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A commentary on cultural change and the implementation of pastoral-liturgical practice since *Sacrosanctum concilium*

By Joe Grayland

Introduction

Sixty years after *Sacrosanctum concilium*'s¹ promulgation, religious and social cultures have radically changed. Significant advances in science, ethics, theology, and social theory have challenged Catholicism's traditional theological positions and contributed to the liturgical debate.

From an external perspective, Catholicism is accused of contributing to racism, colonialism, and the oppression of women and sexual minorities. Internally, its hierarchical and magisterium frameworks are causes for shame because they have contributed to the abuse of minors, often through episcopal complicity. External social change has contributed to an internal critique of our ecclesial and liturgical cultures by making Catholics think differently about how power is exercised in worship and local or vernacular forms of worship.

The changing culture outside the Church and the changing culture within has influenced liturgical change since the 1960s, making implementing *Sacrosanctum concilium*'s principles and vision both necessary and challenging. When one asks how we got to where we are sixty years later, the answer lies in the more significant cultural change in which liturgical practice is immersed. The change in culture during and since the 1960s is the context of this commentary because these changes continue to contribute to Catholicism's current ecclesial fragmentation and liturgical polarisation.

This commentary has four sections. Section One begins with a historical snapshot of the 1960's ritual modification in Aotearoa, New Zealand, following Vatican II. Section Two focuses on the implementation of pastoral-liturgical practice throughout the 1970s and 80s and its use of encounter liturgy. Section Three addresses the growing polarisation of liturgical and ecclesial life from the perspective of papal responses beginning in the 1980s. Section Four, Capacity and Capability for Enculturated Liturgy, considers whether modern Catholics in a modern, technological, global world can engage with liturgical symbols after profound external and internal cultural change.

The distinction between ritual modification and pastoral-liturgical practice alerts us to the qualitative difference between the initial phase following Vatican II and implement of *Sacrosanctum concilium*'s vision throughout the 1970s and 80s. Although related to each other chronologically, they are not the same experience. Pastoral-liturgical

¹ Second Vatican Council, "Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum concilium*, 4 December, 1963" in *Vatican Council II The Basic Sixteen Documents*, ed. Austin Flannery, (New York: Costello Publishing Company/ Dominican Publications, Dublin, 1996), 117-161.

practice went beyond ritual modification as the liturgy came to be understood as an ecumenical, inclusive, and cultural experience of encounter.

Issues such as ritual modification, pastoral-liturgical implementation, culture, and polarisation and their impact on each other are complex. In an article of this length, there is a possible danger of oversimplification through generalisation, for which I hope the reader will make allowance, given the scope of these issues.

Section One—Historical Snapshot of Ritual Modification, Ecclesial and Liturgical Change

The initial phase of ritual modification in New Zealand (1963-69) was a top-down process led by the bishops. Their leadership was reactive, not proactive, and more perfunctory than inspirational.

The broader ecclesial and liturgical renewal in parishes and schools was led mainly by religious women, followed by members of lay movements and lastly by a small group of diocesan priests who had belonged to the St. Paul's Group or had been influenced by its members.² Engagement by religious reflected their discernment on *Lumen Gentium*³ and *Perfectae Caritatis*.⁴ Lay Catholic involvement sprang from their participation in diocesan and parish associations inspired by the Catholic Action movement.⁵ The use of vernacular languages and the liturgy's more overt pastoral purpose was strengthened through Catholic Action's socially conscious worship practice.

New Zealand's largest liturgical initiative was Christian Life Week in Auckland in 1967. Representatives from across the country attended, the two largest groups being religious women and the laity. Fr. Godfrey Diekmann OSB was the keynote speaker. As Diekmann was from the United States, this signalled a change in direction: previous liturgical influences had been European or English; henceforth, they emerged mainly from the United States.

² The St. Paul Group was established by seminarians during the 1950s at Holy Cross College, the National Diocesan Seminary in Dunedin. Originally, their sources were French, German, and English. During the mid-1960's several members developed unofficial translations because no official ones were available. After 1967 their inspiration would come predominantly from North America. Joseph Grayland, *It Changed Overnight! Celebrating New Zealand's Liturgical Renewal, 1963 to 1970*. (Auckland: Te Heparā Pai, 2003), 17-20.

³ Second Vatican Council, "Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen gentium*, 21 November 1964" in *Vatican Council II The Basic Sixteen Documents*, ed. Austin Flannery, (New York: Costello Publishing Company/ Dominican Publications, Dublin, 1996), 1-95.

⁴ Second Vatican Council, "Decree on the Up-To-Date Renewal of Religious Life. *Perfectae Caritatis*, 28 October 1965" in *Vatican Council II The Basic Sixteen Documents*, ed. Austin Flannery, (New York: Costello Publishing Company/ Dominican Publications, Dublin, 1996), 385-401.

⁵ Catholic Action in New Zealand was inspired by the Catholic Youth Movement (CYM) begun in Belgium by Fr Joseph Leo Cardijn (later Cardinal) the founder of the *Jeunesse ouvrière chrétienne* (Young Christian Workers). Bishop Reginald Delargy (later Cardinal Archbishop of Wellington) founded the The Catholic Youth Movement in Auckland in 1939. The principles of the movement sought to change society by studying the Gospels and putting them into practice following the principles of Catholic Action. Delargy's interest in the Council stemmed from his activity in the Catholic Youth Movement.

New Zealand's two national Catholic papers, *Tablet* and *Zealandia*,⁶ contributed editorials and articles from leading experts. Their *Letters to the Editor* made them critical sources for debate. Naturally, not everyone was happy with the ritual changes, nor can it be said that everyone was involved, enthused, or informed to the same extent.

The two ritual changes most identified from this period are (1) the priest celebrating Mass *cum populo*—*cum sacerdote* for the laity—and (2) using English and Māori in the Mass and other sacramental rites. Celebrating Mass *cum populo/ cum sacerdote* changed the culture of ritual participation and raised expectations for more inclusion and equality. Using English and Māori made the prayers comprehensible, participatory, and thus more accessible. These modifications to what was essentially the 1962 Roman Missal changed the culture of participation. The Mass was no longer 'Father's Mass'; neither was the priest the only "pray-er" of the Mass.⁷ Liturgical participation was the work of the laity and the priest. Together they began to pray the Mass.

Preparations for the ritual changes began on February 5 1964, when the *Tablet* published the *First Instruction for implementing Sacrosanctum concilium*.⁸ The decree permitting the introduction of the vernacular into the Mass in New Zealand was given at Rome on May 16 1964 and arrived on June 8.⁹ The letter sent to all priests (July 10 1964) outlined changes in the Mass, the rites of Baptism, Matrimony, Anointing of the Sick and funeral masses and burials. It was published in the *Tablet* and *Zealandia* five days later.¹⁰

Priests received resources for the holy day, nuptial and funeral Masses and a revised altar chart with the Mass parts in English and Latin. Because there were no official translations of the scriptures, ordinary and proper, the clergy were directed to use the Knox scriptural translations and the *Layman's Missal Prayer Book*. The first post-conciliar Mass in English and Latin was celebrated in the Dunedin Catholic Centre on Saturday evening, August 15, by Bishop Kavanagh and broadcast the following day by station by 4YA, Dunedin, from Holy Cross College, Mosgiel.¹¹

Overall, episcopal leadership was marked by the desire to avoid unnecessary harm to the faithful, as expressed by Cardinal Peter McKeefry: 'there was nothing to be lost in going slowly about the introduction of further changes'.¹² McKeefry, like others, mourned the passing of pre-conciliar worship and ritual Latin. Generally, the bishops saw these ritual reforms as rubrical modifications that would initiate another four hundred years of ritual stability.¹³

⁶ National Catholic Newspapers. The *Tablet* from Dunedin Diocese and the *Zealandia* from Auckland Diocese. Both are now defunct and replaced by NZ Catholic.

⁷ In the celebration of the Mass, even when the readings were read by a lay reader in the local vernacular, the priest still read the readings in Latin at the altar. Generally, the priest was the only one to receive communion and was the only communicant necessary for the legal validity of the Mass.

⁸ *Tablet*, February 5, 1964, 6.

⁹ Bishops' Conference Minutes, May, 1964.

¹⁰ *Tablet*, July, 15, 1964, 35.

¹¹ Grayland, *It Changed Overnight*, 59.

¹² Delargey Papers, 10.2, Auckland Catholic Archive, 1963-70.

¹³ Liturgy Papers, 1954 to 1985, Wellington Catholic Archive (WCA), March, 22, 1959.

At times, the bishops appeared to lose control of the process. In 1966, McKeefry wrote an angry letter to his priests pointing out that no permission had been given to admit laypeople into the sanctuary, give communion on the hand or remove altar rails that created a 'barrier between the congregation and the altar'.¹⁴

For priests not connected to the St. Paul's Group, their overall approach was similarly perfunctory, lacking any sensitivity to the nature of ritual change or identification. Their formation was minimal and often amounted to receiving a letter and implementing the change with the introduction: 'today we can say the *Pater Noster* in English so....Our Father'.¹⁵

By the end of the 1960s, the Letters to the Editor in *Zealandia* and *Tablet* show a growing divergence of opinion on the success of ritual change and liturgy's role in ecclesial life. The letters show that correspondents understood more was at stake than just using English instead of Latin. The response to the promulgation of *Humanae vitae* (1968) is indicative of the change in Catholic culture— arguably under the influence of broader social change. The response to *Humanae vitae* signalled the end of one epoch of ecclesial thinking and the beginning of another that influenced liturgical thinking and practice.

Throughout the initial modification phase, loyalty to the hierarchy and its conciliar documents guided the process. By the mid-70s, this was less true with the implementation of pastoral-liturgical practice. It emphasised that the liturgical experience was not the preserve of the clergy alone but one in which all the baptised participated. Henceforth, the liturgy was no longer a one-size-fits-all experience; instead, it had to respond to local needs, which meant those who worshipped. Now, liturgy belonged to the youth group, the school, the house group, the retreat experience, the charismatic group and more. Now, the laity and clergy had to learn to negotiate the liturgical form and style used in any situation. As a result, liturgical prayer became more obviously the primary vehicle of evangelisation, catechesis and pastoral ministry in many dioceses and parishes.

Section Two—Pastoral-Liturgical Practice Culture Change

Social and Catholic cultural change is a topic too broad for this article. Suffice it to say that since the 1960s, in countries like Aotearoa, New Zealand, the movement of indigenous, ethnic, and linguistic cultural change has taken place and influenced a movement from a 'Roman' Catholicism to a 'New Zealand' Catholicism where local culture and attitudes are influential in liturgical thinking and practice. This does not deny the place of the rites mandated by the Church that, for the most part, retain their received ritual structure.¹⁶ Just as the 19th-century state called New Zealand as

¹⁴ Liturgy Papers, WCA, December, 20, 1966.

¹⁵ Grayland, *It Changed Overnight*, 77.

¹⁶ Received tradition or culture applies to traditions and cultures that are not indigenous to a society. This is contrasted with vernacular expressions of art, culture, and worship that arise from a local context. In the context of liturgy, the Roman Rite is a received tradition that given by the Church to all local churches for their use; the vernacular practises are those that arise within the local churches and become included in liturgical practice.

become Aotearoa, New Zealand, so too is the Church here is bi-cultural and bi-lingual in its rituals.¹⁷

Turning to the global context, we see the broader role of cultural change in societies, political systems, and institutions like education, health and social services. Culture is a complex dynamic. Terry Eagleton writes, 'four major senses of it stand out. It can mean (1) a body of artistic and intellectual work; (2) a process of spiritual and intellectual developments; (3) the values, customs, beliefs, and symbolic practices by which men and women live; or (4) a whole way of life.'¹⁸ Eagleton notes that 'the first three meanings of the word would seem more useful than the fourth (culture as a whole way of life), which is at risk of taking in too much.'¹⁹

The complex global context of cultural change—post-modern, post-colonial, deconstruction, post-deconstruction, feminist, and post-feminist—with the central critique of trust in the meta-narrative of institutions has been the context of liturgical, ecclesial and pastoral change since Vatican II.²⁰ In this, the post-conciliar context of ritual change—from the mid-1960s onwards—differed significantly from periods of change prior to it. Ritual modification before and during the Council was anchored in an assured institutional culture that trusted hierarchical implementation and magisterial teaching. Catholics did not question eucharist theology and who could receive it. Ecumenism was avoided, and inter-faith marriages were discouraged. The nature of the priesthood and who could exercise it was not questioned, and ritual language was not designed to be inclusive. With the loss of the assured institutional culture, the implementation of pastoral-liturgical practice took place in a context of growing distrust in hierarchical and magisterial power systems by clergy and laity alike on both sides of the conservative/progressive divide.

The broader context of cultural change throughout the twentieth century in politics, arts, philosophy and science challenged Catholicism's theological culture of values, customs, beliefs and symbolic practices. Ideas and structures once held to be absolute and unchanging changed, reforming 'a whole way of life' with the consequence that new pastoral, liturgical and ecclesial responses needed to be found.

The change in the way of life, both socially and religiously, is the context of Romano Guardini's seminal question concerning contemporary Catholics' ability to symbolise.²¹ He questioned the ability of modern, industrialised, technological Catholics to worship using the customs, beliefs and symbolic practices of the past

¹⁷ See the Roman Missal, English Translation according to the Third Typical Edition, New Zealand Catholic Bishops, 2010.

¹⁸ Eagleton, Terry, *Culture* (New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 2016), 1.

¹⁹ *Ibid*, 3.

²⁰ Dealing here in generalisations tends to lead to oversimplification in order to paint a picture using broad strokes. Events of the twentieth century like the First and Second World Wars, the Great Depression, the end of the royal houses of Europe, the rise of anti-colonialist thinking, the Cold War, the technological revolution, the space race, the contraceptive pill and more influenced cultural change across the globe and within the Church. It is this complex network of events, philosophy, politics and personal freedoms that form the complex context of liturgical, ecclesial and pastoral change.

²¹ First asked in 1923, Guardini's question regarding symbolfähig (ability to symbolise) after exposure to 'dangerous rationalism' was asked again in 1964 at the Mainz Liturgical Congress.

when their psycho-social context has radically changed. It is the question we face today as we negotiate the demands of indigenous, local "catholicisms".²²

Following Guardini, the liturgical act is the act of a body of actors united by their sharing in customs, beliefs and symbolic practices (*cultus*) that articulate belief.²³ Guardini insists that the liturgical act requires an individual to act as a whole person (head, spirit, body, emotions, history, future, fear, hope, piety) in union with other liturgical actors and Christ. Participation in the Church's *lex orandi* requires each actor to participate by bringing their uniqueness to the liturgical act *and* putting aside their individualism. While each actor is the ground of their participation in the liturgical act, this is insufficient. Therefore, individuals must unite with the body of participants in a single act of worship. The liturgical act's complexity is negotiating the relationship between the actor as an individual and the actor as a member of the body. Consequently, sharing symbolic language, values, beliefs and a way of life is not secondary but central to a shared ecclesial vision and a shared liturgical encounter.

As pastoral-liturgical practice developed during the 1970s, our understanding of the liturgical person, liturgical participation and individuality grew. It became harder to convince people who did not want to join in the unity of gesture and posture to do so because they wanted to decide for themselves the expressions they would use. Consequently, the liturgical act became a negotiated act where liturgy's anthropological dynamic became prominent. The liturgy was most often described in terms of its relationality, a relational experience between God and individual believers within a body of believers.

As a relational act, liturgical participation had to reflect the local cultural environment and the person or people celebrating; the genesis of enculturation. As liturgical participation became more pastoral than rubrical, liturgical participation meant more than participation in a received cult—for those who initiated the principles of *Sacrosanctum concilium*, it meant considering the enculturation of worship.

Pastoral-liturgical practice ushered in a relational egalitarian ecclesiological framework with the potential for shared leadership and collaborative pastoral and liturgical ministry. A new language for worship appeared. The Mass became the Eucharist, and sacraments were celebrated, not just received. Catholics began studying liturgy's theological and anthropological dynamic and began speaking of 'doing liturgy', which opened up opportunities for local expression through music, song and idiom. The practice of liturgy became the most potent form of pastoral

²² 'Is not the liturgical act and, with it, all that goes under the name of 'liturgy' so bound up with the historical background-antique or medieval or baroque-that it would be more honest to give it up altogether?' Romano Guardini. "Ein Brief, des 3. Liturgischen Kongresses 1964 in Mainz", in, *Liturgie und liturgische Bildung*, edited by Franz Henrich, 9-17, (Mainz: Matthias Grünewald-Verlag, and Paderborn: Verlag Ferdinand Schöningh, 1992). My translation.

²³ *Cultus*. The noun *cultus* originates from the past participle of the Latin verb to tend, take care of, cultivate, to dwell in, or inhabit. *Cultus* identifies a pattern of ritual behaviour within a spatial or temporal construct that includes rituals and their repetition. The liturgical act is cult-act that uses rituals, words, songs, postures, and gestures to articulate symbolically the subject and object of worship with external ceremonial. I have used the Latin word *cultus* rather than the English rendering *cult* because in the English it has the connotation of devil worship, or a cult of people.

outreach, and new worship styles were required to meet the pastoral objective of encounter and inclusion.

The new pastoral-liturgical landscape identified youth and school masses, "normal" parish masses, guitar or traditional masses, and charismatic masses as distinct from each other. Each group's ritual identification expressed their understanding of encounter and enculturation. The liturgy spoke *about* them and *to* them. Liturgical celebrations used symbols the target group could engage in and identify with. As the Church reached out to its diverse community pastorally, the motivational force behind liturgical participation was an inclusive, enculturated encounter with Grace.

During the 1970s, we saw the unprecedented departure of clergy, religious and laity, from ministry, religious life and church practice. The reasons for this are many. For some, the changes in traditional Catholic theological positions left them lost, while others were frustrated by the slow rate of change. The movement from the assured institutional culture of hierarchical magisterial teaching to one that raised questions concerning the clerical lifestyle, women's ordination, religious life, intercommunion, marriage and contraception cannot be underestimated. The presumed generic universality of Catholicism's "western" or eurocentric cultural formulation of theological knowledge and worship was replaced by vernacular (local) forms. Simultaneously, Catholic believers were becoming diverse and pluriform. Contemporary Catholicism's emerging, enculturated global character was the resumption of authentic vernacular traditions, not an innovation.²⁴

Section Three—Polarisation and Conflicting Agendas

By the end of the 1980s, the liturgical debate was polarised between progressives and conservatives. Polarisation and the weaponisation of liturgy characterise the division between the extremes of radical traditionalism and disempowered progressivism that battled each other over magisterial authority, pre-conciliar rites, and the *Novus Ordo's* validity. This state of affairs was not helped through papal and curial pronouncements that contributed to a culture of rebuttal.

The radical traditionalist agenda argues that the Council usurped the Tradition and falsified reform to the point that Vatican II is an illegitimate magisterial teacher. The progressive agenda argues that hierarchs are holding back authentic development through their unwillingness to include laity, especially women, in ministry and ordination. Both groups rejected magisterial authority and created separate communities that weaponised ritual preferences by accepting or rejecting the 1962 or 1969 Roman missals. The polarised liturgical-ecclesial debate changed ordinary ecclesial life, making studying and teaching liturgy difficult. It complicated parish pastoral ministry throughout the following decades until the liturgical lockdown of 2020.

Polarisation attacks the relational system previously considered stable and unitative, and individuals lose sight of relationships as the organising principle of life, love,

²⁴ See, J. P. Grayland, *Catholics, Prayer, Belief and Diversity in a Secular Context. A New Zealand Perspective*, (Palmerston North: Te Heparā Pai, 2021), 120-126.

work, family, and religion. Where polarisation happens, all the presumptions of unity—expressed in language, sign, and symbol—become lost or confused, and relational confusion ensues. People ask: ‘why does one priest do this and another that?’, ‘which priest do we believe?’, ‘who is telling the truth?’ Once the system’s relational heart is lost, adherents move to positions that generally oversimplify the complexity of the system breakdown, where they refuse to hold the tension of the issue’s complexity.

Polarisation creates oppositional groups who demand their right to their portion of the property, idea, job, religion, or cultural landscape. They break taboos by acting as cultural disruptors who do not trust or respect another’s point of view. As the relational system breaks down, more voices join the debate. New relationship systems emerge, each with its rites of inclusion that delineate the in-group and exclude others, often with sacrificial language, like, ‘she is a heretic’.

Radical traditionalism, characterised by the Latin Mass movements, and disempowered progressivism, characterised by the woman-priest movements, contributed to legislative amendments between 1980 and 2021 that were intended to (1) entice back those who had rejected the Council’s theological teaching (2) legitimise the use of the 1962 Roman Missal, (3) hold back unchecked experimentation, and (4) reform the language of the liturgy.

Although individuals and small groups received permission to use the 1962 Missal after 1970²⁵, significant legislative changes came with *Quattuor abhinc annos* (1984)²⁶, *Ecclesia Dei* (1988)²⁷, *Liturgiam authenticam* (2001)²⁸ and *Summorum Pontificum* (2007).²⁹ *Quattuor abhinc annos* authorised diocesan bishops to grant specific permission to use the 1962 Roman Missal with the proviso that groups and individuals accepted the conciliar rites.³⁰ *Ecclesia Dei* (1988) expanded *Quattuor abhinc annos* and exhorted bishops to grant permission in a ‘wide and generous application’.³¹ *Liturgiam authenticam* reformed liturgical

²⁵ Paul VI, October, 30, 1971 to a group of priests in the United Kingdom.

²⁶ *Quattuor abhinc annos*. Letter of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, 3 October, 1984: AAS 76 (1984), 1088-1089). It followed an earlier invitation from Pope John Paul to comment on the reception of the Roman Missal promulgated in 1970 and any difficulties arising from the liturgical reform.

²⁷ John Paul II, *Ecclesia Dei* (Vatican City: Vatican Press, 1988), sec. 3. In this letter John Paul responded to the prohibited consecration of four bishops by the Society of St Pius X in Ecône, Switzerland. John Paul excommunicated the priests concerned, called for unity and established the Pontifical Commission *Ecclesia Dei* to foster dialogue.

²⁸ Fifth Instruction “For the Right Implementation of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy” (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, art. 36), *Liturgiam authenticam* on the use of Vernacular Languages in the Publication of the Books of the Roman Liturgy”, Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, 2001.

²⁹ Benedict XVI, *Summorum Pontificum*, Apostolic Letter, July 7, 2007. Accessed 3 January 2023. https://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/motu_proprio/documents/hf_ben-xvi_motu-proprio_20070707_summorum-pontificum.html.

³⁰ “Indult for Use of Roman Missal of 1962, Congregation for Divine Worship”, 22 October 1984: ‘it be made publicly clear beyond all ambiguity that such priests and their respective faithful in no way share the positions of those who call in question the legitimacy and doctrinal exactitude of the Roman Missal promulgated by Pope Paul IV in 1970’ in *Quattuor abhinc annos*, sec a.

³¹ ‘Respect must everywhere be shown for the feelings of all those who are attached to the Latin liturgical tradition, by a wide and generous application of the directives already issued some time ago by the Apostolic See for the use of the Roman Missal according to the typical edition of 1962’, sec. 6/c, cf. *Quattuor abhinc annos*, 1088-1089.

language to be more literal than dynamically equivalent. *Summorum Pontificum* expanded on *Quattuor abhinc annos* further by allowing the almost unlimited use of the rituals prior to 1963 and by giving every priest permission to use the pre-conciliar rites without his bishop's permission.

Summorum Pontificum introduced the novel idea of ordinary and extraordinary rites. It proposed a 'twofold use of the same Roman rite' with the *Novus Ordo* as the *lex orandi's* ordinary expression' and the 1962 Missal as its 'extraordinary expression'.³² It argued that the ordinary/ extraordinary distinction worked because the promulgation of the *Novus Ordo* did not abrogate the pre-conciliar rites. Thus, there could be 'two expressions of the church's *lex orandi* [that] will in no way lead to a division in the church's *lex credendi*.'³³ It ignored that 'these two missals do not share...the same ecclesiology [therefore] the assertion that they can exist as a 'twofold use of the same Roman rite' cannot be sustained'.³⁴

Summorum Pontificum responded to the 'Reform of the Reform' movement and the hermeneutic of continuity to interpret Vatican II.³⁵ It fed the liturgical polarisation and contributed to the broader liturgical confusion revealed in the pandemic responses of 2020, with drive-in-reconciliation, walk-up-communion, and virtual private masses where laity 'received' spiritual communion. Covid finally reopened the liturgical debate after years of polarisation had reduced the Mass and the sacraments to commodities to be pedalled by traditionalists and progressives alike.³⁶

Traditionis custodes (2021) repealed *Summorum Pontificum* and abrogated the general use of the 1962 Roman Missal.³⁷ Article One reaffirmed that the liturgical books of Paul VI and John Paul II are 'the unique expression of the *lex orandi* of the Roman Rite'³⁸ and quashed the concept of ordinary and extraordinary rites. In Article Two, the diocesan bishop's 'exclusive competence' to authorise the use of the 1962 Roman Missal was reasserted.³⁹

In his accompanying letter to *Traditionis custodes*,⁴⁰ Pope Francis acknowledges that the intention of *Summorum Pontificum* had failed by contributing to the Church's liturgical disunity. *Traditionis custodes* purpose is to restore 'the unity of the Church' through re-establishing the single *lex orandi* because the use of the 1962 Missal and the rites prior to the Council are often characterised by the rejection not only of

³² *Summorum pontificum*, Art 1.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Joseph Grayland, "The Tridentine Mass again: Can the Church celebrate in two rites?" in *Compass: A Review of Topical Theology* 41/3 (Spring 2007). Vol 41 No 3.

³⁵ Benedict proposed the hermeneutic of continuity which he called the correct lens for interpreting the Second Vatican Council and rejected the hermeneutic of rupture.

³⁶ See J.P. Grayland, *Liturgical Lockdown. Covid and the Absence of the Laity. A New Zealand Perspective*, (Palmerston North, Te Heparā Pai, 2021).

³⁷ Francis. *Traditionis Custodes*, Apostolic Letter, 16 July, 2021. Accessed January 3, 2023.

https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/motu_proprio/documents/20210716-motu-proprio-traditionis-custodes.html, nn 7-14.

³⁸ *Traditionis custodes*, Art. 1.

³⁹ *Traditionis custodes*, Art. 2.

⁴⁰ Francis, Letter of the Holy Father Francis to the Bishops of the Whole World, that accompanies the Apostolic Letter *Motu Proprio Data Traditionis Custodes*, Rome, 16 July 2021. Accessed 3 January 2023, <https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/letters/2021/documents/20210716-lettera-vescovi-liturgia.html>.

the liturgical reform, but of Vatican II 'claiming, with unfounded and unsustainable assertions' that Vatican II 'betrayed' the Tradition.⁴¹

In rejecting this claim, *Traditionis custodes* reasserted Vatican II's agenda. Further, it identifies the issue at the heart of the liturgical-ecclesial polarisation: '[t]o doubt the Council is to doubt the intentions of those very Fathers who exercised their collegial power in a solemn manner *cum Petro et sub Petro* in an ecumenical council, and, in the final analysis, to doubt the Holy Spirit itself who guides the Church.'⁴²

It is *Traditionis custodes'* call to unity that affronts polarisation. The counter to polarisation is complementarity, which includes a call to unity. While the unity of the individual is the ground of their capacity to worship, this alone is not sufficient for the liturgical act. Individual capacity must give way—freely—to the collective action where the individual becomes a willing participant in the collective *Corpus Christi* that gives praise and thanks to God.

Section Four—Capacity and Capability for Enculturated Liturgy

Aotearoa, New Zealand's synodal feedback has identified the substantial need for liturgical encounters that are life-giving, accessible, and culturally appropriate to Catholics here.⁴³ The feedback shows that many 'indigenous Catholics' no longer identify with the liturgical and ecclesial symbols used in the liturgical rites.⁴⁴ Many do not agree with, understand or value the Church's theological language and teachings.⁴⁵ For many respondents, the Church's organisational matrix and magisterial teachings are no longer absolute or necessary for salvation or participation in liturgical life. The feedback calls for relational structures that enable liturgical participation through contemporary words, gestures, and inclusive language.⁴⁶

Contemporary pastoral liturgy is challenged to provide enculturated liturgical encounters that are aware of and responsive to contemporary Catholic's capacity and ability to participate symbolically. Today, liturgical practitioners must navigate

⁴¹ 'But I am nonetheless saddened that the instrumental use of *Missale Romanum* of 1962 is often characterized by a rejection not only of the liturgical reform, but of the Vatican Council II itself, claiming, with unfounded and unsustainable assertions, that it betrayed the Tradition and the "true Church". The path of the Church must be seen within the dynamic of Tradition "which originates from the Apostles and progresses in the Church with the assistance of the Holy Spirit" (*DV* 8).' "Letter of the Holy Father Francis to the Bishops of the Whole World" para. 6.

⁴² 'I take the firm decision to abrogate all the norms, instructions, permissions and customs that precede the present *motu proprio*, and declare that the liturgical books promulgated by the saintly Pontiffs Paul VI and John Paul II, in conformity with the decrees of Vatican Council II, constitute the unique expression of the *lex orandi* of the Roman Rite', "Letter of the Holy Father Francis to the Bishops of the Whole World", para. 7.

⁴³ The feedback from the entire country shows a less than 30 percent participation rate by New Zealand Catholics.

⁴⁴ The concept of 'indigenous Catholic' is problematic. It is intended to refer to Catholics born or raised in Aotearoa, New Zealand who are part of the cultural fabric of the country and the church, rather than new migrant Catholics who did not contribute to the synodal process because they see no need for it.

⁴⁵ See, Grayland, *Catholics, Prayer, Belief and Diversity in a Secular Context*. Section 5, 115-132.

⁴⁶ Here a distinction needs to be made between Catholics born in Aotearoa, New Zealand, and new migrant Catholics from Asia. Migrants bring a 'cultural catholic practice' that does not mirror indigenous or local Catholicism, in devotional practices, weekday Mass attendance and reconciliation and penance.

the relational breakdown between an individual's capacity to participate in the liturgical act (*cultus*) and their ability to ritualise using the symbols proposed for worship. Moreover, all of this needs to be 'done' in the context of diversity and with others. This is the contemporary liturgical challenge.

Increasingly, liturgical language, ritual gestures, postures, and symbols have to be adapted, often to their basic expressions, so that 'non-ritualised' Catholics can participate in the rites—which begs the questions of participation and 'ownership'. This challenge is real when families gather for funerals, and the only family member who can ritualise liturgically is the deceased.

The signifier of change from a received *cultus* of liturgy to a vernacular *cultus* is observable in contemporary funerals, weddings, and school masses. One can no longer presume that the mourners, couples, or students are capable of symbolic participation using the received tradition, so vernacular expressions must be sought. As liturgical actors, many cannot bring their whole selves to the liturgical act because the concept of God, the purpose of worship and the object of praise articulated through the received symbols are concepts that increasing numbers of mourners, couples, and students do not understand.

Beyond this, Guardini's question of 'symbolic-ability'—the *capacity* to worship and the *ability* to symbolise—returns. Where a couple shares the capacity to live the theology of Christian marriage themselves within the People of God, they will symbolise using the liturgical symbols and language of Christian marriage—both received and vernacular. However, where the couple does not share the capacity and ability to symbolise within the People of God, Christian marriage's symbolic language and rituals are incidental to them. Their wedding ritualisation will default to symbols—received or vernacular—that show their understanding of matrimony as an event between themselves and their friends.⁴⁷

The complexity of the capacity/ability relationship speaks to the experience of enculturated worship and ecclesial life articulated in *Sacrosanctum concilium* section three, *The Reform of the Sacred Liturgy, A-F*. These principles can guide practitioners of liturgy through the complexity of adaptation, enculturation, participation, and culture. Taken together, they reorient our presumptions of fully conscious and active participation by restating liturgy's relational centre as an encounter with the living God in and through Christ.

The relationship between capacity and ability pivots on the encounter. If signs and symbols want to express the liturgy's relational structure, they must adhere to the principle of engagement at the heart of *Sacrosanctum concilium*⁴⁸. Thus, we begin to see that active liturgical engagement is only possible where the *cultus* or system of worship underpinning the liturgical act has changed to facilitate capacity and ability through an encounter that translates the liturgical act into symbols that speak to the new symbolic world.

⁴⁷ Both couples may use received and vernacular ritual expressions. The point is that the vernacular expressions for the second couple are probably no longer Christian.

⁴⁸ See especially, *Sacrosanctum concilium*, number 1.

Conclusion

Sixty years on from *Sacrosanctum concilium*'s promulgation, one may ask, have the years of change and the pain been worth it? The answer is yes. The alternative is a rarefied cultural-religious world where devotees' way of life has little or no relationship to the world Christ and the Gospels call us to inhabit. Sadly, since the 1960s, the Church has lived in a functional schism that has taken its toll on the ecclesial community and negatively impacted the reception of *Sacrosanctum concilium*.

The enormous cultural changes within and beyond the Church that have led or moved us to our present positions are forces of such immense change. Even if the Second Vatican Council's foresight had not led us to change, it would have happened without the guidance of significant magisterial texts.

Significant social-cultural movements and theological developments have shaped our liturgical practice and reframed our catholic worldview because Catholics live in the world. The transition from a pre-conciliar to a post-conciliar worldview that is less deferential to the hierarchy and more willing to be egalitarian is evident in the unwillingness of the radical traditionalists and progressives to be directed by the magisterial teacher.

The movement from pre-conciliar ecclesial thinking and ritual (prior to 1963) through the initial phase of ritual modification (1963-69) to the implementation of pastoral-liturgical practice (1970-80) has been accompanied by a significant evolution of theological and social thought that has questioned magisterial teachings and challenged the theological foundations of central tenets of belief and religious practice. The ritual modifications that began as a top-down process had, by the early 1970s, developed a ground-up movement for change, as the 'ground' realised it too could be a change agent.

The uniqueness of twentieth-and twenty-first-century change can be seen when compared to the magnitude of social-religious change during the Reformation. Then, unlike now, the value of religion and the existence of God was not questioned when churchmen and kings fought to secure their religious-civic worldview. That is not the case today, and it has not been so since the early nineteenth century. The presumptions of the Reformation religious-civic worldview are not the presumptions of the secular worldview of countries like Aotearoa, New Zealand, where the social purpose of religion has disappeared from public life, and religious practice is a private matter.

Clearly, the liturgical practice is immersed in a larger context of change. Going forward, liturgical theologians and practitioners must consider more carefully the relationship between capacity and ability as worshippers change. Liturgy will have to become more adaptive to complex and competing forces for change within the Church and from society.