the Waikato River, from where travel by waka on the great river could reach the heart of Te Ika a Maui, the North Island. For Māori, Te Pae o Kaiwaka was an important location on part of a major highway.

The town of Waiuku takes its name from an old story about two brothers who both loved the same woman, the daughter of a chief from the Waikato. The brothers, Tamakae and Tamakou were the two who sought the woman as their wife. Tamakou was an orator and the first to meet her when she travelled to the area looking for a husband. Tamakae's skill was working in the fields and growing crops for



the iwi. After meeting Tamakou, the chieftainess requested a meeting with Tamakae who was in the field working at that moment. To prepare to meet her, Tamakae washed in the wai – water, and bathed in the uku, a particular

type of white mud found at the mouth of a nearby stream that flows into the Manuaku Harbour. Tamakae won the chieftainess's favour and they were married. Because of this, the area has been called Waiuku ever since.

Welcome - Bishop Steve Lowe

On Saturday February 19th, Steve Lowe was welcomed and installed as the 12th Bishop of Auckland. The ceremony took place under the red-light setting of the Covid Protection Framework, meaning few were able to be present at the Cathedral of St Patrick and St Joseph, but many were present in spirit and online.

Following a trip to the northern regions of the Diocese, Bishop Steve remarked, 'I visited Panguru Parish celebrating a vigil Miha at Motuti and



Bishop Steve with student representatives

the Sunday Miha at Panguru. It was deeply significant to be with Bishop Pompallier and to pray there as I begin the mission. He is a good icon for us in the Diocese, of a missionary disciple who learnt the language of the people and was able to build bridges between the culture and people he encountered, and Jesus Christ and his Church. This remains our mission.'

We offer our heartfelt thanks to Bishop Pat Dunn who has served the Diocese and Aotearoa New Zealand faithfully, energetically and compassionately. Bishop Dunn was ordained Bishop of Auckland in 1994 and retired in December 2021.



Bishop Steve and Bishop Pat

How Covid has Changed Liturgy and Prayer in Catholic Schools - *Two schools reflect*

Holy Trinity School

Ana Silva

Ana is DRS of Holy Trinity Catholic Primary School ,Takanini

As a Catholic community, before Covid, we would gather to celebrate liturgy in our sacred space and it was always wonderful to see our families attend. Each learning community took turns to prepare and lead liturgies and many families came to these on Monday mornings. It's was such a beautiful way to set the scene for the week ahead, and a time to reflect as a school on the Sunday Gospel. The senior leadership team took turns to break open the Word and there was time for students and whanau to reflect on the senior's words. We were able to see all the symbolic elements that create our prayer focus and feel the spirit of reverence in our gathering.

Our senior students have developed

confidence in planning and leading liturgies with the support of the teachers and they loved adding their own creative flavour to the liturgy, through liturgical dance, role play and drama. These were the moments that stayed with the children, especially the very young. Because of these moments, the younger children were able to participate in the liturgy and develop a deeper understanding of the message. They loved the singing too!

Now, we are gathered virtually. Yes, we follow the same format- we proclaim and break open the Word, we share a prayer of the faithful and yes, we have beautiful songs. But we yearn to be together physically so we can experience again the spiritual connection which happens



Children of Holy Trinity School bless their parents and whanau, pre-Covid-19 pandemic.

when we gather as a whole school faith community. We gather in our bubbles, adhering to all the necessary guidelines that we have been given, but it just isn't the same.

One of the things we appreciate about virtual gatherings is that our families are always enthusiastic about taking part in the liturgies and sometimes will even ask the teachers if they can have a turn, soon! It's great! Perhaps the next step would be to look at ways to inspire the same enthusiasm for our families to be involved in our Parishes, with the children leading the way.

We celebrate our liturgies on Zoom, with our microphones on mute. Sometimes,

for those who are learning from home, it can be hard to find a quiet space to sit and be still and just be present for the liturgy. We all have different home circumstances and sometimes, it just doesn't work for students or families.

We are very limited in the way we can celebrate liturgy together, so we continue to pray for a time when we will be together and can share in communal prayer as a whole school once again. But for now, we reminisce about what we used to do and when we do return, which hopefully will be soon, we can really make sure that we celebrate our liturgies with more zest and not take our 'gathering' for granted.

St Mary's School

Bernadette Pause: Bernadette is DRS of St Mary's Catholic Primary School Papakura

At St Mary's our students understand that a liturgy is an opportunity to engage, participate and give everyone present an opportunity to feel the presence of Jesus in our midst. The highlights of our year are most definitely our Holy Week liturgies and our Assumption Liturgy. During the year we have smaller liturgies as well, each with their own Jesus encounters, but these two events create an opportunity for ALL students to be involved and participate in different individual roles.

Holy Week:

Holy Week starts with our junior students acting out the Palm Sunday Gospel story. All our students dress up in their Jesus clothes and line up in the driveway, waving palms at Jesus and his disciples as they walk past. We listen to the Gospel story and sing Hosanna songs on entering and exiting the hall. The Gospel stories are stretched in special ways through collaboration with the children who have input in every scene. The Last Supper and Agony in the Garden are two important stories where our students have touched us

all in such a significant way. When the senior students lead us in the Stations of the Cross, there is not a dry eye in the room. Every year these stories are told differently as we add different elements like liturgical dancers or an extra scene to accommodate students with no roles, yet still staying true to the original Gospel story.

Assumption Liturgy

Over the years, this very important liturgy evolved from a basic one-role liturgy, to multiple roles for our students. The six year old girls and their white tutus now join our seven and eight year old liturgical dancers to enhance the liturgy. Elizabeth sings when Mary visits her and our lovely Mary sings the Magnificat. One year, at the end of our liturgy, Mary was cloaked with a beautiful family korowai. We saw and experienced Mary in such a real way. Our senior girls joined Mary in their cultural clothes to emphasize the significance of Mary in each ethnic group.

Prayer and Meditation

Our prayer gardens create opportunities for classroom, staff or individual prayer. Scriptures on tiles and stones, a beautiful mosaic cross and a pathway for Stations of the Cross are special spots to engage in prayer. Buddy benches are placed strategically for chatting or praying with a buddy. Meditation is well established in our school and Father Peter Murphy's meditation bowl is well

used every day after lunch.

How has the pandemic changed this?

During the first lockdown in 2020, our school community was rocked with the sudden death of one of our students. Our morning prayer became urgent and fervent in each household as families joined via zoom. On the day the family took him to their marae, the hearse came to the school. The family walked from their house alongside the hearse, our school families lined the street on both sides, our cultural groups welcomed him onto the field and he lingered long enough for us to say our goodbyes. Even the builders on a building site nearby stopped working. This in itself became a special liturgy where these moments were not planned but had the natural flow of the Holy Spirit binding us together with a spiritual chord and lasting memories.

Later in the year we were hit with a second tragic blow when one of our student leaders also passed away. Once again our prayer life deepened. Our chapel became a place for individual students to pray with a counselor, our prayer gardens became spots of reflection.

Even though these two sad events overshadowed our other liturgies, they each had a different impact and were in different ways, poignant reminders of the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives and in our community. It gave us

an opportunity to reflect on how we do liturgy. Is it controlled and timed to suit our day, or do we really allow the Holy Spirit to flow naturally and linger in our midst?

During lockdown, technology has allowed many parents to be present, even while they were at home. Many joined our morning prayers and liturgies during the lockdowns as they found they could make time to join. Under normal work hours, they were unable to be present due to work commitments. We would just get a handful of parents coming to our liturgies.

How have we changed?

Have we lost the essence of our school liturgies? No, because we do not “gather” in one spot but we extend and “gather” in the homes of our school community. Our students become individual disciples as they lead prayers in their own homes. Our Religious Education lessons become lessons for everyone listening in the background while they tune in on zoom every morning. Our student leaders proclaim the Good News on our Facebook page and we reach a wider audience to spread the Gospel. Candles are lit in multiple homes at the same time and families engage prayerfully.



St Mary's School senior students lead the school in praying the Stations of the Cross.



Pandemic Prayer and Liturgy

A Personal Reflection - 1

by Brendan Bergin

Brendan preaches the Good News of Jesus Christ as a Religious Ed Adviser (Catholic Education Auckland), liturgist, and theological anthropologist

Our pandemic experience has contributed to a radically different understanding of what it means to be the people of God and the Body of Christ, extending to areas of our lives that are innately human and therefore painful. Think for one instant of those lockdown moments when you were unable to join a family meal, embrace a grandchild or reminisce with a friend. Lockdown, and more recent iterations thereof, have deprived us of Eucharistic encounters, forcing us to plod on without the indwelling, God-originating grace, of whanau and community experiences. Liturgy is ultimately about connection.

As someone once said, 'You can't send an apple in an email!' I have discovered different yet familiar expressions of gathering, prayer and liturgy online that have extended my computer skills, accentuated the online profile of my choosing, providing much flexibility and a few boundaries about when and how God interrupts my life! I have been able to nurture a spiritual identity and create an online presence that has suited me, my family and my lifestyle.

Paradoxically, this has brought me to a deeper encounter of prayer, spirituality, God and self that may otherwise not have been available to me. Me and my online image of God... Imago Dei!

It certainly had its moments. I don't think I'm alone in confessing to electronic burnout, inertia and inadequacy accompanying those Zoom conversions and baptisms by fire (or was that the Easter Vigil huddled around gas burners and barbeques on Ponsonby patios streaming incense-absent blazes on my mobile into the living rooms of unsuspecting parishioners). It was

Lockdown, and more recent iterations thereof, have deprived us of Eucharistic encounters, forcing us to plod on without the indwelling, God-originating grace, of whanau and community experiences. Liturgy is ultimately about connection.

definitely communal! For me things kind of plateaued during the second lockdown when I was asked to be the live editor for streamed presentations from my faith community once again, having barely survived the onslaught of electronic production from Easter Triduum liturgies the year before. Game of Thrones had nothing on us!

And yet, it was during these times too that I was able to draw deeply from my own personal, online experiences of prayer, preaching, reflection and intercession upon God's Word that brought my spiritual life to a different plane, one that resonated more closely with an experience of God who walks with us in the vestiges of remote (dis)connection and 'working from anywhere'. Like Elijah I discovered God, not in the volcanic Covid earthquakes and explosions of global outbreak, but in the four corners of my bedroom and the fresh, earthy colours and smells of my autumn garden, flaming out 'like shining from shook foil.' *Gerard Manley Hopkins, God's Grandeur*

In his article titled *Caveat Pastor* priest theologian Thomas O'Loughlin reminds us of some important limitations of streamed Masses and other prayer and liturgical celebrations...

'If we peddle the illusion that there is a streamed surrogate (and many of those who are streaming images of a cleric celebrating his Eucharistic act

are saying something like this), we may not only confuse people at a practical level, but also be leading sisters and brothers astray: giving the illusion that celebration is a matter of info sharing!'

(Catholic News, Sunday April 26th, 2020)

So God, bring on the real deal! I too anticipate some special reunions as parishes and faith communities gather together in physical community once again. No liturgical business as usual! Our learnings during the pandemic will provide fresh ideas and appreciation about how we participate and what we celebrate. Liturgy, prayer, Mass must be changed and our pandemic practices pontificated. May they also be directed at the beauty and reality of our streamed and messy lives that have ultimately reflected our 'co-dependency' on God. This is beautifully described in the Latin phrase *creatio ex nihilo*.... creation's complete dependence on the Creator who is greater ... and for all to see, accept and pray over ... without judgement and with gratitude for what has been blessed by God's zooming grace.



Photo GoranH Pixabay



Pandemic Prayer and Liturgy

A Personal Reflection - 2

by Teresa Wackrow

Teresa, the former editor of Liturgy magazine and Coordinator of The Liturgy Centre, is a wife, mother, grandmother and companion to many.

I write this on Shrove Tuesday, conscious that I have a 'ticket' to the morning Ash Wednesday Mass tomorrow and that many in the parish will have missed out by not being quick enough off the mark. We will be given the ashes in a small pouch, along with the words, 'Repent and believe in the Gospel,' to take home to administer to ourselves and other family members and perhaps neighbours. How sad this method of the distribution of ashes will be for those who live alone or in a household with no other believer. And so begins our Lenten observance, thirsting for the fullness of our usual liturgical services in the presence of the people of God.

My sister-in-law was diagnosed with terminal cancer at the beginning of August 2021 and as she lived alone, she spent many days without company over the fifteen weeks of lockdown. Her own parish priest told us the *Ministry of the Sick* was not operating during this time, as was the case in many parishes. As family members our own parish priest gave us Holy Communion to take to

our sister Ann. Once hospitalised she did receive the Sacrament of Anointing from the priest chaplain. She died on the morning the border restrictions into Auckland eased, too late for family members who lived in other parts of New Zealand. Ann did not own a computer but was able to tune into the Sunday Mass on Shine TV for which she was grateful. During her months of illness she prayed constantly for those in need among her family, friends and community.

In our own parish we have been fortunate to have a very hard working and tech-savvy priest who has made sure parish Masses have been online every day during periods of lockdown and all thanks to him for his efforts. I know the hours he must have put in to this way of ministering alone to his parish family. He rejoices, along with his parishioners, that we are able to be together again to celebrate Mass, albeit with limited numbers and a booking system.

Online Masses though have much of a 'pre Vatican Two' feel to them. Or should I say 'pre-liturgical movement, pre-Pope Pius X's call for frequent reception of Holy Communion by all the People of God' (Sacra Tridantina synodus, 1905). Online Masses have the appearance that it is only the priest who matters, the people are invisible and not able to receive Communion. We have all felt this loss.

The internet has lessened to some degree the feeling of being isolated from the community of the Church. Access to the daily Scripture readings, zoom and online Masses and prayer services have been helpful.

In our household during lockdowns we have shared the Sunday readings, taking turns to read each passage and to pray the psalm together. We have

followed this with shared reflection on the Gospel and our own Prayer of the Faithful, praying for the Church, the world and those in need. These have been special prayerful times for us as we appreciate our shared faith. When the Covid restrictions allowed, we were sometimes joined by our Catholic neighbour. We called these times our 'Service of the Word with coffee and muffin' in recognition of our deprivation of receiving Holy Communion.

This week the suffering of the people of Ukraine eclipsed the news stories of the, hopefully, waning worldwide Covid pandemic. During these weeks of Lent let our heartfelt prayers be for all those who suffer and may we look forward in hope to celebrating the Risen Christ in the full presence of our communities this Easter.



'When the Covid restrictions allowed, we were sometimes joined by our Catholic neighbour. We called these times our 'Service of the Word with coffee and muffin.'

Photo Dana Tentis, pixabay



From Spectator to Participant

Thomas O'Loughlin

Thomas O'Loughlin is a presbyter of the Catholic Diocese of Arundel and Brighton and professor-emeritus of historical theology at the University of Nottingham (UK).



An inherited space, restructured to help the gathering experience of being participants in a common action rather than spectators.

photo Tom O'Loughlin

When we gather for worship we always find ourselves in a strange place. On the one hand, the God we worship transcends the whole creation. Usually expressed using a shorthand that was a brilliant joke in the mid-second century – *creatio ex nihilo* – this is a phrase that for us is often less than clear, but it is as close to an absolute as we can get. We do not know what we mean by the word 'god' and if we once imagine we understand, at that moment we land ourselves in nonsense. Yet we still must

address God! On the other hand, we are also firmly within the created order – and we bring all our human nature to our worship. God is beyond the creation, we are firmly within it.

This means that all liturgy must be in a state of purification and reform – all the time. Here lies the foolishness of those who imagine that some ancient rite (such as that promulgated in 1570) can continue without improvement.

Likewise, the notion that 'change and experimentation' ended after Vatican II at some legally defined moment is nonsense because that would assume a perfection that will only occur at the conclusion of our human journey.

The process of purification is also different for the two aspects of our worship. We have to try to remove from our vision of God everything that is confusing and unworthy. A confusion, for example, is to imagine that the solemn is identical with the sacred. Another confusion is to imagine that we can contain God or buy God's love or favour. We live most of our lives as traders and consumers – and so we

bring this baggage with us to worship, and we falsify God (at best) or create an idol or blaspheme (at worse). We also forget to shake off our hang-ups. Nationalists always assume that God and their flag are intimately related. Conservatives think they are serving God when they advance their political agenda. The list is endless.

The process of reform means that the liturgy must be rooted in our humanity and speak to it. Only then will we be able to speak what is deepest within us to one another and to God. The liturgy must be rooted and re-rooted in our experience – for when this link is damaged, then our liturgy becomes a duty, a bore, something that we do but which is lifeless. Any liturgy that is not speaking to us in our depths as humans, will soon be a depopulated liturgy – we see the empty church-buildings – and becomes just a set of formulae that are drained of vitality.

Liturgia semper reformanda

We all know the tag *ecclesia semper reformanda* – change and improvement must not stop. But fewer people realise that if liturgy is at the heart of the Church's life, then there is another basic truth: *liturgia semper reformanda*.

This means that any criterion for liturgy that is based on repeating an earlier pattern is almost certainly wrong-headed: each situation generates a liturgy, and as the situation changes,

so must its liturgy.

A very simple expression of this is the use of elaborate vestments. In a world where the rich and socially significant displayed their place by special dress and by degrees of elaborateness in dress, so too the liturgy took on that form. Whether or not it should have done so is irrelevant: it happened! But just as the grades of nobility were demonstrated by their costume and the ranks of an army by ever more splendid uniforms, so too the clergy. But we live in a world where such dress codes have little value: in terms of dress there is little difference between the suit worn by Vladimir Putin, Xi Jinping, Joe Biden, or the guy who tried to sell me a new car a few weeks ago! So – if you were designing a liturgy from scratch, you would not have vestments, much less those brocaded in the style of Renaissance court-dress or Napoleonic officers.



This is a language of robed power: it belongs more to a European vision of politics in court dress and the military in dress uniforms than to a desire to express the pilgrimage of everyday discipleship in contemporary society. Photo La Croix

In a world where that language of elaborate dress is not used, to spend time using it merely says that you do not realise that the world has moved on. The few clerics who still use it may think they are saying something useful, but actually they are speaking in a dead language. They are sending a message: this is just of antiquarian interest. Or, it could be worse: they are doing it because they think it is fun. If this is the case, we need to pray for them. They are using worship, and the ministry they claim they have to serve the people, to serve their own whims. This is the antithesis of liturgy which means, literally, the work of the people.

The liturgy must speak in today's language of the deepest needs of human beings – and this means constant reform – so that those needs can be seen to be brought before God. And in creating an image of God in this process, all concerned should be getting an ever-less-contaminated understanding of that Mystery beyond words – more constant reform.

The Spirit is at work

This continual renewal of the liturgy, plumbing the depths of the human spirit and the depths of the Divine, is the work of the Holy Spirit. Creative in the beginning, the Spirit is creative now in each human heart. And we continually renew our liturgy to give expression and incarnate reality to this on-going re-creation by the Spirit.

Our liturgical renewal is a response to the Spirit for which we pray:

Veni sancte Spiritus, reple tuorum corda fidelium ... et renovabis faciem terrae.

Come, Holy Spirit, fill-up the faithful's hearts ... and you will renew the face of the earth.

Greatest challenge

In our society the greatest challenge facing all who lead the Church's worship is that many western, urban, first-world people see all liturgy as simply a show. It might be useful at funerals – though ever fewer people opt even for this minimal involvement with the Church – and the odd event you cannot avoid (such as Confirmation if your child is in a church-run school), but it is of little real worth. If you have to attend, then you do so as a spectator. And you hope that the performance will not be too long – it all feels rather pompous and artificial. Luckily, if you are discreet you can use your phone to catch up on messages – no one minds, it is at least a good use of time!

So before we can do anything else we have to offer our sisters and brother an opportunity to move from being a passive spectator to an active participant.

Walter Gropius

Nearly a century ago, the great architect Walter Gropius (1883-1969) faced the same questions when asked to design a theatre that would give new life to

performances that seemed lifeless after that great triumph of nationalism: the First World War. Gropius is now famous as an architect and as the founder of the Bauhaus, but he was also a profound philosopher.

Faced with reforming theatre, he came up with the notion of 'the theatre in the round' where the division between stage and auditorium, between actors and audience, between 'them' and 'us' were blurred. Asked why he did this, he replied that it was: *'a response to our unconscious need to create again a vita communis, a form of life which transforms the passive spectator into an active participant.'*



The vita communis

I wish everyone who leads liturgy would remind themselves of this every time they preside. A basic human need – and so an authentic starting point for liturgy – is to experience a common life. This is life that Cain rejected in the story in Genesis, this is the antithesis of contemporary individualism, but it is also a basis for all liturgy. We worship in common. Liturgy is an expression of the

vita communis. Liturgy is the antidote to self-centredness.

But note that Gropius also knew something else: we are often unconscious of this need. We want to recreate a vita communis – but we do not know this and, frequently, we reject the idea as a silly one!

What does it look like?

If we can create a real sense of being at the Lord's Table, then we have liturgy in the round. If we are assembled in the round, then we are faced with a choice: do I participate or do I not? I cannot simply spectate and play with my phone.

Liturgy in the round poses to each an existential choice. Am I here to take part in a common celebration of our common life before a loving God? Am I here just because it is expected and I want nothing to do with either those around me or the religious stuff?

If we can create a space where these become real questions, we will have a living liturgy.

Renewal and reform is the task of helping people to move from being passive spectators to being active participants. Anything less – no matter how elaborate or solemn or packed full of inherited symbols – is just a performance, and a failure.



The Gift of Spiritual Direction

Sandra Armstrong

Sandra is a wife, mother, grandmother, spiritual companion, Baptism Preparation team member and Friendship Club President. She enjoys the solitude of nature, hiking, boating, cycling and the company of family and friends.

“For when two or three are gathered in my name, then, I am there with them.”

Matthew 18:20

To better understand the term spiritual direction, it is helpful to begin with a definition from Barry and Connolly's book *The Practice of Spiritual Direction*.

“We define Christian spiritual direction, then, as help given by one Christian to another which enables the person to pay attention to God's personal communication to him or her, to respond to this personally communicating God, to grow in intimacy with this God and to live out the consequences of the relationship.

The focus of this type of spiritual direction is on

experience, not ideas, and specifically religious experience. i.e any experience of the mysterious Other whom we call God. Moreover, this experience is viewed not as an isolated event but as an ongoing expression of the ongoing personal relationship God has established with each one of us.”

William Barry and William Connolly

Barry and Connolly begin their definition with the idea that “help is given by one Christian to another, to enable that person to pay attention to God's personal communication to him or her.....

In the practice of spiritual direction this help normally takes place intentionally as the directee and director meet at a prearranged time and place. Spiritual Direction takes place within

the framework of a distinct kind of friendship where one person acts as the director (guide, soul-friend, companion on the way) and the other as the directee (seeker, soul-friend, spiritual companion). Usually, the director is a little further along the way in his/her experience of hearing from the mysterious Other we call God.

'Directors and directees are dedicated to listening for God's ways, desires and invitations. They meet together to listen to the Holy Spirit and to each other, for the benefit of the directee.' Jeanette A Bakke, *Holy Invitations*,

In *Evangelii Gaudium*, Pope Francis describes accompaniment by using the analogy, of 'removing our sandals before the sacred ground of the other' EG169.

Spiritual direction, or spiritual companioning or accompaniment, is holding a sacred space for the other; a holy ground, as directee and director sit quietly with the knowledge the Holy Spirit is present to guide during the session.

'It is in this sacred space that the directee shares his or her story and in the encounter is enabled to discern God's movement, activity or presence. The process of intentionally meeting with a director can be seen as a 'spiritual discipline and like other Christian disciplines that have played a

part in the lives of numerous Christians, it helps us hear, see and respond to God.' Jeanette Bakke, *Holy Invitations*.

During a session of spiritual direction, the focus will be on experience of the mysterious Other. It can be very hard for a directee to focus on one's inner life when there is so much going on in the outer world. An experienced Director will let the directee talk, waiting for a suitable time to ask an open question with a deliberate focus on the inner experience or activity of God.

Once the focus has turned to God, it won't necessarily follow that a directee will have the discernment, experience, or learning to see God's activity in their situation and it is here that the director gives gentle direction. 'What is God's invitation in this?' or 'And how is God wanting to be for you in this situation?' An immediate response may not come, so the directee is invited to take the question away, to mediate and pray with it. 'To be still and know that I am God' Psalm46:10.

In the closing sentence of Barry and Connolly's definition, they speak of any religious experience, 'to be viewed, not as an isolated event, but as an ongoing expression of the ongoing personal relationship the mysterious Other, or God, has established with each one of us.'

This suggests that we are involved

in something; an ongoing something that God is orchestrating. We are on a journey, moving toward God, as God calls us into relationship. This is a journey we are not called to travel

alone. Not only do we have the gift of spiritual companions we have the gift of liturgy and the sacraments. Heightened awareness of God's presence and overwhelming love impacts one's



An example from scripture is the wonderful story of Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan woman at noon, at the well. The focus of this passage is on drawing the Samaritan woman, from her external, practical, sensing world, into her internal intuitive world and to help her see ... the truth.

Photo: [Flickr](#) by DM [CC](#)
Art: The Woman at the Well by Carl Bloch

ability to relate, to be reconciled, to co-operate with the mysterious Other's life-giving force.

Liturgy comes to life in new ways as one is able to enter it more deeply, as one sees, hears and experiences the words, the movement, the beauty of liturgy. There is a shift from one's outer world and preoccupations with the busyness of life, to one's inner world, to being totally present, to engaging with the liturgy, with our heart, mind and soul, with the very essence of our inner selves, to encounter God and the community we are gathered into.

Spiritual Direction is therefore of the holy and mystical. It is a sacred space where two companions (director and directee) meet together for the primary purpose of focusing on God's activity and presence in the directee's life. Spiritual Direction recognises the Spirit of God is always actively working and we need help to learn the skills of noticing it and co-operating with this life-giving force through both good and bad times. The understanding we are called into, is deeper and deeper relationship with our God, through the gift of spiritual companionship.

An example from scripture is the wonderful story of Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan woman at noon, at the well. The focus of this passage is on drawing the Samaritan woman, from her external, practical, sensing world,

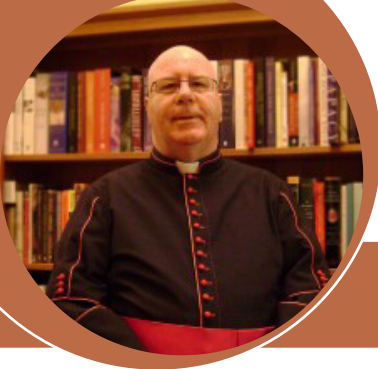
into her internal intuitive world and to help her see what she believed to be the truth, the scripture prophecy about 'the arrival of the Messiah who will explain everything.'

By refocusing on the spiritual inner world, she was helped to move from the everyday, mundane external world, to the inner world of the sacred and aspirational. To draw on the source that inspires and uplifts.

***'I am the One who wants
to draw from you
From the reservoirs there
at your core
Love and patience, gentleness, joy
and understanding
That get pushed aside in the
busyness and hurt of life.
I am the One who keeps
in touch with you.
And so more real and open and
honest and quiet with me.
I am the One who offers
my perspective
as you sit and wait
and focus on me
I am the Quietener
of your Soul.'***

Who are you Lord to Me
Margaret Dunn

A Spiritual Director can be accessed through the Association of Christian Spiritual Directors, NZ <https://acsd.org.nz/>



Coffee With Mons



*In this interview with Paul Farmer (PF) we (LC) discuss
Liturgy and Its Quality*

LC Is there a dimension of quality to liturgy: good or poor?

PF Yes liturgy can and does vary in quality. We need to think about this. 'Good celebrations can foster and nourish faith. Poor celebrations may weaken it.' So it is always important how we celebrate the liturgy. STTL p5

LC What is good liturgy?

PF Everyone has a different answer to this question. For some it's about feeling good, others, about being entertained, others, being together as a community, for others its being aware of what we cannot see. And that is a problem. We need to find a shared understanding of what good liturgy is. Everybody wants good liturgy. People are looking for good liturgy but they often leave hungry, desiring more, or disappointed.

LC Why do we have these different understandings?

PF As a Church, we were for centuries, used to everyone except the priest being passive during Mass. People went to 'hear' Mass. The priest was the only one who was active. Father

said the Mass and the people passively got the 'fruits' of the Mass. The people filled in the time with private prayers, the rosary, their own devotions, and the bells told people when to be attentive. The pre-Vatican II Mass is still embedded deeply in Catholic culture. I think there are two phrases in our catholic vocabulary that are unhelpful. One, 'I'm going to Church,' the other, 'Father is saying Mass.' Both of these expressions suggest a passive attendance. A thought still lingers in the Catholic mind that we only need to turn up for the main or important part of the Mass which begins at the preparation of the gifts.

LC How did this change with Vatican II?

PF In the reform of the liturgy, we were told that every baptized person was called to participate. That was a huge shift. It is 60 years since the Council but we still really haven't got our heads around the idea of full, conscious and active participation. To celebrate the post-Vatican II Mass, we must have a post-Vatican II mindset. New wine for new wineskins! The

people pray as a community **with** the priest who presides. The liturgy is always a community prayer.

LC What enhances liturgy?

PF Preparation and participation. People not participating or wanting to be private or alone at Mass is unhelpful, having a spirituality that is about Jesus-and-me, and doesn't stretch to include other people diminishes good liturgy. When we celebrate Mass, we should always have an arm outside the window and a foot outside the door. We must not lose connection with the world. Liturgy without connection to the world, to others, is meaningless. Jesus took a towel and washed the disciples' feet, then told them to do the same. Also, if the ministers haven't prepared, quality will be missing. All ministers; presider, Ministers of The Word, Ministers of Holy Communion, need to prepare. Even the assembly needs to prepare. Lack of preparation by all ministers, effects how well we celebrate. We need to be attentive to all of our actions and what we use in the liturgy. All our actions and movements in the liturgy, speak. We need to ensure actions and movements and what we use communicate what we are actually doing.

LC Where do we focus our attention?

PF Turning the liturgy into devotion by focusing on the tabernacle or praying one's private prayers during

Mass is unhelpful. Bowing - we should all stop bowing. During the Liturgy of the Word, all the focus should be on the Table of the Word. A bow is unnecessary, it takes people's attention away from what is being done and diminishes the quality of the liturgy. Similarly at Communion. There is no need for a minister of Holy Communion to approach the tabernacle or bow. The General Instruction of the Roman Missal says people should receive Communion from bread consecrated **at that Mass**. We focus our attention on the bread that is consecrated at that Mass. Our focus should always be on the action that is taking place. If we go to the tabernacle, we haven't really understood what we are doing.

LC What might help us grow in appreciation of good liturgy?

PF As a Catholic community we all need to be more liturgically literate. Good liturgy has a timeless quality. We are far too conscious of time. I have often encouraged people to leave their watches at home so they can enter fully into the liturgy without worrying about how long it takes. People have often responded positively to this. This can help us move into another dimension, it can help us be consciously present, participate fully, connect more deeply with what it is we are doing.

LC What can lift the quality of liturgy?

PF We all need to read the

scriptures before we come to Mass. More and more people are doing this. Liturgy is better when people have reflected on the scriptures. We need to come to Mass hungry for the life that God gives to us at the two tables. If we go for a meal and we are not hungry, it won't satisfy. If we are hungry, we are much more likely to be satisfied. We need to come with a sense of gratitude and thanksgiving for what God has done in our lives.

LC What do we need a better understanding of?

PF Many things. One of the things that gets in the way of good liturgy is not having a sound understanding of liturgy. For example, in the Eucharistic prayer we pray, 'Humbly we pray Father that by partaking in these gifts, we may be one as you are one.' But people come to Communion with different gestures, e.g. some bow, some genuflect, some receive on the tongue, some in the hand. When we put all this together, we end up a sign of disunity, people following their own personal preferences. This weakens liturgy. The sign of unity we are called to be is not visible. Similarly, as we move to Communion, we are not queuing, we are forming a joyful procession to the Lord's table, and whenever the Church processes, it sings. We need suitable music for the Communion procession. We need to sing as we move in this procession. There are many things we need a better understanding of and much

education is needed. We need to grow in a deeper understanding of the vision of the liturgy that was given to us at the Second Vatican Council.

LC Does God benefit from good liturgy?

God does not need the liturgy – we do! The only liturgy that touches God, is liturgy that brings about change in our hearts and minds. All the flowers, vestments, music, ceremonial – none of that worships God. It's there so we might worship God and so that we might be touched and changed. It is us being open to the Holy Spirit, our being changed that worships God.

LC How do the people contribute to good liturgy?

We all have our skills and styles. In the liturgy we put these at the service of the community. Good liturgy depends on good ritual. Good ritual needs our skills so that our worship may be beautiful, and when we do this, we are contributing to good liturgy. In the liturgy we must work to bring our best to the word, our best to the music, our best to the movement, and to the environment in which we gather. Everyone has a ministry. All the baptized are a part of the worshipping community. All are celebrants. Ministry and liturgy is not about rank. It's always about service. The Mass is always a community ritual. Good liturgy requires constant preparation. It is never perfunctory, never on auto pilot.

The Triduum - Some Q & A

What is the Triduum?

It is the high point of the Church's Year. The Sacred Paschal Triduum is one liturgy in which the Church celebrates the greatest mysteries of our redemption. The one liturgy is spread over three days. It begins with the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday. It is followed on Friday by the celebration of the Passion of the Lord. This is followed on Holy Saturday night by the Easter Vigil. The Triduum closes with evening prayer on Easter Sunday.

Do devotions have a particular importance on Good Friday?

From the Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy (2002), 'the central celebration of this day is the celebration of the Lord's Passion. In no way should manifestations of popular piety substitute for this solemn liturgical action. Nor should aspects of the various acts of piety be mixed with the Good Friday celebration, creating a hybrid. In recent times, Passion Processions, celebrations of the Stations of the Cross, and Passion Plays have become more common. In such representations, actors and spectators can be involved in a moment of faith and genuine piety. Care should be taken however, to point out to the faithful that a Passion Play is a representation which is commemorative and they are very different from 'liturgical actions' which are *anamnesis* or the mysterious

presence of the redemptive event of the Passion.' (USCCB Committee on Divine Worship Newsletter Vol XLVI)

How is the Cross venerated by members of the assembly on Good Friday?

For the Adoration of the Cross, first the priest celebrant alone approaches, with the chasuble and his shoes removed, if appropriate. Then the clergy, the lay ministers and the faithful approach, moving as if in procession, and showing reverence to the Cross by a simple genuflection or by some other sign appropriate to the usage of the region, for example, by kissing the Cross. (*The roman missal NZ*) **Note** - kissing the Cross is not appropriate during the pandemic. The Missal allows 'the priest ... takes the Cross and standing in the middle before the altar, invites the people in a few words to adore the Holy Cross.'

How many readings should be proclaimed at the Easter Vigil?

One of the unique aspects of the Easter Vigil is the recounting of the outstanding deed of the history of salvation ... The faithful are encouraged to meditate on these readings by singing a responsorial psalm, followed by a silent pause, and then by the celebrant's prayer. Meditation on these readings is so significant for this night that we are strongly urged to use all the readings whenever it can be done. (USCCB Committee on Divine Worship Newsletter Vol XLVI)

Hallmarks of Well-celebrated Parish Liturgy

Auckland Diocesan Commission for Liturgy

‘Good celebrations can nourish and foster faith. Poor celebrations may weaken it.’

Sing to the Lord: music in divine worship #5

The statement above, taken from the document: Sing to the Lord: music in divine worship, indicates that the liturgy can vary in quality. For this reason, the following list, *Hallmarks of Well-celebrated Parish Liturgy*, has been drawn up so that faith communities can reflect on their own celebrations of the liturgy. It is an outline of principles that can guide and support any group which is striving towards an improved celebration of the liturgy.

Generic statements

- Liturgy, well-celebrated, is life giving. It strengthens faith, deepens hope and prepares us for mission.
- Liturgy is a celebration of the community with people taking up different roles to make this celebration possible.

Liturgy

1. Good liturgy flows and is celebrated

reverently - but not rigidly

2. There is a sense of beauty to the Liturgy and this finds an echo in the liturgical environment

3. There is a warmth which extends to all and is felt. A welcome inclusion of all people (this includes old, young, very young, hearing impaired, vision impaired, disabled, people who are hurting, poor, wealthy, Māori (tangata whenua) and immigrant peoples)

4. Symbolism is clear

Welcome

5. People are actively, warmly and generously welcomed to each liturgy. The celebrating community understands that hospitality and welcome is a ministry shared by all.

6. Children are made welcome

7. All people experience a sense of welcome

8. Special needs (such as some form of physical impairment) are provided for

Kaupapa Māori / Māori Dimension

9. Kaupapa Māori / Māori Dimension is given expression

10. An understanding and appreciation of the Te Tiriti o Waitangi

/ Treaty of Waitangi is evident

Participation

11. People understand their role as participants in the Mass
12. People participate well in the sung parts (including in the song at the procession to Communion)
13. People participate well and give full voice to the spoken parts
14. A sense of unity is evident
15. People participate in the silences (before the collect, after reading 1, after reading 2, after the homily, during the Prayer of the Faithful and after Communion)

Musicians and Music

16. The singing has vitality and engages all people – people are drawn in
17. One Mass setting is used for the whole Mass, the people know it and sing it
18. Songs or hymns that accord with their function (see GIRM) are used in the Mass
19. Musicians are trained in their role as liturgical musicians and receive ongoing formation
20. Musicians support and do not dominate the singing
21. Musicians join with the assembly in the prayers and responses of the Mass

Priest

22. The priest speaks clearly with warmth and vitality and is easily

understood, (see list below)

23. The priest looks up and engages/ connects with people when reading or praying.
24. The priest conveys the meaning of texts he reads with ease
25. The priest warmly encourages people to take up their role as ‘active participants’ and ‘priestly people’.
26. While it is important the priest brings his personality to the liturgy, he does not allow his personality to dominate, since liturgy leads us to Christ.

Homily

27. Homily breaks open the Word for people to see the relevance of the Word in their lives today
28. People engage with the homily
29. Homily is an appropriate length
30. Homilist uses good vocal techniques (see list below)

Readers

31. Readers are involved in ongoing training.
32. Readers prepare to read before coming to Mass
33. The Word is consistently well proclaimed (see criteria below)
34. Reader has a sound understanding of the text they proclaim.
35. Reader pronounces difficult words correctly and with ease.
36. Readers consistently and actively seek feedback from a peer.
37. People comprehend what is read

Prayer of the Faithful

- 38. The petitions allow people to exercise their priestly ministry and pray for the needs of the world.
- 39. The petitions need to include the universal church, the needs of the world, those in need, as well as local needs.
- 40. The petitions are read clearly and concisely and with understanding (see criteria below).
- 41. The petitions are addressed to the people (not to God) and are invitations to the people to pray.
- 42. Petitions are short and unnecessary wordiness is avoided
- 43. After each intention is read, there is silence before the response which allows people time to pray for the intention.

Communion

- 44. Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion participate in ongoing formation, seeking to deepen their understanding
- 45. Ministers project a sense of confidence and dignity.
- 46. Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are attentive to sound hygiene without allowing it to interrupt or become part of the Rite of Communion
- 47. Extraordinary Ministers are involved with Communion of the sick

Children

- 48. Children are made welcome
- 49. Liturgy of the word with Children is

offered as needs indicate

50. Leaders of Liturgy of the Word with Children participate in ongoing formation

51. One of the Eucharistic Prayers for Children is used at times

Sacristans

52. Are well organised and prepared for each Mass

53. Work well with the priest

54. Ensure all appropriate cleaning is done after Mass, including that the chalice is properly washed with hot water and detergent.

55. Are attentive to sound personal hygiene practices.

Eucharistic Prayer

56. Symbolism of the Eucharistic Prayer is evident

57. People understand that this is their prayer and they pray it (silently with the priest)

58. People are aware of the names and parts of the Eucharistic Prayer

59. The acclamations are sung well by all

60. Musical introductions to the three acclamations are very short or even not present

Power Points (if used)

61. Words are clearly displayed, easily legible and correctly spelt (NZ or British spelling)

62. Only words that support people's participation (for example, songs) are displayed and blank screens are

used between, (for example, between songs).

63. The power point does not distract from, but supports the liturgy

64. If artwork is used, it is of rich artistic quality (avoids words) and it supports the liturgy.

65. All appropriate copyright accreditation is provided (including for artwork that is used)

Microphone

66. The sound system is effective

67. Microphones do not intrude

68. Musicians use microphones sparingly – their main task to support the singing of the assembly

Liturgical Environment

69. The environment supports the liturgy.

70. Devotional images are located out of the sanctuary and do not dominate liturgical space.

71. The environment in the Church is clean and clutter free.

72. Under the guidelines of Kaupapa Māori / Māori Dimension, a Māori Dimension is incorporated into the environment.

73. Those caring for the liturgical environment have ongoing formation, understand the liturgical seasons and changes to the environment that these seasons require.

74. Banners, flowers and artwork support the liturgical season. They generate beauty not clutter.

75. The environment provides a sense

of welcome.

76. Outside the church is well cared for, attractive and has a sense of welcome

General

77. Adult formation is regularly provided.

78. People have an awareness that we go out from the Mass as servants to take up Christ's Mission.

79. Strong sense of pastoral care within the parish.

80. Parish priest loves and serves the people of the parish.

Vocal Techniques & Principles

Parts that are spoken during Mass use the best principles of spoken language. These include;

- Ample volume
- Voice projection
- Correct phrasing
- Use of punctuation to guide expression
- Variation in pitch
- Pace that allows comprehension - is unhurried
- Moments of silence
- Correct pronunciation
- Eye contact, looking up from the text and at people
- Good posture
- Understanding - The reader has and projects a clear understanding of the text
- Presence – The reader is engaged with and committed to, the words that are being spoken

Book Review

But What is the Church For?

What is the Mission of the Local Church?

By Neil Darragh

But what is the Church For?

What is the Mission of the Local Church?

by Neil Darragh

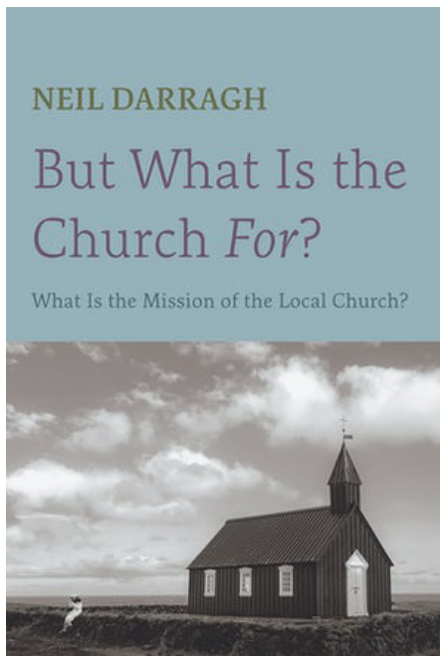
Published by Wipf & Stock © 2021

Reviewed by David Tennent.

David is a retired school principal and enthusiastic grandfather.

Fr Neil Darragh is a pastor and theologian from Aotearoa New Zealand. In this work he explores the mission of the local church. You may have already given your attention to the question; what is the mission of the local church? However, I suggest that in your ponderings, you will not have traversed the theological, missiological, sociological or ecological landscape as broadly as Neil Darragh. Drawing on an extensive range of sources, supported by his own deep insights, he outlines what he sees as the mission of the local Church.

Darragh never leaves a statement unsupported. More importantly, he never leaves it untested. The potential for a position to be compromised, to spring from unworthy motives or



tainted assumptions, is made plain and the potential risks examined. None-the-less, within the various caveats and constraints, he develops a vision of the mission of the local church that is both inspirational and achievable.

At one point in the book, Darragh succinctly summarises the mission of the local church. It would be an insult to the author to shortcut your opportunity

for growth by offering that summary here; I will leave that for you to discover. The purpose of a review is to entice the prospective reader, or to warn them off, if necessary. It is not an attempt to shortcut the author's voice. By way of enticement, just one quote will suffice. It will give you a hint of what is in store for you, and alert you to the quality of thinking you will encounter. "A strength-based theology is grounded in belief in the creative presence of God in society and the basic goodness of people who make up society. It recognises the activity of the Spirit already present there and seeks to empower and enhance that goodness and those gifts." (p158)

My personal response to reading this book was twofold: The first was an awareness that it had been a long time since I was last exposed to the depth of thought I encountered here. The second was a deeper understanding of what we can be about if we engage authentically in the work of local church life.

At its heart, Fr Neil Darragh's vision for the work of the church at the local level, presents us with a well-considered opportunity to contribute to furthering the realm of God, a phrase central to this book. As an aside, you may wish to ponder why he uses this phrase, rather than the reign of God or the Kingdom of God. I suggest once you have read this book, Fr Darragh's preferred phrase will be your own.

This book would make a great resource for individuals or groups of people who wish to discern a direction to take in response to the needs of their local community. It is neither an easy read nor a quick read; but if engaged with to some degree of depth, with time to ponder, then great shifts in understanding can be expected, and exciting possibilities for outreach can be entertained. I commend this book to anyone seeking authentic ways to contribute to the work of their local church community.



A Synod - for a Synodal Church - calling for your participation.

"Following the renewal of the Church proposed by the Second Vatican Council, this common journey together is both a right and a responsibility."

Visit <https://www.aucklandcatholic.org.nz/synod/>

Bread - A Triduum Symbol

Holy Thursday

Bread

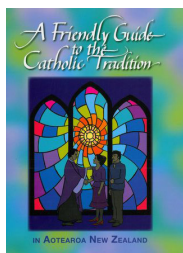
The Liturgy Centre

Tiny seeds, beginnings, carrying the pattern of life
are covered with soil and left to brood, waiting for life to stir within.
So much happens in the darkness of the earth.
Then, a sprout, a sign of life, straining up, towards the light.
In time, there is a golden fullness, a sundance,
A gentle swaying in soft winds.
On the sunniest of days, razor-like steel, snatches at the base.
The stem is cut, lies fallen.
Grain is separated from stalk, pounded and crushed.
The singleness of a grain disappears: the individual is lost.
There are no longer single members but a mass united,
a pile of fine powder we call flour. Water is added, and yeast.
The dough is punched, pummelled, pushed out, drawn back,
stretched and gathered in again, beaten to make it ready.
Fire transforms. The dough is changed in the heart of the furnace,
the change from pliable dough, to food for the hungry,
Aromatic, appetising and nutritious.
This loaf will become a centre piece. Together they will sit around it.
It will be broken and shared. As they eat, stories will be told,
The hungry will have their fill. The lonely will find friendship,
The weary, rest, and the troubled will be comforted
All because a loaf is at their centre. A loaf broken and shared.
Jesus took the bread in his hands.
He remembered the seed, the soil, the new shoots, the rain, the sun,
the harvester's sickle, the grinding and the kneading.
Almost as a mirror of his life, the bread journeyed to this Passover table.
In this most basic of foods, he saw himself.
He saw how he would become food for those who hungered.
And he said to them,
"I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer."
Then he took bread and broke it and gave it to them.
He said, "This is my body. Take and eat."

Photo Marco Verch CC2.0 Bread Flickr

Liturgy Centre Resources

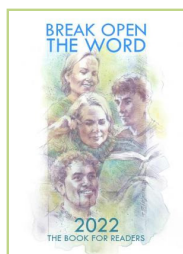
Liturgy Centre Resources can be ordered online at this link <https://form.jotform.co/93346356565870> You will find many annual resources are now on sale.



A Friendly Guide to ...

Garratt Publishing

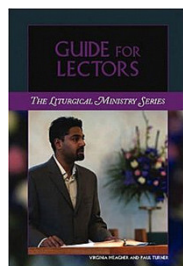
The Friendly Guide series are attractive accessible books for anybody wanting to refresh their appreciation of the Catholic tradition, and look at it with new eyes in the light of the challenges in their contemporary lives.



Break Open The Word 2022: Year C

Published by Liturgy Brisbane

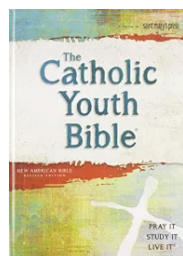
Designed for those who proclaim the Scriptures at Sunday Mass, the Readings are in two translations: Jerusalem and NRSV and a commentary is supplied.



Guide for Lectors

Published by LTP

Guide for Lectors is one in a series of Guide for Books. These books offer training and formation for those serving in particular ministries.



The Catholic Youth Bible

Published by St Mary's press

The Catholic Youth Bible includes special features to help you explore scripture and deepen your prayer life.

The Liturgy Centre provides:

- Resources to support liturgical ministries, including books with Sunday and daily readings and reflections on the readings. These provide excellent background material for readers.
- Guidebooks for various ministries including readers, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, musicians, sacristans and the preparation of liturgical environment
- Resources on art and architecture
- Formation opportunities for Readers of the Word
- Formation opportunities for Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion.
- Website with Prayer of the Faithful, Liturgy of the Word with Children, Readings Te Reo Māori, weekly music suggestions,

Workshops including:

- A Walk through the Mass
- The role of the Assembly
- Music: Choosing music for Mass
- Music: The Musician's Role
- Managing Copyright in your parish
- Formation and training for altar server trainers
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Please feel welcome to contact the Liturgy Centre and discuss what formation you would like to provide for your liturgical ministers throughout the year.
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