

## MEDIA RELEASE

7 November 2025



## Celebrating 10 years of the ACU Centre for Liturgy

Australia's only national centre for liturgical formation and training has turned 10.

The ACU Centre for Liturgy, based at Australian Catholic University, has provided specialist expertise, teaching, and formation in liturgy, sacraments, and the sacred arts since 2015.

Directed by Professor of Liturgical Studies and Sacramental Theology Clare Johnson, the ACU Centre for Liturgy is the only initiative of its kind in Australia that is officially endorsed by the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference (ACBC).

The Centre was established in response to *Sacrosanctum Concilium's* call for territorial authorities to set up "some kind of Institute for Pastoral Liturgy, consisting of persons who are eminent in these matters".

Originally a priority initiative of former Vice-Chancellor Professor Greg Craven, the Centre opened in 2015 as a national resource for the Catholic Church in Australia operating in formal partnership with the ACBC.

The Centre has four part-time staff including Professor Johnson, assistant director Dr Paul Taylor, professional specialist for liturgy education Cathy Murrowood, and program coordinator Maryanne Hemsley.

"Australia's size, pastoral complexities and rich blend of people from different cultures mean that the Catholic Church here needs programs tailored specifically to its unique circumstances," Professor Johnson said.

"The Centre's programs meet the needs of large Archdiocesan parishes as well as small rural parishes with non-resident clergy.

"We enjoy engaging with parishioners, teachers, and clergy seeking to learn more about liturgical ministries through both our on-site and online programs."

As an entity based at a Catholic university, the ACU Centre for Liturgy works closely with the Faculty of Theology and Philosophy in the provision of units in liturgy, sacramental theology and the sacred arts at undergraduate and postgraduate levels and staff supervise higher degree research by up-and-coming liturgical scholars.

Some of the Centre's key achievements during the first decade include hosting numerous public lectures and three scholarly symposia; developing effective online training programs for liturgical ministries including a custom Ministers of the Word training program for lay Catholics in Nigeria; launching its highly regarded *Speaking of Liturgy* podcast; and sponsoring a postgraduate scholarship for the study of liturgy and sacraments.

The Centre's academic staff have also contributed to or edited numerous books and scholarly articles, including a recently launched book edited by Professor Johnson, Professor Gerard Moore, and Fr Peter G. Williams AM to mark the 60th anniversary of *Sacrosanctum Concilium*.

"Helping people to understand the liturgy more fully, and enabling them to recognise why celebrating liturgy properly, reverently and meaningfully is so important for both faith

expression and faith formation, is a key part of what we do in our workshops, training programs and pastoral formation days,” Professor Johnson said.

“As we work to support, promote, and enhance the liturgical life of the Catholic Church across Australia, we always aim to provide accessible, interesting and practical training opportunities that inform and encourage people to develop a deeper relationship with God through beautiful, informed, and fruitful liturgies.”

Photo caption | ACU Pro Vice-Chancellor Virginia Bourke, Bishop Paul Bird, ACU graduate Josie Ryan, ACU postgraduate student Lisa de Paiva, Cathy Murrowwod, Professor Clare Johnson, Maryanne Hemsley, Archbishop Pat O'Regan, ACU Faculty of Theology and Philosophy Executive Dean Professor Richard College, Bishop Ken Howell, and Dr Paul Taylor at the official celebration to mark 10 years of the ACU Centre for Liturgy. Credit: ACU.

**Media Contact: Emilie Ng, 0475 963 606, [emilie.ng@acu.edu.au](mailto:emilie.ng@acu.edu.au)**