



Joint Conference
in tandem with
Society of Biblical Literature International Meeting

*‘This is My Body, Given for You’:
The Eucharist in Scripture and Tradition*

July 5-7, 2026

Adelaide University

Contents

Conference Schedule

Sunday	3
Monday Morning	4
Monday Afternoon	5
Tuesday Morning	6
Tuesday Afternoon.....	7

Abstracts

ACTA Abstracts.....	8
ACBA Abstracts.....	16
Conference Attendees	20



Conference Schedule

SUNDAY JULY 5		
TIME	EVENT	VENUE
13.45 – 14:00	Registration ACBA & ACTA	St Aloysius College, 53 Wakefield Street
14:00 – 14:45	ACBA and ACTA Joint Opening Session Opening Prayer (ACTA)	
14:45 – 15:45	Keynote Address Brendan Byrne SJ (The Loyola Institute, Australian Catholic University) <i>The Messiah's Banquet: Recapturing the Biblical Foundations of the Eucharist</i>	
15.45:00 16:15	Afternoon Tea	
16:30-17.00	Smoking Ceremony	Outside Elder Hall
17.00-18.00	SBL Opening Session	Elder Hall
18.00-20.30	Wine Reception	National Wine Centre

MONDAY JULY 6 MORNING				
8:45–9.00	Morning Prayer (ACBA) Venue: Lower Napier LG 28			8:45–9.00
9.00–10.30	ACBA/ACTA/CBA Joint Session on the Eucharist Venue: Lower Napier LG 28 Chair: Teresa Brown Panellists: - Clare Johnston - Michael Trainor - Frances Baker - Chris Seeman (CBA)			9.00–10.30
10.30–11.00	Morning Tea			10.30–11.00
TIME	NAPIER 108 (ACTA)	NAPIER 205 (ACTA)	NAPIER 144 (ACBA)	TIME
11.00–11:45	Gregory Moses <i>Creatively Receiving Aboriginal Gifts</i>	Sandie Cornish <i>Lessons from the Synod and the Reception of Catholic Social Teaching in Oceania</i>	Rosemary Canavan <i>“This is my body”: Eucharistic and Living</i>	11.00–11:45
11:45–12:30	Gerard Moore <i>The Eucharist and the Scriptures: A Complex Interrelationship</i>	Joel Hodge <i>Can ‘the Sacrifice of the Mass’ be Saved?</i>	Ian J. Elmer <i>“Do This in Remembrance of Me”: Large Language Models, Living Tradition, and the Embodied Logic of Pauline Eucharistic Theology</i>	11:45–12:30
12:30–14:00	Lunch Gender Justice Networking Session over lunch			12:30–14:00

MONDAY JULY 6 AFTERNOON				
14.00-14.30	Geoff Brodie <i>Some Implications of the Eucharist for Catholic Education</i>	Kim Hyunjhik SJ <i>The Creed as a Compass: A Social Ontological Approach to the Pilgrimage of the Sunday Mass Community toward the Eucharist</i>	Francis Ootobo <i>Broken and Poured Out: The Eucharist as a model for Discipleship in Mark's Gospel</i>	14.00-14.30
14.30-15.00	Joseph Vnuk OP <i>Why Transubstantiation?</i>		James R Harrison <i>The Iconography of Porcine Death at Kolossae: A Visual Exegesis of Mark 5:1-20</i>	14.30-15.00
15.00-15.30	Terence Kennedy CSsR <i>Augustinianism and St. Thomas's Theology of Grace</i>	Desmond Cahill <i>Beyond Bondi: A Trinitarian Theology of Multicultural Cohesion</i>	Sarah Hart <i>Biblical Studies and Sacred Scripture</i>	15.00-15.30
15.30-16.00	Afternoon Tea Napier 108			15.30-16.00
16.00-17.00	Session Commemorating Rev. Prof. Francis F. Moloney SDB (1940-2025) Chair: Rosemary Canavan Panellists: - Brendan Byrne - Dorothy Lee - Michael Trainor - Catherine Playoust			16.00-17.00
17:45-18.30	Conference Mass St Francis Xavier Cathedral 17 Wakefield St, Adelaide			17:45-18.30
18.45 onwards	Conference Dinner Wakefield Hotel 76 Wakefield St, Adelaide			18.45 onwards

(Continued overleaf)

TUESDAY JULY 7 MORNING				
8.45-9.00	Morning Prayer (ACTA) Napier 108			8:45-9.00
TIME	NAPIER 108 (ACTA)	NAPIER 205 (ACTA)	NAPIER 144 (ACBA)	TIME
9.00-9:45	Gerard Kelly <i>The Eucharist – An Event of the Trinity</i>	David Kirchhoffer <i>Eucharist, Sacramentality, and the Future of Catholic Healthcare</i>	Joint Biblical Studies Session: ACBA/CBA <i>The Bible and our Geopolitical Context</i> Chair: Ian Elmer Panellists: - Chris Seeman (CBA) - Michele Connelly - Sarah Hart	9.00-10.30
9.45-10:30	Danielle Lynch <i>Radical Hospitality: Living Jesus’ Eucharistic Welcome to the Marginalised</i>	John Herd <i>The Eucharist, Synodality and the Common Good</i>		
10.30-11.00	Morning Tea			10.30-11.00
11.00-12.30	ACTA AGM		Paul Creevey <i>A Consideration of Jn 6:51-58: Johannine Eschatology and Its Implications for John’s Eucharistic Theology</i>	11.00-11.45
			Fr Joseph Nguyen (JD Tan) <i>An insight, through the lens of trauma, into a theology of Resistance and Resilience in Revelation 2:1-7</i>	11.45-12.30
12:30-14:00	Lunch			12:30-14:00

TUESDAY JULY 7 AFTERNOON				
14.00-14.45	Gavin Brown <i>Massive Gatherings: A Historiographical and Theological Survey of the International Eucharistic Congress</i>	Julie Trinidad <i>Ignatius' Rules for Thinking with the Church and the Journey toward a Synodal Church</i>	Free time	14.00-14.30
			Kevin Waldie “What does 1 Cor 11:23-26 tell us about the Eucharist?”	14.30-15.00
14.45-15.30	Robert Gascoigne <i>The Eucharist and ‘the Eschatological Nature of the Pilgrim Church’</i>		Evan Caddy <i>Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego are not protagonists.</i>	15.00-15.30
15:30-16:00	Afternoon Tea			15:30-16:00
16.00-16:45	Thomas V. Gourlay (Anthony J. Kelly Essay Prize Recipient) <i>The Religious Sense as Praeparatio Fidei: Reason and faith in the thought of Luigi Giussani</i>	ACBA AGM		16.00-17.30
16.45-17.30	Free Time			
17.45-18:45	Conversation with Brendan Byrne and Dorothy Lee <i>Brendan and Dorothy will talk about their lives in biblical studies, their passions as scholars, what is changing in their field, and the future of biblical studies.</i> Lower Napier LG28			17.45-18:45
19:00	CBA panel event on Antisemitism, open to the public <i>Facing Antisemitism Today: Scholarship, Faith, and Public Responsibility</i> Panellists: - Prof. Amy-Jill Levine - Dr Michael Trainor - Archbishop Anthony Ireland - Rabbi Benjamin Elton Scots Church 237 North Terrace, Adelaide			19.00



ACTA Conference Abstracts

Abstracts are listed in alphabetical order by presenter surname.

Brodie, Geoff

Some Implications of the Eucharist for Catholic Education

The Congregation for Catholic Education affirms the importance of the sacraments in Catholic education in these terms: “An understanding of the Sacramental journey has profound educational implications... Through the Spirit, [the Lord] causes us to grow in the Church, offering us ‘grace upon grace’; the only thing he asks is our cooperation. The educational consequences of this touch on our relationship with God, our witness as a Christian, and our choice of a personal vocation.”

This paper will suggest some implications of the Eucharist for Catholic education through an application of the Congregation’s understanding of the Eucharist as embodying two supreme acts of love: Jesus renewing his sacrifice of salvation for us and Jesus truly giving himself to us. One implication is that contemporary pedagogy in a Catholic school needs to be informed by a sacrificial love that transforms suffering into joy, which is a real possibility whenever a liturgical and sacramental dynamic motivates and directs a teacher’s vocation. Another implication is that a liturgical dimension of education frames authentic development of human freedom as occurring through the felt-desire to cooperate with God’s loving plan for the salvation of all.

Brown, Gavin

Massive Gatherings: A Historiographical and Theological Survey of the International Eucharistic Congress

The bold theme of the first ever International Eucharistic Congress, held in Lille, France in 1881, declared, “The Eucharist Saves the World.” Fifty-three congresses later, with Sydney set to host the 54th International Eucharistic Congress in 2028, to what extent have such events “saved the world”? This paper surveys how historians and theologians have approached and interpreted this “mega-event” in the life of the Catholic Church, drawing upon the varying and often complex interrelationships between the event’s devotional, ecclesial, papal, political, and global dimensions. Have the congresses witnessed a pilgrim Church engaged in a saving mission across the globe or one which has indulged in the dangerous modern temptations of spectacle?

Cahill, Desmond

Beyond Bondi: A Trinitarian Theology of Multicultural Cohesion

After a short overview of academic discourse on multicultural Australia, social cohesion and whiteness theory over the past 50 years, the paper will focus on the relational nature of the Trinity and its *perichoresis*, *koinonia* and notion of communion

as solidarity, and the common good as the foundation notions of community cohesion. It will then draw on other connected concepts drawn from the 1989 National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia and from the eight positive peace pillars derived from quantitative global data collected by North Sydney's Vision of Humanity and its cognate Institute for Economics and Peace with notions such as equity, equality, and a well-functioning government delivering educational and health care services as well as high levels of human capital and low levels of corruption

Cornish, Sandie

Lessons from the Synod and the Reception of Catholic Social Teaching in Oceania

This paper proposes that local cultural resources, such as Oceanic oralities, can enhance the synodal development, promulgation, and reception of Catholic social teaching in Oceania. Analysis of documents from the continental and universal stages of the Synod on Synodality suggests that the reception of Catholic social teaching can be enhanced by ensuring that its content is specific enough to provide guidance for social engagement in concrete local contexts, that it is expressed in accessible language for specific multicultural local contexts, and that it is developed via inclusive and participatory processes. Oceanic oralities such as Indigenous Australian yarning circles (Fricker, 2025) and the practice of *vei talanoa* in Tonga, Samoa, Fiji and Tokelau (Mafile'o et al, 2024), can address these needs. They are a precious resource for the local and universal Church as they can deepen and extend approaches to consultation and dialogue beyond the text-based processes used by the Synod on Synodality. These oralities can also reconfigure synodal methods such as Conversation in the Spirit to decentre Eurocentric assumptions about time, voice, interiority, and authority, making the emergent knowledge produced more concrete and contextually grounded. Sanga and Reynolds' Oceania Oralities Framework and Himes' discussion of consultative development of social teaching by bishops' conferences will inform consideration of approaches to consultation and dialogue.

Gascoigne, Robert

The Eucharist and 'the Eschatological Nature of the Pilgrim Church'

In their distinctive ways, the texts of the New Testament emphasize the eschatological character of the Eucharist. 'I will never again drink of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.' (Mt 26:29) 'He said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; for I tell you, I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the Kingdom of God.'" (Lk 22:15-16) In anticipation of sharing the new wine with Christ in his Father's Kingdom, his disciples will receive his body and blood in the eucharist 'in remembrance of him', 'for as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.' (1 Cor 11.26)

Chapter VII of *Lumen Gentium* emphasizes 'the eschatological character of the pilgrim church.' *Gaudium et Spes*, too, speaks of the eucharist in the language of pilgrimage: "The Lord left behind a pledge of this hope and strength for life's journey in that sacrament of faith where natural elements refined by man are gloriously changed into His Body and Blood, providing a meal of brotherly solidarity and a foretaste of the heavenly banquet.' (38)

This paper will consider the eschatological character of the eucharist in relation to humanity's pilgrimage, in the light of Scripture, Vatican II and more recent Papal teaching.

Gourlay, Thomas

The Religious Sense as *Praeparatio Fidei*: Reason and faith in the thought of Luigi Giussani

Luigi Giussani's teaching concerning what he termed 'the religious sense' is one of his most unique and enduring contributions. For him, the religious sense is best understood within the context of its relationship to, and contradistinction from faith. Although on a simplistic and superficial reading it may seem that the two concepts simply coincide, this is not the content of Giussani's teaching. The aim of this paper is to explore how Giussani marked the difference between the religious sense and faith, demonstrating that these two distinct realities exist in a complementary and reciprocal enriching, yet essentially asymmetrical relationship. Through analysing Giussani's presentation of these two phenomena, we observe that the religious sense is understood not as something that must simply be demonstrated rationally prior to the assent of faith, a sort of *praeambula fidei*, but rather as a *praeparatio fidei*, a preparation—which is not merely a preceding activity, occurring chronologically prior the encounter with Christ and the arrival of faith, but which coexists with the experience of faith and also, in a specific sense, arises as the fruit of that experience.

Herd, John

The Eucharist, Synodality and the Common Good

The Eucharist is at the centre of the life of the Church and is integrally connected with synodality: "The gift of communion, mission and participation - the three cornerstones of synodality - is realised and renewed in every Eucharist" (Final Synod Document #142). This paper will consider how synodality is realised and renewed in the Eucharist in relation to the concept of the common good. First, we will consider how Karol Wojtyla grasped the common good as oriented to the true good of the person and consider implications for synodality and the Eucharist. Second, we will ask what this suggests for a productive development of ecclesiology especially in relation to the "authority of pastors" (FSD #33) and the plurality of "vocations, charisms and ministries at the service of the common good" (FSD #38).

Further, the Final Document calls for a "genuine relational conversion that redirects each person's priorities" (FSD #50). It will be helpful to discuss this call to conversion in terms of Lonergan's religious, moral and intellectual conversion. If true ecclesiological developments are to occur in line with synodality then conversion needs to move from self-absorption to self-transcendence with openness to greater authenticity. As Lonergan would say, we need a community self-transformed by conversion "to help one another in working out the implications and fulfilling their promise of new life" (*Method*, 130). And it is worth considering Doran's psychic conversion as providing depth of commitment and motivation on this journey of conversion. We are all called to live more authentically an ecclesial common good for the good of all of us and the good of the world.

Hodge, Joel

Can ‘the Sacrifice of the Mass’ be Saved?

Among a number of modern theologians—such as Edward Schillebeeckx and Karl Rahner—there has been a noticeable hesitation about, or critique of, sacrificial language in relation to the Eucharist. While some of this critique has been a needed corrective to violent or substitutionary interpretations of sacrifice, it has also led many of the faithful to downplay or even reject the Eucharist’s character as sacrifice—the one, definitive sacrifice of Christ. This trend has often been reinforced by appeals to sources outside traditional theology. The most influential example is René Girard’s mimetic theory, which has frequently been used to support a rejection of sacrificial language for Christ’s redemptive work and its sacramental memorial.

Although Girard initially understood “sacrifice” exclusively in terms of violent scapegoating, he later revised this position. He came to distinguish between inauthentic forms of sacrifice characterized by violence and exclusion, and authentic sacrifice, which consists in self-giving love. Girard recognized that his earlier restriction had been shaped by his desire to differentiate Christianity sharply from archaic religions, as well as by what he later called a “humanistic and progressivist illusion.” His shift on this point mirrors current theological debates and opens the way for a return to more ancient Christian sources. This shift gives an understanding of Christ’s sacrifice as having a double movement: both the abolition of false, violent sacrifice and the revelation of the true, eternal sacrifice of divine self-gift.

Kelly, Gerard

The Eucharist – An Event of the Trinity

Understandably, in the Catholic imagination the Eucharist has a Christological focus. Yet, in the great Tradition, including the liturgy, it is clearly an event of the Triune God. With a focus on the Gospel of John, the paper will explore the relationship between the Father and the Son in the Eucharistic texts. This invites a consideration of the participation of the believer in the relationship of Father and Son. As the Tradition develops, the place of the Holy Spirit in the Eucharist becomes clear. With this development, it is essential to situate within the dynamic of the Trinity, the participation of the faithful in the Eucharistic action. The paper will explore the implications of this theology for the mission of the Church.

Kennedy, Terence

Augustinianism and St. Thomas’s Theology of Grace

A number of contemporary theologians remain critical of St Augustine, despite his rehabilitation by De Lubac. For medieval theologians, on the other hand, he was THE Doctor of the Church. St Thomas was aware of Augustine’s mistakes about grace, especially the suspicion of double predestination in his thought. Thomas followed the Church practice of promoting Augustine’s doctrine while tacitly avoiding his errors. Augustine lacked the satisfactory philosophy of divine action necessary for an integrated synthesis.

Aquinas had to “redo” Augustine’s work before proceeding to his own systematic treatment. This he did in the *Summa Theologiae*, I- II, Q 109, which is both a summary of Augustine’s position and a re-elaboration of his thought. The crucial correction is in a. 2 that outlines God’s action in creation and grace. Thomas usually begins a discussion of a subject by asking what its nature is and then proceeding to its causes and properties. His discussion of grace is an exception. He begins with the NECESSITY of grace and then proceeds to his synthesis in ST, I-II, Q 110-114. Thus he preserved Augustine’s fundamental insight that grace is necessary to human and Christian existence. Bouillard insisted in his study of conversion that the ST cannot be properly understood as a logical synthesis considering how Thomas’ thought developed historically. De Lubac and Bouillard introduced the recovery of patristic sources to contemporary Thomism.

Kim Hyunjhik

The Creed as a Compass: A Social Ontological Approach to the Pilgrimage of the Sunday Mass Community toward the Eucharist

This paper examines the communal dimension of the Sunday Eucharist, exploring how gathered individuals are transformed into a cohesive community with a shared teleological goal. Specifically, it investigates the recitation of the Creed not merely as a cognitive statement of belief but as a dynamic pilgrimage toward the Eucharist and the secular world beyond. To elucidate this transformation, the study employs Raimo Tuomela’s theories of social ontology. By analysing the liturgical assembly as an “organised social group,” it demonstrates how the Creed functions as the community’s fundamental *ethos*. Liturgical actions, such as the unified profession of faith and the physical procession to the altar, are understood as “pattern-governed behaviour” that cultivates a collective “we-mode” and solidifies a joint commitment. However, the paper argues that the Eucharistic culmination is not a static endpoint. Because Christ reveals Himself as the ‘Way’ rather than the destination itself, the community embarks on a continuous journey toward the incomprehensible mystery of the Father. Drawing upon Gregory of Nyssa’s concept of *epektasis*—the endless yearning to reach God in the “divine darkness”—this study proposes the paradigm of a “community of becoming.” While scholars like Hans Urs von Balthasar and Sarah Coakley have engaged with *epektasis*, their approaches often lack concrete communal dynamics or remain confined to solitary asceticism. In contrast, this paper asserts that traversing the secular world requires the assembly to engage in collective “we-reasoning” and a “communal interpretative wager.” Ultimately, the repeated celebration of the Eucharist empowers this pilgrim body to continuously navigate complex lived experiences through the orienting compass of the Creed.

Kirchhoffer, David

Eucharist, Sacramentality, and the Future of Catholic Healthcare

Healthcare has long been part of the Roman Catholic Church’s corporal works of mercy. Today, many Catholic healthcare organizations operate in secularized and pluralized contexts in which the presumption of religious conviction or of objective and universal normative answers to bioethical answers is no longer a given. Consequently, Catholic agencies face an identity crisis, especially where being a Catholic organisation

seems to put them at odds with newer legal and medical acceptance of practices that the Catholic Church considers morally wrong. How should Catholic healthcare agencies navigate this context?

Ethically speaking, all ‘solutions’ to this challenge presuppose a theory of value. This paper explores the meaning of two key markers of Roman Catholicism—sacramentality and the Eucharist—that should inform the theory of value that shapes the decisions about the future of Catholic healthcare. The paper argues for viewing Catholic healthcare sacramentally. The sacramental worldview that characterises Catholicism is premised on an approach of ‘critical realism’ to questions of reality. This view rejects both materialism, which reduces reality to matter and processes, and idealism, which reduces reality to personal experience. The sacramental worldview, by contrast, sees the material world as real and of inherent value, but also as the locus and manner of the God-of-Goodness-and-Truth’s own self-revelation in history to humanity and to the conscience of the individual person (who is, according to Louvain personalism, inherently open to God). The Church, which is epitomised in the gathering of believers at the Eucharist in which Jesus is believed to be really present in the matter of bread and wine, is itself a sacrament, that is, a sign and instrument of God’s loving self-revelation and work in the world. So, Catholic healthcare can be viewed sacramentally as a locus of God’s self-disclosure in the encounter between the institution and society, and the carer and the person in need. This vision may offer a way to navigate the ethical challenges faced by Catholic healthcare by expanding the horizon of meaning from the morality of individual actions to that of ultimate meaning and the promise of the redemption of all creation.

Lynch, Danielle

Radical Hospitality: Living Jesus’ Eucharistic Welcome to the Marginalised

Jesus’ table fellowship is an example of radical, counter-cultural, all-inclusive welcome. Not only does Jesus overturn societal expectations of who is ‘in’ and who is ‘out’, but he encourages his followers to do likewise. The Vatican document, “Towards a Spirituality for Synodality,” states, “Communion as participation in the Divine Life is the grounding reality of all Christian life and, therefore, of a synodal Church.” It also makes clear that synodal spirituality integrates communion, participation, and mission. As Eucharist is the “source and summit” of Christian life, and synodality is the way of living ecclesial life in communion, it matters whose presence, voices and experience are included. In this paper, I bring Church documents into dialogue with a diverse range of Catholic theologians including trans scholar Nicolette Burbach, gay moral theologian Xavier M. Montecel, and Cuban-American theologian and musician Antonio Eduardo Alonso. Following Burbach’s lead, I propose that the development of creative synodal Eucharistic spaces might allow space for communities whose roots have been oppressed or erased to (re-)discover their voices and contribute to the dialogue. To live more fully the Eucharistic call to communion, radical hospitality must be extended to the marginalised through synodal processes, by creative engagement with those who are yet unheard. Such synodal processes potentially provide the opportunity for more radical hospitality – a more inclusive welcome – in Eucharistic spaces.

Moore, Gerard

The Eucharist and the Scriptures: A Complex Interrelationship

There is a complex interrelationship between the Eucharist, the scriptures that emerge from the eucharistic gatherings, and the interpretations eucharistic theology places on the biblical texts. The Eucharist is the prime locus for the formation of resurrection faith and the scriptures that come to form the canon. Once established, the biblical texts are interpreted within eucharistic theology and can find themselves at the mercy of their foundational environment. In this, the Eucharist is a place of biblical amnesia, a 'forgetting' of the scriptural witness and an ignorance of the power of biblical silence.

In *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis draws attention to the relationship of sublime communion among the three persons of the Trinity whose perfect love engages in an ongoing act of creation of all that exists. Patristic theologians understood that this creative act imparts a trinitarian and incarnational "imprint" on all creation. Reflection on this underpinning theology in *Laudato Si'* highlights an Ignatian influence offering a hermeneutic of grace and generating a praxis of hope crucial to realising the potential of the theology of integral ecology.

This paper draws on the Ignatian wisdom evident in Karl Rahner's theology of grace and Denis Edwards' fully trinitarian theology of the natural world. This wisdom enlightens a comprehension of Pope Francis's articulation of the interconnectedness of all elements in the created world. It deepens our understanding of integral ecology, grounding its trajectory of hope in God's graced self-bestowal.

Moses, Gregory

Creatively Receiving Aboriginal Gifts

This is a contribution towards carrying out part of the program set for us by John Paul II in Alice Springs in 1986, namely that part which has to do with theology. The paper uses, as its background theory, a version of Process Relational Philosophy and Theology. The first thing this Process Relational Spirituality of Creation and Life as Gift might be able to do for us latter-day Australians is to put us into the right place, as respectful but serious receivers of gifts that have been copiously given in the direction of a less shallow spirituality. Beyond this, the Process Relational conceptuality does help also with the content. There is a congeniality between traditional culture and the strongly relational character of what Process Relational thinkers propose; in both cases reality is understood as spiralling networks of connection. Secondly, our background theory makes it theoretically/theologically possible to think of the Dreaming, stories, song lines, ceremonies, and Law as something like more or less successful clan-in-nation-in-country appropriations of the Divine Lure for the sake of integration into and overall flourishing within a particular social, natural and spiritual environment. With our background theory there certainly is no theoretical problem with accepting pre-invasion/pre-missionary experience of the Mystery we call God. Moreover, Process Relational conceptuality makes surprisingly good sense of the "everywhen" character of the Dreaming, to use W.E.H. Stanner's terminology. This in turn, in dialogue with the author's own experience and some contemporary work coming out of Adelaide, opens a section of the paper which is both intensely personal and highly theological, potentially transforming our experience of liturgy and occupying a similar kind of territory to the movement known as Deep Incarnation.

Trinidad, Julie

Ignatius' *Rules for Thinking with the Church* and the Journey toward a Synodal Church

This paper engages with St Ignatius of Loyola's *Rules for Thinking with the Church* in order to explore their significance for the emergence of a contemporary synodal Church. While these 'rules' have often been regarded as problematic or outdated, particularly in light of ecclesial crises and practices of marginalisation, the paper argues that they remain a valuable resource when interpreted in light of their original pastoral intent.

Drawing on the work of interpreters such as George Ganss, Ladislav Örsy, Elizabeth Liebert and Annemarie Paulin-Campbell, the paper suggests that Ignatius' 'rules' should not be understood as rigid demands for unquestioning conformity, but rather as flexible spiritual guidelines designed to assist believers in discerning how to live faithfully in contemporary contexts.

The paper proposes a recontextualization of the 'rules' within the ecclesiological vision of the Second Vatican Council and the synodal commitments of Popes Francis and Leo. In this light, "thinking with the Church" (*sentire cum ecclesia*) can be understood as a shared practice of discernment within the whole People of God, attentive to the *sensus fidelium* and the movements of the Holy Spirit in history. The paper demonstrates how Ignatius' *Rules for Thinking with the Church* can foster ecclesial belonging, prophetic responsibility and co-responsibility for the Church's mission. Reinterpreted in this way, they offer a constructive resource for nurturing hope, dialogue and renewal in a Church seeking to walk together in a synodal spirit.

Vnuk, Joseph

Why Transubstantiation?

When one analyses closely Thomas Aquinas' description of the way the Body of Christ is present in the Blessed Sacrament, it seems almost exactly the same as the way that a block of land is present in a title deed. The difference lies not in the presence but the absence: the title deed remains a piece of paper; what lies on the paten has ceased to be bread.

Thomas gives two main reasons why the substance of the bread does not remain: the truth of our Lord's words, and the exclusion of idolatry when the Blessed Sacrament is adored. In the *Summa Theologiae* Thomas does not explain what role adoration of the Blessed Sacrament could have in the life of the believer. To discover this, we need to consider Thomas' commentary on John 6, where he explains the role of the Eucharist in the redirection of human desire, a theme found frequently in his commentary on John and also given in the *Summa* as one of the reasons for the incarnation. When we probe deeply, we see that transubstantiation is linked to the possibility of a new economy and thus a radical re-ordering of society.



ACBA Conference Abstracts

Abstracts are listed in alphabetical order by presenter surname.

Caddy, Evan

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego are not protagonists

The story of the fiery furnace (Daniel 3) has been a beloved story in both Jewish and Christian contexts since antiquity. Most interpreters focus on the stalwart faith of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, but their role and agency in the text itself is fairly minimal. Drawing on the narrative conventions at play and the tale's context within Daniel, this paper presents the minority position that Nebuchadnezzar is the intended protagonist (though not the hero) of (Masoretic) Daniel 3. Then the paper addresses some of the tale's earliest traceable reception in its textual transmission—especially in the longer form of Daniel 3 that includes the deuterocanonical Addition (Dan 3:24–90)—to offer some suggestions as to how Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego became the heroes they are remembered as today.

Canavan, Rosemary

“This is my body”: Eucharistic and Living

“This is my body” occurs in 1 Cor 11:24, Mark 14:22, Matt 26:26 and Luke 22:19. Only in Luke is the addition, τὸ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν διδόμενον, which is given for you. This adds only one word, a verb, to Paul’s τὸ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν, that is for you, but is part of the argument for a common source for Paul and Luke that over the full passages are distinct from the Mark-Matthew source. This paper will focus particularly on Paul as the earliest mention of the Eucharist tradition that he declares he received from the Lord that he handed on to the Corinthians (1 Cor 11:23) and link it to the metaphor of the body of Christ developed by Paul especially in Romans 12:5-8 and 1 Corinthians 12:4-14. In this way I will be able to examine the relationship of living as the body of Christ with the seminal importance of structure for both Paul and Luke “that is for you”/ “given for you” coupled with the iteration of “Do this in remembrance of me” in both 1 Cor 11:24 and Luke 22:19.

Creevey, Paul

A Consideration of Jn 6:51-58: Johannine Eschatology and Its Implications for John’s Eucharistic Theology

A key theme in Johannine theology is God’s offer of eternal life (cf. Jn 5:24; 17:3; 20:31). In John’s Gospel, Jesus’ final meal with his disciples is not recorded as a Passover meal but contains the image of the Footwashing as an ὑπόδειγμα of Christian remembrance. Johannine scholars would see in John’s Bread of Life Discourse (Jn 6:22-71) the closest passage to the centrality of the Eucharist in Johannine theology, in particular, Jn 6:51-58. Further, within this passage, one finds that participation in the

Eucharist event is explicitly linked to the offering of both a ‘realised’ and a ‘final’ eschatology in the language of “to live”.

This paper consists of three parts. First, it offers a brief analysis of the concept of eternal life in John’s Gospel as a foundation for Johannine eschatology. Second, it examines the Johannine discourse, Jn 6:51-58, in its context, as the basis for the Eucharistic celebration, serving as the source of a fundamental encounter with Jesus, the sent One of the Father. Finally, it will briefly consider how this understanding can enrich our understanding of the Eucharist as the source and summit of the Christian life.

Elmer, Ian

“Do This in Remembrance of Me”: Large Language Models, Living Tradition, and the Embodied Logic of Pauline Eucharistic Theology

Large Language Models (LLMs) — the AI systems underlying tools such as ChatGPT and Claude — are a form of accumulated human meaning-making. Trained on vast archives of text, they generate outputs recognisably continuous with that inheritance while remaining capable of novelty. In this they bear an uncanny resemblance to what Catholic tradition calls the living tradition: the community’s Spirit-guided transmission and ever-new generation of meaning from the apostolic deposit. This paper takes that resemblance seriously — and then presses it until it breaks.

Paul’s Eucharistic theology in 1 Corinthians 10–11 provides the critical leverage. In 10:16–17, the Eucharist is not the transmission of information about Christ but *koinonia*, bodily participation in Christ himself. In 11:17–34, the Lord’s Supper is not a memorial archive but an enacted, communal, eschatological event: “until he comes.” Eucharistic meaning, for Paul, does not circulate as text. It is performed at a table, in a body, among bodies, in expectation of a bodily return.

LLMs have no hunger, no table, no bodies, and no eschatological horizon. In exposing this limit, Paul’s theology illuminates something easily obscured in both AI discourse and thin accounts of tradition: that the transmission of meaning in the Church is irreducibly incarnational.

Harrison, Jim

The Iconography of Porcine Death at Kolossae: A Visual Exegesis of Mark 5:1-20

A series of porcine images, of different provenance and media (coins, honorific stelae), throw unexpected exegetical light visually on Mark’s Gerasene demoniac pericope: namely, (a) the economic motivations underlying the swineherd owners’ request to Jesus to leave the territory; (b) the victory of Israel’s God over Gentile paganism; (c) Jesus’s messianic despoilation of Satan’s possessions, symbolised by the destruction of the herd of swine and the transformation of the demoniac (Mark 5:15-20); (d) anti-imperial sentiments that were possibly relevant to Mark’s 69 CE audience; and (e) the Markan inversion of Roman power in the weakness of the cross. The Colossian iconography of death portrayed in MAMA VI 50—with its seemingly inconsequential three curly-tailed pigs—has enabled us to ask new questions of Mark’s Gospel and the reactions of its later audience, especially when brought into dialogue with the Roman porcine numismatic evidence and the Edessan pig stele (SEG 25.711).

Hart, Sarah

Biblical Studies and Sacred Scripture

The books of the Bible are regarded as both divinely inspired and written by human beings. Academic courses on the Bible can be labelled 'Biblical Studies' or 'Sacred Scripture', reflecting two different perspectives on the same collection of books.

How do traditional Catholic forms of interpretation eg typology and harmonisation, cohabitate with modern biblical methods eg historical-criticism and archaeology? How does one reconcile variance between interpretation of a biblical passage within the context of its own book and when that same biblical passage is juxtaposed with a passage from another book?

This paper analyses selected post 1850 Catholic documents and directions on interpretation of the Bible. The aim is to develop a hierarchy of biblical reading principles.

Nguyen, Joseph

An insight, through the lens of trauma, into a theology of Resistance and Resilience in Revelation 2:1-7

Recent scholarship has suggested resilience as a productive lens for biblical interpretation, with significant contributions from Schreiter (2017), Warner (2023), and Joelsson (2024). Schreiter makes a compelling case for expanding the application of trauma studies in biblical interpretation by focusing on resilience, clarifying that resilience encompasses the long-term capacity to live and respond to oppression, while resistance addresses immediate opposition. Joelsson describes resilience as "the capacity to retain functioning and preserve basic structures even in hardships and stress."

Focusing on the Book of Revelation (BoR), Whitaker (2020) and Maier (2021) have contributed significantly to analyses exploring how it engages with themes of suffering, trauma, and hope. Maier argues that the BoR actively creates a sense of trauma within its readers by manipulating spatial and temporal frameworks, rather than merely reflecting existing trauma. Whitaker examines how the BoR offers apocalyptic hope and a vision of ultimate triumph to those facing systemic oppression, even without explicitly using the word 'hope'. Together, these contributions illuminate the complex network of ideas in the symbolic language of the BoR, showing how it offers a profound vision of hope, resistance, resilience, and ultimate vindication for the persecuted.

Drawing on this background, this paper offers an interpretation of Revelation 2:1-7 — the letter to the ἐκκλησία in Ephesus, one representative of the seven churches (2:1–3:22) — through the lens of trauma. Through key Greek terms such as ὑπομένω and ὑπομονή, and attention to historical context, the paper explores (1) the symbolic images, (2) the dynamics of resistance and resilience (and their absence), and (3) the proclamation of hope and healing. These are examined through the psychological and sociological dimensions of communal trauma theory.

Otobo, Francis

Broken and Poured Out: The Eucharist as a model for Discipleship in Mark's Gospel

In Mark's Gospel (14:22-25), the institution of the Eucharist points to Jesus' impending sacrifice on the cross (15:21-39). In the Gospel, Jesus asks his disciples to take up their cross and follow him (8:33). While the Markan narrative frequently portrays the disciples as failing to understand Jesus' messianic identity (8:32b), the Last Supper serves as a turning point where Jesus redefines their vocation. This paper explores the Markan Eucharistic institution narrative (Mark 14:22-25) and argues for the Eucharist as a model for discipleship in Mark's Gospel. By linking the Eucharistic actions (taking, blessing, breaking and giving), the Passion predictions (8:31-33; 9:30-32; 10:32-34), and the servant-leadership model (10:45), the paper contends that the Eucharist acts as a pedagogical, sacramental, and ethical template for the followers of Jesus to be "broken" (self-denial) and "poured-out" (service) in imitation of the crucified Servant.

Waldie, Kevin

"What does 1 Cor 11:23-26 tell us about the Eucharist and its place within Pauline ministry?"

It is interesting that these verses are a unique Pauline record within the epistolary collection bearing Paul's name. It is of note that what we read in this brief referencing of the eucharistic ritual bears a striking similarity to the Lukan wording found in Luke 22. And because of that connection I intend to investigate their similarity, particularly in light of the genre in which each author presents this specific set of words. Also, as Paul's purposes here are epistolary and pastoral we might wonder what conclusions can be drawn from his brevity or seemingly minimalist focus with respect to the eucharistic celebration. The context in Paul is then perhaps an area of some interest and so calls for a closer examination, especially in light of Luke's more expansive eucharistic Gospel referencing.



Conference Attendees



Baker, Frances	Kelly, Michael
Brodie, Geoff	Kennedy, Terence
Brown, Gavin	Kim, Hyunjhik
Brown, Teresa	Kirchhoffer, David
Cahill, Desmond	Koning, Robin
Calder, James	Lenehan, Kevin
Carroll, Sandra	Lynch, Danielle
Collins, John	McEvoy, James
Cornish, Sandra	Moore, Gerard
Gascoigne, Robert	Moses, Gregory
Gourlay, Thomas	Nguyen, Van Vien
Herd, John	Prosser, Rose-Marie
Hodge, Joel	Trinidad, Julie
Ireland, Abp Anthony	Vnuk, Joseph
Kelly, Gerard	Zhao, John



Beaton, Nicole
Beirne, Margaret
Byrne, Brendan
Caddy, Evan
Canavan, Rosemary
Connolly, Michele
Creevey, Paul
Dowling, Elizabeth
Elmer, Ian

Elvey, Anne

Harrison, James

Hart, Sarah

Lee, Dorothy

Luttick, Janine

Nguyen, Duyen

Nguyen, JD Ngoc Tan

O'Brien, Mark

Otobo, Francis

Playoust, Catherine

Rushton, Kathleen

Snoddy, Debra

Trainor, Michael

Turner, Marie
