

2010

## Australia's other Anzac Day: April 25 on the Western Front

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This article was originally published as:

Hardiman, R., & Wellstead, P. (2010). Australia's other Anzac Day: April 25 on the Western Front. *Pastoral Liturgy*, 40 (2-3), 27-31.

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# Australia's other Anzac Day: April 25<sup>th</sup> on the Western Front

By Russell Hardiman and Peta Wellstead

## Introduction

This paper is a response to my opportunity to take part in a pilgrimage to the World War I Western Front Battle sites, and graves, as part of a Military History Tour for Anzac Day 2009. I took part in this tour in order to fulfil a long term ambition to visit, as others in my family have done, the grave of my grandfather's nephew, Frank O'Callaghan, who is buried in Poperinghe, near Ypres in Belgium.

I am also embarking on the publication and critique of Frank's brother Jack's war diary from 1916. Jack was an Ambulance Driver and his reflections on the pastoral impact of various sections of the war effort form a powerful back drop to appreciating the long term power of pastoral care in battle zones, which provides a framework for examining the myths and realities of ANZAC with new eyes.

It has been a long time since Shakespeare raised the question: "What's in a name? A rose by any other name would smell just as sweet". This common expression is one possible way to introduce the questions about the increasing popularity of ANZAC Day, along with the growing attendance at city based Dawn Services and the faithfulness still portrayed when, like the faithful remnant of biblical times (Jer 6: 9), the country folk continue to preserve the tradition in small country towns to commemorate the local boys who enlisted with enthusiasm, yet with little awareness of the shock and horror ahead for them. The rally cries "Lest We Forget" and "We will remember them" are still the spirit of the Anzacs.

## "The History Wars"

As in many segments of Australasian life the so called "History Wars" are battles being launched again and again over issues such as the scandalous history of the treatment of the original settlers of the territory we now call Australia; or the dubious equity in the allocation of land grants to certain classes of the early settlers. ANZAC Day is also subject to revision.

The status of Anzac can now be analysed from a variety of perspectives that lead to new conclusions or a more rounded analysis. Can we proclaim forever the near miraculous withdrawal from ANZAC Cove without casualties and does this generate a positive perception of a campaign that had few objectives of serious military value rather than an integral strategy to focus attention on another service within the British ranks? Can we adulate the positive outcome out of a military disaster as we own the appalling loss of life and other casualties? Can we draw attention to the extraordinary phenomenon of three relatively new countries: Australia, New Zealand and Turkey emerging with different horizons and a new mutual respect? It is significant that in recent time, on Marine Drive in King George Sound (Albany, WA) where the ANZAC Fleet assembled, there is now an area and memorial honouring the Turkish soldiers as they too fought for their emerging country. This shows

too a changing response to the realities of the Gallipoli campaign and the ANZAC legend.

The history wars of recent times about the role of Australia in the outcome of WWI have generated a huge interest in what research and outcomes can be achieved by true scholars whose ounce of enthusiasm can overtake the tonne of mandate (mis) managed by official channels or agencies.<sup>1</sup> The discovery of the missing graves of 165 Australians at Fromelles in France has drawn attention to the issues not publicly known until recently. In response to the discovery of the graves has been an initiative by the Australian War Graves Commission to exhume the bodies and re-inter them in a grave which will be marked by a memorial similar in status to other war grave sites on the Western Front in France. The *piece de resistance* has been the generosity of spirit from the widow who has donated her late husband's farm land, which had been used for multiple ditches for the missing mass graves, and has given it to the Australian people.

The French have particular memories of the Australian contribution to their country during WWI. "Never forget Australia" is a common theme in many areas, especially in and around the town of Villers Brettoneux in the Somme Valley. The *grande gesture* of the widow in Fromelles has had another parallel this year in the context of the Victorian bushfires of February 2009. After WWI, in memory of the Victorian company who served there and lost so many lives, money raised by Victorian school children to rebuild the school in Villers Brettoneux. The school is called the Victoria School and it is in the *Rue Melbourne*. After the bushfires in Victoria in 2009 the children of Victoria School in Villers Brettoneux raised money to send to support the school children who had lost their homes and schools in Victoria, Australia. (The circle of care and concern continues). The symbolic gestures of the children are powerful witnesses to the power of a good symbol, with a potential for multiple meanings and depth of interpretation. The epitome of this growth was the playing of the first game of Australian Rules Football was played in Villers Brettoneux the day after Anzac Day in 2009.

## Expanding ANZAC Day

The phrase "Our Other Anzac Day" has been nurtured by the efforts of a business run by ex military personnel calling themselves "Military History Tours" offering the chance to visit the War Graves of the range of the war years, often called the Battle of the Somme or the Western Front.

ANZAC Day becomes allied with this because on April 24-25 of 1918, in the last months of the war, the Australian troops bravely resisted the Germans' strategic plan to capture the French Railway head at Amiens, which provide the possibility of a direct route through to Paris, and their last chance to end the war. In and around Villers Brettoneux the Australian troops held up the German advance and eventually forced their withdrawal,

which became the pivotal point in the stalemate after four years of sustained close fighting.

The new military tactics of Australasia's General Monash meant the artillery was to protect the troops by accurate sequences of bombardment, followed by the tanks' aggressive ground action before the infantry started their charging forward. The horrendous death tolls were being substantially eased and reduced further again – a result that saved many of the British Generals in their jobs. The non professional soldier was teaching the top brass how to do their job.<sup>2</sup>

For ANZAC Day 2008, the ninetieth, the Australian Government initiated and funded a Dawn Service at Villers Brettoneaux for this major anniversary. Some 9,000 Australians made the pilgrimage for that occasion and powerfully initiated a new era for a unique form of observing ANZAC Day. The Australian Government was committed by the Prime Minister Rudd to hold an annual ANZAC Dawn Service at Villers Brettoneaux Australian Memorial from 2009.

### **A Pilgrim's Journal on the Western Front – ANZAC DAY 2009**

It was 2am on April 25 when I began my preparations for attending the ANZAC Dawn Service at the Australian War Memorial in Villers Brettoneaux. After my normal routines, it was one last check that everything was in order before setting out for a walk in the cold to where the buses were waiting to take our tour group of 70 to the memorial service. It was a 40 km trip to the memorial, one of the locations of Australian WWI biggest battles of the whole campaign on the Western Front. Driving through the dark night at 3am gave us an experience of the small villages' life style with the self contained houses, often built very close to the footpath or even the road, where many had solid wood or metal shutters to give strong privacy and security. Driving through the night did not give us a good insight to all the countryside but just studying the road signs and distances and noting the town signs for Albert, Amiens and Villers Bretonneux was significant.

We must have been the first bus to arrive (2 hours before the service was due to begin), yet we hastened up the hill towards the hugely impressive cross and on further to the base of the National Monument. As we made our way forward the poignancy of the row after row of white head stones did not go unnoticed notwithstanding that the strategy was to get up to the planned seating area and try to get a good view for the ceremony. I settled on my old belief of being on the aisle only some 15 rows from the front but with a view across the main entrance aisle meant there was less chance of a tall "boofhead" bothering me and my capacity to move sideways to see.

The leaders of the tour group had warned us of a cold sleet atmosphere the year before, but we were in no way well prepared for what was ahead. After all we had nearly 100 minutes to wait for the five am start but it was a long time of exposure to the most frigid conditions I have ever encountered. All this realism brought to mind the awesome cold and shocking conditions for the soldiers during the dreadful winters of the campaign on the Western Front. My Notre Dame Australia jacket turned out to be a real dud, with a smooth reassuring feel

but in fact scarcely any cold protection being synthetic. I reflected that I should have put on more t-shirts of my Propaganda Fide College style – good cotton warmth. I have never felt anything like this cold, even when I was in Rome as a student and not used to European winter weather, even after wearing the dressing gown under the soutane at St Charles' Seminary in Guildford, which is notoriously cold by WA standards. In my graduate days in Rome I was more creative and had a zimarra, made of felt, for my size but without the Propaganda Fide College red trimming. This is what I call the horse blanket and it would have been great for this day, using the hood over the neck, head, ears and scalp with all the weight of the seamless felt very, very, very useful. Somewhere behind me a woman was claiming four layers of clothing were keeping her warm but the extremities were still feeling the cold – I did not have the benefit of four layers.

As it turned out I could only pull up the collar to near my ears and stretch the sleeves down to my fingers but stretching the fibre only revealed how low was its head dimension. At first I started to catch up on my travel diary for the first couple of days in France but it was uncomfortable trying to write in the dark with only one spotlight coming over my right hand full length and the casting quite a shadow at the very point the left → right writing process needed to follow. I only did about half page when I gave up the task to concentrate on dealing with the cold, the frozen feet and the daunting bladder pressure. I eventually took to walking to the portable toilets, which were no great improvement to any Aussies I have seen at concerts or rallies.

On the way back I caught up with one of the leaders of the Australian tour who invited me to stay put there in the shelter of the front wall of the Monument. This did give some relief from the extreme blizzard like tone of the cutting wind.

As the main access aisle was now clogged up with the Unly, South Australia, Brass Band and a Collegia Choir and others, I opted to move forward again to the seat, but once in place I had to admit I missed the advantage of the wall's blunting the wind a small bit at least. It was deadly cold, I guess about five or six degrees but magnified worse by the wind chill factor.

Reading through the Order of Service<sup>3</sup> we had been given and its modern style of digitalised photos of the Australian War Memorial's photo collection, I found (p2) a great photograph of a stretcher/motorised ambulance scene which I thought I might be able to use in the publication of the WWI diary and another (p3) dealing with the posing crew of a huge artillery cannon mounted on wheels and steam driven on a railway track and line. These images and the biting cold made me even more aware of the lives lived by the soldiers in this place during WWI.

As the service got underway it became evident that there were many opportunities to reflect on the ritual action which was taking place with the elements of ANZAC uniqueness bridging military, royalty, national anthems and customs, regalia, marching music, national flags – all of which coalesce to create the unique spirit of a special military expression.

## Ritual

The military style of preparation was good for the technical precision of every speaker and every microphone generating a clear, precise, elocution with no distortion or the speaker being too far away or too close.

The Master of Ceremonies did a very good job at presenting the overview and some of the specific elements, such as laying wreaths.

The service book was cleverly produced with parallel content with sets of 16 pages with one (English) starting from the front and the other (French) starting from the rear but turned upside down to read as if both open from the front.

The Hymns were a few only but with the text printed. A 60-voice choir, and thousands of committed participants wanting to be there, made a good corporate source of active, free and fruitful participation in all ritual forms, even if few knew the technical language for the analysis of active participation.

## Participational Emotion

The 'liturgy wars' often seem to be parried and thrashed in terms of the emotional and/or intellectual understanding that is generated by the deepest and fullest sense impressions and expressions. The tragedy is when adherents of either side behave as if their own package of priorities which is unique, and personally beneficial to themselves, so too it should be so for all others. But others have another model built on other sensory expressions and whose vision is also reinforced by the strong impact on the senses and emotions.

Liturgical Structure The preliminaries were authorised by the MC making his own introduction but in a clear, precise, significant tone. The mixture of military, regal, national, political and ritual patterns are built on an understated liturgical structure with a rather low key to religious elements or ecumenical linkages. This was illustrated by eight building blocks, celebrated calmly and oratorily well done before the call to mark how special is this day. We will relive these 8 points.

Call to Remembrance This was read by an [Anglican] Chaplain of the Royal Australian Air Force with the proverbial words "We are gathered here to honour the memory ... "It then developed other themes, such as "thanking God for the many blessings he gives us ....." and "draws inspiration to dedicate ourselves to serve others" ... rising to the height of ... "draw close to the God who set us the supreme example of sacrifice for others...". All these lead to a Trinitarian image of the ascending and descending elements that make liturgy the ideal blend of the divine and the human in the shared presence and action as ... "God cleans[ing] our hearts and order[ing] our minds that we be open to the Spirit of Him before whom we bow in reverence and worship..".

Hymns Only two hymns and the two National Anthems were sung, but in both categories they were appropriate in their expression of the very goal and purpose of the whole day and all the events.

The Service Book called the next phase the "Recessional" (or concluding procession) when it is really was a "Processional" (or entrance movement). The "God of Our Fathers" hymn named in the traditional pattern of how the first line becomes its title, was a

successful expression of the very purpose of the day; the recognition of the powerful Judaeo-Christian ethos of *anamnesis*, or not forgetting, but positively remembering how we share the divine and the human dimensions. Very clearly each stanza invoked titles of our various traditions emerging from the same concept of the divinely inspired revelation of the Sacred Scriptures:

*Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet, Lest we forget – lest we forget!*

*Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet, Lest we forget – lest we forget!*

*Judge of the nations, spare us yet, Lest we forget – lest we forget!*

The final concept is the challenge ahead to acknowledge the need of a forum for nations, much more hopeful than self inspired refusal of some nations to be subject to examination in any human rights or responsibilities, equally as inane as the power of the gun taken as the first choice by many.

## Scripture Reading

The solitary biblical reading was taken from the Gospel of Matthew, 5: 1-9, the famous Beatitudes texts in which Jesus both confirms the Jewish law of the Hebrew Scriptures while deepening the communal dimension of ways of being, rather than just platitudes of a vision of hope to be the tools of mutual existence. The readers were two South Australian High School winners of a special competition to raise awareness of students about Anzac Day.

The Commemorative Address epitomised the dilemma of the oratory or formal speaking on such occasions. What is its purpose? For whom is it directed? What is the goal? The speaker was the Hon. Alan Griffin (MHR, not MP as in the Service Book) Minister for Veteran's Affairs. His words were better in terms of timing this day, compared to the long spiel that was given by another at the Historical Museum in Peronne the first night we were there. Poor delivery and use of the microphone diminished the impact of the content and left the listeners with a sense of confusion.

Hymn: Abide With Me This choice reflects the dominance of British traditions in so much of our military origins, with very few noticeable original Australian elements. The exception to this is the pattern of time of the ANZAC Day Dawn Service itself and its founder Rev. Arthur Earnest White in Albany WA, where he began privately with Eucharist on top of Mt Clarence in Albany WA, above King George Sound, from where the Anzac Fleet sailed in 1914. The Turkish memorial mentioned earlier is nearby to this site, at a parking bay the Marine Drive.

The [Second] Commemorative Address was a representative role by Mr Jean-Marie Bockel, the [French] Minister of State for Defence and for Veterans' Affairs, Ministry of Defence.

[The] Prayer of Remembrance was the ambit of the Chaplain, Andrew Knight, of the RAAF; built on the example of God's son "as the highest example of laying down his life for others". Though structured as a form of Collect in the Anglican tradition, it also served as a definite form of remembering and the double responsibility we share now in honouring them and for their sacrifices for so many; a further commemorative

theme came in the final stanza about our responsibilities today both corporately and individually. The classic form of concluding a Collect prayer is to direct our prayer through Christ in the common Trinitarian mutual relationship. This occasion, however, had a rather more direct biblical phrase of Jesus' guarantee to fulfil our prayers with the compact phrase: "In your Holy Name we pray" which, as presented in the Service Book, gave people some chance of recognising a cue to add their Amen to the intercessory type of conclusion prayer:

*Lord God of Hosts, whose son gave us the highest example of laying down his life for others, hear us when we call upon you. We remember before you all who gave their lives in defence of their families and ideals. Especially we remember before you those who were far from their homes when they died here in these fields. May their legacy of devotion to duty and of sacrifice for the welfare and security of others not be lost by we who benefit from the sacrifice they made.*

*We pray that the memory of their sacrifice will motivate us to serve in whatever role you have given us with the same devotion to our responsibilities and love for others that led them to this place. In your holy name we pray.*

Following straight on was a Prayer for Peace, redolent with images of our divided world and the hope and trust that the sacrifice of so many would not be in vain. The projection for a new world to arise where "... all live in peace and fraternity". The conclusion is repeated.

A Second Reading was a secular reading from the work of the doyen of WWI historians, Charles Bean, from his Sixth Volume.<sup>4</sup>

*The Old Force passed down the road to history. The dust of its march settled. The sound of its arms died. Upon a hundred battlefields the broken trees stretched their lean arms over sixty thousand of its graves ... Australians watched the name of their country rise in the esteem of the world's greatest nations. Every Australian bears that name proudly abroad today; and by the daily doings of the [Australian Imperial Force], great and small ... the Australian nation came to know itself... [Ninety one years] ago the arms were handed in. The rifles were locked in the rack. The horses sold. The guns were sheeted and parked for storage for other gunners. The familiar faded-green disappeared from the streets. But the Australian Imperial Force is not dead. That famous army of generous men marches still down the long lane of its country's history, with bands playing and rifles slung, with packs on shoulders, white dust on boots, and bayonet scabbards and entrenching tools flapping on countless thighs ...*

*What these men did, nothing can alter now. The good and the bad, the greatness and smallness of their story will stand. Whatever of glory it contains, nothing now can lessen. It rises, as it will always rise, above the mists of ages, a monument to great-hearted men; and, for their nation, a possession for ever.*

Leading into the major commemorative action, the Official Wreath Laying, was the Ode of Remembrance proclaimed by young Signaller Even McMahon of the Australian Defence Force. It was easy to call to mind that words of the Ode are not purely a military phrase: The time honoured biblical phrase "At the going down of the sun and in the morning" [Mal 1:12] a vision of time, moving from dusk to dawn – or vice versa – as the most constant witness of God's plan for the world of God's creation. The same primal vision is part of the newest Eucharistic Prayer of the Roman Missal of Paul VI (1970):

*From age to age you gather a people so that from East to West a perfect offering may be made...*

This text is a powerful expression of the Hebrew concept of *Anamnesis*, or the trust that we shall remember God's plan for Jesus, his Son's coming in glory. The whole thrust of the *Anamnesis* structure is "not forgetting" but "remembering".

Last Post The military tradition of the bugler's call is dramatic in itself. The music beat itself draws people into its ambit with the Gs and Cs notes setting the atmosphere for the silence. Whether one minute, two minutes or more, the musical magic overcomes the noise of our world and leads people to something so rare in our world: silence that shouts attention.

The Reveille is the timbre of resurrection itself and can hardly elude anyone's sense of occasion to concentrate.

National Anthems In an ANZAC context with upwards of 4,000 people and very many of them from Down Under, the music of our national Anthem *Advance Australia Fair*, may not have resonated as strongly as the favourite *Waltzing Matilda*.

The French anthem, *La Marseillaise*, was readily taken up by so many locals, who probably would turn up their nose at the knowledge of their song being used as the club song for the AFL team, The Brisbane Bears, as part of the deal of their merger with the former Melbourne based team, the Fitzroy Lions.

Floral Tributes The basic witness in the laying of wreaths unfolded with something of an obvious hierarchic order which somewhat countermands the Aussie feeling of equality for all. It seemed the more simple the origins of the group the more they were represented in group actions rather than the focus on individuals who represented the elites or patrician figures like government officials and diplomat representatives.

Benediction The Chaplain read a dismissal theme of witness ahead in the spirit of the who commemorated. It was more than a mere dismissal but a challenge to live the ANZAC spirit this day and always.

## Reflection on the Order of Service

The eight building blocks of the ritual elements of this Order of Service for the ANZAC Dawn Service allow for a solemnity and development of the service itself that, in spite of the cold and personal discomfort, also carry the multitude of personal feelings and connections with those who died in WWI, and other subsequent, similar outbreaks. Readers may like to consider using some of these elements in their own planning for ANZAC liturgies to give participants a deeper engagement with the texts and their underlying messages.

## Sunday Mass. Another form of Australia's Other Anzac Day

A further occasion for engagement emerged from a casual question from one of the participants of the tour group. Her simple question to me was: "are we going to have Mass anywhere on Sunday?" Actually, I had been considering if it would be feasible to have Mass in the local Village Church which I noticed, while going on early morning walks. After the Dawn Service, and aware of the early morning difficulties in the cold etc, I now thought more in terms of being able to have a small group Mass within easy access to people of the tour group.

After tea I went out near the main reception and approached the House Manager. I asked if it would be feasible to have the use of a room for a small group Mass on Sunday morning. He immediately offered the No 1 salon room free of charge to our group, though normally €600 to hire for a day. I accepted his offer and set about making arrangements for an impromptu Mass. I went to check with the head in the kitchen about suitable utensils for our celebration and tried to ask if he had a large cup. He went off and came back with a huge solid bowl just like a replica of the Davis Cup. When I corrected his size range he brought in three largish wine glasses; one of these was just right for our purpose as a chalice. I advised the ones I knew were interested and set the time for 7:30am so that the scheduled departure time 8:30am would be feasible.

I was awake very early, with thoughts of how to arrange Mass with no Bible, no Missal, no Chalice or paten, no altar linen or no vestments, no music, no candles. My subconscious was bringing up all sorts of thoughts about the *anamnesis* connections with "lest we forget" of the Anzac tradition which can combine with the ritual elements of The Mass. Fortunately I had a copy of my journal *Pastoral Liturgy* which I had shown it to the Italian priest, liturgist ex graduate from Saint Anselmo in Rome, but now a spiritual director at Propaganda Fide College.

I had a very quick breakfast at 6:30am and then got the keys to the salon where we left the 60 red baroque style chairs as they were in linear formation. I got the desk clerk to set up the microphone system as I had no idea of how many may come to Mass. I set out the altar with two little vases of Flanders Poppies style of flower, which I "borrowed" from an ANZAC memorial in the front porch. I then placed the glass chalices on the side with the small bottle of red wine and then the two pieces of French crusty bread covered by a red tissue, with my *Pastoral Liturgy* and another Anzac Day, service I

happened to have in my bag for some reason I cannot specify, but I know I had been trying to make up a collection of Anzac Day Services and this must have been one of these.

People started coming in, firstly the couple, Matt and Judith, whom I first met in Paris in which Matt is one of the organisers of the tour and always in his slouch hat. Once a few were settled in seats I asked if anyone had had any experience as a Special Minister of Communion and then Lola, the woman who had first raised the question of Mass on Sunday, put her hand up, so I was comfortable then that I could ask her daughter to help as well.

I made a few opening remarks about the uniqueness of a Mass in an informal, more intimate form of space, and how often people are impacted strongly by the more close scene where they can put the concentration on a different level, as a contrast with large ritual occasions such as the Dawn Service the day before. I pointed out the Gospel story of the disciples on the road to Emmaus and how things clicked for them as they walked along with Jesus, when they recognised him in the Breaking of Bread, so it was an element of particular significance in this Mass.

At one stage I did another quick count and advised them that the numbers now made us equal to the Twelve Apostles, and then – as another came in – we were the Thirteen Apostles! Just then I noticed my mobile phone was exactly showing 7:30am, so I said we should begin at the advertised time in a sense of military precision.

Without having any Books, Missal or Bible, Hymn books or Prayers of the Faithful text I suggested we just follow the pattern of Church in our tradition which, I said, I could follow that by heart and head. And so we were away with the Sign of the Cross which gives everyone a dialogue in which they can join in comfortably already. A brief *Kyrie* form of Penitential Rite I made up off the cuff, and then I used the Common and Proper Prayers from the Rome approved text for an Anzac Day Mass, which does express the moment well.

The first reading was from the Anzac Mass from the Isaiah text about the souls of the Godly are at peace with God, so I pointed out the connection with the corporate action of being in God's presence which connected with the umpteen examples we had already seen with reference to those whose graves read "*Known only to God*".

The Gospel was the Beatitudes text from Matthew so I drew attention to the young youth leaders who were with us who had won their trip to their Scout exchange between Australia and Belgium. Now the impetus from A to B leads us to C, standing before us as the Being-Attitude to show us how to follow God. From young to old we all need to recognise the supporting team work of being able to follow in the footsteps of others, especially Jesus, The One.

For the Prayers of the Faithful I had some of the texts from the Anzac Day Dawn Service of the day before, which were very strong in the mutual responsibility of not forgetting, but remembering all types and personalities to pray for the healing power of Jesus.

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## Conclusion

This is where proclaiming the Word and celebrating the Paschal Mystery in all its facets is the vital lifeline at all levels of the Church.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Russell Hardiman, editor. *The Years of the Year: the Paschal Mystery Celebrated in Christian Worship*. Pastoral Liturgy Publications, College of Theology University of Notre Dame Australia: 1997.

<sup>2</sup> Angela Bendotti (2009) "Eucharistic adoration or devotion? Issues today through the centuries" in *Pastoral Liturgy* Vol 39, 3-2 pp 5-17.

<sup>3</sup> Roman Missal 3. Preparation of the Gifts, to be said *sub secreto* "in silence" by the priest.

<sup>4</sup> Allocation of Pope Pius XII September 22, 1956 in R. Kevin Seasoltz. *The New Liturgy. A documentation, 1903-1965..* New York: Herder and Herder, 1966 pp 233-245.

<sup>5</sup> *ibid* p 234

<sup>6</sup> *ibid* pp 245-248

<sup>7</sup> Decree and Instruction of the Sacred Congregation of Rites, November 16, 1955 in Seasoltz *ibid* pp 209-218.

<sup>8</sup> Geoffrey Wainwright. *The Praise of God in Worship, Doctrine and Life a Systematic Theology*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1980/1984 pp 103-114.

<sup>9</sup> Wainwright *ibid* pp 340-41.

<sup>10</sup> Second Council of the Vatican: Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests (*Presbyterorum Ordinis*). Chapter II The Ministry of Priests para 4, note 47. London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1966 (English edition) p 540.

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The Preparation of the Gifts was low key, but obvious when the French crusty bread was brought forward with a red wine to be poured into the goblets to "become for us the bread of life and the cup of eternal salvation".

Leading straight into the Eucharistic Prayer, one could respect the power of the grace of these works whereby they have now become the essential presence of our Lord and our God. The breaking of bread was relatively easy and our Eucharistic Ministers knew their roles well.

## Conclusion

This paper recounts some aspects of my pilgrimage to take part in the "Other ANZAC Day" at Villers Bretonneux in France in April 2009. While this was a personal journey it provided many opportunities to reflect again on liturgical form and style in a number of traditions, both secular and religious. The structured elements of the Dawn Service and of our small, improvised, group Mass were different, yet similar, in many of the ritual elements and the messages underlying them.

The contrasts between a large pre-planned, and orchestrated event, and our small group Mass in an intimate setting seem obvious, yet there were many similarities. In the larger events, which are so popular today, there is an opportunity to join with the throng, to acknowledge a shared history; or quest for new knowledge – similar, perhaps, to the biblical images of the 5,000 who gathered to gain more insight into the teachings of Jesus. The small intimate setting such as the group Mass, again, allows us to take part in our shared history – not forgetting – yet in a forum where the intimacy is intense, and our "eyeballing" each other allows for reflection of a very different kind; which can be uplifting and discomfoting in equal measure.

Both the mega event of the Dawn Service, and the improvised small group Mass, ran the risk of farce and hyperbole; going through the motions for form's sake, without due regard to the historical and ritual elements which are integral to such occasions, and of their potential for pastoral impact. With the great Feast of Easter and the secular memorial day of ANZAC calling us to ritual form during the month of April it is fitting that the structural elements of each can provide building blocks to make our ceremonies more poignant. Attention to detail (such as ensuring a good sound system) and to the historical elements which underpin the ceremonies, will ensure that participants gain the true depth of experience which must be the goal of all such occasions. Also, by ensuring that due acknowledgement is made to the calling to *Pass Over* into new ways of thinking and being, which is integral to the ceremonies, will provide a rich framework for personal and community growth.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Patrick Lindsay. *Fromelles: the story of Australia's darkest day. The search for our fallen heroes of World War One*. Prahran, Vic: Hardie Grant Books, 2007

<sup>2</sup> Roland Perry. *Monash: the outsider who won the war*. Sydney: Random House, 2004/2007 pp 349-355.

<sup>3</sup> Anzac Day 25 April 2009 Viller-Bretonneux France. Australian National Memorial Dawn Service. French Monument Wreath Laying Ceremony [Order of Service]

<sup>4</sup> Charles E. W. Bean, C. E. W. *The AIF in France 1918* Sydney : Angus & Robertson, 1921-1942. (Vol 6. p 1096).