

Your Grace,

Thank you for taking the time to attend this retreat with us. Permit me to accept your offer of submitting questions regarding the retreat:

1. You made a comparison between apostolic succession and *whakapapa* or genealogy. One traces lines back to a progenitor and the other to the apostles. Not all Christian denominations adhere to this. If a Christian organisation that looks and functions like a Church but has no apostolic succession, what then are they?

Archbishop. Tēnā koe Lucas. Thank you for your questions. *Whakapapa* establishes familial links, whether someone is a fourth cousin twice removed or a great uncle etc... but it also validates succession rights to land and inheriting estates. Apostolic succession is much the same. A Bishop establishes their link back to the apostles through the Bishop who consecrated them and so forth. There are various ways to receive consecration but for it to be valid (thus making the link) the form and matter are necessary. To the apostles was given the task to establish the Church in all the world, the bishops being the successors to the apostles carry on that task. Let's view the hallmarks of the Church:

- a. **The Church is One.** Its teachings, doctrines and beliefs — are the same, irrespective of where the Church is.
- b. **The Church is Holy.** The Hebrew word *Qodesh* means set apart which gives a better explanation of holy. Christ is the head of the Church and He has set it apart for a holy purpose.
- c. **The Church is Catholic.** From the Greek meaning universal. Our Lord instructed those gathered "...to go into all the world..." (Mt 28:18-19) and a Church that is not evangelising, or going out, is not fulfilling its commission.
- d. **The Church is Apostolic.** The Church comes to us from the apostles with a valid succession to the present day, through the bishops.

Joseph Ratzinger (Benedict XVI) is attributed with coining the term 'ecclesial community' as recorded in the document *Dominus Iesus* making the distinction between a 'Church' headed by a Bishop and a gathering of

Christians met for prayer and worship. This term I think best describes those who do not have the succession. They are joined to the Church of Christ by baptism but do not have the means to possess all of the sacraments, having neither a Priest to officiate or a Bishop to establish their community.

Christians who desire to meet for prayer and worship, for spiritual enlightenment should consider it a laudable practice. Such was the case with the founders of the Brethren; the Methodists; the Salvation Army and most of the communities formed after the Reformation and to a degree the Anglicans. But a simple gathering of Christians, does not constitute a Church.

2. I had to leave before the question and answers period. But of all the seven sacraments, which one is the most important? If I may, my answer would have been The Eucharist for reasons that are obvious, but I could be wrong.

Archbishop. All of the sacraments are important and you are not wrong in saying the Eucharist has precedence among the others and is often entwined with the others. However, without Holy Orders, there is no confirmation, confession, Eucharist, extreme unction and nuptials. The Church teaches that anyone can baptise providing it is their intention to do so and that they use the words Christ instituted (Mt 28:19). So, without Bishops to ordain priests the sacraments would not be available. Would the Church exist if there were no bishops to continue the work? No.

3. Your retreat was titled 'Valid Sacraments'. For someone outside the Church this makes little to no sense but you explained it simply and to the point so that it could be understood and even those (like myself) who were raised in the Faith, had lightbulb moments of clarity. I also liked that you addressed your own position because many of us questioned how and why you became a bishop, it certainly wasn't a normal process (appointment by the Pope), the origins of your Church and how or if it connected to the mainstream Churches. My question is: why did you take a different route instead of the norm?

Archbishop. The tenets of the Church resonate with what I fundamentally believe. It would be silly to get involved with an organisation that is contrary. With that in mind, is it a different route? The best advice I was given in the process of discernment was to engage a spiritual director. For the last six years, a Jew (not intended to be discriminatory) has fulfilled this role. I chose someone not of christian roots, simply because I wanted an outside

perspective but with a religious background. I trust him. I trust his advice. I am completely open with him. He is not an intimate friend but a trusted advisor in spiritual affairs. It wouldn't work otherwise. He advises me on spiritual affairs. Gives practical suggestions. He can be cut throat. He is very reasonable, rational and pragmatic. He validated for me my call to priesthood. As have my previous directors. Years ago in seminary, I read the poem "The Road Not Taken" by Robert Frost. My choices have been to choose the road less travelled...

4. Many of us at the retreat came from different traditions. We were 'treated' to different versions of a Eucharistic service and of all of them, yours was by far the most traditional. We either hadn't seen it in years or at all. You have a wonderful sense of humour and employed that in encouraging us to not chatter before Mass. The atmosphere was serene. What I didn't like was your back to us for most of the time, because we couldn't see what you were doing and it wasn't what I was used to. Curiosity got the better of me. We watched you and the server setting up the altar and you both put it together with great respect and reverence and we felt that what we were about to participate in would be something special. And it certainly was. Why has your Church retained a lot of the traditional aspects, that are no longer in practice?

Archbishop. Many of my generation are over the entertainment non-sense that seems to dominate church services these days. Such things as 'Liturgical dance', 'the greeting of peace' they disturb the flow of the Mass and distract from the rite at hand. We're over it, and turning to more traditional practices.

The liturgical reforms of the second Vatican council are simply disastrous! Thankfully, our Church has nothing to do with these. Unfortunately because the conciliar church is the largest, its norms are more visible, which makes the traditional liturgies (like ours) foreign but they are in and of themselves a fantastic means of catechesis. Dame Judi Dench put it beautifully in answer to a question about being nervous on stage which she addressed in an interview with Vogue: "...it's not the business of you to show nerves to a house full of people who have come to see a performance about something else..." the same principle should be applied to any liturgical rite of the Church. Take for example, the Mass. At the centre is the celebrant (not a presider — big difference). They have a script. They wear a costume. They have a platform. They have a part to play. Unlike the theatre, the Mass is not a production but a re-enactment of Calvary. The priest must not take liberties and detract or go

off script. If there is such a need, take an opportunity outside of the liturgy to conduct catechesis thus forming the Faithful to 'work out their own salvation' (Phil. 2:12).

5. A lot of the liturgical ceremonies we were exposed to with you, was very traditional. Are the rites translated into Māori?

Archbishop. That is a work in progress. We are in the process of putting our liturgical books together. Once that is finalised, we can employ language experts to commence translation work.

I look forward to Your Grace's response in the coming days.

Lucas Broughton

The Archbishop of Oceania was invited to preach at a retreat for clergy and seminarians, June 2021. Mr Lucas Broughton is a seminarian and was a retreatant.