ENCOUNTERING THE JUSTICE OF GOD'S REIGN THROUGH MUSIC:
THE USE OF CONTEMPORARY MUSIC IN THE
CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OF YOUNG ADULTS

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Abstract

Contemporary Christian religious educators need to establish respectful relationships with young adults (YAs) in order to be able to engage in dialogue. The foundation for such an approach is found in *communio* theology. Research in Australian Catholic schools indicates a disparity in the views of students and teachers regarding the effectiveness of the religious education programme. Developmental research indicates that YAs are disposed towards thinking and acting justly. The main developmental task of YAs is the gaining of identity that is reinforced through rituals. Contemporary music is ubiquitous in the lives of YAs thus it could be said to be their *lingua franca*. Therefore contemporary music and video is an effective means for religious educators to dialogue with YAs. Contemporary music and video, a YA ritual, frequently has a justice focus. Thus music can be used in the religious education programme to help YAs grasp the justice message of the Gospels. Groome’s shared praxis approach is adapted, using contemporary music as the pedagogical medium. Examples of the use of contemporary music in religious education are proposed.
To my darling wife, AnneMaree: my friend, lover and soul mate who has endured my study. Her unconditional love supported me as I laboured to give birth to this thesis.

To my beloved sons, David and Nathan, my unofficial research assistants: My hopes for them in life and faith are a foundation for my research.

To my supervisor, Dr Maryanne Confoy RSC: Her patience, guidance and commitment to excellence have spurred me along what has proved to be a long road.

To my mother, Rona, whose faith, good humour, love and determination have been my constant inspiration.
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Music moves me and has done so for as long as I can remember. As a child, I was moved by my older sister’s playing of the piano, especially Beethoven’s “Moonlight Sonata”, and I remember the feelings evoked by some songs that I heard on the radio. I also enjoyed the lyrics and music of the hymns used in my parish church. When I eventually became a teacher it seemed logical to me to use music in the religious education classroom – as a comfort or a challenge. Strongly desiring to touch the hearts of the young people in my care, I could see that young adults (YAs) enjoyed and were moved by music. In that sense, their passion and mine met and found common ground.

Recently, my sons have grown and have themselves become YAs. My love for them and the desire to have as strong and loving a relationship as I could with them was further impetus for this research. While I have been researching, my relationship with them has been strengthened as we have talked and shared music together. It has been a constant joy to hear them say, “Hey Dad, you need to listen to this song”.

The future of Christianity lies in adults guiding YAs on their faith journey. Adults will be effective travelling companions if they are able to communicate with YAs using their language, the language of contemporary music.
CHAPTER ONE: THE CONTEMPORARY CATHOLIC SCHOOL:
COMMUNITY OF FAITH

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to lay the foundations for an approach to the use of contemporary music in Christian religious education that stimulates and focuses the young person’s living faith and hunger for justice and in so doing make steps towards bringing about the reign of God.

By clarification of the nature, purpose and methodology of Christian religious education, the religious educator can engage in dialogue with young people and show them that they are on a journey of faith. As Christians we believe that our faith journey culminates in the reign of God which we can foster but not complete in this life. In and through the reign of God, humanity and all of God’s creation are called to a communion of right relationships with God and each other. The life and mission of the church flows from a trinitarian communion and the religious education provided in Catholic schools is part of the church’s mission.

The majority of my educational ministry has been spent in Lasallian schools, thus it is a natural context from which to write. This chapter proposes ways in which De La Salle’s vision for religious education is important today.

Longitudinal research into Australian Catholic schools points out the desire of young people to live their faith, to live justice. The research also notes a disparity between student and teacher responses concerning their
views on the nature and relevance of religious education classes.¹ Such a
disparity in the views of teachers and students could be explained by a
number of factors. The argument of this thesis is that teachers, whose hard
work and commitment is not under question, are not using a language which
touches the concerns and issues of young people.

CHURCH AS COMMUNITY

An understanding of God as triune and relational is important for the
religious educator since it provides a basis for community and gives a model
for how we should relate to each other. This communion is meant to be the
way of life of the Church and its mission, one aspect of which is the task of
religious education. Speaking of right relationships helps set the tone in the
classroom in a language that young people can understand. It also points
toward a living faith that livens justice for which young people are searching.

Our understanding of God as triune is based on revelation through
Scripture and tradition. For the early Christian communities, their life and faith
were inseparable from their belief in the economy of salvation brought to them
by Jesus Christ. This is attested by the recording of their devotion to each
other, their sharing everything in common and meeting the needs of all (Acts
2:42-47: 4:32-35). From as early as the writings of Paul, notably 2 Cor 13:13,
we have expressions of God as triune, with humans being called into koinonia
with each other and with God.² This communion was brought about by

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¹ For development of the research mentioned here, see the section “TEACHER VIEWS ON
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION” p.36.
² The Latin communio comes from the Greek koinonia which means communion.
dikaiosyne (Gal 3:21; 2 Cor 6:14; Phil 3:9; Rom 1:17), most often translated as “righteousness”, but which can also be rendered as “right relationships” and “justice”, forms that are more accessible for today, as well as forms that help young people in their meaning-making. While Paul uses the language of harmonious glories of the Phillipians hymn (2:9-11) in referring to communion, he is also practical. Paul is at pains to show that he promotes the bonds of communion amongst the churches through the collection for the poor in Jerusalem e.g. Gal 2:10; Rom 15:25-26. Such a practical example of communal justice and living faith appeals to the young people of today.4

The baptism of Jesus in the Jordan (Lk 3:21-22), presents the Father, Son and Holy Spirit relating together, in the iconic Lukan fashion. The Johannine corpus more fully explicates a theology of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, with passages such as Jn 17:21-22 being the ground for a theology of perichoresis. In her exploration of trinitarian theology, La Cugna points out that “perichoresis means being-in-one-another, permeation without confusion” and “to be a divine person is to be by nature in relation to other persons”.5 Since God is communion, and we are imago Dei, that is what we are called to as persons.6 We become more authentic persons when we fulfil our nature, when we go out to others, loving freely, when in our own lives we mimic the

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4 Many senior school students choose to work for justice through programs such as volunteering on soup vans, collecting for charities and working on development projects during their holidays.
perichoresis of thetriune God and work to create community.\(^7\) This notion of the fullness of humanity existing in the free giving of love has powerful implications for education in terms of the relationships within a classroom, as well as models of behaviour outside it, particularly concerning justice.

The life and mission of the church flows from a trinitarian communion and Christian religious education is part of the church’s mission. Trinitarian communio is the heart of the Church:

> The mystery of the Church consists, according to the Council, in the fact that since we are in the Spirit we have access to the Father through Christ, in order to become participants in the divine nature.\(^8\)

We become participants in the divine nature when we live right relationships. The language of communion is seen in a variety of documents since Vatican II. Communion can directly appeal to young people since it touches their deepest selves and it needs to be lived to be authentic. In *Ecclesia in Oceania*, John Paul II stated that the church should engage with the world as “a healing sacrament, a fountain of communio responding to the deepest hungers of the heart”.\(^9\) Young people are only too aware of the needs of the world and they want to make a difference, to respond to those needs. An exploration of these matters is vital for the classroom to make them accessible for young people. *Communio* theology allows young people an integrated way to respond to the needs of the world and to live right relationships.

\(^7\) See La Cugna, *God for Us*, 271.
Since Christian religious education is an integral part of the church’s mission, the manner in which it is undertaken is also important and must be done in accord with the trinitarian communio where there is deep love and respect for each person. In that way, Christian religious education (educere) can truly be education which leads the individuals (both teacher and student) out to all that they can be and inspire action which brings the reign of God closer. In his examination of communion ecclesiology, Lennan states that communion “necessarily implies both diversity that enhances unity, rather than undermining it, and an understanding of unity that promotes diversity, rather than stifling it”. Young people strongly desire relationship and a feeling of unity, but they want the space to express their identity in diversity.

Over the centuries, the Church has held that the defining experience of communion is the Eucharistic celebration (1 Cor 10:10-18; 11:23-27). The liturgy of the Eucharist reflects the Church’s trinitarian basis, seen particularly in the doxology at the end of the Eucharistic prayer: “Through Him, with Him, in Him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honour is yours Almighty Father, forever and ever. Amen”. The Council Fathers reinforced this view: “really sharing in the body of the Lord in the breaking of the Eucharistic bread, we are taken up into communion with him and with one another”. The Eucharistic communio feeds the human need for community. Importantly, the Eucharist should also show the way for authentic human relations, as

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11 In his statement on the Eucharist, St Leo, Martyr, said: “the sharing of the body and blood of Christ has no other effect than to accomplish our transformation into what we receive”. Cited in Austin Flannery (ed.), Vatican Council II: The Conciliar and Post-Conciliar Documents, (Collegeville MN: The Liturgical Press, 1975), Lumen Gentium #26, 381-382.

12 Flannery, Vatican II, Lumen Gentium #7, 355.

13 Kasper, “Church”, 108.
Benedict XVI notes: “A Eucharist which does not pass over into the concrete practice of love is intrinsically fragmented... Love can be ‘commanded’ because it has first been given”.¹⁴ Thus the Eucharist is most authentic when it points those gathered toward the living of the Gospel. A prime way that such authenticity occurs for young people is in right relationships with those around them and also in working for justice.

While the Eucharist is central, the way we celebrate the sacrament needs to ensure that the full import of the tradition can be comprehended in today’s world.¹⁵ The considered use of contemporary music (arguably the *lingua franca* of young people) in school liturgies would seem a perfect opportunity to help young people to understand the tradition more fully, particularly where that music points the young people toward justice. The thinking behind this assertion will be explored in other chapters of this thesis. It is important that communion be experienced in the concrete reality of people’s lives. The longing for community, for a sense of belonging present in humanity is addressed in communion, but we are called to communicate it in the witness of our lives. “Without that kind of sacramental authenticity, the young will see but not understand; they will hear but not comprehend”.¹⁶ This emphasises the importance of Benedict’s affirmation of the significance of living the Eucharist,¹⁷ for example through working for justice. If, as a Church, we do not exhibit right relationships, we need to acknowledge our continued

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¹⁷ Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est* (#14), 25.
need for conversion,\textsuperscript{18} rather than suggest that \textit{communio} ecclesiology is not sufficiently realistic.

In summary, trinitarian theology and \textit{communio} ecclesiology with which it is inextricably linked are both visionary and practical in terms of the sort of relationships we should foster through a living faith which expresses itself in response to the ecclesial call to justice. This forms an excellent model for teacher-student relations, is readily understood by young people and provides a clear context for vibrant and engaging liturgies.

THE CATHOLIC SCHOOL AS COMMUNITY

In the previous section, I outlined the trinitarian and communitarian foundations of the Christian faith community. The reality of the lives of many young people is that they do not regularly experience community outside school hours. While some do experience community in happy homes, sporting or other clubs, others experience a more solitary existence due to the fractured nature of their home lives. Another contributing factor is that the presence of extended family in the lives of young people is the exception rather than the rule. Lack of a sense of belonging to local neighbourhood and/or parish are other influential factors. Contemporary society sees success in individualistic terms. The mutual \textit{inter}dependence of trinitarian \textit{communio} provides an educational challenge since the prevailing ethic in contemporary Western society is that one should never be \textit{dependent} upon anyone other than oneself. This prevailing ethic means that the Catholic school has a

\textsuperscript{18} Lennan, “Communion Ecclesiology”, 35. Cf. \textit{Lumen gentium} #8, 358.
unique opportunity to provide young people with something that they yearn for – a community, somewhere to belong.

Since the Catholic school is part of the mission of the Church, then the Catholic school must be a place that is also modelled on trinitarian *communio*. By promoting right relationships and justice, Catholic schools can provide some satisfaction for young people in their search for meaning. The Catholic school can do this in a variety of ways, through social justice activities such as donating money for development projects and/or volunteering for soup vans. However, the young person must see right relationships and justice lived out in the everyday life of the Catholic school to know that this is a community of integrity. There are obvious implications about discipline policy and the general conduct of the school. But in living out its mandate as part of the mission of the Church, the Catholic school needs to provide a religious education curriculum for young people that emphasises right relationships and justice. In so doing, young people can then see that there is integrity between belief and practice in this faith community.

**THE ROLE OF FAITH AND CATECHESIS IN THE CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

I will now propose an approach to Catholic religious education that would promote community through the emphasis on right relationships and justice. To do so, we must first clarify certain terms. This will begin through an examination of contrasting understandings of faith and catechesis.

The *New Catholic Encyclopedia* defines faith as “objectively… the sum of truths revealed by God in Scripture and tradition and which the Church
presents to us in a brief form in her creeds, subjectively, faith stands for the habit or virtue by which we assent to those truths”.\(^{19}\) We note that this definition is mainly cognitive.

Historically, when one has spoken of formation in the faith the term that has been used is catechesis. A definition in a similarly cognitive vein states that catechesis is “used to signify teaching or instruction in the law of God”.\(^{20}\)

The research of James Fowler synthesised the work of other developmentalists into stages of faith development. Fowler separated the term faith from its more traditional associations with religion and belief. His description of faith as a human universal extends faith beyond doctrinal boundaries:

It is our way of finding coherence in and giving meaning to the multiple forces and relations that make up our lives. Faith is a person’s way of seeing themselves in relation to others against a background of shared meaning and purpose.\(^{21}\)

Fowler bases his understanding of faith on the work of Paul Tillich, H. Richard Niebuhr and Wilfred Cantwell Smith. Smith, as a historian of religion, shows that the classical understanding of faith is that it is not a separate dimension of life. Rather, based on the Greek pisteuo (I believe [in someone]) and the Latin credo (I trust, believe [in someone]), which is best translated as “I set my heart upon”, faith is an orientation of the total person.\(^{22}\) In stating that “faith is

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a verb”. Fowler’s research describes faith in terms of knowing (cognitive development), valuing (moral and affective development) and committing (faith development). Fowler emphasises the nature of faith as triadic, comprising the relationships between self, others and God.

In establishing the groundwork for his shared praxis model, Groome draws upon Fowler’s research on the notion of faith as a verb, characterising faith as believing, trusting and doing. Examining faith as believing, Groome states that, “we need to know and assent to them (a body of doctrines and statements of belief) with conviction if we are to draw upon them to make meaning in our lives”. Regarding faith as trusting, Groome reflects on the relationship between God and the believer. “Because God is faithful, we can commit ourselves with confidence and trust”. Personal and communal prayer gives expression to these feelings. Groome argues that faith and doing are intertwined, much as James does in his epistle:

What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you? If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, and one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill’, and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead. (James 2:14-17)

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23 Fowler, Stages of Faith, 17.
24 Fowler, Stages of Faith, 16-23.
The Christian faith, as outlined in the scriptural text, involves the harmony of faith and action. Young people are able to understand the doing of faith. To most young people, anything less is hypocrisy.

While having a cognitive dimension that is clear in its foundations in scripture and tradition, faith is also relational. The approach to faith in this thesis is that Christian faith is based in the trinitarian *perichoresis*, encompassing the personal and communitarian relationship with God. Christian faith guides us to embrace our humanity and to recognise its basis in the trinitarian relationship. We are impelled outwards to work towards wholeness, justice and peace, thus bringing about the reign of God.

Gerard Rummery, in his seminal work on religious education in a pluralist society, defines catechesis as “an activity which takes place when believers, with fellow believers, deepen their personal faith by their common dialogue, activity and worship as members of the church”.29 In the world in which we live, the assumptions of shared faith and active church membership are problematic for many young people and also for some of their teachers, even if both groups possess the potential for faith that comes from the grace of Baptism.30

Rummery outlined five different operative models of religious education. Four of the models (which he refers to as ‘teaching that’, ‘education in’, ‘teaching how’ and ‘teaching about’) are didactic. The other model, preferred by Rummery, is catechetical. He refers to it as ‘education of

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30 Rummery, *Catechesis*, 32.
the faith’ and since it is catechetical it is based in the assumption that faith is shared between teacher and student.

Rummery writes that the “education of the faith” model has catechesis as its aim in a “process by which the baptised believer receives instruction and is engaged in the further education of the faith affirmed at baptism”. The content of this model is “the word of God spoken through the scriptures and the history of mankind”. Catechesis is a “continual process which… deepens the believer’s faith through continuing encounter with the word of God in the liturgy, the homily and the events of life”. Catechesis “constitutes a dialogue between believers in which both are changed”. There should be a variety of forms of catechesis. It is concerned with the “didactic teaching of what the true believer should know of the doctrinal and moral teachings of the faith”, yet “at another level it must respect both the freedom and the differing abilities of the ‘faithful’ in their perception of what is implied by their faith”. The language of catechesis while having “strong scriptural influences” is not necessarily an “exclusively theological one”. The language should vary in order to reach the believers.\(^\text{31}\)

While parts of the catechesis model may be culturally or temporally bound, it contains a richness based in dialogue and respect\(^\text{32}\) which more closely fits with the relational conception of faith. Rummery is aware that the assumption of belief is problematic, particularly for students but also for some teachers.\(^\text{33}\) He concludes by noting the importance of a believing teacher.

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\(^\text{33}\) Rummery, *Catechesis*, 176, 189.
Such teachers who have a (religious or) Christian faith respectfully invite students to dialogue about important issues and participate in activities that might foster faith. Dialogue can only occur when the relationship between student and teacher has been built upon mutual respect. Young people want to know what the church teaches. They also want to know that they can still be affirmed if they take a differing view to the church. A believing teacher with their own Christian faith convictions and the correct relationship with their students can invite students to participate in activities that might foster aspects of Christian faith that the students would not consider if they did not have a respectful relationship with their teacher. Such insights are of lasting benefit in religious education. Having examined varying understandings of faith and catechesis for contemporary Christian religious education, I shall now focus on some educational foundations.

FOUNDATIONS FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Having established that the best approach to foster faith in young people will be broader than a purely catechetical one, it is appropriate to examine the broader concept of religious education. In this section, I will examine terms that are integral to the approach to religious education that I propose.

34 Young people want and need to engage in dialogue; time and again I have seen their thirst to question, to dialogue.
Education – from the Latin words *educere* and *educare* which both mean ‘to lead out’\(^{35}\) – describes that process between a teacher and a learner where each is led out to a broader understanding of themselves, others and the world. Thus it is a process of mutuality where both come to understand more about themselves, their gifts and their world. The key point to note is that education ordinarily happens in relationship.\(^{36}\) A fostering relationship occurs when each person treats the other with dignity and respect. An educative relationship ideally involves mutuality. Indeed, such a fostering relationship could be referred to as a dialogical partnership, where both sides are working together toward the same goal or vision. In contrast, an enforcing relationship is one of power and domination, when one person regards the other as inferior, in need of help, an “empty vessel”.\(^{37}\) Such an approach resembles the ‘teaching that’ model from Rummery’s research.\(^{38}\) Education will be enriching and life-giving where it is composed of relationships marked by dignity and respect, such as those outlined in the ‘education of the faith’ model.\(^{39}\) Such respect and dignity allows us to confront the new, the unexpected or the familiar in ourselves and others. It requires that the teacher, who ordinarily initiates the process of education, is intentional about the sort of educative relationship that is established.


\(^{36}\) Most students forget the lessons that are taught, but usually remember the teacher as a person and the relationship that was fostered or enforced.


\(^{38}\) Rummery, *Catechesis*, 109-111.

\(^{39}\) cf Thomas Groome’s dialogical approach in his model of shared praxis. *Christian Religious Education*, 188-191. This will be more fully explored in chapter 3 of this thesis.
To move to clarify religious education, one needs to define religion. Such a definition can be made from outside a tradition or inside a tradition. A classical anthropological definition of religion is:

a system of symbols which acts to establish powerful, pervasive, and long-lasting moods and motivations in men by formulating conceptions of a general order of existence and clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic.\(^\text{40}\)

While “there is no single definition agreed upon by all”,\(^\text{41}\) a definition of religion from within the Catholic tradition is:

the whole complexus of attitudes, convictions, emotions, gestures, rituals, beliefs, and institutions by which we come to terms with, and express, our most fundamental relationship with Reality (God and the created order, perceived as coming forth from God’s creative hand).\(^\text{42}\)

From this definition we see that religion can help the believer make meaning by engaging the cognitive, affective and actional domains\(^\text{43}\) through ritual. The importance of ritual will be taken up in coming chapters. While there are other definitions of religion,\(^\text{44}\) we shall now explore Christian religious education in light of the definition proposed.


\(^{42}\) McBrien, Catholicism, 277.

\(^{43}\) In his later work, Groome refers to ‘conation’ as “the agency which undergirds one’s cognition, affection and volition”. Thomas Groome, Sharing Faith: a comprehensive approach to religious education and pastoral ministry: the way of shared praxis, (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1991), 27.

\(^{44}\) Marcellin Flynn unites the cultural and theocentric approaches: “Religion is the reaching out of men and women towards God in order to provide meaning to the most fundamental questions they face”. Marcellin Flynn, The Effectiveness of Catholic Schools: a ten-year study of Year 12 students in Catholic high schools, (Homebush: St Paul Publications, 1985), 199. Groome defines “religious education activity as a deliberate attending to the transcendent dimension of life by which a conscious relationship to an ultimate ground of being is promoted and enabled to come to expression”. Groome, Christian Religious Education, 22.
Christian religious education has been described as

a political activity with pilgrims in time that deliberately and intentionally attends with them to the activity of God in our present, to the Story of the Christian faith community, and to the Vision of God’s Kingdom, the seeds of which are already among us.\textsuperscript{45}

There are many important facets to this definition. One is the implication of journeying together in faith, by use of the term pilgrim. Therefore, the educator and learners are pilgrims together. While it is not explicitly stated, there is trinitarian mutuality to the relationship of educator and learner. There is a common search in attending to the activity of God in their lives and to the signs of the reign of God that are already present (Vision). The definition implies that God is at work, that we need to discern it, as well as discern what we are called to do in faith. There is also a fidelity to the church’s tradition by use of the word Story.\textsuperscript{46} Due to its basis in relationships and justice, it is this definition that provides the framework for my approach to Christian religious education.

In Groome’s shared praxis approach, there is a dialectical hermeneutic between the Christian Story and the human stories of the participants. The term “hermeneutic” is used since interpretation and/or explanation is needed, both of the Christian Story and the human stories. The term “dialectical” is used as the shared praxis approach is carried out as a dialogue, between the participants, but also as a dialogue between the Christian Story and Vision and stories and visions of the participants. Dialogue requires that the Story

\textsuperscript{45} Groome, \textit{Christian Religious Education}, 25.

\textsuperscript{46} Groome capitalises Story to “distinguish it from our individual stories”. By Christian Story he means “the whole faith tradition of our people however that is expressed or embodied”. Groome, \textit{Christian Religious Education}, 192.
and Vision be made available in “a way that invites people, bringing their own stories and visions, to reflect upon, grapple with, question, and personally encounter what is being presented”. In this dialogue, the participants recognise the limitations in both their own praxis and in the Story and Vision as they know them, “but it also recognises the truth that is in them both and carries that forward to a new point of understanding and way of living the tradition”. The participants will affirm the truth in the Christian Story, but will also look to deepen their present understanding and way of living it. Thus the dialectic involves asking both “What does the Story say to our present praxis?” and “What does present praxis do to and ask of the Story?”

As Christians, we believe in the ongoing presence of the Holy Spirit in the world. Part of the shared praxis approach is to discern God’s activity in the world since “we are constantly called upon to respond and participate in that activity”. This is relevant to this thesis since part of the task of Christian religious education requires a hermeneutical activity “to guide people in their attempts to discern God’s will for them in their lives and to provide a space within which their discernment can be shared”.

Since this thesis seeks to focus on senior students in a boys’ Catholic school, this Christian religious education is taking place in the Catholic faith context, which carries with it the Christian tradition and its 2000-year history.

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47 Groome, Christian Religious Education, 214. In the same passage, Groome refers to this as disclosure.
48 Groome, Christian Religious Education, 196.
49 Groome, Christian Religious Education, 197.
51 Groome, Christian Religious Education, 195. Groome observes in an endnote that “coming to know God’s will must be accompanied by a formation in disposition to do that will”. Groome, Christian Religious Education, 203.
THE LASALLIAN SCHOOL AS COMMUNITY

Having examined the ways in which the Church and then Catholic schools should promote right relationships and justice, I will now describe the Lasallian tradition and how community is promoted.

During the seventeenth century, schooling was primarily by tutors and reserved to those families who could pay for it. John Baptist De La Salle\(^{52}\) established schools that were begun especially for the poor children who would normally have been roaming the streets or put to work from as early as 10 years of age. The educational methodology that he used more closely resembles current experience – classrooms where most students will be concentrating on the same subject or topic. However, De La Salle’s educational methodology was more holistic than simply “group teaching” implies. The schools following his charism known as Lasallian schools are “to provide a human and Christian education to the young, especially the poor”.\(^{53}\) De La Salle was clear that the Christian schools that he set up were part of God’s will:

> God wills not only that all come to the knowledge of the truth, but also that all be saved. He cannot truly desire this without providing the means for it, and therefore, without giving children the teachers who will assist them in the fulfilment of his plan.\(^{54}\)

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\(^{52}\) St John Baptist De La Salle is the Patron Saint of Teachers. So his life and teaching methods are recognised by the universal Church and are worthy of emulation.


Clearly, for De La Salle, teaching is a vocation and part of that vocation is to bring salvation to young people. Vocation is also an expression of Baptism’s universal call to holiness.\textsuperscript{55} This remains a challenging notion for teachers at current Lasallian schools.

One of the guiding principles of the Institute is the spirit of community. The spirit of community is expressed as education by association. This means that the teachers work together to further the education of the young, but it also refers to the relationship between the teacher and the learner. This means that education takes place in relationship, founded in the Trinity.\textsuperscript{56} The Brothers are consecrated to the Trinity as part of their profession.\textsuperscript{57} De La Salle instructed educators to foster relationships with the young who “are a letter which Christ dictates to you, which you write each day in their hearts, not with ink, but by the Spirit of the living God”.\textsuperscript{58} Thus, the Christian schools were expressly set up to build community with the best interests of young people at heart. This is made manifest in a myriad of ways, such as the organisation of the school. De La Salle’s thinking behind this is seen clearly in this quote from his 33\textsuperscript{rd} Meditation:

(Teachers) must be able to understand their pupils, and discern the right way to guide them. They must show more mildness towards some, more firmness towards others. There are those who call for much patience, those who need to be stimulated and spurred on, some who need to be reproved and punished to correct them of their faults, others who must

\textsuperscript{55} “The baptized, by regeneration and the anointing of the Holy Spirit, are consecrated as a spiritual house and a holy priesthood”. \textit{Lumen Gentium} #10, 361.

\textsuperscript{56} The explicit nature of the trinitarian basis for relationships is contained in many documents of the Institute. The most recent occurrence is in the documents of the 44\textsuperscript{th} General Chapter (2007) which can be found at \url{http://www.lasalle.org/English/Resources/Publications/PDF/Circulars/Circ455_eng.pdf} (website accessed 16/11/2007)

\textsuperscript{57} Rule of the Christian Brothers (2002), Chapter 3, section 25.

\textsuperscript{58} De La Salle, \textit{Meditations for the time of Retreat}, Meditation 3:2, 54.
be constantly watched over to prevent them from being lost or going astray. This guidance requires understanding and discernment of spirits.  

The understanding and discernment were gained through careful observation of the young people. Such understanding and discernment would be applied by good educators today. This discernment was so that young people could best be educated and brought closer to God. This focus on salvation is also seen in the way that De La Salle viewed what we would refer to as religious education. Students were to be taught the catechism, “carried out like a natural conversation”. The school day was directed towards communion with God and awareness of his presence. Yet this was not an otherworldly piety. Communion was a living reality. The Brothers' schools were organised so that education was not solely directed to the individual but was also carried out communally with the other students. In today's world which is becoming increasingly fragmented, this is still a powerful aspect of Lasallian education. This focus continues today since it is part of the Lasallian Mission for educators to entrust the young with responsibility for a variety of activities, so that they might be enabled and empowered by the Holy Spirit. This practice encourages their self-belief.

62 Cf Rule of the Christian Brothers (2002), Chapter 2, section 13b.
La Salle’s *modus operandi* was loving, relational and respectful, based in a lived trinitarian theology.

The spirit of faith makes “it possible… to see in everything that happens, in every person they meet, especially the poor, the unwanted and the persecuted, a sign and an invitation of the Holy Spirit.” God, viewed through such a lens, is “someone with whom we form a relationship”, that is a unifying connection between God and all God’s people. Since a relationship with God is foundational to religious education, that relationship can be fostered through prayer. It is through faith that educators are able to touch the hearts of their students. Educators are urged again and again to pray for those pupils whom they find difficult. De La Salle saw that the ritual of prayer, fostered through pausing a number of times through the school day to remember the presence of God, would help to provide needed routine to the undisciplined, provide encouragement towards forming a relationship with God and as a help to build community. By beginning with the phrase, “Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God”, the community is reminded of God’s transcendent presence among them, but it also reminds those who pray that God is immanent – because of the Incarnation, present in each and every one who gathers to pray. This also reminds those who pray together that they should treat each other with dignity and respect.

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63 The Rule of the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, 40th General Chapter (1976), 20.


These simple yet profound precepts guide Lasallian educators to shape their relationships with those entrusted to their care so that they more fully reflect the trinitarian ideal, guiding them into fullness of life. The spirit of faith is also expressed by concluding prayers with “Live Jesus in our hearts!” to which comes the response, “Forever!” The Christian schools also promoted interiority through the morning reflection, silence in school and the evening examination of conscience. 67

The Rule of the Institute (2002) encourages teachers to integrate faith with culture, 68 and to train students to adopt a critical stance toward contemporary society. 69 Catechesis should be lively, student-centred, in touch with life as it is, based on Scripture and the liturgy and attentive to the teaching of the Church. 70 Brothers, and by extension all staff at Lasallian schools, are also encouraged to cooperate closely with those involved in “the cultivation of a sense of justice”. 71 It is clear that the focus of this thesis which involves the use of contemporary music with a focus on justice as part of religious education, including liturgies, fulfils the Lasallian criteria because it integrates faith with culture, is student-centred and is in touch with life as it is.

We have noted that while Lasallian education has historical roots, it answers contemporary needs. In setting out a contemporary view of Christian religious education, De La Salle brother Herman Lombaerts asserts that:

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68 Rule of the Christian Brothers (2002), Chapter 2, section 13a. This emphasises the point made in the ecclesiological section of this chapter that religious education is part of the mission of the Church and so intimately associated with the trinitarian communio.
69 Rule of the Christian Brothers (2002), Chapter 2, section 13c.
71 Rule of the Christian Brothers (2002), Chapter 2, section 17d.
For many students it is the RE staff who must provide the first initiation into Christian traditions. Students’ confidence in the trustworthiness of the staff will determine their ability to believe what they are taught.\textsuperscript{72}

The relational emphasis is again clearly evident.

Lasallian education has its roots in the past, its feet grounded in the present and its eyes toward the future. Some characteristics of religious education of the future have been outlined. Firstly, there will usually be pluralism\textsuperscript{73} in the composition of the class. This requires pastoral sensitivity and the challenge of rightly proclaiming our Christian faith as a communal witness. Next, the class is a learning group, working together,\textsuperscript{74} rather than the older, more hierarchical “banking” model. Thirdly, discovery methods should be used in the classroom, so that students can test their choices and arguments in a sincere and honest fashion, without judging each other. Then, there should be differentiated goals. Religious education should present a range of outcomes based on the attitudes of the students to “religion, philosophy, values and lifestyles”. Finally, the information revolution which has largely been facilitated by the Internet, allows teachers and students to develop a new relationship, since they are “all equally involved in a learning process that goes beyond them”.\textsuperscript{75}

What has been outlined above is both pastoral and dialogical in its approach and has clear links with both the

\textsuperscript{72} Lombaerts, \textit{Management}, 67.
\textsuperscript{73} In most Australian schools there will be diversity in ethnicity and in sociocultural backgrounds.
\textsuperscript{74} In this model, the educator is the “leading learner”. Groome, \textit{Christian Religious Education}, 223.
\textsuperscript{75} Lombaerts, \textit{The Management and Leadership of Christian Schools}, 70.
“education in the faith” model and Groome’s definition of Christian religious education.

Lasallian schools promote the human and Christian education of youth. This model of education has its basis in a focus on relationships modelled on the Trinity. Respect is central as is the remembrance of God’s presence. We also note that Lasallian education is aligned with the definition of Christian religious education in that Lasallian schools promote a lived faith that seeks to integrate the tradition and engage with the world in order to bring closer the reign of God through justice and right relationships. We shall now examine the Australian Catholic educational context.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS: CURRENT RESEARCH

A majority of the students in Australian Catholic schools struggle with the place and practice of faith in their lives. This is reflected in low Mass attendance rates. This reality poses difficult questions for the religious education programs in Australian Catholic schools. The notion of shared faith between teacher and student is problematic. Many educators over the last 30 years have tried to find answers to this problem. Some educators have asserted that an answer is to emphasise sound content. While sound

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77 See Table 1, next page.
78 Rummery, *Catechesis*, 176, 189.
educational content is always important, it is not the whole answer. Given the importance of a dialogical student-teacher relationship, I believe that a significant issue is for the teacher and student to have a shared language.

Table 1: Mass Attendance rates by age, 2001

We note the low Mass attendance rate for the age groups from 15-19 year olds to 25-29 year olds. We can only speculate how the same respondents would react to a question concerning their Catholic affiliation, though I doubt the figures would be as low. Educators are left to ponder the causes and to deal with the effects.

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79 There are broader issues at work, one of which is the level of parental support for religious education. Consideration of this issue is beyond the scope of this thesis.

This thesis concerns 16-18 year olds in an Australian context, so it is appropriate to explore the longitudinal research by Marcellin Flynn with Year 12 students in Australian Catholic schools. It is only possible to focus on a small portion in this section. I shall focus on student and teacher attitudes towards religious education, as well as some issues for religious education.

*Students’ views on religious education*

Flynn and Mok’s research into Yr 12 students’ attitudes about religious education raises some interesting, though not unexpected, issues. 50% of the students surveyed said that religious education does not arouse great interest on the part of students. While 41% agreed that RE classes have been interesting and enjoyable, 40% disagreed. 44% disagreed that more emphasis should be placed on knowledge and content in RE (20% agreed). 81

What is interesting about the reported student comments is that they indicate a closed-minded, negative attitude regarding the relevance and importance of religious education that appears unlikely to change, no matter what educational content or style is used. 82

While Flynn and Mok suggest that “the growing secular culture of Australian society” 83 is behind the negative student comments, there are other

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82 Flynn & Mok, Catholic Schools 2000, 282.
possibilities. While approximately 77% of the sample indicated that they were practising Catholics, the level of their practise may be pertinent as it is also influenced by family attitudes. The documents of Vatican II confirmed that the family are the prime educators in faith.\textsuperscript{84} Where the faith views of the parents and the school are in tension, young people are left in a difficult and confusing position.

Student attitudes towards the teaching of religious education are a little more positive. 48% of students agreed that RE classes are well prepared and taught (24% disagreed). 47% of students agreed that their school has a good RE programme (24% disagreed). 43% agreed that RE is treated on an equal basis with academic subjects (29% disagreed). What is salient but not surprising is that 19% of students agreed that RE classes are taken seriously by students while 55% disagreed.\textsuperscript{85} Student comments displayed a mixture of both positive and negative attitudes. One student who commented about the difficulty of believing in God when a young friend dies\textsuperscript{86} spoke of a possible faith transition time and the importance of being mentored. Another student spoke of the need for “good religion teachers” who practised their faith\textsuperscript{87} and the importance of young people living their faith through feeding the poor and the like.\textsuperscript{88} This student’s comment bears out a conclusion from Flynn’s earlier research about the need for service and outreach programmes for students to

\textsuperscript{84} Flannery, \textit{Vatican II Documents}, \textit{Gaudium et Spes} #48, 950.

\textsuperscript{85} Flynn & Mok, \textit{Catholic Schools 2000}, 282.

\textsuperscript{86} Flynn & Mok, \textit{Catholic Schools 2000}, 283.


\textsuperscript{88} Flynn & Mok, \textit{Catholic Schools 2000}, 283.
live their faith. Such comments support my assertion of the importance of acting for justice in the lives of young people. Catholic schools that promote justice through their religious education programs help to promote an authentic faith that appeals to young people.

Teachers’ views on religious education

Teachers’ responses to similar questions were covered in Flynn’s 1993 study. Overall, they were very positive on a range of items. 77% agreed that they enjoyed teaching religious education classes (11% disagreed). 78% disagreed that religious education classes are often poorly prepared and taught (7% agreed). 79% agreed that religious education classes integrate contemporary issues into the teaching of religious education (6% disagreed). 38% agreed that religious education classes do not arouse much interest on the part of students (33% disagreed). Of concern were the reports by several teachers of the negative influence of other staff on student attitudes towards religious education. In reference to attitudes about knowledge and content, 78% agreed that knowledge of Catholic faith is taught in religious education classes (5% disagreed). Similarly positive results were recorded

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90 Flynn, The Culture of Catholic Schools, 251.
91 Flynn, The Culture of Catholic Schools, 252. It is my experience that ‘support of the Catholic ethos’ of the school is only paid lip-service by some staff.
92 Flynn, The Culture of Catholic Schools, 253.
on a range of other items covering teacher attitudes towards assessment, the teaching of morality, and the Catholic character of religious education.

Disparity between the teacher and student attitudes can be explained by a number of factors, such as differences in age and maturity. The commitment and expertise of the teachers surveyed comes through clearly. However, the disparity could also be explained because teachers don’t fully understand young people and are not using a language which reaches them in their RE classes.

**Issues in religious education**

Catholic schools have to deal with issues such as Australia’s place in a world marked by change and its struggle for self-identity. Another issue is the “theological and ecclesial transformations” since Vatican II. Catholic schools are desired by parents because they can provide stability and clear values in such a changing cultural milieu. Flynn and Mok assert that Catholic schools do their part to bring about an Australian community that is highly educated, skilled and cultured, able to critically analyse social issues and promote the pursuit of truth. This occurs in Catholic schools through the promotion of an appreciation of each person’s belonging to a community and the attendant responsibilities. The challenges for Catholic schools will

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94 Flynn, *The Culture of Catholic Schools*, 255.
95 Flynn, *The Culture of Catholic Schools*, 257.
96 A salient change issue that has come to the fore since Flynn and Mok’s data collection would be the so-called “war on terror”, particularly with the impact on relations with Muslims. This is a change issue due to the significant number of Muslims who attend Catholic schools.
continue, but they will make their contribution to a twenty-first century Australian society with its multicultural and pluralistic faith dimensions.\textsuperscript{98}

Graham Rossiter argues that relevance and personalism are the most important issues for Catholic religious education at the present. He notes that these issues are not different from the 1970's. While they were dealt with successfully in settings like retreats, he asserts that the formula used in classrooms was “generally inappropriate and naïve”.\textsuperscript{99} Since the 1970's, religious education has fought to achieve status as a significant subject in the curriculum. He believes that the issue of relevance is best dealt with by having sound content.\textsuperscript{100} This assertion stands in contrast with the student comment that 44\% disagreed that more emphasis should be placed on knowledge and content.\textsuperscript{101} I agree with Rossiter that relevance is important and that sound content is a significant factor. But, there are other factors at play, such as parent and child attachment to religious institutions and to religious practice, of which Mass attendance is one measure.\textsuperscript{102} Another means of addressing relevance in the religious education curriculum is through the language used in the classroom. This would indicate the wise use of media i.e. using the young people's \textit{lingua franca}, which I assert is contemporary music. Relevance of the religious education curriculum could also be heightened by a focus on justice. The use of contemporary music drawing on justice issues to dialogue with young people would help them to grasp more of the Church’s teachings in their own sociocultural and relational contexts.

\textsuperscript{98} Flynn & Mok, \textit{Catholic Schools 2000}, 30.
\textsuperscript{99} G. Rossiter, in Flynn & Mok, \textit{Catholic Schools 2000}, 263.
\textsuperscript{100} Flynn & Mok, \textit{Catholic Schools 2000}, 263.
\textsuperscript{101} Flynn & Mok, \textit{Catholic Schools 2000}, 281.
\textsuperscript{102} As Table 1 indicates, 10\% of young people of 15-19 years old attend Mass.
SUMMARY

In this chapter I have set out the centrality of a lived trinitarian theology for RE in Catholic schools. Since we are made in the image and likeness of God, whose being is *perichoresis*, this explains our need for relationships. All of humanity is called into a communion of right relationships and justice with each other and God. From this communion flows the mission of the church to spread the gospel.

I have also proposed that formation in the faith is an integral part of the church’s mission. Catechesis is the term typically used in faith formation, but it assumes a dialogue of believers. Given the “mixed faith” backgrounds of students in RE classrooms, some evangelisation also needs to take place, as part of the preparation for religious education and for understanding catechesis. Education is a process of mutuality where all involved are “led out” to understand more about themselves, each other and the world around them. The relationship between educator and learner is vital. Such a trinitarian basis is an excellent foundation for the teaching of Christian religious education. Christian religious education involves educators and learners journeying together as pilgrims as they grow in understanding of the Gospel Story and Vision. Part of this understanding is recognising God’s influence in their lives and the lives of those around them. Together educators and learners try to live out the Gospel Story and Vision in right relationships and justice.

I have shown that the Lasallian principles of religious education flow from a trinitarian communion, with a strong emphasis on right relationships
between teachers and students. Young people are encouraged to engage in activities that promote justice. We have seen that De La Salle’s vision for religious education is relevant today and we noted some characteristics for religious education of the future. The Lasallian Rule states that religious education should be “lively, student-centred, in touch with life as it is, based on Scripture and the liturgy”. This supports the use of contemporary music in the religious education program and in liturgies.

In this chapter, I have noted the difficulties for religious education in Australian Catholic schools since communication of the shared faith between teacher and student is more complex than in the pre-Vatican II era. Research validates much of the ministry in Catholic schools. The disparity between student and teacher responses could be explained by a number of factors. A key factor may be that hard-working and committed teachers are not using a language or approach which connects with young people’s lives.

In the next chapter, this thesis will examine the psychosocial factors that affect 16-18 year olds. Group belonging, individual identity and the psychosocial power of ritual are explored in the next chapter. Erikson’s research describes the ideological mind of young people. That this ideological mind inclines them toward working for justice fits well with what has been explored in this chapter. Young people listen to music. It is my contention that music is their common language. Thus, an approach to religious education which combines music and justice is likely to resonate strongly with young people.

INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, we examined some key elements of contemporary Christian religious education. This chapter will examine the “who” of this thesis, 16-18 year olds in Catholic education. Specifically, to be able to undertake effective Christian religious education, the educator must have some grasp of the important psychosocial developmental markers in the lives of those entrusted to their care. The research of Erik Erikson will be the starting point of this investigation of the psychosocial development of 16-18 year olds (the combination of socio-cultural factors means that they are young adults, hereafter referred to as YAs). The concepts of identity, belonging and moratorium will be examined, as well as the importance of rituals in the lives of young people. Structural developmental theory will be explored for links to the sense of justice displayed by and of importance to young people.

In ministering to and being a partner in the education of young people, it is vital for the educator to understand their cultural context. Current research gives little evidence of the importance of music in the spirituality of young people. This is despite the fact that music was rated highly in helping young
people attain a sense of peace and happiness which means that music is an influence on their spirituality.  

PSYCHOSOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF YOUNG ADULTS

Psychosocial theory has its beginnings in the research of Erik Erikson. There are three significant features of psychosocial theory. Firstly, the theory addresses growth across the life span. Next, the theory assumes that individuals at each stage have the capacity to contribute to their own psychological growth. Also, the theory takes into account the part that culture plays in shaping the direction of an individual’s growth.

Psychosocial theory, according to Newman and Newman, is based on five organising concepts:

1. Stages of development
2. Developmental tasks
3. Psychosocial crises
4. Central processes for resolving the psychosocial crises
5. Coping behaviour

A stage of development is a period of life that is characterised by some underlying organisation or emphasis. Stage theories propose a specific

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105 Because this is not a psychological thesis but one which builds on Erikson’s research for the purpose of educating young adults, I choose to use both primary and secondary sources as a means of developing Erikson’s insights for the contemporary Australian Catholic educational context – to use psychosocial theory as foundational to the development of YAs.

direction for development. Erikson claims that each human being moves through eight ages or crises, that he calls the “Eight Ages of Man”.\textsuperscript{107} Erikson claims “only that psychosocial development proceeds by critical steps – ‘critical’ being a characteristic of turning points, of moments of decision between progress and regression, integration and retardation”.\textsuperscript{108}

Developmental tasks propose polar aspects of normal development at each age in the human life cycle. The tasks have a sequential nature. Mastery of the developmental tasks is influenced by the resolution of the psychosocial crisis of the previous stage. It is this resolution that leads to the development of the new social capabilities. The place of socio-cultural influences is also taken into account.

Newman and Newman further clarify Erikson’s definition of psychosocial crisis as a

\begin{quote}
person’s psychological efforts to adjust to the demands of the social environment at each stage of development. The word crisis in this context refers to a normal set of stresses and strains rather than to an extraordinary set of events.\textsuperscript{109}
\end{quote}

Societal demands differ from stage to stage. The psychosocial crisis of a given stage forces the person to use and develop further developmental skills that usually have only recently been mastered. New skills must also be learned at each new stage. The term, ‘crisis’, is used to refer to what a person is confronted with in each stage because there is both danger and opportunity involved in the resolution. Psychosocial theory

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{109} Newman and Newman, \textit{Development Through Life}, 34.
\end{footnotes}
attempts to account for failures in development that appear at every stage in the life span. The concept of crisis implies that at any stage something can interfere with growth and reduce the person’s opportunities to experience personal fulfilment.\textsuperscript{110}

The polarities that Erikson outlined for each of the stages are in a lifelong tension. The attainment of a positive or negative balance at one time does not mean that the attainment is permanent or in stasis, as the balance between the polarities can be affected by a number of unforeseen stresses in subsequent life phases. So, the resolution of the crisis and the needed psychological reworking occurs through the life cycle.

The table below shows Erikson’s stages with their associated crises. They follow the epigenetic principle, meaning that there is a biological plan for growth that allows each function to emerge in a systematic way until the fully functioning organism has developed. The entire life span is required for all the functions of psychosocial development to appear and become integrated.

\textsuperscript{110} Newman and Newman, Development Through Life, 38.
Table 2: Erikson’s Eight Ages of Man\textsuperscript{111}

Newman and Newman have modified Erikson’s stages:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Infancy</td>
<td>Birth to 2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toddlerhood</td>
<td>2 to 4 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early school age</td>
<td>4 to 6 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle school age</td>
<td>6 to 12 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early adolescence</td>
<td>12 to 18 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Later adolescence</td>
<td>18 to 22 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early adulthood</td>
<td>22 to 34 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle adulthood</td>
<td>34 to 60 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Later adulthood</td>
<td>60 to 75 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very old age</td>
<td>75 until death</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Psychosocial stages according to Newman & Newman\textsuperscript{112}

\textsuperscript{111} Erikson, \textit{Childhood and Society}, 273.
It is the nature of research that a theory would be refined over time. The gap of over 30 years between the writings of Erikson and Newman & Newman has also seen changes in society that, amongst other matters, have delayed the age when a person accepts (or is ready to accept) the responsibilities of adulthood. The adult needs to deal with issues such as life roles, work, relationship and lifestyle choices. This research, combined with that of David Elkind on the disappearance or erosion of markers of their transition status connected with clothing, activity, innocence, image and authority, along with the variety of family structures now prevalent, means that the 16-18 year old, is generally recognised societally as a young adult. In her research on YAs Sharon Parks notes: “If 'adulthood' connotes a confident and secure sense of self in relationship to one's world, adulthood is difficult to achieve in a cultural climate marked by change in every dimension of knowledge.” YAs today live in a world where change is a constant. The change that can seem stressful for the adult is exhilarating for the young person. Thus it is little wonder that they may delay accepting responsibilities and the developmental task of “settling down”.

The central process refers to a mechanism that links the individual’s needs with the requirements of the culture at each life stage. At each life

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112 Newman and Newman, Development Through Life, 29. I make reference to the work of George E. Vaillant concerning mid-life issues. While not appropriate to YAs, the various manifestations of mid-life issues are relevant to educators who are in dialogue with YAs. Adaptation to Life, (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), 219-230.


stage, significant relationships and relevant competencies change. The central process for coping with the challenges of each life stage provides both personal and societal mechanisms for taking in new information and reorganising existing information. For the YA the central process is peer pressure.

Originally postulated by Erikson as “basic virtues”, the prime adaptive ego qualities are the lasting outcome of a positive resolution of each stage. Prime adaptive ego qualities develop as a result of the positive resolution of the psychosocial crisis at a given stage and provide resources for coping in the next. The first of Erikson’s Eight Ages is Trust versus Mistrust. If there is a positive resolution of that polarity, the individual is able to hope. If there is a positive resolution of the Autonomy versus Shame and Doubt polarity, then the individual is able to display willpower. The individual who is able to positively resolve the Initiative versus Guilt polarity is able to display a sense of purpose. The positive resolution of the Industry versus Inferiority polarity will lead to the individual being able to demonstrate their competence. As a person develops psychosocially, she/he will have an internal balance between the two poles. Indeed it is healthy to have a certain amount of mistrust, so that they are not easily duped. Similar comments can be made for the other “negative” poles. Compassion could arise from being sufficiently self-aware of the polarities within oneself. These prime adaptive ego qualities are positive coping behaviours.

Coping behaviour refers to active efforts to resolve stress and create new solutions to the challenges of each developmental stage. Coping

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118 Erikson, *Childhood and Society*, 274.
behaviours can be understood as those that allow for the development and growth of the individual as opposed to the mere maintenance of equilibrium in the face of threat.\textsuperscript{119} The prime adaptive ego quality for the YA is fidelity.\textsuperscript{120} In this instance, fidelity refers to the ability to freely pledge and sustain loyalties to others.\textsuperscript{121} Essentially, this means that the young person is able to belong to one or more peer groups. This is a coping behaviour since YAs find themselves in different situations and roles e.g. son, school student, football player, musician, and they must in time learn to adapt in these different situations. These different situations allow YAs to grow in understanding as to their qualities and abilities and ultimately their identity.

A core pathology results from a severe, negative resolution of a psychosocial crisis that protects the person from further unwanted association with the social system. For the YA, the core pathologies are isolation and repudiation.\textsuperscript{122} Those who work with adolescents and YAs are most concerned when they witness an individual exhibiting “loner” behaviour. In this instance a school counsellor might take subtle remedial steps to ascertain the basis of the behaviour and whether it is possible to ask others to include the individual in their activities.\textsuperscript{123}

\textsuperscript{119} Newman and Newman, \textit{Development Through Life}, 45.
\textsuperscript{120} Newman and Newman, \textit{Development Through Life}, 45.
\textsuperscript{122} Newman & Newman, \textit{Development through Life}, 46.
\textsuperscript{123} The YA who is seen to repudiate certain roles and values will be discussed later in this chapter.
Newman and Newman outline the developmental tasks of the 16-18 year old age cohort as physical maturation, formal operations, emotional development, membership in a peer group and heterosexual relationships. The central process is peer pressure. The prime adaptive ego quality is fidelity to others, while the core pathology is isolation.

The development of the YA is described in the fifth of Erikson's stages: “Identity versus Role Confusion”. In this stage, the young person ponders their answer to the question, “Who am I?” While this question is a lifelong one and may never be fully resolved, people can come to their own balanced understanding throughout their life stages. In this stage, the young person develops a sense of identity as part of a group – a readily observable fact for those who spend time with adolescents. In affirming their group identity, young people can be cruel to those who are seen as not part of “their” group. Erikson proposes that this is a defence against identity confusion. While Erikson was not explicit about such a distinction, a subtle difference between group and individual identity can be discerned, though these two facets of identity are not easily separable. For many YAs their major psychosocial focus is the attainment of group identity and their ability to express fidelity to

126 Erikson, Childhood and Society, 262.
others, though it is around this age span that their focus will shift to individual identity and their ability to pledge loyalty to values and ideologies.\textsuperscript{127}

The dual importance of identity and belonging is described by Erikson:

In youth, ego strength emerges from the mutual confirmation of individual and community, in the sense that society recognises the young individual as a bearer of fresh energy and that the individual so confirmed recognises the society as a living process which inspires loyalty as it receives it, maintains allegiance as it attracts it, honours confidence as it demands it.\textsuperscript{128}

For Erikson, the YA and the community enter into a symbiotic relationship. YAs must have a sense of belonging, while the community needs people to belong in order to exist as community. YAs crave recognition in order to be, i.e. to have an identity. A serious problem can arise for those individuals who do not feel that they have a community to belong to, they have no community which inspires loyalty in them. Such a young person might find others who are disaffected, become alienated or lash out at those around them:

\ldots should a young person feel that the environment tries to deprive him too radically of all the forms of expression which permit him to develop and integrate the next step, he may resist with the wild strength encountered in animals who are suddenly forced to defend their lives. For, indeed, in the social jungle of human existence there is no feeling of being alive without a sense of identity.\textsuperscript{129}

Role confusion can be brought on by an inability to make clear decisions on career or vocation, sexual identity or life in general.\textsuperscript{130} Given the struggles associated with heterosexual relationships at this stage, role

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{127} Newman & Newman, \textit{Development Through Life}, 45. See also Erik Erikson, \textit{Identity: Youth and Crisis}, (London: Faber and Faber, 1968), 128: "The adolescent looks most fervently for men and ideas to have faith in".
\item \textsuperscript{128} Erikson, \textit{Identity: Youth and Crisis}, 241.
\item \textsuperscript{129} Erikson, \textit{Identity: Youth and Crisis}, 130.
\item \textsuperscript{130} http://web.cortland.edu/andersmd/ERIK/stage5.HTML (website accessed 15/9/2007)
\end{itemize}
confusion is heightened for those individuals who discover homosexual orientation. The religious educator has a special ministerial role to affirm and support all of the young people in their care, being especially aware that some of their students will be dealing with sexual orientation issues. Role confusion can also be brought on by trying to synthesise the variety of roles that a YA must “play” as outlined in the previous section e.g. son, student, football player, musician.

Alienation\textsuperscript{131} is likely to be experienced by many teenagers, but usually only for short periods of time. If this psychosocial crisis is resolved negatively, it may be due to the individual not finding a group to suit their needs or the individual may not be accepted by any of the groups. A school community cannot make such issues disappear for individuals, but teachers have a duty to recognise that an individual is becoming alienated and do their best to address the situation. This might be addressed inside the classroom when the educator forms work groups and outside the classroom if the educator encourages one or two co-operative young people to try to include the young person they feel is “at risk” in their activities.

During the years of young adulthood, intimacy becomes increasingly important. Intimacy is the capacity to commit to relationships and to abide by such commitments despite sacrifices and compromises.\textsuperscript{132} Being in relationship requires a sharing of personal identity. Since the project of attainment of personal identity is ongoing for YAs, it is little wonder that intimacy is difficult. As Erikson notes, “it is only when identity formation is well

\textsuperscript{131} Newman & Newman, Development Through Life, 352.
\textsuperscript{132} Erikson, Childhood and Society, 263.
on its way that true intimacy… is possible”. Thus the YA is in a tension – not being entirely sure of their identity yet wanting intimacy. The YA can resolve this tension by rejecting authentic intimacy altogether, or alternatively throwing themselves “into acts of intimacy which are ‘promiscuous’ without true fusion or real self-abandon”. It is also possible for a person to develop an “impersonal kind of interpersonal pattern” as a YA, be seen as highly successful in their career and “yet harbour a severe character problem doubly painful because he will never feel really himself, although everyone says he is ‘somebody’”.

YA love is a means of coming to identity by projecting one’s diffused self-image on another, to see themselves reflected in the eyes and attitude of the “other” and eventually their identity clarified. “That is why so much of young love is conversation”. There is a sense in which YAs talk themselves into clarity; clarity about their identity and clarity about how and who they can be in relationship. Such conversation can happen in person, on the mobile phone and via computer software such as MSN Messenger. The integrity and truth of such conversation can be compromised by current technology which allows a mask to be worn. This can be confusing and potentially hurtful. Some adults have used it to prey upon the young.

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138 I am referring to incidents of paedophilia and ephebophilia through the use of MSN Messenger, “chat rooms” and email.
The ages of 16 to 18 years indicate the key task of the YA in terms of discovering who they are in the adult world into which they are moving. This can take the form of personal identity, in terms of physical attributes such as their height, weight and strength, but also in terms of cultural, academic, sporting or artistic abilities. In a world increasingly obsessed by possessions, a young person’s socio-economic standing is not only an aspect of their identity, it can be a significant factor. Socio-economic standing affects YA status in terms of what they can afford to own, but more importantly in terms of the young person’s dreams and aspirations for their future. Over time the healthy young person owns and values their attributes and abilities, though there is always the overt or unspoken tension to see if they “measure up” against others.

Newman and Newman rephrase “Who am I?” as “Who am I, and with whom do I belong?” Over the span of young adulthood, an individual will gain group identity first, followed by personal identity. Communal identity takes the form of the peer group which manifests differently depending upon gender and socio-economic background. While the names may change, some examples of groups are the sporting group, the academic group, and groups associated with ethnicity such as Asian, Middle Eastern or European.

There can be a tension between personal identity and communal identity. Different individuals resolve this tension in different ways:

In most cases, adolescents’ personal values are altered and shaped by peer group pressure in order to increase their

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similarity with other group members. If, however, peer group expectations are too distant from adolescents’ own values, establishing a satisfying group identification will become much more difficult. In this case, adolescents will always be experiencing tension and conflict in trying to balance the allure of peer group membership with the cost of abandoning personal beliefs.\textsuperscript{140}

This is a small indication of the tensions endured by the YA. The young person is involved in a delicate dance – and the steps are rarely clear! Thus it is little wonder that the YA can need time alone to try to sort through these tensions, or that the young person can be judged as moody or even depressed. A group that suits the needs of the young person for a time cannot be easily put aside, yet the demands of the group can prove too restrictive. Then, the young person’s need for group identity may be sublimated for a time, so that individual identity in the form of particular values or beliefs can be given due attention. It is also important to note that while individuals may have discovered many of their personal attributes at this age, identity is a concept that can be deepened and nuanced as an individual marries, raises children, and works different jobs, moves to new surroundings or a different culture. Each of the factors mentioned, as well as other factors, can be prompts for further psychosocial development.

MORATORIUM: POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE ASPECTS

The young person knows that they need to develop their personal identity. It is something of visceral importance. Yet, individuals do not work to specific timetables regarding course, job or career selection. Thus,\textsuperscript{140} Newman and Newman, \textit{Development Through Life}, 358.
consciously or unconsciously, some individuals may take or need to take “time out” or what Erikson describes as a period of moratorium: “a period of delay in which to test the rock-bottom of some truth before committing the powers of mind and body to a segment of the existing order”.¹⁴¹ For Erikson, the mind of the 16-18 year old is “essentially a mind of the moratorium, a psychosocial stage between childhood and adulthood, and between the morality learned by the child, and the ethics to be developed by the adult”.¹⁴²

This notion of moratorium is apposite for a YA for a variety of reasons. As they approach the completion of their secondary education, the YA is faced with a wide and diverse array of choices. For a young person who does not want to continue their education, the task of getting a job is complicated. Rightly, they want employment that recognises their worth and their potential to contribute, while at the same time affording them the opportunity to continue their development and discover skills and talents that remained latent during secondary education. For the young person who wishes to continue their education, there is a large array of tertiary courses from which to choose¹⁴³ which continues to grow.¹⁴⁴ It is a more recent phenomenon that many YAs need to accept that they will be in debt once they finish their tertiary education. Thus, another pressure on young people, even while they are still at school, is finding part-time employment to help them in their future directions. There is also the backdrop of increasing cost of living, including

¹⁴² Erikson, *Childhood and Society*, 262-263.
affordable housing, if they are accepted into tertiary education. Given that a significant number of young people go on to some form of tertiary study, the choice to continue studying itself can be a form of moratorium, as it delays having to make more permanent choices. “The sense of identity, then, becomes more necessary (and more problematical) wherever a wide range of possible identities is envisaged”. These factors combine to make a compelling case for the YA faced with leaving school to stop and take stock i.e. a moratorium.

Erikson’s idea of moratorium helps deal with the threat of role confusion. Because young adulthood is seen as a time when life decisions are made, and because pressures to succeed in their secondary school studies are heightened, the ability to take the time to reflect and clarify life choices, provided by a moratorium, could be crucial. Elkind notes that, “forming an identity, like building a theory, is a creative endeavour that takes much time and concentrated effort”. The moratorium is seen by some as the exclusive preserve of the affluent in Western society. The reality is usually more nuanced. There is a moratorium that is available to the affluent that can involve travel or work that delays long-term choice. A moratorium period can also happen for students whose families are struggling (working class, homeless), but it can take a negative form, such as alcohol and drug taking, sometimes to excess.

145 Erikson, Identity: Youth and Crisis, 245.
146 Erikson, Childhood and Society, 262.
Contemporary culture could be described as consumerist and addictive. Thus, addiction is a factor that some YAs face. A moratorium can be brought on by the addiction of a family member, especially a parent. A YA can develop a range of negative behaviours as a consequence of parental addiction. The least helpful of those behaviours is addiction for the YA. A number of roles have been identified in those families affected by addiction and this can have an impact on their faith development as well as on their school life.

Young people can delay choice or commitment on the religious dimension of their identity. If the religious educator acknowledges this facet of moratorium in the YA, there is a moment of opportunity. By encouraging participation in action for justice through soup vans and the like, the religious educator appeals to the innate sense of justice in the young person and keeps the young person connected to the religious community, while being respectful of not forcing such choices on the young person. Young people who attend denominational schools can display characteristics of Christian affiliation while at school. However, once they leave school, many do not feel that they truly belong to a religious or faith community.

The moratorium is an important concept for educators in the Catholic school communal context to comprehend and to make provision for in classrooms occupied by YAs. In part it is about providing them with space to clarify who they are. Thus, it may be linked to or associated with Fowler’s notion of a “holding environment”. For Fowler, a holding environment is a place that respects where the young person is in their development, thus tying

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in closely with our previous discussion concerning fostering relationships. Part of the purpose of the holding environment is to protect “fragile new beginnings against the power of old patterns or the premature forging of new ones”.\textsuperscript{150} The holding environment also provides a secure place to be and belong. This meets the YA’s need for belonging, while providing a haven as the YA continues to explore and grow in understanding of his/her identity.

**BELONGING**

Belonging is also a concept that has a focus at this stage and is closely intertwined with identity. Identity is communal before it is personal\textsuperscript{151} and personal identity is not ordinarily clarified until after 18 years of age. Belonging can take the form of groups that confirm their communal identity associated with particular ethnicity, musical preferences, attire, presence or absence of cosmetics (in both males and females), or hair (colour, length, use of hair product). “There are demands from within these groups to conform to group norms and demonstrate commitment and loyalty to other group members”.\textsuperscript{152} Belonging can be tribal: “young people can become remarkably clannish, intolerant, and cruel in their exclusion of others who are ‘different’”.\textsuperscript{153} There is also the notion of “strength in numbers” that bolsters the fragile ego (or personal identity). The affective dimension of belonging is not to be underestimated. Young people can be elated or deflated dependent upon


\textsuperscript{151} Newman and Newman, *Development Through Life*, 320.


\textsuperscript{153} Erikson, *Identity: Youth and Crisis*, 132.
their inclusion or exclusion from a group that is important to them. This feeling is not momentary for the young person, but can be more persistent.

The inability of some young people to envisage a career or some form of higher education for themselves, or who have rejected certain roles and values as alien to themselves,\(^\text{154}\) can also lead to a negative form of identity resolution such as gang membership. Unable to find an appropriate personal identity or a mentor, they are bolstered by a group identity and find occupation in activities such as theft, destruction, graffiti, or fights. They are always busy, even if they just “hang”. There is a real danger that such young people are categorised as problematic or criminal by society and “it may be the final step in the formation of a negative identity”.\(^\text{155}\) In the Catholic educational context, it is vital that the educator reach out to such young people and as much as possible make them feel they belong in the school community.

Belonging can be experienced through music: “Music was a kind of home, a place of safety.”\(^\text{156}\) The importance of music both for a sense of belonging and a glimpse of the divine is seen in this quote from a young person:

“Driving home at night with mates after a good night out, a certain song came on. All the boys started singing in the back, I looked back to see how happy they were and I couldn’t help but join in. We all finished singing and had a laugh. That gave me a sense of belonging and made me feel fully alive inside.”\(^\text{157}\)

\(^\text{154}\) Newman and Newman, Development Through Life, 46.

\(^\text{155}\) Erikson, Identity: Youth and Crisis, 255.

\(^\text{156}\) Don Saliers and Emily Saliers, A Song to Sing, A Life to Live: Reflections on Music as Spiritual Practice, (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2005), 89.

\(^\text{157}\) Kath Engebretson, Connecting: Teenage Boys, Spirituality and Religious Education. (Strathfield, St Pauls Publications, 2007), 173.
This powerful testimony demonstrates that belonging and music are linked in a way which can speak to a young person’s heart and head. This will be explored further in the next chapter. The educator must be aware of the psychosocial power of music and alert to its abuse. Music-promoted belonging can also occur or be encouraged in a negative or destructive direction. Having seen that music can be strongly linked to belonging and thus to group identity, we need to consider how music might be of use to the religious educator. One way that the religious educator can utilise the psychosocial power of music is through its use in ritual.

RITUAL: INTEGRAL TO THE YOUNG ADULT

Rituals are integral to human lives, though they are more evident from an outside perspective. As Erikson observes, “ritualization is more often than not experienced simply as the only proper way to do things; and the question is only why does not everybody do it our way”. Anthropologically, “ritual” means “a deepened communality, a proven ceremonial form, and a timeless quality from which all participants emerge with a sense of awe and purification”. In his research, Erikson noted the presence of formal and spontaneous rituals. A graduation ceremony, wedding or a school liturgy

158 Neo-Nazi groups in the economically depressed part of Germany are using music to increase membership. Andrew McCathie, “German neo-Nazis use music to spread a vicious message”, The Age, September 8th, 2007.
160 Erikson, Toys and Reasons, 78.
161 Erikson, Toys and Reasons, 107.
are examples of formal rituals. Examples of a spontaneous ritual are particular styles of greetings or handshakes.

Formal rituals for YAs, “where they are enjoined to become responsible members of their society (or pseudo-species)”\(^\text{162}\), have the power to confirm their group identity as a member of a school, part of the Australian or worldwide Lasallian family, as a Catholic, as a Christian. In an educational context, some formal rituals include participation in World Youth Day, a Founder’s Day whole school liturgy, investiture of College Leaders and the final assembly for Year 12 students.

While Erikson uses the word “spontaneous” to describe rituals that are not formal, I believe that an alternative word is “informal”. An example of an informal ritual for the young person would be seen in their use of language. Over 25 years I have noted subtle shifts in word usage. A different use of language is involved in listening to or playing music (individually or communally). Such activities confirm their identity as part of a peer group.

There are many formal and informal rituals that normally occur, either connected to liturgy or the customs of the school. Such rituals provide opportunities for the religious educator. When young people play their music or their music is used in a liturgy, linking an informal ritual with a formal ritual, the playing of music reinforces the experience of group belonging. This is linked in a new way to the group belonging experience of the whole school. The psychosocial influence can thus help the YA to feel that they belong to the school, as a faith community. Thus the YA is opened to a different level of religious meaning in and through the use of their own lingua franca.

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Therefore, judicious use of contemporary music is important. A religious educator may use contemporary music in order to make a link between the message of the music and the message of the Gospel, drawing on a medium that young people understand and connect with. A theme that can be common to contemporary music and the Gospel is the theme of justice. The blend of formal and informal rituals, especially with a focus on justice, will be explored further in the next chapter. We shall now explore the developmental basis for the young person’s drive for justice.

STRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENTAL THEORY, JUSTICE AND THE YOUNG ADULT

With YAs, the conception of justice seems to take two forms. One is the personal, “that’s not fair” sense of justice. The other is the broader, more inclusive sense that works for the betterment of others, the common good. I shall now explore the developmental basis for each of these forms of justice.

Young people can exhibit behaviour that suggests they conceive a self-centred form of justice and can be heard to exclaim “that’s not fair”. “That’s not fair!” means “they’re getting something that I’m not getting”. So, in this context fair means everyone gets the same. We can gain an explanation of such behaviour by examining the research of Lawrence Kohlberg into the development of moral reasoning. Kohlberg interviewed respondents by seeking answers to dilemmas. The best known is Heinz’s dilemma about

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stealing a drug to save the life of his wife. Kohlberg then categorised the reasoning of his respondents’ answers into stages.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVEL</th>
<th>STAGE</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Pre-conventional</td>
<td>1. Heteronomous morality</td>
<td>Avoidance of punishment, and the superior power of authorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Conventional</td>
<td>2. Individualism and exchange</td>
<td>To serve one’s own needs or interests in a world where you have to recognise that other people have their interests, too.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Mutual interpersonal relationships</td>
<td>The need to be a good person in your own eyes and those of others. Your caring for others. Belief in the Golden Rule.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Social system and conscience</td>
<td>To keep the institution going as a whole, to avoid the breakdown in the system “if everyone did it”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Post-conventional</td>
<td>5. Social contract</td>
<td>A sense of obligation to law because of one’s social contract to make and abide by laws for the welfare of all and for the protection of all people’s rights.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. Universal principles</td>
<td>The belief as a rational person in the validity of universal moral principles, and a sense of personal commitment to them.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Kohlberg’s stages of moral development

The “that’s not fair” type of justice fits into Kohlberg’s Stage 2. Such thinking is categorised as pre-conventional and could also be described as concrete or literalist. A shift to conventional thinking will most likely come about through a

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conflict that creates cognitive disequilibrium. Such a conflict would be to
decide between individuals who have competing demands for “some good
thing”. A way of resolving such a conflict is to recognise the “existence of
groups and roles within groups which have their respective rights and
obligations”.166 In this way, an individual’s thinking undergoes a transformation
from the concrete to the more conceptual, being able to perceive the
intangible guided by “the esteem and approval of others”.167 Having made this
cognitive leap of recognition of group demands and roles, it is possible for the
individual to become capable of social justice, where previously they would
only be capable of thinking of justice in individualistic terms. As young people
develop their moral reasoning to Stage 3 and beyond, their sense of justice
will become more universal and directed toward the common good.

Reciprocal fairness is described differently by cognitive psychologist
Robert Kegan. Kegan describes Durable Category168 as the order of
consciousness from which teenagers could be emerging. As seen in Table 4
below, those whose consciousness functions from the Durable Category
recognise others, but only in terms of simple reciprocity, since one’s point of
view is subject. This means that an individual with this order of consciousness
can only truly think of a situation from their own perspective. Such a YA’s
sense of justice is just that, individual and self-referential. There is no real
altruism in the vision of someone in the Durable Categories consciousness. It
is something of which they are incapable. The shift in thinking to cross-

166 Duska and Whelan, Moral Development, 61.
167 Duska and Whelan, Moral Development, 60.
categorical consciousness means that one’s point of view becomes the object i.e. such a person can think about their thinking. This allows for mutual reciprocity and a vision of justice that is much broader. In exploring how this change in thinking might come about, Kegan focuses upon the “best friend” relationship. In so doing, he notes that “such relationships… are facilitators of a kind of trick nature plays on the second order of consciousness”. The trick is that

in taking the other into account one is simultaneously continuing the categorical embeddedness in a single point of view (since the other’s point of view is the same as one’s own, a feature of identification) and bringing another’s point of view into the process of constructing the self’s point of view.

This nudges one’s thinking into a different order of consciousness, referred to as cross-categorical consciousness, as outlined below.

**Table 5: Kegan’s orders of consciousness**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBJECT</th>
<th>OBJECT</th>
<th>UNDERLYING STRUCTURE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PERCEPTIONS</td>
<td></td>
<td>Single Point/ Immediate/ Atomistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fantasy</td>
<td>Movement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCIAL PERCEPTIONS</td>
<td></td>
<td>Durable Category</td>
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<tr>
<td>IMPULSES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCRETE</td>
<td>Perceptions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actuality</td>
<td>Data, Cause-and-Effect</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POINT OF VIEW</td>
<td>Impulses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role-Concept</td>
<td>Social Perceptions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simple Reciprocity (tit-for-tat)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENDURING DISPOSITIONS</td>
<td>Concrete</td>
<td>Cross-Categorical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needs, Preferences</td>
<td></td>
<td>Trans-Categorical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self Concept</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>ABSTRACTIONS</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ideality</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Inference, Generalization</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Hypothetico, Proposition</td>
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169 Kegan, *In Over Our Heads*, 44.
170 Kegan, *In Over Our Heads*, 44.
It is cross-categorical consciousness that the religious educator wants to nurture, since it enables the individual to see beyond their own concerns to the concerns of another. Being able to see and empathise with the concerns of other people means that a person is capable of a broader and more inclusive notion of justice than previously. The religious educator wants to encourage this cross-categorical consciousness as it enables a conception of justice that is closer to the scriptural conception of justice exemplified in passages such as Luke 4: 17-21 and Matt 25:31-40. Cross-categorical consciousness is needed before the young person can see a link between contemporary music with a justice theme and with scriptures where the least are looked after first (e.g. Matt 25: 31-40).

Young people can exhibit behaviour that would indicate such cross-categorical consciousness. Some young people can be observed working for justice for causes from helping those in need in their immediate society e.g. ‘Jeans for Genes’ Day or participation in soup vans run by a variety of groups, to more international causes like Project Compassion, Caritas or Make Poverty History. While one can look for alignment of this behaviour with one developmental theory or another, the most important factor is that there is a breadth to their conception of justice that more closely reflects the scriptural vision. The task of the religious educator is to integrate the motivation with the scripture and with the thinking behind it. This integrates the moral choices with their Christian commitment.

Having examined other developmental areas that contribute to YAs moving toward a broader and more inclusive form of justice, the psychosocial
factor that might propel them toward justice is called “the ideological mind”. Dependent upon which ideology the young person has imbibed, their focus may be close to home or it may be more universal. This is an opportunity for the religious educator to ensure that the focus of the young person is close to the scriptural conception of justice. The religious educator can point the way, through their own behaviour and through activities that will reach the young people entrusted to their care.

Having explored a variety of psychosocial and developmental factors at work in the lives of YAs, we shall now examine some of the socio-cultural factors that affect the lives of young people.

SOCIO-CULTURAL CONTEXT OF THE YOUNG ADULT

The society in which we are living is changing, not only in Australia, but around the world. Young people tend to be the ones who ride the crest of the wave of change, embracing change in ways that older people can find more difficult. There is always a “generation gap”, in terms of language and mores, but recent research suggests that the gap is not as conflicted as it was previously. If, as educators, we wish to reach young people we need to understand the culture, their culture as completely as we can. The importance of this understanding is emphasised if we wish to use a portion of their culture, in this case music, for education. I also note the connection with

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172 Erikson, Childhood and Society, 263.
174 A recent survey done by the Pew Research Center indicates that rock music may be an intergenerational lingua franca. This would suggest that the use of contemporary music by
psychosocial theory in that culture plays a role in shaping the direction of an individual’s growth. In trying to understand today’s culture, I shall explore some key aspects of the research of sociologist of religion Gary Bouma and the work that culminated in “The Spirit of Generation Y” (hereafter Gen Y) report.  

Australian spirituality has been described as “a shy hope in the heart”. It is not the Australian way to trumpet such matters, rather they are held tenderly in the heart. In exploring a definition for spirituality, Bouma states that “in postmodernity, definitional concerns tend to focus less on establishing boundaries between concepts and more on indicating the central tendency of a concept”. The 'spiritual' refers to an “experiential journey of encounter and relationship with otherness, with powers, forces and beings beyond the scope of everyday life”. The Gen Y report stated that spirituality is used “to encompass the whole range of different ways of life”. Being spiritual can be done alone and has come to be associated with educators should not be jarring to them. 


177 Bouma, Australian Soul, 11-12.

178 Bouma, Australian Soul, 12.


180 Bouma, Australian Soul, 12.
movements and groups not usually seen as religious.\textsuperscript{181} We note that where once there were forces to bind the young person to a religion, now there are cultural forces at work that encourage the young person to find their own spiritual way, be it individual or communal.

A similar picture emerges from the Gen Y reports. The key findings were that 48\% of Generation Y believes in a God, 20\% do not and 32\% are unsure. Two-thirds of those who do not believe in God or are unsure believe in a “higher power or life-force”. 43\% of Generation Y identified themselves as Christian, 17\% as Eclectic and 31\% as Humanist. Of those described as Christian, less than half attend church services once a month or more (19\% of total surveyed). Religion is seen as a private matter. Those described as Eclectic believe in two or more New Age, esoteric or Eastern beliefs. Some attend religious services, but most do not. The Humanists reject the idea of God, although a few believe in a “higher being”. Another key finding was that the social concern of Generation Y is not especially different to older generations, with 27\% being involved in some sort of volunteer work per month. The influences on contemporary religion and spirituality, which the report describes as secularisation, the relativism of postmodernity, consumer capitalism and individualism, shape more than Generation Y alone. The young are just more subject to their influence.\textsuperscript{182}

Australian society is postmodern, diverse and secular. It is postmodern because it does not have a single unifying religion or way of life.\textsuperscript{183} Indeed to

\textsuperscript{181} Bouma, \textit{Australian Soul}, 13.
\textsuperscript{182} Mason et al, \textit{Gen Y final Summary report}, ii.
\textsuperscript{183} Despite what the advertisers would have us believe!
be consciously multi-faith is to be postmodern.\textsuperscript{184} While Australian society is secular, meaning that it is not tied to any particular religious beliefs or values, this does not necessarily mean that religion and spirituality are on the wane. Rather, the religious and the spiritual are no longer controlled by mainstream religious organisations.\textsuperscript{185} Australian society is diverse, in its ethnic make-up, its lifestyles and religious expression. The changing landscape of Australian society is a challenge for all who hold to a tradition, be it a religious tradition or otherwise. The challenge for Christian religious educators is to find a way to express the old in the new; to find a way to adapt so as not to be irrelevant, without compromising the core of the Christian tradition.

There is a number of examples of religious revitalisation, such as in civic rites like those following the Port Arthur shootings, the rise of mega-churches, notably Hillsong, and the rise of high demand religious groups such as Opus Dei.\textsuperscript{186} Fundamentalisation and spiritual innovation are two other responses to the challenge of the current society.\textsuperscript{187}

Bouma’s research indicates that there are three core drivers for spirituality. The first is that hope and meaning, the needs addressed by religion and spirituality, are vital to humanity. Factors such as drought, climate change, pandemics, crime or war threaten many basic assumptions about being human and living responsibly in community that people have. This asserts the importance of ways that people choose to find hope and meaning,

\textsuperscript{184} Bouma, \textit{Australian Soul}, 5.
\textsuperscript{185} Bouma, \textit{Australian Soul}, 6.
\textsuperscript{186} Bouma, \textit{Australian Soul}, 148-156.
\textsuperscript{187} Bouma, \textit{Australian Soul}, 156-166.
such as religion and spirituality. Another core driver is the increasing diversity of Australia’s religious and spiritual life. The obvious differences in religions mean that people ask questions about how to understand such differences so that they can relate in a constructive, even faith-filled, way. The third major driver is the rise of diverse faith-based education, be it for Christians, Muslims, Jews, Buddhists or other faiths. With this increase, there will be “more demanding and sophisticated consumers in the religious marketplace”. The organisations that embrace this challenge will grow; “those that keep insulting their market – as is the case for much of what passes for mainstream Christianity – will not”. Research also emphasises the importance of religious education teachers and the seriousness needed when appointing them. Experienced religious educators have learnt to deal with and to embrace religious diversity as a teachable moment and necessity. Such religious educators know that young people search for hope and meaning and they engage their students in discussions about how religion and spirituality can help to foster hope and meaning.

Research indicates that religion and spirituality will continue to play a significant role in Australia’s future. One sign of growth is in the area of youth spirituality. While many young people do not attend weekly services, they are more likely to attend major events and pilgrimages. YAs give evidence of exploring commitment to religious communities. Many Muslim youth are

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188 Bouma, Australian Soul, 206.
189 Bouma, Australian Soul, 206.
190 Bouma, Australian Soul, 208.
191 Bouma, Australian Soul, 208.
192 Bouma, Australian Soul, 208.
displaying more intense religious affiliation than their parents. The second “sign of hope” can be seen in grass roots interfaith activities, often supported by local councils. A third piece of evidence is in the mix of religion and politics. There may not be one approach, but many Australians support politicians who promote more humane values. This may have been a deciding factor for some voters at the 2007 federal election. I believe that young people find a faith that works for justice an authentic faith expression.

While research sets out Australia’s religious and spiritual landscape clearly and cogently, it does not adequately address the importance of music, particularly in the lives of young people. Bouma’s research makes no specific reference to the importance of music to the spirituality of young people. The extensive Gen Y reports gave mixed opinions regarding the influence of music on youth spirituality.

The first report, dated August 2004, refers to cultural sources such as music as an influence on Gen Y spirituality. However, the second progress report, dated June 2005, states that “cultural objects and products, like music” do not exert “any meaningful influence on their spirituality”. The final Summary report, dated June 2006, states that, “listening to music received the highest mean score for importance for attaining a sense of peace and happiness”. Yet, in what appears to be a direct contradiction, the same

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report states that, “music, television, or even books, are not directly influencing their spiritualities”. One of the Gen Y researchers delivered a paper which returns to the terminology of the first progress report stating that, as a part of culture, music is an influence on the spirituality of young people.

Part of the confusion comes down to what young people are able to articulate as well as in the conflation of spirituality with religious affiliation. The inability to articulate music’s influence does not mean that music has no influence on the inner life of YAs. The ability to articulate this influence may not come until later in life if ever. Mason and his fellow researchers assert that music, as a part of culture, influences the spirituality of young people. They also point out that music is an identity marker. Not being sure of whom they are, music is an anchor for young people. It is a bridge connecting their identity to the divine; a concrete expression of their struggle to understand the mystery of life. Since listening to music can help young people attain a sense of peace and happiness, surely that is another way that music is part of their spirituality.

I have ministered to young people who are aware and are tuned in to the lyrics and music that speaks to their heart, to their feelings, to their dreams. This attunement or awareness is intimately connected to their spirituality. I am aware of this because, in the classroom context, some YAs have shared their love of, or experience of music with me in this fashion. It is

198 Mason et al, Gen Y final Summary report, 34.
200 Mason et al, Gen Y Second Progress Report, 46. This connects with the psychosocial research noted in this chapter. The difference between belonging and group identity can be blurred.
unlikely that they are the only young people who are aware of music’s influence on them, and thus on their spirituality. The ability of young people to articulate music’s influence on their spirituality is secondary to its influence.

SUMMARY

In this chapter I have examined the psychosocial development of the 16-18 year old. The sense of identity and belonging that a young person gains during this period is closely linked to their affiliation with a group, though group affiliation for a young person is not without its tensions. Group affiliation is based on a range of criteria, one of which can be musical taste. The use of contemporary music in the religious education classroom will be developed in a later chapter, but music’s link with psychosocial development especially as part of rituals is important to note.

Erikson’s notion of moratorium can also be helpful to a young person who is trying to sort out their identity and sense of belonging. Moratorium is an important concept for parents and educators to understand in their dealings with young people, especially for parents and educators not to push young people to make life choices when they are not ready or able to do so. However, encouraging young people to participate in programs where they can act for justice is a way of attending to their developmental need for justice while the religious aspect of their identity may be in moratorium. Working for justice can be transformative. This actional aspect fits well with Groome’s definition of Christian religious education. Rituals have a psychosocial power
for young people and should be judiciously utilised in liturgical and educational settings.

Sociological research confirms that Australian society is postmodern, diverse and secular. However, the research on YA spirituality does not give due credit to the place of music in the spirituality of young people. The Gen Y reports are unclear about the place of music in the spirituality of young people. Yet, music was rated highly in helping young people attain a sense of peace and happiness. Surely, this means that music is an influence on their spirituality. Liturgy as ritual confirms identity and belonging. Liturgy is a celebration of the community. Contemporary music influences young people’s spirituality, therefore the use of contemporary music in liturgy, along with traditional music, is affirmed for psychosocial and socio-cultural reasons, as well as for its importance in YA faith development and commitment to justice.

The next chapter will explore the links between music and Christian religious education.
INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, I examined the psychosocial factors at work in YA development. It is clear that group belonging is significant and contributes to identity formation. Musical choice has been shown to be a significant factor in group belonging. Rituals confirm identity and belonging and to this end they have been used in liturgy and education. Generally, the development of the YA inclines them toward working for justice which dovetails with the foundations of the first chapter. The research by Flynn in the Australian context has made it clear that young people want to work for justice. Therefore, a justice focus is important when ministering to YAs. Pope Benedict XVI has spoken of the importance that the Eucharist “passes over into the concrete practice of love”. So, Eucharist with YAs should reflect their lived experience of action for justice.

This chapter proposes that music is innate to humanity and that music can provide an opening to YA spirituality. We will then examine how music has become the lingua franca of young people. The issue of acting justly from the Christian perspective will be proposed as integral to bringing about the reign of God. A brief overview of how contemporary music has expressed the need for justice and the implications for educating YAs for justice is then presented.

201 This development is described as the conventional level of moral development by Kohlberg or cross-categorical thinking by Kegan. See Chapter 2 of this thesis.
202 Flynn & Mok, Catholic Schools 2000, 283.
203 Benedict XVI, Deus Caritas Est (#14), 25.
As a human activity, music can be an expression of our deepest desires. Historically, music has been a vehicle for justice. “The Marsaillaise” from the French Revolution is an example. When the religious educator uses YA music in Christian religious education, this demonstrates respect for the world of the YA. Thus, the capacity to engage in dialogue is enhanced. But for religious educators to simply use their music is not enough. The Christian life should be centred on right relationships and justice and this is the criterion for selection of YA music in religious education classes.

The higher orders of moral development proposed by Kohlberg or higher order of consciousness as proposed by Kegan displayed by many YAs, is geared toward living justly. This is the religious educator’s window of opportunity. By using contemporary music that has the theme of justice, the religious educator can make the connection between YAs’ music and the right relationships toward which human beings are called and thus help young people to grasp more of the Gospel and see its relevance and life-giving purpose in today’s world.

MUSIC AS AN EXPRESSION OF HUMANITY

Music is essential to some people for life and “appears as natural as language is”. Such importance defies tangible explanation. Yet humans make and buy music extensively. As noted by Waleed Aly, “we turn to it in grief and in triumph, in contemplation and in whimsy, in anger and


celebration”. Music has been part of human life throughout recorded history. There are also musical artefacts dating back 50,000 years. Isabelle Peretz, a neuropsychologist at the University of Montreal has referred to music as a “universal human trait” and she states that “emotional responses to music can be aroused as readily in humans as reflexes”. Indeed, humans have an “innate propensity to enjoy music”. This is borne out by research which demonstrates that nonmusicians may lose their ability to recognise spoken words while remaining able to recognise music and by the response of infants to their mother’s singing which points to receptivity to music virtually from birth.

One of the reasons that humans engage with music is that it can evoke positive feelings:

Brain scans show that the feeling of euphoria you get when listening to music is accompanied by activity in the same parts of the brain that respond to the rewards of food, sex and psychoactive drugs.

Clearly, different individuals have differing conceptions of what constitutes “good music”. The use of contemporary music in religious education would

need to be done in a considered manner, understanding that an effective approach would need to incorporate a range of musical styles.

The research of Howard Gardner into multiple intelligences, which has been significant in education, includes musical intelligence. Educators have utilised musical intelligence in subject areas as diverse as history, mathematics and fine arts. It is seen as good teaching practice to utilise multiple intelligences with a range of methods. Since musical intelligence is employed in other parts of the curriculum and given that each YA learns differently, this reinforces the importance of the use of music in religious education. The possession of musical intelligence by some YAs in a community means that they can contribute to celebrations and rituals, providing opportunities for musical enjoyment and thus building up the community. We will now look at how music could be part of a person’s spiritual journey.

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214 The musical styles or genres chosen would need to come from dialogue with YAs and immersion in those musical styles on the part of the religious educator (or at least some understanding and appreciation) so that the music chosen is most likely to “strike a chord” with YAs and have Gospel values inherent in it or values that can be discussed.
216 Create a rap for a series of key dates.
217 Learn addition and subtraction through drum beats.
218 Draw or paint a piece of music as it plays.
220 Peretz also argues for this. “The nature of music”, 26. My purpose is not to argue for this, but to accept the research of writers such as Peretz and Gardner that the appreciation of music and its use in education is a given.
MUSIC AND SPIRITUALITY

The clear link between music and the sacred is proposed by many musicians, particularly those who work in ecclesial contexts. Liturgist Don Saliers and his musician daughter Emily Saliers expressed it this way: “Coming alive to music, we are led on a double journey: into the mystery of God and into the depths of our humanity”. So the emotion that the music evokes can teach us more about who we are and it also opens up a way of faith or spirituality.

The movie “Copying Beethoven” makes a clear link between music and spirituality, when the character who plays Beethoven states:

“Music is the language of God. Musicians are as close to God as man can be. We hear his voice. We read his lips. We give birth to the children of God. We sing his praise. That’s what musicians are. And if we are not that, we are nothing.”

Coming from a different perspective, contemporary musician Eric Clapton comments: “For me, the most trustworthy vehicle for spirituality had always proven to be music. It cannot be manipulated, or politicised, and when it is, that becomes immediately obvious.” For Clapton, there is a purity or clarity to music that can be an opening to the inner worlds and when music is made in a less authentic way the jarring is clear. Quincy Jones spoke about artist Stevie Wonder: “In the recording studio, you need to allow space for God to walk through the room. Stevie does that”. I have observed that

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221 Saliers and Saliers, A Song to Sing, 2.
222 Agieska Holland, Director, Copying Beethoven, (MGM), 2006.
224 From the BBC-TV show Classic Albums, Stevie Wonder, “Songs in the Key of Life”, 1997.
music can affect teachers and students in a spiritual sense over the years.\textsuperscript{225} Recently, one Yr 12 student, an ardent musician, told me that he and his family weren’t religious, but that playing music was a spiritual activity for him. He expressed that music was “something to look to – something that isn’t right in front of you”. He went on to say that music helped ground him, kept him going, and is a very positive factor in his life. He went on to say that

“some people might question certain aspects of life – they might ask God those questions. I ask God those questions a bit, but mainly, while I’m playing music it gives me a chance to reflect, to think things through. Music helps me get away and get in my own environment. It doesn’t give me the answers, but it helps me to deal with things and put things in my own perspective. With the music that I listen to, artists express their problems, so I see that others have similar problems and maybe I can get answers from those songs.”\textsuperscript{226}

For this young man, music is a positive factor in his spiritual life which allows him to connect with his inner world. Music could be likened to a form of Fowler’s holding environment that allows YAs to explore their inner emotional and spiritual worlds, sort through their issues and emerge with greater self-understanding and solutions to some of their questions.

Music touches most human beings on an emotional level; it can evoke joy, sadness or longing. Particular melodies can evoke memories which also carry emotions, such as love, pain or beauty. Peretz notes that this could begin with “maternal vocal behaviour of singing and expressive speech” which generates “emotional communion”.\textsuperscript{227} Musical activity such as singing can awaken a sense of solidarity and can be a “means of communion between the

\textsuperscript{225} This is borne out in some of the research for the Gen Y reports: “listening to music received the highest mean score for importance for attaining a sense of peace and happiness”. Mason et al., The Spirit of Generation Y, 30.

\textsuperscript{226} Personal communication with student, 10/10/2008.

\textsuperscript{227} Peretz, “The nature of music”, 24.
human and the divine.” Music possesses two features that affect communion. In terms of singing, “pitch intervals or frequency ratios allow harmonious vocal blending” and in terms of dancing, “regularity favours motor synchronicity or grace.”

Music is an activity that impacts on our bodies as well as on our emotions in ways that are not fully understood or explored. As Christians, part of our tradition is that God’s glory is seen in and through the humanity of Jesus. As C.K. Barrett observes, the glory of God is “seen in the flesh and nowhere else.” We only need to observe the joy on the faces of children who have mastered the flurry of movement and music associated with skipping games to know that our bodies can come alive to music. The effect of music on people’s bodies is seen when people dance. This is brought into sharp focus by the following quote from Martin Buber:

My grandfather was lame. Once they asked him to tell a story about his teacher. And he related how his teacher used to hop and dance while he prayed. My grandfather rose as he spoke, and he was so swept away by his story that he began to hop and dance to show how the master had done. From that hour he was cured of his lameness.

This Hasidic story reminds readers that the effect of music can be on a deep, even unconscious level, with physical effects.

228 Saliers and Saliers, A Song to Sing, 170.
230 Quoted in Dorothy Lee, Flesh and Glory: Symbol, Gender and Theology in the Gospel of John, (New York: Crossroad Publishing, 2002), 35. Cf St Irenaeus “the glory of God is (the hu)man fully alive”.
231 Cf. Saliers and Saliers, A Song to Sing, 34.
Some religions have tapped into the embodied effect of music on spirituality such as the Sufi dervishes and the Taiko drummers. A musician who is also a theologian put it this way:

My experiences playing rock were usually more religious than I had found in most churches. I discovered a sense of spirituality “in the pocket”, playing tightly with a drummer. As a bass guitarist, when I am traversing the deep rhythm, riding the low notes, or stomping through a syncopated rumble, something happens. After the band’s last concert, a woman approached me and said, ‘You play the bass like it is part of your body.’ Later I thought, that is the way good religious ritual, or liturgy, works. We move our bodies and souls in harmony with the music, which is in harmony with the Spirit, with God.233

Young people frequently listen to music on portable music players. “With a Walkman, listening to music touches me so physically that I somehow become the music and my muscles move in spite of myself.”234 As the quality of music from portable music players has increased, the bodily effect of the music is also likely to have increased. So also can the spiritual life of YAs be touched and transformed by the music to which they choose to listen.

Throughout Christian history there has been much polarisation between the way of the flesh and the way of the spirit, such that the human body was seen as an enemy to the inner world. Human beings have been created by the God who loved us into life with bodies, it seems logical that God would draw us close through our bodies that come alive to music. Given both the physical and emotional impact of music, then the use of contemporary music in religious education is entirely appropriate. It may be argued that it is essential for religious educators to use such music in their

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classes so that YAs are more critically and sensitively aware of the ways in which their musical choices can impact their spiritual lives.

MUSIC AS THE YOUNG ADULT LINGUA FRANCA

The early Christian writings, both Gospels and letters, were written against the backdrop of the Roman Empire. However, these writings that we now refer to as the New Testament were written not in Latin (the Roman language) but in koine Greek, since it was the lingua franca of the time. Lingua franca refers to “any language widely used as a medium among speakers of other languages”, thus it can be understood by the largest number of people in the cultural context. Gaudium et Spes states that the Church’s “purpose has been to adapt the Gospel to the grasp of all as well as to the needs of the learned, insofar as such was appropriate. Indeed this accommodated preaching of the revealed word ought to remain the law of all evangelization”. Religious educators minister as part of the Church, thus they are commended by the Church to reach people and to be in tune with the ‘signs of the times’.

The prevalence of music in the lives of young people can be easily observed through their use of iPods and other mp3 players. 14-24 year olds love music, arguably more than any previous generation. Thus, music and video, which is essentially an embodied form of music, is proposed in this

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236 Flannery, Vatican II, Gaudium et Spes #44, 946.
237 From the press release by British Music Rights regarding the 2008 survey that was completed by the University of Hertfordshire. http://www.bmr.org/page/press-release-29 (website accessed 15/9/2008)
thesis as the *lingua franca* of young people. This concept is supported by the research of psychologist Daniel Levitin who noted that

> our brains learn a kind of musical grammar that is specific to the music of our culture, just as we learn to speak the language of our culture. This becomes the basis for our understanding of music, and ultimately the basis for what we like in music, what music moves us, and how it moves us.\(^{239}\)

For religious educators to be in dialogue with YAs, this comment suggests that they must become more familiar with the music of YA culture. This point was noted in 1967 by Pierre Babin who observed that “audiovisually oriented people were being born, and we could no longer speak to them as we had spoken in the past. The church’s education and pastoral work had to change”.\(^{240}\) While there have been some attempts, it is my contention that contemporary music is an untapped means of dialogue with and evangelisation of YAs.

As educators and adults of a different era, we may not be ‘native speakers’ of young people’s language.\(^{241}\) However, if contemporary religious educators have tried to communicate with the young people in their care, they know how important music is to YAs. We noted in the previous section the emotional and spiritual connections that can be stimulated by playing and/or

\(\text{\textsuperscript{238} See “A soul kind of feeling” by Chris Middendorp in The Age, Saturday 14}^{\text{th}}\text{ April, 2007 and “Communicating Jesus’ message with iPods and videos” by Patricia Lefevere in National Catholic Reporter, 6}^{\text{th}}\text{ April, 2007.}\)

\(\text{\textsuperscript{239} Daniel Levitin, “It’s just an illusion”, New Scientist, 23 February 2008, 38. This is also borne out by the story of the man struck by lightning which led to the desire and ability to play the piano. In Oliver Sacks, Musicophilia: Tales of Music and the Brain, (London: Picador, 2007), 3-17.}\)

\(\text{\textsuperscript{240} Pierre Babin, The New Era in Religious Communication, (Minneapolis MN: Fortress Press, 1991), 4. Note this comment came after he viewed the 1967 Expo in Paris. Forty years on, the comment is still valid. If anything, the need is more urgent.}\)

\(\text{\textsuperscript{241} We need to keep the commonalities across the generations indicated by recent research. http://pewresearch.org/pubs/1309/gentler-generation-gap-music-tastes?src=prc-latest&proj=peoplepress}\)
listening to music. This has also been borne out by the Gen Y research. Therefore, contemporary religious educators would be wise to use this musical language in their classroom in order that they might more effectively communicate with and evangelise young people. We will now explore how a just life is one of the central factors of Christianity.

JUSTICE, COMMUNITY AND THE REIGN OF GOD

Christian religious education takes place in the context of the Christian community. As noted in Chapter One, the trinitarian communion toward which Christians are called is a communion of right relationships and justice. The communion (koinonia) is brought about through dikaiosyne. Dikaiosyne can be translated as both right relationships and justice. So, justice is a hallmark of the communion. Therefore, it is a responsibility of Christian religious education to promote justice. Justice is explicit in the mission statements of many Catholic schools, as is exemplified by this quote from the De La Salle College Mission Statement:

The College aspires to provide an environment which is committed to the principles of Catholic social justice and actively supports these principles through its teaching program and internal structures.

The Christian conception of justice flows from its Jewish roots. The Hebrew Scriptures contain repeated admonitions to take care of the widow, the orphan and the stranger, beginning with the Torah e.g. Deut 10:18-19.

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242 The Spirit of Gen Y, 30.
243 Arndt and Gingrich, Greek-English Lexicon, 196.
244 http://www.delasalle.melb.catholic.edu.au/about02.htm (website accessed 30/9/2008)
The prophets tried to bring the Israelites back to God’s teaching. One measure of Israel’s fidelity was their care for those in need e.g. Jeremiah 7:5-7. However, the Israelites did not appreciate having their faults pointed out to them by the prophets. The prophet Jeremiah was put in stocks in a Temple gate (Jeremiah 20:2). This treatment didn’t silence him because the word of the Lord was “like a burning fire” in his bones so that he could not keep quiet. In summary, the justice that the prophets exhorted Israel to display is best experienced in a community of right relationships.

The Christian scriptures promote a vision of an inclusive community and the connecting themes of right relationships and justice frequently recur. Two telling examples of this occur in the Gospels. The Gospel of Luke establishes the centrality of justice to the Good News from the beginning of Jesus’ public ministry:

‘The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to let the oppressed go free,
to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour.’ (Luke 4:18-19)

The implication is clear – the disciples of Jesus are called by God to lead just lives – to care for the poor, the prisoner, the blind, the oppressed – by tending to those on the margins of society. This Christian sense of justice is a continuation of the Jewish faith, since Jesus quotes from Isaiah (61:1-2).245

The reader of Luke’s Gospel is reminded what happens to the prophet in 4:29: “They (those who were in the synagogue) got up, drove him (Jesus) out of the

town, and led him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they might hurl him off the cliff.” The reader understands that this sort of lived faith will not be easy but action for justice is essential for the Christian, regardless of personal outcome. Right relationships and justice are intertwined – action for justice has a human face. John Haughey observes:

The primary medium of Christian justice after Jesus, one could argue, is still the person who, like Jesus, stands in the truth the Spirit gives one to see. This truth unmasks untruth even when that untruth is systematized and ensconced in political, social and religious power configurations that appear impregnable.246

It requires vision and wisdom to see the injustice and courage and wisdom to act for justice. Clearly, religious educators have a role to play in helping YAs to see, judge and act justly. However, many YAs have not been able to make the connection between faith and justice or they may have lacked adequate mentors.

Matthew 25: 31-46 is very clear and practical about the life of the believer:

Then the righteous will answer him, “Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?” And the king will answer them, “Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.”… Then he will answer them, “Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.” And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life. (Matt 25: 37-40, 45, 46)

The eschatological aspect of the Matthean passage links a life of right relationships and justice with salvation. “If he (Jesus) is God’s justice and

246 Haughey, “Jesus as the Justice of God”, 275.
identifies himself with the oppressed, poor, homeless, and hungry, then where they are he is; or one’s salvation is where they are.”  

So, the Christian must live a life of justice.

The scripturally-based justice imperatives are clearly a part of the official teaching of the Catholic Church. This began in an explicit way with Leo XIII’s encyclical *Rerum Novarum* in 1891 which spoke of the rights of workers. More recently, it has come to be known as the “preferential option for the poor” which was explicated by the Second Vatican Council:

> Faced with a world today where so many people are suffering from want, the council asks individuals and governments to remember the saying of the Fathers: "Feed the people dying of hunger, because if you do not feed them you are killing them", and it urges them according to their ability to share and dispose of their goods to help others, above all by giving them aid which will enable them to help and develop themselves. 

While the Gospels were written two millennia ago, the justice which is at their heart has provided the basis for the Christian life. Church statements have been intended to provide clear guidelines and clarify what a lived faith entails. Most young people want to work for justice, not just talk about it. Typically YAs at school do this through volunteering for activities such as working in soup vans. Over time, they come to recognise the face of Jesus in those for whom they work. They come to faith through acting for justice. The lives of those who work for justice are transformed.

YAs are often attracted by people whose actions promote right relationships and justice. Therefore people like Martin Luther King, Dorothy

247 Haughey, “Jesus as the Justice of God”, 282.
248 Flannery, *Vatican II, Gaudium et Spes* #69, 976-977.
249 This is demonstrated in a 2006 Georgetown University study entitled “Social Justice Attitudes and Religious Commitment among participants in the Jesuit Volunteer Corps”. [http://cara.georgetown.edu/Number%207%20JVC%20Paper.pdf](http://cara.georgetown.edu/Number%207%20JVC%20Paper.pdf) Website accessed 15/8/09
Day and Oscar Romero (and others like them\textsuperscript{250}), whose lives were transformed by their desire for justice, become exemplars. King, Day and Romero lived their faith in Jesus Christ by working for justice in the face of “impregnable political and social power”, regardless of personal outcome. Their lives appeal very strongly to YAs. Their example shows YAs what an authentic faith can achieve. In the YA’s search for identity and belonging, the example of people like King, Day and Romero promote the Christian community as an authentic place to be and belong for YAs who thirst for right relationships and justice.

Such examples of the “doing” of faith resonate with young people who “prefer to work from a practical faith that lifts them up by lifting up the world through them – and so lifting up the content of their faith in the world”\textsuperscript{251}. Having established that justice is at the heart of the Christian community and that many YAs wish to act for justice, we will explore how YAs might grow to understand God’s justice in their own lives through music. They can then be enabled to act to connect their love of music with their desire to bringing about a just world.

\textsuperscript{250} Some living exemplars of Christian justice are Nelson Mandela, Desmond Tutu and Xanana Gusmao.

\textsuperscript{251} Beaudoin, \textit{Virtual Faith}, 93.
ENCOUNTERING THE JUSTICE OF GOD’S REIGN THROUGH
CONTEMPORARY MUSIC

This thesis has explored the developmental issues that dispose young people toward justice. We have noted the centrality of justice to Christian life and community. We have examined how music affects our emotions, beliefs and values. Therefore, music that helps YAs encounter the justice that is God’s reign would appear to be an excellent way to reach young people and encourage them on their journey of faith. Such music will help young people understand that the transformation called for in the lyrics of some songs is in harmony with the transformation called for in the Gospel. To develop this understanding I will examine one example of contemporary music which evokes such a transformative response in a religious education setting. In Chapter 4 I will use other examples of songs for more wide-ranging aspects of YA life and Catholic liturgical life. The song “The Ghost of Tom Joad” by Rage Against the Machine portrays the character Tom as a Christ-figure, using words that echo the values and approach of Matt 25:

Now Tom Said, “Ma, wherever you seen a cop beatin’ a guy Wherever a hungry new born baby cries Wherever there’s a fight ‘gainst the blood and hatred in the air Look for me ma I’ll be there Wherever somebody’s strugglin’ for a place to stand For a decent job or a helpin’ hand Wherever somebody’s strugglin’ to be free Look in their eyes ma, you’ll see me.”

252 cf The Last Judgment Matt 25:31-40 and “Jesus Walks” by Kanye West. The lyrics to this song can be found in Appendix 2.
253 The song is loosely based on the character Tom Joad from John Steinbeck’s novel “The grapes of Wrath”.
The song’s insistent rhythm and the repetition of the lyric “you’ll see me” emphasises the incarnational aspect of the song. The lyric is also an echo of Matt 25:40: “Just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me”.

In a school celebration of the Stations of the Cross in a more contemporary way, the above song was played for the Station “Jesus is condemned”, so that YAs might grasp the reality of God’s presence in the lives of all human beings and to remind them that they are accountable for their actions and their omissions in their relations with each other and in their community.

We noted earlier the role that music has played in human meaning-making. “Whenever human beings are caught in oppressive suffering, songs emerge”. So human meaning-making is also seen in the music of the oppressed (which was where the blues was born), who are striving for justice. Such music also arises in the hearts of those who recognise injustice and wish to be in solidarity with those who are oppressed. It is also a call to all people to open their eyes to the marginalised in their communities. This is surely a significant aspect of Christian religious education.

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255 Saliers and Saliers, *A Song to Sing*, 137.
256 African American spirituals are examples of the use of music in transforming situations of injustice. The blues emerged from such spirituals.
A selection of key examples of justice in music from the 1960’s to 1980’s

The focus on justice in music has been part of the meaning-making of young people for many years. This had its popular beginning through what was described as “protest music” in the 1950’s and 1960’s. Music was a rallying point to fight for civil rights. One example is from Bob Dylan. His song “Only a Pawn in their Game” speaks of endemic racism and social inequality:

A South politician preaches to the poor white man
"You got more than blacks, don't complain
You're better than them, you been born with white skin" they explain
And the Negro's name
Is used it is plain
For the politician's gain
As he rises to fame
And the poor white remains
On the caboose of the train
But it ain't him to blame
He's only a pawn in their game.

Songs like this were the means of an informal justice education for a generation of YAs. They bring the culture into the light for examination and critical reflection. The YA who lives Christian values must not be racist and must expose the lies that foster racism. Such counter-cultural action was and is dangerous.

African-American soul singer Otis Redding in his song “A Change is Gonna Come” sings about the suffering that many endured:

It's been so long, It's been so long
A little too long
But changes gotta come

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257 Bob Dylan, The Times They Are a'Changin', (Columbia Records), 1963.
This song had a significant impact when it was written 40 years ago, but the YA of today can still hear the lack of belonging in the lyric “standing by myself”. The cry of the heart in this song will be eased in a communal context. Lyrics of Christian hymns are similar to such songs.

The Vietnam War (1959-1975) was seen by some people to be unjust. Who was right and who was wrong was more difficult to see than in World War II. Some people were concerned with the undertones of colonialism in the conflict. John Lennon was very public in his disapproval of the Vietnam War, such that he returned his MBE to the Queen in 1969. It was around that time that he wrote “Give Peace a Chance” with the lyric that is repeated at the end of each verse, “all we are saying is give peace a chance”. The implication of this reiterated phrase is to reinforce the awareness of listeners that some people in power were too focussed on war to hear the alternative option for peace. Another song by John Lennon that is acknowledged as an anti-Vietnam War song is “Merry Xmas (War is over)”, which contains the lyric, “War is over if you want it. War is over now”. This repeats the earlier theme about choosing peace over war. There were other musicians, such as Credence Clearwater Revival in their song “Fortunate Son”, who were against the Vietnam War because young men were conscripted to fight. The lyrics outline what was seen as a class divide in terms of who was conscripted and who escaped the draft: “It aint me, it aint me, I aint no senator’s son”. YAs

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261 Credence Clearwater Revival, Willy and Poor Boys, (Fantasy Records), 1969.
were listening to and being influenced by this music, not least because they could be called on to fight in a war on the other side of the world.

This concern for justice in music continued in Australia with bands such as Midnight Oil. They were well known for their stand on nuclear disarmament. They were one of the “headlines acts” in a concert known as “Stop the Drop” in 1983. Their stance against nuclear proliferation was shown through their song lyrics such as “U.S. Forces”:\footnote{Midnight Oil, 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, (Columbia Records), 1982.} “In the shadow of ban the bomb we live” and “Harrisburg”:\footnote{Midnight Oil, Red Sails in the Sunset, (Columbia Records), 1984.} about the meltdown of the nuclear plant at Three Mile Island: “The people out in Harrisburg are getting out of town. And when this stuff gets in, you cannot get it out”. This song reflected the worry felt by YAs about the nuclear threat and the potential lack of a future and the injustice of this situation. Midnight Oil were also prominent in their support of land rights for indigenous Australians. They toured outback communities in a way few other bands would due to the distance and cost involved. Their support was also seen in their music, prominently in the album “Diesel and Dust,”\footnote{Midnight Oil, Diesel and Dust, (Columbia Records), 1987.} which contained the track “Beds are Burning”. The song’s chorus,

\begin{verbatim}
The time has come
To say fair’s fair
To pay the rent
To pay our share
The time has come
A fact’s a fact
It belongs to them
Let’s give it back
\end{verbatim}

was a reflection of the desire for justice in the form of land rights for indigenous Australians. Midnight Oil famously played that song at the closing
ceremony of the Sydney Olympics in 2000 – with the word “SORRY” in large letters on the plain black T-shirts worn by band members.

*Contemporary music for justice*

This drive for justice continued through the 1990’s with bands like Rage Against the Machine, who have been very public in their opposition to American government policies which promote the consumerist influence of transnational corporations. This is seen in a song such as “Bullet in the Head”:

Believin’ all the lies that they’re tellin’ ya
Buyin’ all the products that they’re sellin’ ya
They say jump and ya say how high
Ya brain-dead
Ya gotta fuckin’ bullet in ya head

The song emphasises that the YA need for belonging and identity can be abused in order to sell products and that the lives of consumers are worse as a consequence. People are turned into marketing objects and their human rights are diminished as a consequence.

Another artist who has consistently raised justice issues in his music is African-American Ben Harper. From his first album, *Welcome to the Cruel*

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World, Harper’s lyrics spoke of justice and the transformation of society. This seen in the lyrics of his song, “How Many More Miles Must We March”:

There must come a day
When a box is not somebody's home
The unfinished work of our heroes
Must truly be our own
We can't let the future become our past
If we are to change the world

We note that the song is sung in the first person plural. This “unfinished work of our heroes” is transformative and must be done in community. Harper more directly acknowledged one of his heroes, Martin Luther King, in his song “Picture of Jesus”:

There was a man in our time
His words shine bright like the sun
He tried to lift the masses
And was crucified by gun

Dr King was motivated by his Christian faith. Clearly, Harper sees King following in the footsteps of Jesus. In 2004, Harper contributed a live recording of his song "Oppression" to For The Lady, a benefit album for jailed Nobel Peace Prize winner and Burmese pro-democracy advocate Aung San Suu Kyi. In 2008, Harper contributed to an album compiled to highlight the human rights situation in Tibet.

Sean Kingston is also concerned with the current plight of African-Americans. This is seen in the lyrics of his song “Change”: “Hope to see black people living longer, also less kids without fathers”. It is also interesting

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to note the use of that song as part of the U.S. presidential campaign of Barack Obama. Other artists are part of this musical drive for justice, which has taken a number of different forms. The Black Eyed Peas have used their music to promote Amnesty International. Jack Johnson has used his website, http://www.jackjohnsonmusic.com, to get his fans, many of whom would be YAs, to consider their environmental impact in this time of heightened awareness of climate change.

While individual artists have used their music to promote various causes, there have been occasions when artists have banded together. The Concert for Bangladesh, held in 1971 to raise money for refugee relief, was the forerunner of the LiveAid and Live8 concerts. The LiveAid concerts in 1985, organised by Bob Geldof after witnessing African poverty first-hand, raised money for the poor in Africa. In 2006, there were the Live8 concerts, held concurrently in different places around the world, to try to cancel the crippling Third World debt.

Given the influence of contemporary music on YA meaning-making, the use of contemporary music in Christian religious education appears to be most appropriate. The coming together of the YA thirst for justice, the justice theme of some contemporary music and the Christian vision of an inclusive community working for justice serves to emphasise the use of contemporary music in Christian religious education as both timely and vital.


SUMMARY

In this chapter I have noted that music has been part of human meaning-making for thousands of years and that neurological research indicates that music is innate to humanity. I have explored music as a medium of expression of human emotions and showed that listening to music naturally can have a bodily impact and evokes emotion. I have noted also that music can be a means of communion and thus a link to the divine. Since we have been created by God with bodies, it is logical that God would draw us close through our bodies that come alive to music. Some musicians have noted the link between music and spirituality. Having indicated in Chapter One that the preferred model of religious education advocates dialogue with young people, religious educators will most effectively communicate with YAs by using their lingua franca which is contemporary music.

In promoting justice as part of a lived faith, religious educators engage young people in a powerful way. There are strong scriptural links between the doing of justice and salvation, with the promotion of justice being in the mainstream of official teaching of the Church. Contemporary music that promotes justice has been a part of youth culture for at least fifty years. In light of Gardner’s theory of multiple intelligences, there is also sound educational backing for this approach as integral to religious education. When the Christian religious education program brings together the YA thirst for justice, the justice theme of some contemporary music and the Christian

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272 Haughey, “Jesus as the Justice of God”, 282.
vision of an inclusive community, YAs are likely to encounter the justice of God’s reign.

In the next chapter, we shall explore how examples of contemporary music can be utilised to help YAs encounter the justice of God’s reign, both in liturgies and the religious education classroom.
CHAPTER FOUR: ENCOUNTERING GOD’S REIGN THROUGH CONTEMPORARY MUSIC IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, we explored the impact that music has on YAs and how music is a means of communion with others and God. The preferred method of religious education involves dialogue, thus it would be ideal if religious educators were able to share the language of young people – contemporary music. Contemporary music has a history of justice and can be used with YAs so that they better understand the justice of the Judeo-Christian tradition.

In this chapter, I will outline how contemporary music can be used in a Eucharistic or other liturgical setting such as the Stations of the Cross. I will also explore how Groome’s shared praxis approach with its justice basis is well suited to the use of justice-themed contemporary music. I will show how the examples of contemporary music can be employed for reflection and discussion using the shared praxis approach.

MUSIC AND PSYCHOSOCIAL THEORY

As noted in an earlier chapter, key psychosocial factors in 16-18 year olds such as identity and belonging have an integral link to music. "Music has been crucial to finding personal identity and discovering the communities

273 Chapter Two.
to which we belong”.274 Thus I contend that music can promote identity and belonging in YAs.275 Membership in a peer group is an important developmental task for the YA and connectedness through music is a means for this.

One of the key factors in group identity can be musical choice. Indeed, YA groups are based partly in differing musical choice e.g. rock, rap, R’n’B, metal. Music can provide a way of exploring personal identity, for example through karaoke. This exploration of identity is part of the fascination for young people for reality television shows such as “Big Brother”.

The Urban Market Research of LifeLounge276 researched the factors that determine YA identity. What clearly emerged is the importance of music for YA identity development. There is a range of influential factors displayed and, significantly, music has the highest mean and that has increased over the year from 7.7 to 8 (out of 10). It is important to note the overlap and reinforcement of the affective dimension that occurs between group identity and music, as both group identity and music are connected to feeling. Thus, high affectivity is expressed through the music of YAs. Since the research confirms the importance of music to YA identity, then the use of contemporary music in a liturgy can affirm in the young person a feeling of group identity with the religious community and the power of their response to being connected through a liturgical experience.

274 Saliers and Saliers, A Song to Sing, 75-76.
275 This is also borne out by the research of Peretz. “The nature of music”, 24.
276 The table (page 105) compares the 2007 and 2008 means of a number of factors that determine YA identity. This organisation does its research for marketing companies. The commercial imperative behind this research indicates its limits. This table was supplied upon request.
FACTORS THAT DETERMINE WHO YOUNG URBAN ADULTS ARE [SCALE 0-10] [MEANS]
We have already noted that the experience of belonging can be evoked through listening to and/or playing music. This is often evidenced when people at a concert are invited to sing the words to a song. The feeling of belonging, of connectedness, both with the audience and the artist is very strong. Surely, this is an example of communion. Communion is a polyvalent term. In Christian terms it often refers to the practice of Eucharist. A simple definition of communion is “a joining together of minds or spirits”. In the previous chapter, I noted the research which indicates how music leads to communion. On an interpersonal level, music can be a means of building relationships by sharing music: “People come to love music by listening and sharing it with others, by loving the people who love music”. When the Soviets left the Baltic countries in 1989, thousands of citizens celebrated their national belonging when they sang their national anthem for the first time in fifty years. As noted in an earlier chapter, belonging can also be tribal. This happens when aligning with a particular type of music, there is a badge of belonging to a musical tribe.

It is also possible that music can provide a place for those individuals who do not feel that they have a community to which to belong. During my time in education, I have seen this occur through young people forming their own bands and through the Rock Eisteddfod Challenge. The individuals

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277 Saliers and Saliers, A Song to Sing, 89.
278 Cf Saliers and Saliers, A Song to Sing, 79.
281 Saliers and Saliers, A Song to Sing, 81.
282 Saliers and Saliers, A Song to Sing, 84.
284 Saliers and Saliers, A Song to Sing, 99.
involved in Rock Eisteddfod may be engaged in varied activities, such as
dancing, costuming, music, choreography, lighting or props, but what each
person does is important to and for the whole. It requires a team effort for the
finished production. In this way the participants are drawn into a community –
they have a strong sense of belonging.

The connection between identity, power and music has also been
abused. This was seen in the use of Wagner’s music to ascribe heroic status
to Adolph Hitler as the central focus of German National Socialism.\(^\text{285}\)
Contemporary music is being abused in this way by some fascists who are
trying to recruit disaffected youth to the neo-Nazi cause.\(^\text{286}\) In this way, the
passionate or emotional nature of young people is being tapped into by music
but music has been abused for skewed, political ends.

Engebretson’s research with YAs, noted in Chapter Two, also
confirmed the connection between music, belonging and the spiritual.\(^\text{287}\)
This connection has been used in religious music for centuries in the Catholic
tradition\(^\text{288}\) and is still a factor for many believers. The fact that many young
people rarely attend church services means that to make the most of the
connection between music, belonging and the spiritual in the Catholic school
context there needs to be a deliberate use of contemporary music in religious
education programmes and school liturgies. For some time, there has been a
perceived divide between sacred and secular music in many Christian

\(^\text{285}\) Saliers and Saliers, *A Song to Sing*, 106. Another example is the way that music is used to
sell merchandise or a brand e.g. the anthem-like “C’mon Aussie C’mon!” by Cricket Australia.

\(^\text{286}\) McCathie, “German neo-Nazis”, *The Age*, September 8\(^\text{th}\), 2007.

\(^\text{287}\) Engebretson, *Connecting*, 173.

\(^\text{288}\) I believe that the connection between music, belonging and the spiritual is a factor in other
Christian denominations and other religious traditions but that is outside the scope of this
thesis.
churches and educating communities. As a consequence, the music of YAs can be dismissed by some Catholic educators as ‘unsuitable’ material for religious education. Rather, since contemporary music is an expression of the YA world of meaning-making, it is ideally suited as a vehicle to help them to explore their spirituality and faith. The use of contemporary music in religious education can be used to affirm that which is good in youth culture. The use of contemporary music also affirms the YAs who identify with this music. We will now explore the use of contemporary music as part of rituals and liturgies.

LITURGY AND CONTEMPORARY MUSIC

The concept of using contemporary music in liturgy is not a new one, as this was part of the basis for the so-called ‘rock mass’ and other musical innovations that occurred in a variety of parishes in the 1970’s as part of the liturgical renewal that followed Vatican II. However, the experience of being part of a religious community is not the end point for the Christian. The fullness of life toward which human beings are called requires that we go out to others in self-transcending love: “By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:35). In the previous chapter, we explored ways in which contemporary music can be used to bring about transformation of the world. Justice can be a significant theme in contemporary music. YAs can see this justice being promoted by a faith community which also shows respect for them by using their music, their language. Young people are more likely to be drawn to or feel like they belong to such an inclusive, respectful religious community.
Rituals provide a deepened sense of community for positive development of YAs.\textsuperscript{289} We have noted the impact of music on people’s bodies and emotions, thus music is important in liturgy because “we must attend to the power of sound and its impact on us as sensual, sensuous, sensitive beings”.\textsuperscript{290} Music is also an important facet of fostering a sense of awe in liturgy: “The secret …is with the non-verbal languages of worship: gesture, \textit{music},\textsuperscript{291} the visual, the interpersonal interaction”.\textsuperscript{292} Music has a long history in liturgy. The saying that “when we sing, we pray twice” has been attributed to Augustine of Hippo. Augustine “recognised the power that music has to fill our prayer with the power of joy and hope”.\textsuperscript{293} Liturgy can be educative and so should engage as many different intelligences (or gifts) as possible. While some adults may be touched by the grandeur of Mozart and Bach, contemporary music can inspire a similar awe in young people.\textsuperscript{294}

Contemporary music has a part to play in ritual, not only because of its links to identity and belonging. In the twenty-first century, contemporary music engages both sight and sound, with the visuals enhancing both the lyrics and the music. Since we have noted the bodily effect of music, the use of contemporary music in the liturgy ensures that young people are engaged in

\textsuperscript{289} Cf. Erikson, \textit{Toys and Reasons}, 78.
\textsuperscript{290} Saliers and Saliers, \textit{A Song to Sing}, 21.
\textsuperscript{291} The emphasis is mine.
\textsuperscript{292} Saliers, \textit{Worship Come to its Senses}, 23-24.
\textsuperscript{294} “Music carries its own emotional authority. The church was clever to appropriate it”. Aly, “Songs of redemption”, 14.
the liturgy, through their senses: “we feel it, see it and hear it. That must be
the point of departure for all audiovisual catechesis”.

The factors that prevent deeper participation in the liturgy are outlined
by Saliers: “when worship is ‘done for us’; when worship is ‘done to us’; when
‘we don’t understand what is going on’”. These can be lessened or
circumvented with the use of contemporary music in religious worship as well
as in religious education. The use of contemporary music in liturgy for YAs will
be most effective when YAs are part of the preparation of the liturgy, so the
liturgy is neither being done for them nor to them. Using their common
language of contemporary music also ensures that YAs know that what is
going on connects their experience to the Christian faith tradition. In this way,
contemporary music utilised in rituals and liturgies can be a means to
promoting a greater sense of community. When contemporary music with a
call to justice dimension is used in liturgies and rituals, this illustrates the link
between faith and action for justice. It is hoped that YAs will be encouraged to
live justly. Through such experience, YAs might be transformed, and in turn
work to transform the world and so bring about the right relationships and
justice to which Christians are called.

The religious education approach of T.H. Groome can also be
used with the students in developing a connection between the Christian
Story and the students’ stories liturgically and through music. Groome’s
approach involves a dialogical hermeneutic between the Christian Story and
students’ stories. To develop this connection further, the next section will

295 Babin, New Era, 33.
297 For elucidation of this approach see pp 116ff and Appendix One.
focus on some key examples of contemporary music that can be used in school liturgies.

*Contemporary music as part of a school Eucharist*

The Eucharist is the primary celebration and affirmation of a Christian community: “the Eucharistic sacrifice… is the source and summit of the whole Christian life”.\(^{298}\) As stated previously, the YA’s thirst for justice, the justice theme of some contemporary music and the Christian vision of an inclusive community mean that using contemporary music, particularly with a justice theme in a school Eucharist is educationally sound in theological and educational terms. Since a senior Catholic school community is comprised largely of YAs, then a school Eucharist should use contemporary music that connects with their lives and values. There is a primary place for traditional ecclesiastical music, as the Eucharist is a celebration for the whole Christian community and traditional music\(^ {299}\) also plays a significant part in the religious education of YAs.

Catholics are taught that the Eucharist is a sacrament, a sign of God’s presence among us. Bernard Cooke observed that “sacraments exist for people”,\(^ {300}\) since we need visible signs of the invisible God. In a school context, the celebration of the sacrament of the Eucharist is an integral part of the school community life.

\(^{298}\) Flannery, *Vatican II, Lumen Gentium* #11, 361.

\(^{299}\) Examples are Gregorian chant, plain song or hymns from the *Gather* hymnal.

The human friendships we enjoy embody God’s love for us; in and through these friendships God is revealing to us the divine self-giving in love. God is working salvifically in all situations of genuine love, for it is our consciousness of being loved both humanly and divinely that most leads us to that full personhood that is our destiny. Such salvation occurs in our lives to the extent that we consciously participate in it, in proportion to our awareness of what is really happening and our free willingness to be part of it.  

YAs are their relationships and so communal sacramental celebrations contribute to the development of YA relationships and their Christian experience. Such an understanding of the significance of human relationships also directly links with the YA concern for justice through working for the personal as well as common good of all. Since justice is part of the *communio* toward which Christians are called, it is important to focus the attention of YAs in Eucharistic celebrations on the need to act out of love and care for all people. This can be achieved through the use of contemporary music which is justice and community based in its approach. Such a liturgical approach is a celebration of the Christian community and encourages YAs toward actions that are salvific, for themselves and those around them. The “concrete practice of love” which Pope Benedict writes in *Deus Caritas Est* is thus encouraged.

An example of a way in which contemporary music might be incorporated into a school Eucharist in a respectful and purposeful manner can be seen in the use of the song “Don’t you think it’s time”. This was used as an opening song for a Social Justice Mass. The lyrics clearly focus on the need for change. YAs see that the injustice in the world needs to be changed.

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301 Cooke, *Sacraments*, 84.
Lyrics such as, “Time for changing views”, “Time to leave the past behind”, “Time for reaching out”, “Time for showing grace”, are accompanied by images in a PowerPoint, focus the sound and image-conscious YAs on examples of the need for justice as expressed in the lyrics. The fact that the song was played live helps to give an immediacy and relevance to the song’s message.

The film clip of ‘If Everyone Cared’ was used in the College’s Social Justice Mass as a communion reflection. Having heard God’s word about the need for justice (Luke 4:17-21) and heard how different members of the College community are acting for justice, the film clip allowed an opportunity for the gathered community to reflect upon how people in the wider world, such as Bob Geldof through LiveAid and Live8, Nelson Mandela and Peter Benenson have acted for justice. The final screen presents the quote from Margaret Mead: “Never doubt that a small group of committed people can change the world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has”. This quote is both a challenge and a question. It is an invitation and spur to all members of the school community to act for justice, seamlessly connecting with and summing up the rest of the liturgy.

*Contemporary music as part of a Stations of the Cross liturgy*

The liturgical celebration of the Stations of the Cross, which are based on Scripture and Tradition, has traditionally been held during Holy Week to remind Catholics of the suffering and sacrifice of Jesus Christ. In the Catholic

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304 Founder of Amnesty International
educational context, there is a need to present the Stations in a way such that YAs are more likely to understand and be able to appropriate the tradition and devotion. Below are two examples of songs that are suitable for such a liturgical celebration.

To contemporise the station where Jesus falls, the film clip of the song “Jesus Walks”\(^{305}\) by rapper Kanye West was used. It portrays three individuals who are isolated – they are shunned. By means of Christian symbols of identity and belonging – church building, congregation, cross and dove – West draws the viewer into the experience of the Incarnation, at the same time focussing on the way a supposedly Christian society treats some individuals very poorly. Young people listen to rap because of its confidence, its swagger, its truth. West questions that stereotype, too: “They say you can rap about anything except for Jesus”. This subtle, subversive, powerful song asks the viewers\(^{306}\) to clarify their identity, their belonging, their faith, their life-choices. It may prompt the student to reflect upon how they have (or have not) helped those around them who have suffered difficulties. It has certainly prompted our students to reflect upon the sufferings of Jesus and his connections with their own lives. This is a key purpose of the Stations of the Cross liturgy: to get the young people to think about and to connect their own experience with what they can learn from the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Some of the lessons of the paschal mystery are the victory of love over fear, the Christian idea of hope from hopelessness or reflection upon where the resurrection might be happening today.


\(^{306}\) In this case the congregation of YAs.
There is a song by Good Charlotte called “We Believe” which speaks of the struggle of each person to do what is right in their lives. It has the refrain, “We believe in this love”. The first person plural implies belonging and the love that builds relationships that give meaning to life. This is an example of the fidelity which YAs are seeking. While the refrain is playing the first time, images of fear and terrorism are shown. While the refrain plays a second time, images of hope, of people rallying against terrorism are displayed. The music and the visuals both reinforce the message that each of us must make a choice with our lives – as young people know. “Choose life so that you and your descendants may live” (Deut 30:19). In choosing life by working for justice, they also help others to live the full life that is the promise for all Christians: “I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly” (John 10:10). These are but two examples of what is waiting to be used: “In musical moments like these, we understand that even while we are searching for God, God is also searching for us.” The religious educator with a good relationship with YAs will continue to discover ways in which contemporary music can be used to illuminate the Christian tradition.

Having explored the use of contemporary music to educate for justice in two different liturgical settings, I will now explore its use in the religious education classroom. To begin, I will outline an approach into which the use of contemporary music might best fit.

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308 Cooke, Sacraments, 13.
309 Erikson, Childhood and Society, 274.
310 Saliers and Saliers, A Song to Sing, 175.
MUSIC AND THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT: A CALL TO LIVE JUSTLY

In previous sections of this thesis I have explored the importance of music (and its embodiment, video) as the lingua franca of YAs. I have clarified the centrality of justice to the lived Christian faith – and thus its liturgy. For YAs to be most likely to encounter the justice of God’s reign through music, particular examples of contemporary music need to be utilised in the classroom setting. This is because YAs are more frequently in the religious education classroom than in a liturgical celebration (either in a school or parish setting) and because the classroom setting can more easily promote dialogue and reflection. However each of these two, the liturgical life of the Catholic school and the Christian religious educational approach are interdependent. They each nourish the other. Both worship and education contribute to the living out of the Catholic school’s mission and values.

Groome’s definition of Christian religious education\textsuperscript{311} intentionally includes a justice dimension and confirms the dialogical approach that engages the tradition with the contemporary world, especially the world of YA music. Key aspects of Groome’s shared praxis approach show its value in educating for justice, since it promotes both reflection and dialogue, and connection of personal and communal stories,\textsuperscript{312} as well as the liturgical life of the educating community.

Groome posits that shared praxis can be described as “a group of Christians sharing in dialogue their critical reflection on present action in light

\textsuperscript{311} Groome, \textit{Christian Religious Education}, 25.
\textsuperscript{312} A more detailed outline of Groome’s shared praxis approach can be found in Appendix 1 of this thesis.
of the Christian Story and its Vision toward the end of lived Christian faith”.

In using the word praxis, Groome means “reflective action”, uniting theory and practice. Groome uses Story to mean “the whole faith tradition of our people however that is expressed or embodied”; his use of Vision means “the Kingdom of God, God’s Vision for creation”. This is the panorama against which the use of contemporary music in Christian religious education is developed.

*Shared praxis and music*

The first point to note is that shared praxis takes seriously the life experience and issues, story and vision of the students as well as the Story and Vision of the Christian community. This means that YA music (and media generally) should be taken seriously, since it is so much a part of their story. Table 6 below indicates how the use of a song by a contemporary artist using a justice theme might be developed through the shared praxis approach.

A song is chosen which fits with the issues raised by the students in class. Thus the first movement is adapted, using a song rather than a question. The students then have a chance to reflect individually about how the song does (or does not) reflect their present reality. Different music affects people in different ways. In any discussion after the personal reflection, new

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316 The lyrics should always be available either in hard copy or using a data projector. Alternatively the film clip of the song would be watched, accompanied by a sheet of the lyrics.
ways of seeing or apprehending the song may be provided by the various students. In the second movement, the students are asked to reflect upon whether the song enabled them to see themselves, the world (or a particular situation) in a new or different way. In a group discussion, they are invited to share their insights; the educator might elicit whether the song had prompted any student to ask why things are the way they are. There could also be some discussion about whether there was any material in the song that was negative, exploitative or transformative.

The third movement provides the opportunity for the educator (or students who had been delegated to investigate this approach beforehand) to present the appropriate portion of the Christian Story and Vision, ensuring that it was done in a manner of disclosure and dialogue. In this way, the students would best be able to come to a more personal understanding of and connectedness with the Christian tradition. This would also be the appropriate moment to discuss the values and beliefs that are present in the song and then for all to work together to analyse how those values and beliefs might connect with the Christian Story.

The desired appropriation begins in the fourth movement. Discussion could be based on the manner in which the song reflected Gospel values or evoked or reflected some part of the Christian Story. Importantly, there could be discussion as to how the students’ stories might shed light on the Christian Story. For example, they could come to a better understanding of the Incarnation by watching the determination of a disabled classmate. The fifth movement shifts to how the song reflects some part of the Christian Story and Vision. There could be some dialogue about the manner in which the song
promotes right relationships and/or justice. It is also possible that some
students might be challenged to act for justice e.g. by helping at a soup van or
to live right relationships in the playground e.g. by including others in their
activities. There could be discussion as to which action was most
appropriate.\textsuperscript{317} It is likely that there would be a range of responses by the
students such as letter writing to politicians or the class constructing a website
about a particular issue.

\begin{table}[h!]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|l|p{12cm}|}
\hline
\textbf{SHARED PRAXIS} & \textbf{EXAMPLE} \\
\hline
1. Naming present action & Listening/watching a song with a theme of justice. How does the song connect with the reality of the young person? What are the questions the song moves them to ask? \\
\hline
2. The students’ stories and visions & Does the song provide a different look at reality? Does it prompt the young person to ask “why”? Is there anything in the song that is negative, exploitative or transformative? \\
\hline
3. The Christian community Story and Vision & What are the values and beliefs in the song? Do they connect with the Christian Story? In what ways? \\
\hline
4. Dialectical hermeneutic between the Story and students’ stories & Does the song reflect Gospel values? In what ways does this song evoke the memory of or reflect some part of the Christian Story? Does the song shed light on the students’ stories? Do the students’ stories shed light on the Christian Story? \\
\hline
5. Dialectical hermeneutic between the Vision and students’ visions & Does it promote a sense of community i.e. looking after the least? Does the song call for right relationships? Does the song call for justice? Does the song point to the reign of God? What actions might the students take that would develop authentic Christian communities working for justice? \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Shared praxis and music for justice}
\end{table}

\textsuperscript{317} Any intended response should bring closer the reign of God “through freedom, peace, justice and wholeness”. Groome, \textit{Christian Religious Education}, 198.
The movements outlined above represent an action-based approach to the just life in and through Christian religious education since there is attention to God’s activity in the lives of the students, as well as a focus on the ongoing Christian Story and the responsive activity of the students. It is also Christian religious education since there is an emphasis on right relationships and justice which are the “seeds of the Kingdom”, bringing closer God’s reign.

The value of the inclusion of contemporary music as part of the religious education curriculum is confirmed both by Gardner’s research into multiple intelligences and by contemporary research into brain function which indicates that we should promulgate teaching methods that are best aligned with our “biological make-up and limitations”.\(^\text{318}\)

\(^{318}\) Peretz, “The nature of music”, 26. Such teaching methods are substantiated by other research. “Music listening, performance, and composition engage nearly every area of the brain that we have so far identified, and involve nearly every neural subsystem”. Daniel J. Levitin, This Is Your Brain On Music: The Science of a Human Obsession, (New York: Dutton, 2006), 8-9. “Students who were exposed to the music-based lessons scored a full 100 percent higher on fractions tests than those who learned in the conventional manner. Second-grade and third-grade students were taught fractions in an untraditional manner by teaching them basic music rhythm notation. The group was taught about the relationships between eighth, quarter, half and whole notes. Their peers received traditional fraction instruction”. Neurological Research, March 15, 1999. From http://www.amc-music.com/research_briefs.htm accessed 14/8/09
In the previous section I outlined how contemporary music can be utilised through Groome’s shared praxis approach to religious education. I will now outline select examples of contemporary music with an emphasis on a call to justice, accompanied by appropriate scripture, Church teaching and questions to promote dialogue in the classroom.

*Introduction*

An important caveat in using any music is to be aware that it will not immediately appeal to all members of the class/group. When I use music in my religious education classes I always remind the students that it may not be their “type” of music but I ask the students to be open-minded and listen to the words (which would always be supplied – in hard copy or by data projector). Another procedural point is that it would be best for the class to listen to (or watch, in the case of a film clip) the song at least twice, so that the import of the song is clear. For each of the songs I have supplied an explanation to help clarify the meaning of the song. I have also included a passage from scripture and church teaching that take up some of the themes of the song. They are suggestions and are in no way meant to be exhaustive.

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319 Appendix Two has song explanations and lyrics. Appendix Four is a CD with the music. Appendix Five is a CD of the available film clips and/or PowerPoint presentations mentioned.
320 These are available in Appendix Two of this thesis.
A starting point for engagement with each song might be referred to as “correlation” methodology. The focus questions ask YAs to perceive the links between the song and the Christian Story and Vision, generated by reflection on the verses of scripture. The next step will aid the students in their interpretation and understanding of the song. The educator should prompt YAs to respond to questions such as “What is the position from which the musician is speaking?” and “What ideology, philosophy or religious persuasion is influencing this musician?” “What is the musician’s worldview?” Therefore, the educator needs to have researched the background of the musician and analysed the lyrics and images themselves to be able to help the YAs come to some informed answers to those questions.

**SHARED PRAXIS MOVEMENTS**

![Diagram showing the interplay of Scripture and Church teaching, contemporary music, questions for dialogue and action for justice in the shared praxis process.]

Table 8: The interplay of Scripture and Church teaching, contemporary music, questions for dialogue and action for justice in the shared praxis process
To illustrate the praxis of contemporary music in the RE classroom five songs, each addressing a specific theme in the curriculum, are presented. Contemporary music helps YAs to name their present action (Movement 1), as well as prompting them to reflect critically on their world (Movement 2). Well-chosen examples of contemporary music also facilitate the dialectic between the Christian Story and their stories (Movement 4).

The religious educator can present examples of texts from the Christian tradition that are most likely to help the YAs to grasp the Christian meaning inherent in the song (Movement 3). Such examples also enable the connection to be made between the Christian Story as contemporary and their own stories (Movement 4).

The questions for dialogue help YAs to reflect critically on their world (Movement 2). Other questions can facilitate the dialectic between the Christian Story and their stories (Movement 4). Finally, other questions can prompt the participants toward actional consequences, in terms of naming personal or group actional responses (Movement 5).
**Songs**

1. “We Believe” by **Good Charlotte**

Theme: Justice as an expression of love for and through community

**Scripture**

I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live, loving the Lord your God, obeying him, and holding fast to him. (Deut 30:19-20)

So we have known and believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. Those who say, ‘I love God’, and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen. The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also. (1 John 4: 16, 20-21)

**Church teaching**

Deep within his conscience man discovers a law which he has not laid upon himself but which he must obey. Its voice, ever calling him to love and to do what is good and to avoid evil, tells him inwardly at the right moment: do this, shun that. For man has in his heart a law inscribed by God. His dignity lies in observing this law, and by it he will be judged. His conscience is man's most secret core, and his sanctuary. There he is alone with God whose voice echoes in his depths. By conscience, in a wonderful way, that law is made known which is fulfilled in the love of God and of one's neighbour. Through loyalty to conscience Christians are joined to other men in the search for truth and for the right solution to so many moral problems which arise both in the life of individuals and from social relationships. Hence, the more a correct conscience prevails, the more do persons and groups turn aside from blind choice and try to by guided by the objective standards of moral conduct. (*Gaudium et spes* #16)

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The love that is spoken of in the song lyrics is a love which is shown through care for those in need in the community. This is similar to the love that believers are urged to live in 1 John 4 and *Gaudium et spes* #16. Such loving actions promote life and are a conscious choice (Deut 30).

2. “Jesus Walks” by **Kanye West**

Theme: Belief in the Incarnation prompts us to act justly

**Scripture**

> When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. Then the king will say to those at his right hand, “Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.” Then the righteous will answer him, “Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?” And the king will answer them, “Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me”. (Matthew 25:31-40)

**Church teaching**

Faced with a world today where so many people are suffering from want, the council asks individuals and governments to remember the saying of the Fathers: “Feed the people dying of hunger, because if you do not feed them you are killing them”, and it urges them according to their ability to share and dispose of their goods to help others, above all by giving them aid which will enable them to help and develop themselves. *(Gaudium et spes* #69)

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The song lyrics (and video images) state that those discarded by society (especially a society based in Christian values such as the United States of America) need to be cared for since Jesus walks among us. This is mirrored in the passage from Matthew 25 and *Gaudium et spes* #69 which also urge believers to care for those in need since Jesus is present in them.

3. “The Ghost of Tom Joad” by **Rage Against the Machine**

Theme: Recognising the face of Jesus in all who are oppressed prompts just action.

**Scripture**

What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you? If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, and one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill’, and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead. (James 2:14-17)

**Church teaching**

The struggle against destitution, though urgent and necessary, is not enough. It is a question, rather, of building a world where every man, no matter what his race, religion or nationality, can live a fully human life, freed from servitude imposed on him by other men or by natural forces over which he has not sufficient control; a world where freedom is not an empty word and where the poor man Lazarus can sit down at the same table with the rich man. This demands great generosity, much sacrifice and unceasing effort on the part of the rich man. Let each one examine his conscience, a conscience that conveys a new message for our times. Is he prepared to support out of his own pocket works and undertakings organized in favour of the most destitute? Is he ready to pay higher taxes so that the public authorities can intensify their efforts in favour of

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development? Is he ready to pay a higher price for imported goods so that the producer may be more justly rewarded? Or to leave his country, if necessary and if he is young, in order to assist in this development of the young nations? 
( *Populorum progressio* #47)

The song lyrics (based on Steinbeck’s character from “The Grapes of Wrath”) speak of the person who identifies with all those who are downtrodden. This connects to the action for justice toward which believers are urged in James 2 and *Populorum et progressio* #47.

4. “If Everyone Cared” by Nickelback

Theme: When people who care work together, they can act for justice

**Scripture**

So again Jesus said to them, ‘Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and bandits; but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly. ‘I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. (John 10:7-11)

**Church teaching**

It is imperative that no one ... would indulge in a merely individualistic morality. The best way to fulfil one’s obligations of justice and love is to contribute to the common good according to one’s means and the needs of others, and also to promote and help public and private organizations devoted to bettering the conditions of life. ( *Gaudium et spes* #30)

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The song (particularly through the video images) gives examples of those who loved and cared, such as Bob Geldof, Betty Williams, Peter Benenson and Nelson Mandela. Those people acted for the common good (Gaudium et spes #30) and helped to guide others toward abundant life (John 10).

5. “Don’t you think it’s time” by Bob Evans

Theme: Justice needs to be worked for

Scripture

‘The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour.’ (Luke 4:18-19)

Church teaching

There is a growing awareness of the exalted dignity proper to the human person, since he stands above all things, and his rights and duties are universal and inviolable. Therefore, there must be made available to all men everything necessary for leading a life truly human, such as food, clothing, and shelter; the right to choose a state of life freely and to found a family, the right to education, to employment, to a good reputation, to respect, to appropriate information, to activity in accord with the upright norm of one’s own conscience, to protection of privacy and rightful freedom, even in matters religious. (Gaudium et spes #26)

The time for grace, forgiveness and faith of which the song lyrics speak is similar to ‘the year of the Lord’s favour’ in Luke 4 and will guide believers to act justly to bring about human dignity (Gaudium et spes #26).

325 Bob Evans, “Don’t you think it’s time” from Suburban Songbook, EMI records, 2006.
Questions for dialogue

The initial questions are intended to facilitate the critical reflection of Movement 2. While enabling the focus on the inter-relationship of Christian community story and students’ stories, the questions also integrate the actional aspects of Movements 4 and 5 in relation to each section used. The questions for dialogue are part of an approach that guides the class through the five movements so that concrete actional consequences may be discussed as personal or group responses to the consciousness-raising of the shared praxis process. Some of these questions could be applied in a generic way to each of the songs (or other songs), others are more specific to one or more of the songs used as examples. The teacher will select key questions from the list below.

- Does this song speak to you about issues you are dealing with in your life?
- Why are things as they are? Can we make a difference?
- How does this song reflect the background of the musicians?
- Is there anything in the song which is negative, exploitative or transformative?
- What or who do you fear? What or who do you believe? Why? What do you think gives life meaning?
- What might “opening up your eyes” mean? How might they reach out to others? Where/when could they be more forgiving? What might it mean to “show grace”? 
• How important is to be truthful and sharing? The film clip gives examples of good people. Who inspires you and why?

• Did the imagery from the video strike you? What portions? Why?

• Does the song cause you to think about how you see yourself? The world?

• How hard is it to care? Do you think the songwriter is suggesting that caring is part of being truly alive? (cf John 10:10) Does that make sense?

• What are the values and beliefs expressed in the song? Do they connect with the Christian Story?

• If you/we really believed that Jesus was present today, how should we treat those around us? How should we treat the homeless? The poor?

• In what ways does this song evoke the memory of or reflect some part of the Christian Story? Does the song help you to see the Christian Story differently? Does the song help you to see your life differently?

• Listening to the song, what needs to change for the world to be more just? What actions can you take that will help? What actions can we take that will help?

As these examples demonstrate, the selective use of contemporary music as part of a shared praxis approach to religious education allows the Christian tradition and the perspective of justice to be explored and deepened catechetically in a manner that is likely to be appropriated and lived by YAs.
SUMMARY

Having demonstrated in previous chapters that contemporary music provides a common language for YAs, the purpose of this chapter has been to propose and outline examples of the use of contemporary music with a justice theme in the liturgical life of the school and the religious education classroom. It has also been noted that “music has been crucial to finding personal identity and discovering the communities to which we belong”. \(^{326}\) However, that link between music and belonging has also been exploited by commercial and political interests and there is a need for Christian religious education to redress this situation and to raise the critical consciousness of the students.

The use of contemporary music in school liturgies (a combination of formal and informal rituals) may increase the sense of identity and belonging that a YA will feel toward the school and its religious tradition. Whether used in the religious education classroom, a school Eucharist or another form of liturgy, contemporary music which energises students to act justly and work for a just community in school or society is ideally suited as a vehicle to help communicate the Christian sense of justice to YAs. It also encourages them to see the Holy Spirit at work in the world, their world.

The shared praxis approach enables YAs to see the links between contemporary music and the Christian Story and Vision. Shared praxis enables a dialogue between YAs (who bring their life experiences) and the Christian Story and Vision. Using contemporary music as the medium, the shared praxis approach allows the stories and visions of YAs and the

\(^{326}\) Saliers and Saliers, *A Song to Sing*, 75-76.
Christian Story and Vision to emerge and for each to be informed by the other.

The final chapter of this thesis will draw conclusions from the research and make recommendations about the Christian religious education of YAs in the twenty-first century.
CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION: THE USE OF CONTEMPORARY MUSIC IN THE PROMOTION OF JUSTICE AS PART OF CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

A Christian religious education that has *communio* theology as its foundation and which has the shared praxis approach will promote right relationships and justice. The promotion of justice is integral to Christian religious education. Having researched the use of contemporary music to promote justice both in the classroom and the liturgical life of the school, this chapter will reflect upon the research and explicate implications and recommendations.

THE CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL AND CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

An understanding of God as triune and relational should inform a religious education program which promotes the understanding of the life of the Church and its mission in a Catholic secondary school. Since God is *communion*, and we are *imago Dei*, that is what we are called to as persons. We become more authentic persons when we fulfil our nature, when we go out to others, loving freely, when we mimic the *perichoresis* of the triune God and begin to generate community. According to Paul,\(^\text{327}\) this communion is brought about by *dikaiosyne*, which means both right relationships and justice. This notion of the fullness of humanity existing in the free giving of love has

\(^{327}\) Gal 3:21; 2 Cor 6:14; Phil 3:9; Rom 1:17.
powerful implications for education in terms of the relationships within a
classroom, as well as models of behaviour outside it, particularly concerning
justice.

Research on *communio* theology implies both diversity that enhances
unity and an understanding of unity that promotes diversity. YAs strongly
desire relationship and a feeling of unity, but they want the space to express
their identity in diversity. Thus a Catholic school and its religious education
should have its foundation in *communio* theology. The mutual
*inter*dependence of trinitarian *communio* means that the Catholic school has a
unique opportunity to provide young people with something that they yearn for
– a community, somewhere to belong. A *communio* theology that is integral to
Catholic school life has obvious implications for the general conduct of the
school. However, in living out its mandate as part of the mission of the
Church, the Catholic school needs to provide a religious education curriculum
for young people that also emphasises right relationships and justice. In this
living out of the mandate, young people can then see that there is integrity
between belief, values and practice in this educating community of faith and
justice.

The scriptures are filled with injunctions toward justice. The evangelist
Matthew links a life of right relationships and justice with salvation (Matt
25:31-46). Haughey states that God identifies with the homeless and poor, so
that, for the Christian, salvation is where the poor are. Christians are exhorted
to live a life of justice. Right relationships and justice are intertwined – action
for justice has a human face. Appropriate models are important for the
Christian community as an authentic place to be in and to belong for those
who thirst for right relationships and justice. Vision and wisdom are required to see the injustice and courage and wisdom are required to act for justice. Clearly, religious educators have a role to play in helping YAs to see, judge and act justly.

The educator and learners are pilgrims together. There is a common search in attending to the activity of God in their lives and to the signs of the reign of God that are already present. This implies that God is at work in the world, that we need to discern what we are called to do in faith. Groome’s shared praxis approach provides the framework for a contemporary educational approach in terms of Christian religious education that engages contemporary music and working for the reign of God.

The primary thrust of Lasallian schools, whose charism is based in the life and teachings of John Baptist De La Salle, is to foster trinitarian relationships with the young in order to bring them closer to God. The school day is filled with prompts to prayer, the recollection of God’s presence and encouragement towards building personal relationships founded in dignity and respect for each person. These regular prompts help to guide educators and YAs towards right relationships and justice.

The promotion of justice is also explicit in the Rule of the Institute (2002) which encourages teachers to integrate faith with culture, to train students to adopt a critical stance toward contemporary society and to work with those who promote justice. When the Rule refers to religious education, it encourages a model that closely mirrors the approach proposed by this thesis – religious education should be lively, student-centred, in touch with life as it
is, based on Scripture and the liturgy and attentive to the teaching of the Church.

Developmental theory has implications for Christian religious education, both in terms of understanding YAs and encouraging them toward a Christian conception of justice. For Erikson, the YA and the community enter into a symbiotic relationship. YAs must have a sense of identity and belonging, while the community needs young people to belong in order to continue to exist as community.

In the Catholic educational context, it is vital that the educator reach out to YAs from all walks of life, including those who are labelled as problem students and as much as possible make them feel they belong in the school community.

The development of YAs can dispose them towards the recognition of and action for justice. A shift from pre-conventional to conventional thinking in YAs will most likely come about through a conflict that creates cognitive disequilibrium, e.g. the YA needs to decide between individuals who make competing demands for “something desirable” and the beliefs and values they hold dear. In addressing the existence of groups and roles within groups, the educator works to promote transformation of YAs from the concrete to the more conceptual. Having made this cognitive leap of recognition of group demands and roles and choosing a personal response, it is possible for the individual to become capable of social justice, where previously they would ordinarily be capable of thinking of justice in individualistic terms. As young people are challenged educationally to develop their moral reasoning, through
conventional to post conventional choices, their sense of justice and its 
relation to their faith commitment will become more universal.

Being able to see and empathise with the concerns of other people 
means that a person is capable of a broader notion of justice than 
individualism allows. The religious educator wants to encourage this boundary 
into Kegan’s cross-categorical consciousness as it enables a conception of 
justice that is closer to the inclusive Gospel conceptions of justice.

THE USE OF CONTEMPORARY MUSIC

Educators have utilised musical intelligence in subject areas as diverse 
as history, mathematics and fine arts. It is seen as good teaching practice to 
utilise multiple intelligences with a range of methods. Since musical 
intelligence is employed in other parts of the curriculum, and given that each 
YA learns differently, the importance of the use of music in religious education 
is reinforced. In a previous chapter, we have noted research which described 
music as a universal human trait and other research which demonstrated that 
humans innately enjoy music. The possession of musical intelligence by some 
YAs in a community means that they can contribute to celebrations and 
rituals, providing opportunities for musical enjoyment and thus building up the 
community.

Formal rituals, which encourage YAs to become responsible members 
of their society, have the power to confirm their group identity as a member of 
a school, part of the Australian or worldwide Lasallian family, as a Catholic, as 
a Christian. Rituals in the school lives of YAs provide opportunities for the
religious educator. The use of contemporary music in religious education contributes to the YA’s sense of belonging in both their peer group and the school community.

The psychosocial power at work can make a link that the YA does not expect. At the same time, the YA can be opened to a different level of religious meaning. Where religious educators use contemporary music they can make a link between the message of the music and the message of the Gospel. Thus they are using a pedagogical medium which enables young people to understand and make connections between their lives and their faith.

The Gen Y research found that the YA activity which gained the highest mean score for importance for attaining a sense of peace and happiness was listening to music. Music is therefore an integral resource for young people who are searching for identity.

Over the centuries, music has helped humans to experience the divine, within themselves and in their world. Music can promote communion through the harmony of voices as well as the shared emotion and shared bodily effects evoked by the music and the lyrics. The connection between music and spirituality has also been noted by researchers and acknowledged by some YAs.

The prevalence of music and video in the lives of young people leads to the conclusion that it is their lingua franca. It is my contention that contemporary music is a relatively untapped means of dialogue with and evangelisation of YAs.
Contemporary music has historically been a means for musicians to point out injustices to their audiences. These audiences have frequently been YAs. So, contemporary music is a ready-made ground for dialogue with YAs about justice issues and for developing their consciousness in these important areas of connectedness between living faithfully and living justly.

GROOME’S SHARED PRAXIS AND CONTEMPORARY MUSIC

Music is linked to the psycho-social development of YAs. This has been shown through the Urban Market Research of LifeLounge which demonstrated the prime importance of music to YA identity. As noted earlier, belonging can also be tribal. This happens when aligning with a particular type of music, there is a badge of belonging to a musical tribe. We have noted the research which stated that music was crucial to finding personal and communal identity. It is also possible that music can provide a place for those individuals who do not feel that they have a community to which to belong. The framework for the use of contemporary music in the Catholic school context that this thesis is proposing is that of Groome’s shared praxis. As part of his dialogical approach, Groome is very clear that the Christian Story and Vision be made present in dialogical disclosure, not in a monologue or in a ‘banking’ approach. Promoting a dialogical pedagogical approach can be as simple as the educator concluding a presentation by asking the students what is their response to music or other media or class content and thus enables a respectful discussion that allows all to speak and to be heard. This recognises
that what the educator has presented is not the final word and that the voice and concerns of all are important. The shared praxis methodology recognises that the students should appropriate the Christian Story in the light of their own stories. Ideally, each sheds light on the other, enhancing the understanding of both the Christian Story as well as of their own stories. This is a way of telling their personal stories in connection with communal narratives, and also through lyrics and images. This provides an opportunity to reflect on the community Story and understand it in the context of their own experience.

This thesis has proposed the use of contemporary music with a justice focus in religious education classes and liturgies. YAs can experience the respect offered them by teachers using their music, their language. Young people are more likely to be drawn to or feel like they belong to such an inclusive, respectful religious community. By strengthening communal, interpersonal bonds, the YA’s sense of justice (and awareness of injustice) could be heightened. Such a factor increases the likelihood that they might understand and connect the justice of God’s reign with their own life experience through contemporary music. The factors that are a hindrance to deeper participation in the liturgy, be they a lack of experience of connectedness, of participation or of understanding of the liturgy, can be lessened or circumvented with the use of contemporary music which enables the students to hear their own concerns echoed in a faith community context.

One key use of contemporary music in a school context is in the celebration of the Eucharist. The Paschal Mystery that is recalled in and through the Eucharist reminds participants that God is working salvif...
all situations of genuine love. Such an understanding of the significance of human relationships also directly links with justice through working for the personal as well as common good of all. By focussing the attention of YAs on the importance of acting out of love for all people as Christ did and as recalled in the Eucharist through contemporary music can be transforming for the community. Such a Eucharist is a celebration of our Christian community and encourages YAs toward actions that are just and part of Christ’s salvific sacrifice, for themselves and those around them.

The examples of contemporary music that were examined in Chapter Four each provide different points of connectedness between students’ lives and the Gospel message. One drew the viewer into the experience of the Incarnation, at the same time focussing on the way a supposedly Christian society discards individuals. While another speaks of the struggle of each person to do what is right in their lives, thus showing their love. This offers an example of the fidelity which YAs are seeking.

RECOMMENDATIONS

So that educators can engage in effective Christian religious education, I propose the following theological and developmental recommendations that will help to promote the praxis of justice. The use of contemporary music in religious education in this thesis is supported by developmental, educational and faith criteria and should be something upon which the educator has reflected.
• Right relationships and justice are explicitly the ground of all relationships, school policies and decision-making. A religious education programme that promotes justice will be most effective when there is integrity between words and actions.

• Activities or behaviour that support and promote respect for all in the school community should be the norm.

• Individual responsibility is to be emphasised, particularly when educational activities or student behaviours affect school communal relationships.

• Religious educators must be aware of the needs for communal and personal identity, as well as the need for belonging. This is particularly the case for young people who come from a background of abuse, neglect, addiction or who are conflicted about their sexual orientation.

• Religious educators should be aware of the implications of moratorium for YAs, especially as it relates to giving young people space to be, without forcing choices prematurely upon young people. One example would be to shape the curriculum so that everyone is not forced into the same direction – thus respecting differences.

• YAs should be given opportunities to discuss justice issues and activities should be facilitated which allow YAs to work for justice. Such a discussion should begin with any justice issues that arise in the school.

• The school can choose causes which deliberately expand the experience and understanding of their students e.g. to meet and relate
to young people in need who they may have thought were NOT like them.

- After completing a justice activity, YAs should be given the opportunity to reflect upon that activity, to listen to the reflections of their peers so that they may feel supported in any consequent activity that emerges from such a dialogue.

- Religious educators should utilise a dialogical approach employing contemporary music (and/or video) with their students. This could begin with examples of music with which the educator is familiar, but should expand to encompass examples coming from their students.

- In their dialogue with YAs, religious educators could discuss the ways in which YAs use music to relax or tap into their own concerns to belong and know who they are.

- Catholic schools and religious educators should incorporate informal rituals of young people into the ritual life of the school. This could happen by encouraging young people to play their music in a liturgy when it is appropriate.

- The religious educator could use contemporary music in reflections. This facilitates young people being able to see that the lyrics and themes of their music are mirrored in the themes of the scriptures, particularly those with a justice focus.

- Religious educators could engage in dialogue with YAs about contemporary music with a justice theme. In this way, the religious educator will become aware of such music and be able to utilise
contemporary music in a way that will help YAs to see that the justice in such music is paralleled by the justice of the Gospels.

- Religious educators should utilise good teaching practice, such as preparation e.g. they have already listened to the music, they supply the lyrics of songs to their students, or relevant Scripture passages.

- The contemporary religious educator needs to stay abreast of musical developments to best communicate with and evangelise YAs. This can be done when the religious educator fosters an effective relationship with one or more YAs – children, and/or current or previous students. Dialogue might mean that students educate the religious educator in contemporary music.

- Where possible, religious educators should work in co-operation with their information technology department, utilising their expertise to stay abreast of technological developments.

- Religious educators also need to be trained in the use of musical and audio-visual technologies.

- Where possible, religious educators should work in co-operation with the music department of their school, utilising both their musical expertise and knowledge of YA musical talents.

- Where possible, religious educators should use music played live as this is most effective in reaching YAs.

It is hoped that professional bodies, such as a Catholic Education Office, would offer professional development for religious educators so that they become aware of the power of music in the lives of YAs and thus promote the
utilisation of contemporary music as a tool in religious education, with or without Groome’s shared praxis approach.

There are many more potential uses for contemporary music in religious education – justice is one of the uses.\textsuperscript{328} The methodology that has been outlined in this thesis needs to be worked on, developed and refined. One area of further research could be to parallel a contemporary song that has a justice focus with a hymn, such as “Voices that Challenge” by Trish Watts.

\textsuperscript{328} See Appendix Three
CONCLUSION

If, as a religious educator, a teacher was told that there was a method to grab the attention of the vast majority of the students in their class, they would be expected to follow such a method. This thesis has demonstrated that there are compelling theological and developmental reasons to use contemporary music in religious education. When contemporary music is used in that context, the YAs who connect with such music are affirmed. YAs are trying to find their way in the world. When educators affirm that which is good about YAs and their culture, they touch the hearts of the YAs, their relationship flourishes and further education can take place. Music evokes affective responses from the YA. The religious educator can use contemporary music which prompts the YA to feel for another. When the educator affirms contemporary music and draws the parallels with the Gospel message, they help the YA to glimpse God’s activity in the world. They are leading the YA forward toward the truth, as well as building community.

As Christians, we believe that the Holy Spirit is at work in the world. Part of that work is to guide believers into the truth (John 16:13). The use of contemporary music in religious education allows for the possibility that the Holy Spirit is present in and through the use of contemporary music to guide YAs along the continuum of truth – about themselves, about faith and about life.

Not every educator is gifted with a feel for music, or musical intelligence. However, they can still use contemporary music without the passion for music if they have the concern to reach their students and they
are given guidance. This is the primary passion that an educator needs – the
desire to reach their students and thus they use whatever is in their ability to
do educate effectively on behalf of God’s reign.

Lasallian schools facilitate the spiritual journey of YAs through prayer,
liturgies, retreats and justice activities. Lasallian education is built upon the
mutual respect which flows from relationships modelled on the Trinity, thereby
fostering a strong sense of community, always with the focus of looking after
the last, the lost and the least. This is sound Christian educational practice
which could apply to any Catholic school. The strength and depth of such
relationships can be tangible. These relationships enable the religious
educator to dialogue with and guide YAs in their search for meaning.
Authentic relationships are a fertile ground for the approach advocated in this
thesis and thus they promote justice and bring God’s reign closer.

The purpose of using contemporary music in religious education is
based on respect for YAs. The use of their lingua franca, contemporary music,
which is an “accommodated preaching of the revealed word”, 329 affords YAs
the chance to reflect upon the similarities of the justice in contemporary music
(to which they are drawn, developmentally) with the justice that is at the heart
of the Gospel message. If YAs are able to experience an educating Catholic
school that is centred on justice, they are likely to be drawn into such a faith
community. Thus music can help YAs begin a double journey that takes them
into the depths of their shared humanity with those who suffer and also into
the mystery of God by encountering God’s reign through their commitment to
justice.

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APPENDIX ONE: GROOME’S SHARED PRAXIS APPROACH: SOME INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS

Groome’s shared praxis approach ordinarily takes place in a group context. As many facilitators would realise in working with a group that is new, there need to be “ice-breakers” or community building exercises to encourage a modicum of trust.\textsuperscript{330} The educator has a pivotal role in being a model of trust and dialogue. Dialogue may and often does include times of silence. Experienced educators would be aware that they “should not assume that the silent ones are not participating in the dialogue”.\textsuperscript{331} In discerning what action to take, a shared praxis group must pray “for the presence of the Holy Spirit”\textsuperscript{332} to guide them into the truth (John 16:13).

To help in the process of discernment, Groome proposes three criteria for authenticity: consequences, continuity and community/Church. In referring to consequences, Groome explains that the group needs to discern if its intended response will bring closer the reign of God through “freedom, peace, justice and wholeness”.\textsuperscript{333} For Groome, continuity means that any decisions made by a shared praxis group must be in line with the Story of the Christian community. Continuity does not mean repudiating basic ideals e.g. the notion that certain peoples may be hated.\textsuperscript{334} In addressing community/Church, Groome means that the shared praxis group “must be informed by and measure its decisions against the belief and practice of the whole Church”.\textsuperscript{335}

\textsuperscript{331} Groome, \textit{Christian Religious Education}, 214.
\textsuperscript{332} Groome, \textit{Christian Religious Education}, 198.
\textsuperscript{333} Groome, \textit{Christian Religious Education}, 198.
\textsuperscript{334} Groome, \textit{Christian Religious Education}, 199.
\textsuperscript{335} Groome, \textit{Christian Religious Education}, 199.
However, Groome argues that the whole Church teaches and learns together and also there are three sources of such teaching and learning. These are the teaching of the official magisterium, the research of the theologians and scripture scholars and the discernment of the people (*sensus fidelium*).\(^{336}\) In so doing, Groome names the participants in his dialogical approach.

Such an approach draws upon the educational research and foundations of Freire and Rummery. The educational model takes the experience of students seriously. This approach allows YAs to engage with the tradition in the light of their life experience; in league with an intentional educator, they will be guided towards the truth. All three (magisterium, theologians and people) must work together in the search for a contemporary understanding of the religious education task. Groome proposes five movements of shared praxis as essential to Christian religious education.

**Shared praxis movements**

These five movements are:

1. Naming present action
2. The participants’ stories and visions
3. The Christian community Story and Vision
4. Dialectical hermeneutic between the Story and participants’ stories
5. Dialectical hermeneutic between the Vision and participants’ visions

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In the first movement, “naming present action”, the “important task is to elicit a personal statement on present action rather than a statement of … what ‘they say’”.\textsuperscript{337} The focus of this movement is to get the student to reflect upon the knowing/action that flows from their own life experience.

The second movement of shared praxis is a reflection on “why we do what we do and what our hopes are in doing it”.\textsuperscript{338} One purpose of the second movement is to enable the students to notice the obvious, rather than to passively accept the way things are.\textsuperscript{339} Put a different way, by naming present action through using critical reflection, the students can be aware of the influences and circumstances that have already taken place that brings us to our present situation, as well as become aware of the possible consequences of our actions in response to the present situation in which we are called to respond.\textsuperscript{340}

The third movement is when the group is led to encounter the Christian Story related to the topic being explored and the Vision i.e. how God’s reign can be brought closer. The Story and Vision are most frequently introduced by the educator. Groome points out that it is important that the educator be well informed and present material that will not have to be contradicted later. The manner in which the Story and Vision are presented is also crucial. As part of his dialogical approach, Groome is very clear that the Story and Vision be made present in dialogical disclosure,\textsuperscript{341} not in a monologue or in a ‘banking’ approach. The Christian tradition has given people life for two thousand years,
“but dogmatism is barren and arrests the journey toward maturity of faith”.  

Aiding the atmosphere of disclosure can be as simple as the educator concluding a presentation by asking the students what they think – recognising that what the educator has presented is not the final word. Rather, integral to shared praxis is the realisation that the students should appropriate the Christian Story in the light of their own stories. Ideally, each sheds light on the other, enhancing their understanding of both the Christian Story as well as their own stories and contemporary means of telling their stories through narratives and through lyrics and images.

Since the Christian Story has been presented as a disclosure, the students can bring their own stories into dialogue with the Christian Story. The students can then ponder what the Christian Story means for our stories and how our stories might respond to the Christian Story. This fourth movement provides an opportunity to reflect on the community Story and know it “as their own, in the context of their lives”.

The fifth movement is a chance for the individual and/or the group to choose a response, a critically-reflective action based on Christian principles that integrates all that has fed into the decision-making process. The ability to choose is integral to Christian anthropology, but not all educators are comfortable with letting young people make choices, since they may feel that they lose control. At some point the educator needs to attend to the young people’s need to make their own choices, their own mistakes and, hopefully, grow in the process. “One mark of a great educator is the ability to lead students out, not just to his or her position but beyond that to new places.

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343 Groome, Christian Religious Education, 220.
where even the educator has never been”. Shared praxis is based in dialogue. Since contemporary music is the lingua franca of YAs, which can convey their hopes and dreams and can help YAs to find meaning, then contemporary music is an ideal medium for the shared praxis approach.

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We Believe by Good Charlotte

There’s a woman crying out tonight
Her world has changed
She asks God why
Her only son has died
And now her daughter cries
She can’t sleep at night
Downtown
Another day for all the suits and ties
Another war to fight
There’s no regard for life
How do they sleep at night?
How can we make things right?
Just wanna make this right

Refrain: We believe in this love

We are all the same
Human in all our ways and all of pain
(So let it be)
There’s a love that could fall down like rain
(Let us see)
Let forgiveness wash away the pain
(What we need)
And no one really knows what they are searching for
(We believe)
This world is crying for so much more

Refrain

The words of this song have been combined with a PowerPoint presentation. The lyrics initially paint a picture of sadness, as a mother mourns the loss of her son. The next verse focuses on the everyday world of “suits and ties”, but suggests that they are part of fighting a war that has “no regard for life”. The verse concludes with the impulse for justice. The writer of the song wants to “make this right”.

APPENDIX TWO: SONG LYRICS AND EXPLANATIONS
The chorus is “we believe in this love”. While the chorus is playing, images of the so-called “war on terror” are displayed in turn on one slide. There is a photo of the Twin Towers, of an Iraqi woman in her bombed-out home, then two photos from the London underground bombings. Superimposed over these photos is the word “Fear” – since fear is the opposite of love – the love to which we are all called as Christians.

In the next verse, a picture is painted in the lyrics, focussing on what unites us as humans. The next lines focus on the need for love and forgiveness in the world – “Let forgiveness wash away the pain”. The verse is quite explicit about people’s quest in life: “no one really knows what they are searching for” and “this world is crying for so much more”.

While the chorus, “we believe in this love” is playing a second time, a different set of images were shown: Four different images of groups of people who are acting for justice in today’s world, e.g. rallying for peace. The thought behind this is that as a community we believe in a love that empowers us to act for peace. The final slide has the words of the chorus juxtaposed beside a group of crosses. As a community of Christian believers we try to model ourselves on the self-sacrificing love of Jesus and in so doing we bring closer the reign of God. Implicit in the slides is that belonging to the community provides a place for those searching for meaning and working towards justice for all.
Jesus Walks by Kanye West

yo
We at war
We at war with terrorism, racism, and most of all we at war wit ourselves
(Jesus Walks)
God show me a way because the Devil's trying to break me down
(Jesus Walks with me) with me with me with me [fades]

You know what the Midwest iz?
young & Restless
Where restless [Niggaz] might snatch yo necklace
And next these [Niggaz] might jack yo Lexus
Somebody tell these [Niggaz] who Kanye West iz
I walk through the valley of the shadow of death iz
Top floor, the view alone will leave you breathless
Uhhhh!
Try to catch it
Uhhhh!
It's kinda hard
Getting choked by the detectives yeah yeah now check the method
They be asking us questions, harassin', arrest us
Saying "We eat pieces of [shit] like you for breakfast."
Huh? Ya'll eat pieces of [shit]? What's the basis?
We ain't going nowhere but got suits and cases
A trunk full of [coke], rental car from Avis
My momma used to say only Jesus can save us
Well momma I know I act a fool
But I'll be gone till November I got packs to move, I Hope

(Jesus Walks)
God show me the way because the Devil's tryna to break me down
(Jesus Walks with me)
The only thing that I pray is that me feet don't fail me now
(Jesus Walks)
And I don't think there is nothing I can do now ta, right my wrongs
(Jesus Walks with me)
I wanna talk to God but I'm afraid because we ain't spoke in so long

(Jesus Walks)
God show me the way because the Devil's tryna to break me down
(Jesus Walks with me)
The only thing that I pray is that me feet don't fail me now
(Jesus Walks)
And I don't think there is nothing I can do now to right my wrongs
(Jesus Walks with me)
I want to talk to God but I'm afraid because we ain't spoke in so long.
So Long! So Long...

To the hustlas, killas, murderas, drug dealas even us strippers
(Jesus walks with them)
To the victims of Welfare for we living in hell here hell yeah
(Jesus walks with them)
Now hear ye hear ye want to see Thee more clearly
I know He hear me when my feet get weary
Cuz we're the almost nearly extinct
We rappers is role models, we rap we don't think
I ain't here to argue about his facial features
Or here to convert atheists into believers
I'm just trying to say the way school need teachers
The way Kathy Lee needed Regis that's the way I need Jesus
So here go my single dawg radio needs this
They say you can rap-about-anything except for Jesus
That means guns, sex, lies, video tapes
But if I talk about God my record won't get played, Huh?
Well let this take away from my spins
Which will probably take away from my ends
Then I hope it take away from my sins
And bring the day that I'm dreamin bout
Next time I'm in the club everybody screamin out

(Jesus Walks)
God show me the way because the devil's tryna break me down
(Jesus Walks)
The only thing that I pray is that my feet don't fail me now

The film clip of the song is shown. The speed of the images displayed is counterbalanced by the speed of the vocal delivery. The opening of the song contrasts a man in a church setting with three different people; an African-American woman who the viewer assumes is a prostitute, a homeless African-American man and a group of young African-American men who look like they are gang members.

Then we are shown a gathering storm, followed by a fire and then a choir in a choir loft sing “Jesus Walks”. As they sing, “Jesus walk with me”, three different African-American characters begin walking through their “world”. The main singer, himself an African-American, Kanye West, is styled
as the preacher in the church where the choir sings. “We are at war with terrorism, racism, but most of all, we at war with ourselves” These lyrics suggest that Kanye West believes that some of the plight of African-American people is their own doing.

As the woman walks a white man in a car follows her – he seems to be the one doing the soliciting. She waves him away. The gang member runs away, but is shot, seemingly dead. People are praising God in church in the evangelical style. The homeless man staggers down the street, possibly drunk. The next line is “My mama said only Jesus can save us”. At this point an angelic African-American figure in a wheelchair stops traffic for the homeless man. The angel character blows a bugle. As the lyric “God show me the way” is sung, the angel figure beckons the homeless man across the road.

The African-American woman climbs a fence helped by two African-American child angel figures. Another angel figure goes to the dead body of the gang member as the lyric “right my wrongs” is sung. He is resuscitaded. The three figures continue to walk alone, as the lyrics “And I don't think there is nothing I can do now ta, right my wrongs, I wanna talk to God but I'm afraid because we ain't spoke in so long” are sung. The three eventually walk into the church.

The lyric “To the victims of Welfare for we living in hell here hell yeah Jesus walks with them” is sung and footage of the south-central LA riots from 1999 are shown. This is followed by the lyric “I want to see thee more clearly”. An implication would be that God can be seen – in the people around us.

“Not here to argue about facial features” of Jesus as the 3 characters walk past the startled congregation – one wonders if the congregation expect
a white Jesus, too. It is possible that these ‘least members’ of humanity are seen as less worthy.

The angels who helped the woman climb the fence have rocks thrown at them – they turn into white doves and fly away. The angel character who helped the gang member is chased up a pole by dogs, then turns into a white dove and flies away. The angel character in the wheelchair also turns into a white dove and flies away. Since the dove is a symbol for the Holy Spirit, this could be an echo of John 16:13 with these characters being guided into the truth.

The homeless man puts down his bottle on the floor of the church. The gang member puts down his bandana, the girl lies down on the floor of the church. These would all seem to be symbols of them renouncing their former lives.

The bottle and bandana are then shown in flames. As the song closes, we see a storm, a tornado, a tree on fire, maybe reminiscent of the burning bush (Ex 3:5). The film clip concludes with a white dove rising and flying away with the stained glass window in the background. This is very powerful, striking imagery.
The Ghost of Tom Joad by Rage Against the Machine

Now Tom Said, "Mom, wherever there's a cop beatin' a guy
Wherever a hungry new born baby cries
Where there's a fight 'gainst the blood and hatred in the air
Look for me mom I'll be there
Wherever there's somebody fightin' for a place to stand
for decent job or a helpin' hand
Wherever somebody's strugglin' to be free
Look in their eyes mom you'll see me."

This song is a cover version of a song written by Bruce Springsteen, a musician with a Catholic upbringing who is noted for writing songs of hope and inclusion. Commenting on the situation of workers in America in the mid-1990's, in the song title, Springsteen is referring to Tom Joad who is the protagonist in John Steinbeck's novel The Grapes of Wrath. Rage Against the Machine are a band who are very concerned about the rights of workers and those who are oppressed, regularly giving benefit concerts or donating money to worthy causes.

One of the important lessons that I have learned is that the educator does not have to use the whole song. In this case I intend focussing on the last verse. In it Tom Joad is talking to his mother and expressing solidarity with all those who are oppressed in some way e.g. someone beaten by police,

345 This verse can be heard from 3 min 50 sec to 5 min 10 sec
“a hungry new born baby cries”, “somebody’s strugglin’ for a place to stand for a decent job or a helpin' hand”. “wherever somebody's strugglin' to be free”.

As Tom says to his mother, “Look in their eyes ma, you'll see me”. The phrase “you'll see me” is repeated several times for emphasis.

As a religious educator, there are at least two strong themes to emerge. Firstly is compassion for those who suffer and solidarity with them. By pushing the image a little further and referring to Matt 25: 31-40, as Christians we see the face of Jesus in these “least ones who are members of my family”.

If Everyone Cared by Nickelback

From underneath the trees, we watch the sky
Confusing stars for satellites
I never dreamed that you'd be mine
But here we are, we're here tonight

Singing Amen, I, I'm alive
Singing Amen, I, I'm alive

[Chorus:]
If everyone cared and nobody cried
If everyone loved and nobody lied
If everyone shared and swallowed their pride
Then we'd see the day when nobody died

And I'm singing

Amen I, Amen I, I'm alive
Amen I, Amen I, Amen I, I'm alive

And in the air the fireflies
Our only light in paradise
We'll show the world they were wrong
And teach them all to sing along

Singing Amen, I, I'm alive
Singing Amen, I, I'm alive
(I'm alive)

[Chorus x2]

And as we lie beneath the stars
We realize how small we are
If they could love like you and me
Imagine what the world could be

If everyone cared and nobody cried
If everyone loved and nobody lied
If everyone shared and swallowed their pride
Then we'd see the day when nobody died
When nobody died...

[Chorus]

We'd see the day, we'd see the day
When nobody died
We'd see the day, we'd see the day
When nobody died
We'd see the day when nobody died
This song looks at the importance of living a life of love, integrity and communal responsibility. While the song lyrics could be interpreted in a justice sense, the video clip is quite directive about the meaning of the lyrics. Watching the film clip, the opening verse has the band playing their instruments and the lyric is relational, concluding with “Amen I’m alive”. Certainly, one meaning is that we are truly alive while we are in relationship.

The chorus “If everyone cared and nobody cried, If everyone loved and nobody lied, If everyone shared and swallowed their pride, Then we’d see the day when nobody died” is when the images shift to the story of Bob Geldof who organised the 1985 Live Aid concerts to raise money for the starving in Africa. The concerts raised 150 million pounds in one day. We are shown the example of people being selfless and working for what is right. Note that the focus is on an individual (Bob Geldof) though many people worked to make Live Aid a reality.

While the next verse is playing, the images show the story of Betty Williams who in 1976 witnessed the deaths of three children in Northern Ireland. Within two days she had raised 6000 signatures on a petition. While the lyrics “We'll show the world they were wrong and teach them all to sing along” are being sung, there is a graphic that comes up stating that she led 10,000 people on a peace march to the children’s graves. One graphic tells us that the first march was disrupted by protesters but a second graphic informs us that a week later she organised a march of 35,000 people. This occurs while “Amen I’m alive” is being sung. Clearly, she was a woman who believed in her cause and would not be stopped. She was someone who was truly
alive. The link to “I came that you might have life and have it to the full” (John 10:10) is strong.

The chorus is sung twice as the beginnings of Amnesty International are shown in a number of graphics of words and pictures.

While the lyric “And as we lie beneath the stars, We realize how small we are, If they could love like you and me, Imagine what the world could be” is sung, the band are playing their instruments again. We are shown a number of graphics depicting the story of Nelson Mandela, when the chorus strikes up again. A possible meaning here is that it took an enormous effort and love of others for Mandela and others working in South Africa to eventually gain freedom from apartheid.

After the band concluded playing their instruments, the film clip concludes with a quote from Margaret Mead: “Never doubt that a small group of committed people can change the world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has.” The Christian is prompted to think of Jesus and his disciples and the enormous change that they managed to bring about – and the many groups of people who have followed in their footsteps over the centuries e.g. the founders of religious orders, St Vincent de Paul and contemporary members of “Vinnies”, Dorothy Day and Caroline Chisholm.
Don't you think it's time by Bob Evans

Don’t you think it’s time
Time to start a new
Time for changing views
Time for making up your mind
Don’t you think it’s time
Time for moving on
Time for growing strong
Time to leave the past behind

You’ve been on my mind
Ohh you’ve been on my mind
You've been on my miind
Oh you've been on my mind

Don’t you think it’s time
Time for quelling fear
Time for a new year
Time for meaning what you say
Don’t you think it’s time
Time for easing doubt
Time for reaching out
Time to open up your eyes

You’ve been on my mind
Oh you’ve been on my mind
You've been on my mind
Oh you've been on my mind

Don’t you think it’s time
Time for trusting more
Without keeping score
Time to let forgiveness out
Don’t you think it’s time
Time for showing grace
Time for having faith
Time to make more of your time

This song looks at change and the need for it, which is evident in lyrics such as “time for changing views” and “time to leave the past behind”. The chorus states that one person or a group has been “on the mind” of the singer. Most frequently, if you have someone on your mind, you are concerned about them and you would be weighing up what to do about that person or group. The intent of the song is clarified in lyrics such as “time for reaching out, time to open up your eyes”, “time to let forgiveness out” and “time for showing grace”. In order to focus the listener/viewer on the justice
implications of the song, a PowerPoint could be used with suitable graphics.
The fact that the artist is an Australian gives the song relevance to Australian YAs.
APPENDIX THREE: OTHER USES OF CONTEMPORARY MUSIC AS PART OF THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OF YAS

While this thesis focuses on the use of contemporary music that points to justice, I have also used contemporary music in other liturgical contexts or to broach other topics in the religious education classroom.

Part of the reasoning behind the season of Lent is preparation for Easter. It could be said that Lent is an extended examination of conscience. Thus Ash Wednesday is important in marking the beginning of this process of self examination. For an Ash Wednesday liturgy, The Verve's song “Bitter Sweet Symphony”\textsuperscript{346} talks of the need for change and its difficulty. Ben Folds Five’s song “Smoke”\textsuperscript{347} also talks of the need for letting the past go.

In an educational context, the sacrament of reconciliation also enables opportunities for self-examination. For a reconciliation service, “Tightrope” by Stevie Ray Vaughan\textsuperscript{348} talks of self-acceptance. “I Still Haven’t Found What I’m Looking For” by U2 talks of the search for meaning which can be answered by faith.

In the religious education classroom, I have found that the use of contemporary music can be an excellent way to begin or depth a topic. “The Battle of Who Could Care Less” by Ben Folds Five\textsuperscript{349} deals with apathy, a recurring topic with YAs. Another song by Ben Folds Five, “Brick”\textsuperscript{350} deals with the emotional aftermath of abortion. “Big Time” by Peter Gabriel\textsuperscript{351} deals with

\textsuperscript{346} Urban Hymns, (CD: Hut Records, 1997).
\textsuperscript{347} Whatever and Ever Amen, (CD: 550 Records, 1997).
\textsuperscript{348} In Step, (CD: Epic Records, 1989).
\textsuperscript{349} Whatever and Ever Amen, (CD: 550 Records, 1997).
\textsuperscript{350} Whatever and Ever Amen, (CD: 550 Records, 1997).
\textsuperscript{351} So, (CD: Virgin Records, 1986).
pride. Ben Harper’s song “Fight Outta You”\textsuperscript{352} deals with the need for self-belief despite detractors. “An Audience with the Devil” by Hilltop Hoods\textsuperscript{353} deals with the presence of evil in the world. “Hope” by Thirsty Merc\textsuperscript{354} deals with the need for hope in one’s life. “I Don’t Want to Be” by Gavin de Graw\textsuperscript{355} talks of the need for self-esteem. “In Your Honor” by Foo Fighters\textsuperscript{356} talks of self-sacrifice. “Is this the World We Created” by Queen\textsuperscript{357} deals with some of the inconsistencies of life. “Picture of Jesus” by Ben Harper\textsuperscript{358} explores the meaning of the Incarnation. “Pride (in the name of Love)” by U2\textsuperscript{359} talks of the life of Martin Luther King and parallels it with the life of Jesus.

\textsuperscript{352} Lifeline, (CD: EMI Records, 2007).
\textsuperscript{353} The Hard Road, (CD: Obese Records, 2006).
\textsuperscript{354} Thirsty Merc, (CD: Warner Music Australia, 2004).
\textsuperscript{355} I Don’t Want To Be, (CD single: J Records, 2004).
\textsuperscript{356} In Your Honor, (CD: BMG Records, 2005).
\textsuperscript{357} The Works, (CD: EMI Records, 1984).
\textsuperscript{359} The Unforgettable Fire, (CD: Island Records, 1984).