

conduct they espouse. The schools must strive to maintain the precarious balance between spiritual, academic, and athletic goals.

DANIEL COWDIN
Salve Regina University
Newport, Rhode Island

SACRAMENTAL AND LITURGICAL THEOLOGY

Topic: Liturgy and Evangelization
 Convener: Bruce Morrill, Boston College
 Presenters: Thomas Rausch, Loyola Marymount University
 Mark Wedig, Barry University
 Respondent: Shawn Madigan, College of St. Catherine

In his paper, "Liturgy and Evangelization in the North American Context," Thomas Rausch began by acknowledging that the language of evangelization has only recently, and ever so slowly, found its way into the ethos of Roman Catholicism. Prior to Vatican II, Catholics tended to identify things evangelical with Protestantism, contrasting their own church as one of sacrament, law, and hierarchy. Evangelizing was the work of missionaries, not a task for the entire church. The Documents of Vatican II, however, exploded with a proliferation of references to the Gospel and evangelization, with Pope Paul's *Evangelii nuntiandi* (1975) further developing the social dimension of evangelization and its profound link with social justice. Pope John Paul II has expounded in further detail a "new evangelization," which seeks to revitalize the church's impact in local cultures and which, moreover, finds its greatest source in the church's liturgical life.

Observing that most Catholics would not readily put the words liturgy and evangelization together, Rausch nonetheless reports that such notable theologians as Don Saliers, Stanley Hauerwas, Regis Duffy, and Mary Catherine Hilkert have, in ways quite resonant with the pope, mounted arguments for the evangelical dimension of liturgy. On the other hand, a 1980s study of fifteen middle-class U.S. parishes resulted in a dissonant array of theological evaluations as to whether and how liturgical life inspires and enables participants to work for reconciliation and social justice. Given the unsettled state of this question, Rausch decided to enlist some graduate students to help him study three vital, diverse parishes in greater Los Angeles to explore what indicators of a linkage between good liturgy and social outreach might be found.

After giving brief descriptions of the parishes and their liturgies Rausch, drawing on the theoretical work of Thomas Sweetser and Peter Henriot, proposed six criteria for liturgies that foster parishioners' commitment to reconciliation, justice and service in society: vital liturgy, shared ministry, adult faith development, comprehensive RCIA and full communion programs, concrete projects for

community outreach, and active welcoming of marginal people. Whether in affluent or poor neighborhoods, the parishes Rausch studied provided him with evidence of newly evangelical communities sustained by intense liturgical life. He plans on developing further this initial study.

Mark Wedig presented the session's second paper, "Evangelization, Inculturation and the RCIA." Starting from the premise that the success of Christian evangelization has always depended on the degree to which the church's liturgy was adapted to local culture, Wedig identified the RCIA as a foundational method for the church's mission of evangelization today. If the RCIA is to remain a source for the contemporary church's evangelical mission, however, it will have not only to intensify its efforts at adaptation and integration but also to resist certain aspects of postmodern culture. These challenges set the agenda for Wedig's theoretical explorations.

Like Rausch, Wedig noted the significant shift in the church's understanding of itself and its missionary dimension at Vatican II. Rather than perceiving ecclesiology as preceding missiology, or mission proceeding from a perfect society, the church now realizes that its very existence entails an ongoing, integral, missionary alignment to the world. With mission and evangelization understood fundamentally as the work of a local church, the dynamic "double-movement" relationship between the church's cultic tradition and local culture—i.e., liturgical inculturation—is crucial to the realization of vital ecclesial life in a particular context. Following Aidan Kavanagh, Wedig argues that the most innovative postconciliar liturgical reform has been that of initiation. The RCIA comprises a liturgical response to the challenges of modern social and religious life, a ritual process for balancing competing claims of modernity and ecclesial tradition. By their design the rituals of the RCIA require adaptation and integration to local culture. To the extent that this "double movement" between faith and culture is realized in a local church, the RCIA demonstrates effective evangelization.

In the last part of his paper Wedig turned to the new challenges that globalization and "hypermodernity" pose to even this most current approach to inculturated, evangelical liturgy. The hyperactivity of modernity undercuts the sort of time and space needed for nurturing virtue and moral vision within a religiously formed rhythm of daily life. The spread of hyperintelligent networks of computers and other forms of telecommunication is diminishing the amount of social and interpersonal contact that is so essential to religious and moral formation. In the face of these hypermodern challenges, Wedig argues, local pastoral ministers must develop the skills for a discernment of culture whereby they can identify what is to be resisted in postmodernity and how to integrate what is compatible between Christian tradition and contemporary culture.

BRUCE T. MORRILL
Boston College
Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts