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**The Coronation of Charles III  
from the Perspective of Liturgical Studies**

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## *Abstract*

The coronation of Charles III at Westminster Abbey on 6 May 2023 was the first such occasion for seventy years, and one which took place in a very different national, political, and indeed liturgical context from that which attended his mother Elizabeth II's coronation in 1953. This article explores the continuities and changes in the texts, rites, and gestures of this unique liturgy (whilst also acknowledging that it sits in a tradition of liturgical articles being published around the time of coronations). The article argues that issues like change and continuity, and the anticipation and management of perceptions, have always been engaged with and instrumentalized by those responsible for compiling and working out the coronation liturgy in England: in 2023 that group included, as on previous occasions, the Royal Household, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the broadcast media. The coronation liturgy is one in which adaptation to the perceived needs of the moment has always played an important role, and this article demonstrates how, in 2023, this is particularly evident in the text of the liturgical rite as well as in its performance.

## *Keywords*

Charles III, King of Great Britain | Church of England – Liturgy | Coronations

[↗](#) indicates an embedded hyperlink, the full link is given in the bibliography.

# The Coronation of Charles III from the Perspective of Liturgical Studies

Daniel LLOYD

## 1 Introduction

The date of King Charles III’s coronation on 6 May 2023 was 70 years less a month since the last time this occasion had taken place on 2 June 1953, the coronation of his mother, Elizabeth II. The unpredictability of genetics and of numerous other circumstances means that there is no regular pattern of when such events are likely to take place.

Monarch	Date of Accession	Date of Coronation	Accession to Coronation	Years since previous Coronation
George III	25 October 1760	22 September 1761	11 months	34
George IV	29 January 1820	19 July 1821	18 months	60
William IV	26 June 1830	8 September 1831	14 months	10
Victoria	20 June 1837	28 June 1838	12 months	7
Edward VII	22 January 1901	9 August 1902	19 months	64
George V	6 May 1910	22 June 1911	13 months	9
George VI	[20 January 1936] 11 December 1936	12 May 1937	[16 months] 5 months	26
Elizabeth II	6 February 1952	2 June 1953	16 months	16
Charles III	8 September 2022	6 May 2023	8 months	70

The coronations of George IV (1762–1830) and Edward VII (1841–1910) were both postponed from their originally-planned dates, in the first case from 1 August 1820 to 19 July 1821 because George IV's wife Caroline was bringing parliamentary proceedings against him,<sup>1</sup> and in the second from 26 June 1902 to 9 August because Edward VII had appendicitis.<sup>2</sup> In the case of George VI, the date of the coronation was that fixed for his brother, Edward VIII who had abdicated the previous year.<sup>3</sup> The delay between accession and coronation has partly to do with mourning, and partly to do with planning. In any case, what is most noticeable is that the periods when coronations come relatively close together (George IV, William IV, Victoria; Edward VII, George V; George VI and Elizabeth II) are by no means the norm. Continuity is therefore not a given, although the hereditary nature of the role of Earl Marshal, largely responsible for the ceremonial, though not the liturgical, elements, is something of a safeguard: Bernard, twelfth duke of Norfolk, organised the three coronations of George IV, William IV, and Victoria, and his successors each managed two: Henry, fifteenth duke, was Earl Marshal for Edward VII and George V, and Bernard, sixteenth duke, for George VI and Elizabeth II. Aside from the Earl Marshal, the fact the preacher at the coronations of both William IV and Victoria was Charles Blomfield, bishop of London was a relatively unusual example of an individual with a particular role performing it more than once. Indeed, Blomfield provides an illustration of the pitfalls of presumed precedent: he was bishop of London at the time of each of the two coronations, and it was later assumed, during the planning for Edward VII's coronation, that the task of preaching at the coronation was the bishop of London's right by tradition, rather than simply that Blomfield himself had done it twice. It was later decided, after much investigation, that the preacher could be anyone whom the king chose.<sup>4</sup> In the event, there was no sermon on that occasion. Another instance of continuity is the participation of Frederick Bridge at the coronations of 1902 and 1911 as musical director, responsible for some of the choices, including Hubert Parry's processional

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Roy STRONG, *Coronation. From the 8<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, London 2005, 353.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 466.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 422.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Peter HINCHLIFF, *Frederick Temple, Randall Davidson and the Coronation of Edward VII*, in: *JEH* 48 (1997) 71–99, here: 88.

anthem “I was glad”, performed at all coronations from 1902 to the present day.<sup>5</sup>

Continuity, however, does not necessarily imply competence: the royal occasions which took place during the tenure of the twelfth duke of Norfolk, including his three coronations, were described by David Cannadine as characterised by “ineptly managed ritual”<sup>6</sup>. The reason for this was, Cannadine argued, that “monarchs who were politically energetic but personally unpopular, trundling through the miserable streets of London by the conventional mode of transport, were more the head of society than the head of the nation. So, the royal ritual which accompanied them was not so much a jamboree to delight the masses, but a group rite in which the aristocracy, the church and royal family corporately re-affirmed their solidarity (or animosity) behind closed doors.”<sup>7</sup> The articulation of a “coherent ceremonial language”<sup>8</sup> was absent because unnecessary. We shall return to the “closed doors” and related aspects of the coronation in due course.

The purpose of this article is to examine the coronation of Charles III from the perspective of liturgical theology. It begins by examining the historiography of English coronations, before setting out a description of what takes place, in theory and in print on the one hand, and in fact and impression on the other. Since the English Reformation, the coronation has always been an Anglican service (even if, with James II, not all of those crowned have been). It has also been, in many respects, *sui generis*, not only with regard to the specifically royal rites it contains, but also in the way it has used other elements of Anglican worship, from the Books of Common Prayer before and after 1662, to Common Worship in the twenty-first century. For much of its post-Reformation history, however, the Eucharistic content of the coronation service remained substantially that

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Matthias RANGE, *Music and Ceremonial at British Coronations from James I to Elizabeth II*, Cambridge 2012, 15. 239.

<sup>6</sup> David CANNADINE, *The Context, Performance and Meaning of Ritual. The British Monarch and the ‘Invention of Tradition’, c. 1820–1977*, in: Eric HOBBSBAWM – Terence RANGER (eds.), *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge 1983 [Reprint: 2000], 101–164, here: 108.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 116.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

which was experienced in Anglican parochial and cathedral worship throughout England: there may have been musical settings of texts which were commonly spoken elsewhere, but those foundational texts of the prayer book communion service, such as the Prayer for the Church Militant, the General Confession, and the Prayer of Humble Access (also called the Prayer of Address) were used at every coronation between 1689 and 1953. This meant that, although attendance at coronations remains necessarily a select affair, Anglican participants at least would find familiar elements from their own liturgical experience. Indeed, as the broadcast of coronations began in 1937 with that of George VI, those Anglicans and others familiar with the worship of the Established Church who were for the first time able to hear the service on BBC radio (or saw the later newsreel cut) could not only recognise words used in their own churches, but knew also that the majority of those assembled, including the new king, were hearing and saying them too. Adaptation in the coronation service has always been a feature: no coronation has been identical to its predecessor. This has had to do with such diverse features as royal religious identity (James II), or sickness (Edward VII), or a desire for brevity (William IV), as well as in musical choices, the various participants, the competence or otherwise of those in charge of the ceremonial (the English coronation since the Reformation has had no equivalent of the liturgical Master of Ceremonies), the presence of a consort or not, and so on.

Developments in liturgical scholarship, and in the willingness of those involved to engage with such developments, has also had a part to play, and the precise contents of many of the orations has varied over time. It would be wrong, though, to suggest that there is no continuity, no tradition at all: for over 250 years, that is, on a dozen separate occasions, much has remained stable, textually and liturgically: the epistle and Gospel from the middle ages on; the 1662 prayer book communion consistently service from 1689 on; the role of the Archbishop of Canterbury. Of these three elements, the coronation of Charles III in 2023 dispensed with the first two, and greatly magnified the third. The consequences of these changes will be discussed in greater detail below.

## 2 *Historiography*

Part of the historiography of the coronation, but also an excellent summary of it, is Peter Hinchliff's article on the coronation of Edward VII.<sup>9</sup> One of the key insights which it provides is that, generally speaking, those who write learned articles on coronations are rarely those who actually attend them, and never those to whom they happen. There is a notable contrast, then, between this area of the discipline of liturgical history and theology, broadly considered, and others, in which scholars of the liturgy are not infrequently themselves clergy responsible for liturgy, or are otherwise participants in liturgy. Liturgical scholars may well sit on commissions, proffer new texts or adaptations of rites, and may, where appropriate, allow their own praxis to be informed by the fruits of their academic labour. Scholars of coronations know from their own scholarship that despite their insight, they can have little influence on future occasions. One such specialist, to whose work we shall return, was John Wickham Legg (1843–1921). He remarked of an edition of the Order for the Coronation of James I which was published first in 1660 and republished before the coronations of James II (1685) and William and Mary (1689), that this publication was done “either in the hope of influencing the rites of the coronation, or, more probably, merely one of the booksellers’ ventures, such as often appear on such occasions”<sup>10</sup>. That this book was published in 1902, a coronation year, suggests that Legg was not devoid of a sense of irony.

Hinchliff's article shows, in his own study of the coronation of Edward VII, the extent to which the use of correspondence and other similar material is necessary to understanding why a given decision was taken, or how an element of the rite came to be performed in the moment. He also gives a useful account of studies of coronation services, because he wants to show how they were, or were not, influential on the course of proceedings in 1902. Hinchliff traces such studies from Maskell's *Monumenta Ritualia* of 1847,<sup>11</sup> for almost fifty years “the most important authority for the

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Peter HINCHLIFF, Frederick Temple.

<sup>10</sup> John W. LEGG (ed.), *The Coronation Order of King James I*, London 1902, xvii.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. William MASKELL, *Monumenta Ritualia Ecclesiae Anglicanae, or Occasional Offices of the Church of England according to the Ancient Use of Salisbury the*

history and structure of the coronation service"<sup>12</sup>. It is not without its defects, and the commentary on the rite is notable for the number of occasions on which the author makes remarks on a given element typified by "I must again confess, that I do not perceive the reason why it should have been, of late, omitted"<sup>13</sup>. An attempt to make up for what Maskell had been unable to provide, Christopher Wordsworth published in 1892 the texts for Charles I's coronation.<sup>14</sup> This was for the Henry Bradshaw Society, which has continued to publish texts on the coronation up to the present day.<sup>15</sup> As Hinchliff notes, "the interest in the royal family, quickened by the jubilees [of 1887 and 1897], had no doubt something to do with the rapidly growing spate of coronation literature. It was, moreover, difficult by this time to avoid the thought that there must be a new sovereign before too long."<sup>16</sup> Then came works by John Wickham Legg<sup>17</sup> and Leopold G. Wickham Legg (1877–1962),<sup>18</sup> father and son, around the time of the coronation of Edward VII. These set out include what have come to be identified as the major recensions of the English coronation rite: a pre-Norman order, an Anglo-French version of the rite of the fourteenth century, the *Liber Regalis*, and the 1689 revision for William and Mary. For George VI, Edward C. Ratcliff wrote on the coronation service, and revised the book for Elizabeth II.<sup>19</sup> Elizabeth II's long reign meant that the same kinds of preoccupations as had obtained in Victoria's later years rose to the fore, although without the need to begin the historical investigations from scratch. Three Anglican liturgists, Henry Everett, Paul F. Bradshaw, and Colin O. Buchanan published a Grove book on coronations in 1997, with the articles by Brad-

Prymer in English and Other Prayers and Forms with Dissertations and Notes, vol. 3, London 1847. The Coronation service is treated from pp. 1–142.

<sup>12</sup> HINCHLIFF, Frederick Temple, 74.

<sup>13</sup> MASKELL, *Monumenta Ritualia*, 134.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Christopher WORDSWORTH, *The Manner of the Coronation of King Charles the First of England at Westminster on 1 Feb. 1626*, London 1892.

<sup>15</sup> See David PRATT, *The English Coronation Ordines in the Ninth and Early Tenth Centuries*, Woodbridge 2023.

<sup>16</sup> HINCHLIFF, Frederick Temple, 74.

<sup>17</sup> Including John W. LEGG, *Three Coronation Orders* (HBS 19), London 1900.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Leopold G. W. LEGG (ed.), *English Coronation Records*, Westminster 1901.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. E[dward] C. RATCLIFF, *The English Coronation Service*, London 1936. Ratcliff's work was influential in shaping the coronation of 1953.



shaw and Buchanan forming important departures for discussion of future rites.<sup>20</sup> 2005 saw the publication of Roy Strong's *Coronation*, by the art historian and sometime High Bailiff and Searcher of the Sanctuary of Westminster Abbey.<sup>21</sup> Though this is not a purely academic book, it has the great benefit of being very well illustrated, and thoroughly researched. In 2012, Matthias Range covered in particular the music, as well as the ceremonial, of coronations from James I to Elizabeth II, paying attention to an aspect of coronation services hitherto considered almost ephemeral.<sup>22</sup> Other publications have taken a political-historical view, rather than a strictly liturgical one, from Percy Schramm's seminal study, published in English in 1937,<sup>23</sup> to Bob Morris's article for the Constitution Unit at University College London in 2018.<sup>24</sup> Beyond the setting of the abbey, and indeed outside London, an important study of popular opinion on the 1953 coronation, using Mass Observation data, was published by Mari Elen William in 2022.<sup>25</sup> Reading coronation literature must not neglect this social dimension: the London Gazette's supplement on the coronation in 1953 lists the participants in the service as well as the processions to and from the Abbey.<sup>26</sup> Since those going from the Abbey are the same as those going to it, most names are listed twice. The names that are listed are all of officer rank, clergy, or members of the royal household. Others come either under

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Paul BRADSHAW (ed.), *Coronations Past, Present and Future* (JLS 38), Cambridge 1997. The essays are: Henry EVERETT, *The English Coronation Rite. From the Middle Ages to the Stuarts* (7–21); Paul BRADSHAW, *Coronations for the Eighteenth to the Twentieth Centuries* (22–33), Colin BUCHANAN, *The Next Coronation* (34–44).

<sup>21</sup> Cf. STRONG, *Coronation*.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. RANGE, *Music and Ceremonial at British Coronations*.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Percy E. SCHRAMM, *A History of the English Coronation* [trans. by Leopold W. LEGG], Oxford – London 1937.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Bob MORRIS, *Inaugurating a New Reign. Planning for Accession and Coronation*, London 2018.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Mari E. WILLIAM, *Monarchy and National Identity. Wales and the 1953 Coronation* in: *Journal of the Social History Society* 19/3 (2022) 301–322. See also the earlier paper by Henrik ORNERING, *Revisiting the Coronation. A Critical Perspective on the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953* in: *Nordicom Review* 25/1–2 (2004) 175–195.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Supplement to the London Gazette of Tuesday, 17<sup>th</sup> November, 1953, no. 40020, 6223–6270.

the headings of detachments of this or that regiment, and some are simply ignored: the uninformed reader might suppose that, for instance, the various premiers in the “carriage procession of prime ministers” were managing the horses themselves. From a liturgical studies perspective, failing to pay attention to the nuance of documents like these (that those actually responsible driving the carriages are thought simply not important enough to be named by the Gazette does not mean they are absent) would be like a study of the Eucharist which focused only on the celebrant. In preparation for the 2023 coronation itself, a House of Commons briefing paper by David Torrance<sup>27</sup> and a Prayer Book Society organised a series of talks and the publication of a study guide (although in the event the 1662 BCP was not to be used).<sup>28</sup> Simon Kershaw’s online synopsis of coronation services since 1689 is invaluable not only for reproducing the texts in a single place, but also for seeing the overview as well as the detail.<sup>29</sup> Finally, Torrance produced another briefing paper shortly after the coronation itself detailing the actual course of events and with a concise overview of some of the important changes.<sup>30</sup>

### 3 *Historic Coronations*

As the historiography shows, there is no shortage of histories of the coronation rites, both academic and popular. For completeness’ sake it will suffice to present a version of Ratcliff’s brief synopsis, as follows.<sup>31</sup> Scholarship has settled on a number of “recensions” of English Coronation Orders before the Reformation. These rites grew in complexity, incorporating along the way such elements as the *Veni Creator* and the *Litany*, as well

<sup>27</sup> Cf. David TORRANCE, *The Coronation. History and Ceremonial* (House of Commons Library CPB 9412), London 2023.

<sup>28</sup> All available here: THE PRAYER BOOK SOCIETY, *The Coronation King Charles III* 2023. URL: <https://www.pbs.org.uk/publications/coronation>. [↗](#)

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Simon KERSHAW, *The Coronations of English and British Kings and Queens*. URL: <http://www.oremus.org/coronation>. [↗](#)

<sup>30</sup> Cf. David TORRANCE, *The Coronation of King Charles III and Queen Camilla* (House of Commons Library CPB 9789), London 2023.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. RATCLIFF, *The English Coronation Service*, 38–46.

as the anointing,<sup>32</sup> and a development of oath-swearing and homage-rendering as ideas and ideals of kingship developed. The post-Reformation period until 1689 is one of a degree of instability in the rite, initially in Latin and then translated, with various alterations made by Laud for Charles I, and finally the large-scale changes made by Archbishop Sancroft for James II, including the omission of the communion rite. For William and Mary, Henry Compton, Bishop of London, made a further version, this time based on Sancroft, but with the communion rite restored. Coronations from then on were, throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, followers of the basic Compton shape and contents, until with Edward VII in 1902 there were movements for sensitive and principled recovery of past texts and gestures, which came to a fuller expression in 1911, and then began to be heard and seen on the radio and on film in 1937 and 1953. The rite which had been arrived at in 1953 would not be expected to remain unchanged, but with liturgical revision in the Church of England, as well as the wider effects of the Liturgical Movement and of the Second Vatican Council, questions began to be asked of the Eucharistic liturgy of the coronation as well as of its prayers, and indeed of its meaning as a whole.

Since, based on historical precedent alone, an identical repeat of 1953 in every detail was not to be expected in 2023, it is unsurprising that this proved not to be the case. The striking feature of 2023 is, though, how little, from a textual perspective, the liturgy has to do with its predecessors at all. Edward C. Ratcliff perhaps anticipated this unwittingly when he opined that “it is perhaps too much to hope that upon some future occasion a complete revision of Compton’s Order will be undertaken.” That indeed happened in 2023. “Nevertheless”, he continued, “it is still possible, without further complicating the Rite, to recover something more of its historic form, order, and content, both in prayers and ceremonies.” Any future revision, though, would require “regard for its whole past history in

<sup>32</sup> On royal anointings, see John W. LEGG, *The Sacring of the English Kings*, in: *Archaeological Journal* 51 (1894) 28–42; Arnold ANGENENDT, *Rex et Sacerdos. Zur Genese der Königssalbung*, in: Norbert KAMP – Joachim WOLLASCH (eds.), *Tradition als historische Kraft. Interdisziplinäre Forschungen zur Geschichte des früheren Mittelalters*, Berlin – New York 1982, 100–118.

any architect to whose care it can safely be committed”<sup>33</sup>. In the movements and gestures, in particular the items with which the sovereign is invested, there is great continuity; some of the musical elements, too, have either been retained from one coronation to the next (Parry’s “I was glad” and Handel’s “Zadok the Priest” are the most obvious) or have been recovered from earlier occasions as intentionally historical pieces. It is clear from examining the rite that the only previous coronation to which 2023 can and should be compared is 1953. The cornerstone of the second half of the service, the prayer book communion office, is gone; the majority of the prayers in the first half have been almost totally re-written. No element is a recovery of anything from previous tradition, with the possible exception of the “homage of the people” as will be discussed, and perhaps the sermon. But as the commentary from the Church of England makes clear, 1953 is the point of departure, and those elements which differ from 1953 are consciously innovative, rather than an exercise in resourcement. It is also true to say that there is nothing in the rite itself which could be considered antiquarian: there was no search through older texts to find ways of saying things that had been obscured by seventeenth- or even twentieth-century mores, theology, or other contexts. The use for the first time of certain objects in the coronation in addition to the regalia (the Gospel-Book of St Augustine; the Relic of the True Cross embedded in a processional cross) did, though, have an oddly antiquarian feel despite their novelty.

For this reason, a detailed history of previous coronations, before 1953, is in many ways irrelevant to the present discussion: 2023 simply does not stand in relation to them, in the way that they stand in relation to one another, except chronologically. The relationship of 1953 to its predecessors in general, and the particular characteristics of that chain of coronations of 1902–1911–1937–1953, has been discussed at length, factually and critically, in the literature already referred to. 2023 is really in a different category. To use an ecumenical example, the postconciliar inaugurations of popes may be compared with one another (see below); a comparison of the pre- and postconciliar rites for this liturgical act could also be under-

<sup>33</sup> RATCLIFF, *The English Coronation Service*, 46, quoting H. A. WILSON, *The English Coronation Orders*, in: *JThS* 2 (1901) 418–504, here: 504.

taken. But it would be fruitless to compare the inauguration of Pope Francis in 2013 with that of John XXIII, and also of Pius XII, and of Pius XI, and so on. Indeed, this essay contends that the idea of adaptation is a useful point of dialogue, but that this refers not to the diachronic relationship between the coronation of Charles III in 2023 and its predecessors, but to the ways in which the liturgy of the coronation of 2023 was conceived of synchronically, as being able to adapt any liturgical action or text to other needs.

#### 4 *The Coronation of Charles III*

The coronation service book was published online at the Church of England's official website on Saturday 29 April 2023 at 10.00pm.<sup>34</sup> Two versions were published as pdf files, one with the text of the service,<sup>35</sup> and the other with the text together with an accompanying commentary.<sup>36</sup> At the previous coronation, the title of the liturgical book was "The Form and Order of the Service that is to be performed and the Ceremonies that are to be observed in the Coronation of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II in the Abbey Church of St Peter Westminster on the Tuesday the Second Day of June 1953". In 2023, the book was entitled "The Authorised Liturgy for the Coronation Rite of His Majesty King Charles III, for use on Saturday 6th May 2023, 11:00am at Westminster Abbey. Commissioned and Authorised by The Most Reverend & Right Honourable Justin Welby, The Archbishop of Canterbury". The text contains the following notice on the rear cover: "The Coronation Liturgy for HM King Charles III has been commissioned by The Most Rev'd & Rt Hon. Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury, and approved under Canon B 4. It includes newly devised material as

<sup>34</sup> Cf. THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, The Coronation Liturgy. "Called to Serve" (29 April 2023). [🔗](#) A version had been released in error a few hours earlier and then removed. The URL details have changed between the date of the coronation and the date of publication of this article: the file data suggests that the liturgy and commentary represent the fourth version of each.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, The Authorised Liturgy for the Coronation Rite of His Majesty King Charles III. For use on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> May 2023, 11:00am at Westminster Abbey. Commissioned and Authorised by The Most Reverend & Right Honourable Justin Welby, The Archbishop of Canterbury. [🔗](#)

<sup>36</sup> Cf. THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, The Coronation Liturgy. Commentary. [🔗](#)

well as The Order for Holy Communion: Order Two in Traditional Language from Common Worship (2000) [...] along with material from the 1953 and earlier Coronation Services and from The Book of Common Prayer (1662)".<sup>37</sup> The website also adds, "The Liturgy is accompanied by a Commentary commissioned by the Archbishop, which explains the Christian meaning and symbolism of the key elements of the service"<sup>38</sup>. Notable are the use of the word "liturgy", the variation in title of Westminster Abbey, which is not unprecedented, and the prominent reference to the Archbishop of Canterbury, whose role in the proceedings was greatly increased in comparison to that of his predecessors. The use of the word "liturgy" is reflective of liturgical developments in the Church of England over the course of the twentieth century, just as is the Common Worship Eucharistic liturgy which was to be used. The responsibility and in a sense authority of the Archbishop of Canterbury for the service is made very clear. The file as uploaded is richly decorated: the cover has a purple background with gold patterns, a branded logo for the event itself with a stylised crown and the text "Celebrating Community Faith and Service", a second logo for the coronation and the mark of the Church of England. Throughout, headings are in gold, and the crown appears at the top of each page, with the Church of England logo at the bottom; the pattern is also in the background, at the page borders. Descriptive rubrics, such as "The King places his hand on the Bible, and the Archbishop administers the Oath" are in italics, directional rubrics, such as "All" are in gold, the body of the text is in black roman type, with translations in italics, and the responses in bold. The elaborate design is in contrast with 1953, which used only red and black. A further order of service was released on the day itself, printed by

<sup>37</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, The Authorised Liturgy, 34. [↗](#) Canon B4, "Of forms of service approved by the Convocations, Archbishops or Ordinary for use on certain occasions", allows for the approval by the appropriate body for "forms of service which in both words and order are in their opinion reverent and seemly and are neither contrary to, nor indicative of any departure from, the doctrine of the Church of England in any essential matter". See: CANONS OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND (Website Edition – updated February 2021), Canon B4. [↗](#)

<sup>38</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, The Coronation Liturgy. "Called to Serve". [↗](#) At least one version of the 1953 coronation service had a brief introduction by Geoffrey Fisher, Archbishop of Canterbury. See: Transcription of the official text of the Coronation Service of Queen Elizabeth II, in: The Court Historian 7/1 (2002) 41–60, here: 41.

Barnard and Westwood, printers to the Dean and Chapter and Westminster, in a style much more like that of previous coronations, with text in red and black, and a full complement of rubrics, naming of participants, music for the hymns.<sup>39</sup>

#### 4.1 Processions<sup>40</sup>

The book then lists the order of the processions, of which there are five:

The Procession of Faith Leaders & Representatives of Faith Communities; The Procession of Ecumenical Leaders; The Realms Procession; The Procession of The Choir; The Procession of The King & The Queen.<sup>41</sup>

Previous coronations saw a series of processions before the entrance of the sovereign, though none involving “faith leaders” or “ecumenical leaders”. There were representatives of the Welsh Presbyterians and Scottish Congregational Union among several others in 1953, but they were there as guests rather than afforded a particular entrance procession.<sup>42</sup> At this point in 1953 and 1937 the Litany was sung as the clergy went to the West Door. Previously it had been sung or at least the versicles had been sung by two bishops, and it had come before the beginning of the Communion Service (omitted, though, in 1902). For the procession, though the service book indicates no music at this point, the commentary says that “I was glad” by Charles Hubert Hastings Parry (1848–1918) would be sung, including the Westminster Scholars’ vivats. In 1937, the processions of King and Queen took place one after another, with the middle section of the Anthem extended by organ improvisation between the Queen’s and King’s

<sup>39</sup> It is slightly unclear what the relationship between the online “Church of England” and the printed “Westminster Abbey” orders of service is.

<sup>40</sup> See also Francis YOUNG, Coronation *ordines* compared: 1953 and 2023 (29 April 2023). [↗](#)

<sup>41</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, The Authorised Liturgy, 2. [↗](#)

<sup>42</sup> For the full list of guests, see John HEATON-ARMSTRONG, The Coronation of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth in Westminster Abbey on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 1953. Categories Of Peers And Peeresses Who Received The Queens Summons And Persons who Received The Queen’s Invitation, Compiled under the Authority of the Earl Marshal, London 1953.

Vivats.<sup>43</sup> On Sunday April 30 Westminster Abbey released the arrangement for 2023.<sup>44</sup> The King and Queen arrived in the coronation theatre, the Queen coming first, more closely together than at previous coronations.


## 4.2 *Arrival of the King*


There is a newly-constructed rite of “Greeting the King” by a “Young Person”, in this case a chorister of the chapel royal.<sup>45</sup> The text reads “Your Majesty, as children of the Kingdom of God we welcome you in the name of the King of Kings.” The King responds: “In His name and after His example I come not to be served but to serve”<sup>46</sup> drawing on Mt 20:28/Mk 10:45. The commentary expands this with reference to the title of “King of kings” (Rev 19:16) and asserts that “this new inclusion marks the tone of the service from the beginning”, “Magnificence” and “beauty” are signs of “tradition” and “joy”, but it is the self-commitment of the sovereign to the service of God which is intended to be brought to the fore.<sup>47</sup> The word “service” and variations thereupon appear many times throughout the rite. Standing at the Chair of Estate, the King then takes some time for silent prayer. This is the “humble adoration” and “short private prayers” of previous coronations, except that these were done kneeling at the faldstool, whereas the direction in 2023 is specifically that the King stands.


## 4.3 *Greeting and Introduction*

The Archbishop begins with the Grace (from 2 Cor 13:14), to which all respond “And with thy spirit.”<sup>48</sup> In Common Worship (CW) the Eucharist may, but need not, begin “In the Name of the Father ...”<sup>49</sup>, as it does not here.


<sup>43</sup> See here: [https://youtu.be/L\\_yF-ZAr2MM?feature=shared](https://youtu.be/L_yF-ZAr2MM?feature=shared). 

<sup>44</sup> Cf. WESTMINSTER ABBEY, Abbey releases music for the Coronation Vivats (30 April 2023). 

<sup>45</sup> There are ten full boy-choristers of the chapel royal choir, plus probationers. They attend the City of London School, and are eligible for a choral scholarship of 30% of the fees (c. £21,000 p.a. as of 2023), with further bursaries and fee-reductions available. See CITY OF LONDON SCHOOL, Bursaries at CLS. 

<sup>46</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, The Authorised Liturgy, 2. 

<sup>47</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, Commentary, 3. 

<sup>48</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, The Authorised Liturgy, 3. 

<sup>49</sup> For Order One (Traditional), as used here: CW, 207.



There follows the acclamation for use between Easter and Pentecost, “Alleluia. Christ is risen!/He is risen indeed. Alleluia.” Reflecting the liturgical season, the paschal candle was lit and placed near the altar. CW then adds that “words of welcome or introduction may be said”, and a newly-composed bidding follows. The purpose of the coronation service is set out: to offer worship and praise to God; to “celebrate the life of our nations”; to pray for the King; to recognise and give thanks for his service; to witness “with joy” his “crowning and anointing” [in fact the bidding reverses the order in which these are to take place, perhaps for reasons of the flow of the language], which will result in his being “set apart and consecrated for the service of his people.” The congregation are then invited to dedicate themselves “in body, mind, and spirit” to faith, hope, and charity, expressed as “a commitment to serve one another in love”<sup>50</sup>.

The Kyrie is then sung, in Welsh, to a setting by Paul Mealor, with baritone solo and choral and orchestral accompaniment. The text is given three-fold,<sup>51</sup> as it was for the first time in 1953, when it was said, rather than sung, by the Archbishop and Congregation after the Introit and the Collect for Purity at the beginning of the Communion Service. It was sung nine-fold. As we have seen, the whole coronation in 2023, with the exception of the “Greeting of the King” is framed within the Eucharistic liturgy. The commentary takes the Kyrie to be indicative that “all have sinned (Romans 3:23)”<sup>52</sup>. The Prayers of Penitence in CW are otherwise omitted, and the absolution “Almighty God, who forgives all who truly repent” is not used.

#### 4.4 *From the Kyrie to the Collect*

The Recognition now takes place. There is a minor change in wording and an expansion of the personnel involved. First, the word “Sirs” is dropped: “Sirs, I here present unto you Queen Elizabeth, your undoubted Queen”<sup>53</sup>

<sup>50</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, *The Authorised Liturgy*, 3. [↗](#)

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.* [↗](#)

<sup>52</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, *Commentary*, 4. [↗](#)

<sup>53</sup> Transcription of the official text of the Coronation Service of Queen Elizabeth II, 43. The text is also available at: KERSHAW, *Coronation*. [↗](#)

becomes “I here present unto you ...”<sup>54</sup>. In 1953, the Archbishop was accompanied by the Lord Chancellor, Lord Great Chamberlain, Lord High Constable, and Earl Marshal, with Garter King of Arms going before them. The named participants are now the Archbishop, a Lady of the Thistle, the chairman of the Victoria Cross and George Cross association, and a Lady of the Garter. Previously, the Archbishop alone pronounced the Presentation each of four times for the four cardinal points. The rubrics of the book do not indicate whether the compass-points are used, but the official commentary says that they are, adding that “[a]ll the representatives demonstrate different elements of service, honour, and duty, and have historic links to the Crown”<sup>55</sup>.

The Presentation of the Bible is, as in 1953, made by the Moderator of the Church of Scotland.<sup>56</sup> It is moved to before the Oath, rather than after it. The shortened version of words, first used for Edward VII, is retained, except that the King is addressed as “Sir” instead of “Our gracious King”, the format used previously. The commentary describes it at “the church’s first gift to the King”<sup>57</sup>. The King then kissed the bible. The Oath follows, introduced by a contextualising paragraph from the Archbishop, explaining that the commitment of the King to the maintenance of the Church of England’s settlement is also a commitment to the Church’s “seek[ing] to foster an environment in which people of all faiths and beliefs may live freely”, and that the Oath “has stood for centuries and is enshrined in law”<sup>58</sup>. We see clearly an attempt to cast the Oath as inclusive rather than exclusive. Previously it followed Creed and Sermon, meaning that the sovereign had professed (or had had professed in their presence) the faith of the Church which they were to swear to uphold. The swearing of the Oath has historically involved doing so on the Bible, and the presentation of the Bible now taking place before the Oath has the effect of making the act not only streamlined but also more visually and theologically coherent, as the King uses the Bible with which he has just been solemnly presented to

<sup>54</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, The Authorised Liturgy, 4. [↗](#)

<sup>55</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, Commentary, 5. [↗](#)

<sup>56</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, The Authorised Liturgy, 5. [↗](#)

<sup>57</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, Commentary, 6. [↗](#)

<sup>58</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, The Authorised Liturgy, 5. [↗](#)

swear the Oath. While the Oath is signed, the anthem “Prevent us, O Lord” by William Byrd (c.1540–1623) is sung. The text is that found from the 1549 Book of Common Prayer onwards.<sup>59</sup> The anthem itself was composed in the second quarter of the reign of Elizabeth I.<sup>60</sup> The commentary attributes the authorship of the prayer to Thomas Cranmer, using the attribution to note that “the Book of Common Prayer is the foundational text of the Church of England’s doctrine and worship, as well as being a major contribution to British literature”<sup>61</sup>. First, Cranmer translated the prayer, albeit expanding it, rather than composing it anew (it is in the Sarum Missal for Ember Saturday in Lent: “Actiones nostras, quaesumus, Domine, et aspirando praeveni ...”<sup>62</sup>). Second, the Book of Common Prayer is evidently not so foundational that its structure and contents could be used in their entirety at this service. 2023 is Byrd’s fourth centenary of death, and his music features elsewhere in the liturgy. There is thus, together with the modern compositions, the continuation of the idea of the “Festival of British Music” approach taken at coronations since 1902. The prayer itself was used before the concluding blessing in 1953, but not before that.

After the signing of the Oath and the accompanying anthem comes a further new composition, entitled “the King’s Prayer”, said kneeling before the altar. There is further repetition of the theme of service: “not to be served but to serve, give grace that I may find in thy service perfect freedom”<sup>63</sup>, which is heavily underlined by the commentary: “the prayer continues to reflect the theme of loving service”<sup>64</sup>. The commentary places the sources of the prayer in “biblical language (Galatians 5)” referring to Galatians 5:22–23: “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such there is no law.” It also mentions “the language of the much-loved hymn, ‘I vow

<sup>59</sup> Cf. The First Prayer-Book of Edward VI. Compared with the Successive Revisions of the Book of Common Prayer, Oxford 1877, 260.

<sup>60</sup> See John HARLEY, William Byrd. Gentleman of the Chapel Royal, Abingdon 2016, 300, for a dating for the anthem to the early to mid-1570s.

<sup>61</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, Commentary, 9. [↗](#)

<sup>62</sup> John W. LEGG (ed.), The Sarum Missal, edited from Three Early Manuscripts, Oxford 1916, 64.

<sup>63</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, The Authorised Liturgy, 5. [↗](#)

<sup>64</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, Commentary, 9. [↗](#)

to thee my country', itself inspired by [...] Proverbs 3:17." This refers to the concluding words of the second stanza, "her ways are ways of gentleness, and all her paths are peace". As well as the Gospels (Mk 20:28, as before), that opening clause draws on the phrasing of the second collect, for peace, at Matins or Morning Prayer in the BCP. The Matins connection is further found in the reference to the "knowledge of thy truth", a phrase found in the "Prayer of St Chrysostom" at the conclusion of the morning and also the evening office, as well as in the concluding lines "led into the paths of peace", reminiscent of "guide our feet into the ways of peace" at the conclusion of the *Benedictus*.

The King's Prayer		
God of compassion and mercy	1	Psalm 86:15 "thou, O Lord God, art full of compassion and mercy"
whose Son was sent not to be served but to serve,	2	Mk 20:28
give grace that I may find in thy service perfect freedom	3	Collect for Peace, BCP Matins, "whose service is perfect freedom"
and in that freedom knowledge of thy truth.	4	Prayer of St Chrysostom, BCP Matins: "granting us in this world knowledge of thy truth"
Grant that I may be a blessing to all thy children, of every faith and conviction,		
that together we may discover the ways of gentleness	5	Hymn, "I vow to thee, my country" (Prov 3:17)
and be led into the paths of peace.	6	BCP Matins, <i>Benedictus</i> ; Hymn: <i>I vow to thee my country</i> (Prov 3:17)

Then follows the *Gloria*, from the *Mass for Four Voices* by William Byrd, intoned by a cantor. The King and Queen sat. The text is in Latin, and is sung near the beginning of the liturgy, as in modern Anglican practice, rather than at the conclusion of the communion service, as in BCP 1662. The translation given is that of 1928, and of CW, with the repetition of "thou that takest away the sins of the world, receive our prayer" removed.

The English text given does not translate the Latin next to which it sits, since “tu solus [altissimus] Jesu Christe” is rendered “thou only, O Christ” without the name of Jesus. The Gloria is a regular fixture of coronations, given their festive nature, and the commentary adds that this setting was “originally composed for recusant Roman Catholics (those who refused to adopt the doctrine of the newly established Church of England after the Reformation). It has since been embraced into the central repertoire of many Anglican Cathedrals and choral foundations. It provides a delicate simplicity, and intimacy that musically and thematically balance some of the grander and stronger pieces of music.” Byrd had been heard at the coronation of George VI: the Creed from the “Short Service”, and the Sanctus, translated into English, from the *Mass for Five Voices*: this latter is another of the recusant settings, though this was perhaps not much mentioned at the time.<sup>65</sup>

The collect is yet another new composition. The collect in the *Liber Regalis* was revised under Charles I, praying that the king would “receive an increase of all vertues” and “avoid the gulfe of Vice”<sup>66</sup>. William and Mary had used a much expanded version of the first of the two collects for the king at the 1662 communion service. Later, that collect itself was used. A new collect was used for Edward VII, in the event including a brief thanksgiving for his recovery from illness, which was lightly revised for Elizabeth II, altering the clause that “he may so wisely govern, that in his time thy Church and people may continue in safety and prosperity” to “that in her time thy Church may be in safety, and Christian devotion may continue in peace.”

<sup>65</sup> Jeffrey RICHARDS, *Imperialism and Music. Britain 1876–1953*, Manchester 2001, 114 describes this as the “Sanctus from [Byrd’s] Latin Mass”, and RANGE, *Music and Ceremonial*, 288 notes it as “Sanctus, Byrd (Latin Mass)”. There are three Masses by Byrd, and they are all in Latin. The recording reveals it as the *Mass for Five Voices*.

<sup>66</sup> L. LEGG, *Coronation Records*, 268.

Charles III <sup>67</sup>	Elizabeth II <sup>68</sup>	George VI <sup>69</sup>	Victoria <sup>70</sup>
Lord, enthroned in heavenly splendour:	O God, who providest for thy people by thy power, and rulest over them in love:	O God, who providest for thy people by thy power, and rulest over them in love:	Almighty God, whose kingdom is ever-lasting, and power infinite;
look with favour upon thy servant Charles our King, and bestow upon him such gifts of <i>wisdom</i> and love that we and all thy people may live in <i>peace</i> and <i>prosperity</i> and in loving service one to another;	ELIZABETH, our Queen, the Spirit of <i>wisdom</i> and government, that being devoted unto thee with her whole heart, she may so wisely govern, that in her time thy Church may be in safety, and Christian devotion may continue in <i>peace</i> ;	Grant unto this thy servant GEORGE, our King, the Spirit of <i>wisdom</i> and government, that being devoted unto thee with all his heart, he may so wisely govern, that in his time thy Church and people may continue in safety and <i>prosperity</i> ;	Have mercy upon the whole Church; and so rule the heart of thy chosen servant VICTORIA our Queen and Governor, that she (knowing whose Minister she is) may above all things seek thy honour and glory; and that we and all her subjects (duly considering whose Authority she hath)
to thine eternal glory, who with the Father and the Holy Spirit reigns supreme over all things;	that so persevering in good works unto the end, she may by thy mercy come to thine everlasting kingdom;	and that, persevering in good works unto the end, he may through thy mercy come to thine everlasting kingdom;	may faithfully serve, honour, and humbly obey her, in thee, and for thee, according to thy blessed word and ordinance;

For Charles III, the collect begins by evoking, as the commentary notes, the hymn “Lord, enthroned in heavenly splendour” by George Bourne (1840–1925), published

<sup>67</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, *The Authorised Liturgy*, 8. [↗](#)

<sup>68</sup> KERSHAW, *Coronation*. [↗](#)

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.* [↗](#)

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.* [↗](#)

in 1874.<sup>71</sup> The “wisdom” of the previous collect is retained, and the “peace” introduced for Elizabeth II is combined with the “prosperity” which had been removed for her but was present for her father. There is, once again, a reference to “service” – the commentary suggests that “the themes of loving service [...] are at the heart of the Coronation celebrations”<sup>72</sup>. The reference to coming “to thine everlasting kingdom” is removed, but returns later in the blessings pronounced by the other Christian leaders.

#### 4.5 Readings

The choice of Epistle is new to the Coronation. The Church of England Sunday lectionary provides for two readings before the Gospel, and it may have been thought that having an additional reading would be too much. In this case, it is Colossians 1:9–17, in the Authorized Version. This was read by the Prime Minister, Mr Rishi Sunak, a practicing Hindu. Previously the Epistle was read by a bishop. The commentary explains that “as well as declaring the Lordship of Christ, the reading is a prayer which we can use for The King today” and adds that “the Archbishop of Canterbury has selected this reading” (presumably in case anyone thought anything to the contrary). The invitation to read extended to the Prime Minister “has become modern custom seen at other State Ceremonies, by virtue of his public office, being the Prime Minister of the nation in which the Coronation takes place”<sup>73</sup>. In 1953, the bishop, in this case of London, William Wand, read the epistle holding the book by himself, standing at the south/epistle corner of the altar and facing down the church. In 2023 the Epistle was read from the pulpit, and was concluded “This is the word of the Lord./Thanks be to God”<sup>74</sup>, following modern Anglican practice (in 1953 it was concluded “here endeth the Epistle”<sup>75</sup>). Following the Epistle, a Grad-

<sup>71</sup> Hymn 296 in the *New English Hymnal*. See Carl P. DAW, Singing our way from Ascension to Pentecost, in: *Reformed Worship* 75, March 2005. [↗](#)

<sup>72</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, Commentary, 11. [↗](#)

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.* [↗](#)

<sup>74</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, *The Authorised Liturgy*, 9. [↗](#)

<sup>75</sup> These words, present in the rubrics of BCP 1662, are absent from the Transcription of the official text of the Coronation Service of Queen Elizabeth II, 45. The Bishop of London said the words, however, as the recording demonstrates.

ual was used for the first time under Elizabeth II, Ps 141:2 “Let my prayer come up into thy presence as the incense”, a text which had found use at earlier coronations. For 2023 there is a composed Alleluia by Debbie Wiseman, using Ps 47:1–2 before the Gospel, and Ps 47:6–7 afterwards.<sup>76</sup> The Gospel is read by a bishop, in 2023 the bishop of London, Sarah Mullally; it was the archbishop of York, Cyril Garbett, in 1953. Garbett, standing at the north/Gospel side, and reading in the same way as the Epistle was read, spoke the introduction; the response “Glory be to thee, O Lord” was sung to the Merbecke tone, on one note and finishing down a semitone. At the end, “Thanks be to thee, O Lord” was sung in the same way. Neither of these is in BCP 1662: the former is in BCP 1928,<sup>77</sup> and also in Laud’s BCP 1637;<sup>78</sup> the latter is only in BCP 1637.<sup>79</sup> In 2023, the Gospel is Luke 4:16–21 with its reference to anointing, and to the preaching of the gospel to the poor. It is preceded by “The Lord be with you/and with thy spirit/Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke/Glory be to thee, O Lord”, and concluded with “This is the Gospel of the Lord/Praise be to thee, O Christ”<sup>80</sup>. No music was printed in the service book, and the words were not sung. For the first time in recorded English coronation history, the Gospel is not Matthew 22:15–21. The First Recension had a different first reading (Leviticus 26:6–9), but the same Gospel.<sup>81</sup> Perhaps surprisingly, the commentary says nothing about the change. It does mention the reference to anointing, and again uses the language of being “set apart for service” as found in the opening bidding. An oddity in the commentary is that the “liturgical Gospel Book for this procession and reading” is the St Augustine Gospels, brought by St Augustine to England in 597.<sup>82</sup> It was therefore left slightly unclear what the bishop would read the English text from. The

<sup>76</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, *The Authorised Liturgy*, 9 f. [↗](#)

<sup>77</sup> Cf. BCP 1928, 357.

<sup>78</sup> Cf. BCP-SC 1637, 224.

<sup>79</sup> Cf. BCP-SC 1637, 224. BCP 1928, 357 has “Praise be to thee, O Christ” and the end of the Gospel. For comparison, the BCP-SC 1929, 352 has “Glory be to thee, O Lord” at the beginning of the Gospel, and “Thanks be to thee, O Lord, for this thy glorious Gospel” at the end.

<sup>80</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, *The Authorised Liturgy*, 10. [↗](#)

<sup>81</sup> L. LEGG, *Coronation Records*, 4.

<sup>82</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, *Commentary*, 12. [↗](#)



book was borne, open on a cushion before the bishop, accompanied by lights, and the bishop read from a text held by an assistant. Presumably for aesthetic reasons, the St Augustine Gospels was open at the only surviving illumination, at fol. 129<sup>v</sup>, next to which the text is Luke 1:1–8, rather than what was actually read.

The Creed is also omitted: it is mentioned in the *Liber Regalis*<sup>83</sup> and has been at every coronation for which the order is recorded ever since. BCP 1662 does not envisage that the Creed be omitted when there is a communion service, although 1928 allowed for its omission at the discretion of the minister when it was not a Sunday or holy day.<sup>84</sup> CW requires the use of a creed (Nicene or Apostles') or an authorized alternative on Sundays and principal holy days.<sup>85</sup> It may have been thought unhelpful to ask the guests present to recite the Creed, although it was sung on previous occasions by the choir: royals and other guests of non-Christian faith have been present at coronations before. Even for the shortenings requested by James II and required for Edward VII the Creed was said. In BCP 1662, the Creed follows the Gospel; then comes the sermon (after the notices, e.g. declaration of holy- or fasting-days, and banns); CW, following the Roman order, has the sermon first, between the Gospel and the Creed.<sup>86</sup> The sermon in 2023 was the first since 1911. Once again, the commentary refers to "service": a sermon is an opportunity to "hear the call of God's Word, and discover within our own context how we are being called to serve"<sup>87</sup>. The archbishop preached for five minutes.

#### 4.6 Anointing

The rite of Anointing begins without introduction, as the *Veni Creator* is sung. It may have been felt that a liturgically-constructed introduction was not required since the sermon could serve that purpose. In previous coronations (with the exception of 1902, following the king's illness) the sovereign (and consort) were directed by the rubrics to kneel for the *Veni Crea-*

<sup>83</sup> "Dum cymbolum a choro decantatur." L. LEGG, *Coronation Records*, 103.

<sup>84</sup> Cf. BCP 1928, 358.

<sup>85</sup> CW, 213.

<sup>86</sup> CW, 212.

<sup>87</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, *Commentary*, 13. [↗](#)

tor.<sup>88</sup> In 1953, a rubric was added directing the people to do so as well.<sup>89</sup> In 2023 the service book contains no instruction on this. The *Veni Creator* is sung to the text by John Cosin (1594–1672), with verses 2, 3, and 4 being sung in Welsh, Scots Gaelic, and Irish Gaelic respectively.<sup>90</sup> Then comes the prayer with the oil. Prior to 1689, the anointing prayers were quite different. Before 1689, and afterwards, the oil was blessed beforehand, and for 1689 alone the prayer said, specifically, “bless this Oyl and sanctify thy servant”<sup>91</sup>. Thereafter, it was recast as a prayer for blessing on the sovereign, the divided blessing and sanctification in the 1689 service (over oil and monarch respectively) coming together for the monarch: “bless and sanctify [this] thy chosen servant N”, and not including the queen consort who was also to be anointed with the same oil. The rubric directed the Archbishop to “lay his hand upon the Ampulla”, formerly between “is now to be anointed with this Oil” and “and consecrated King”;<sup>92</sup> but moved in 1953 to after the end of the opening clause, such that it came between “to teach and govern thy people Israel” and “Bless and sanctify thy chosen servant”.<sup>93</sup> Where the oil had been blessed before the service there was naturally no need to bless it again. However, the 2023 texts show two significant variations. First, in the text itself, to which we shall turn shortly. But the oil is now blessed by the archbishop, and this despite the fact that it had, with some considerable publicity given to the fact, already been blessed. A press release of 3 March 2023 explained that the oil had been “consecrated” in a joint ceremony involving the Patriarch of Jerusalem, Theophilus III, and the Anglican Archbishop, Hosam Naoum.<sup>94</sup> It also gave details of the composition of the perfume, substantially the same as in Laud’s recipe, except that animal products were no longer used. The service book heads this section “Thanksgiving for the Holy Oil”,<sup>95</sup> and this would suggest that there would be a prayer of thanksgiving said over the

<sup>88</sup> KERSHAW, Coronation. [↗](#)

<sup>89</sup> Ibid. [↗](#)

<sup>90</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, The Authorised Liturgy, 11. [↗](#)

<sup>91</sup> KERSHAW, Coronation. [↗](#)

<sup>92</sup> Ibid. [↗](#)

<sup>93</sup> Ibid. [↗](#)

<sup>94</sup> Cf. The Consecration of the Coronation Oil (3 March 2023). [↗](#)

<sup>95</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, The Authorised Liturgy, 12. [↗](#)

oil, perhaps not unlike that used in the Roman rite of the anointing of the sick, when a prayer of thanksgiving is directed to be said over the oil (of the sick) if it has already been blessed, with a different prayer to be used if oil is blessed during the rite: a clear distinction is made between the two circumstances.<sup>96</sup> The commentary says that at this moment in the service “the Archbishop is presented with and formally receives the Coronation Oil, praying and giving thanks for it” and notes that it was “co-consecrated” in Jerusalem.<sup>97</sup> However, in the coronation service, the archbishop says: “By the power of the same Spirit, bless and sanctify this oil”<sup>98</sup> as though there were to be understood to be a difference between the “consecration” of the oil in Jerusalem, and its “blessing” in Westminster Abbey. The prayer is another new composition (there is no rubric in the service book about laying a hand on the Ampulla), and the commentary notes its sources: in style, the Book of Common Prayer, with references to the anointing of kings (1 Kings 1:38-40), the meaning of Christ/Messiah, “anointed one”, and the royal priesthood (1 Peter 1:9), together with yet another reference to “connections between the consecration – setting apart – of His Majesty, and our own callings to serve God and one another”.<sup>99</sup> A subtle but important change is that while the oil is blessed (a second time?), the sovereign is not. The recasting of the 1689 prayer brought the “blessing” over the oil and the “sanctification” of the sovereign into one. In 2023, “bless and sanctify” are said of the oil alone, although the effect of the oil is prayed to be a sign of “joy and gladness” for the sovereign.

<sup>96</sup> The Roman Ritual. Revised by decree of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council and published by the authority of Pope Paul VI, Great Wakering 1977, 32.

<sup>97</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, Commentary, 15. [↗](#)

<sup>98</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, The Authorised Liturgy, 12. [↗](#)

<sup>99</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, Commentary, 15. [↗](#)

2023 <sup>100</sup>	1953 <sup>101</sup>
<p>Blessed art thou, Sovereign God, upholding with thy grace all who are called to thy service.</p>	<p>O Lord and heavenly Father, [the exalter of the humble and the strength of thy chosen<sup>102</sup>]</p>
<p>Thy prophets of old anointed priests and kings to serve in thy name and in the fullness of time thine only Son was anointed by the Holy Spirit to be the Christ, the Saviour and Servant of all.</p>	<p>who by anointing with Oil didst of old make and consecrate kings, priests, and prophets, to teach and govern thy people Israel:</p>
	<p><i>Here the Archbishop is to lay his hand upon the Ampulla.</i></p>
<p>By the power of the same Spirit, bless and sanctify this oil, that it may be for thy servant Charles a sign of joy and gladness;</p>	<p>Bless and sanctify thy chosen servant Elizabeth, who by our office and ministry is now to be anointed with this Oil, and consecrated Queen:</p>
<p>that as King he may know the abundance of thy grace and the power of thy mercy, and that we may be made a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for thine own possession.</p>	<p>Strengthen her, O Lord, with the Holy Ghost the Comforter; Confirm and stablish her with thy free and princely Spirit, the Spirit of wisdom and government, the Spirit of counsel and ghostly strength, the Spirit of knowledge and true godliness, and fill her,</p>
<p>Said by all: Blessed be God, our strength and our salvation, now and for ever. Amen.</p>	<p>O Lord, with the Spirit of thy holy fear, now and for ever; Amen.</p>

Note also the similarities between the previous anointing prayer and that for Confirmation in the BCP:

<sup>100</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, The Authorised Liturgy, 12. [↗](#)

<sup>101</sup> KERSHAW, Coronation. [↗](#)

<sup>102</sup> Removed in 1761, and returned in 1953.

Anointing (1953) <sup>103</sup>	Confirmation <sup>104</sup>
Strengthen her, O Lord, with the Holy Ghost the Comforter; Confirm and stablish her with thy free and princely Spirit, the Spirit of wisdom and government, the Spirit of counsel and ghostly strength, the Spirit of knowledge and true godliness, and fill her, O Lord, with the Spirit of thy holy fear, now and for ever;	Strengthen them, we beseech thee, O Lord, with the Holy Ghost the Comforter, and daily increase in them thy manifold gifts of grace; the spirit of wisdom and understanding; the spirit of counsel and ghostly strength; the spirit of knowledge and true godliness; and fill them, O Lord, with the spirit of thy holy fear, now and for ever.

Then the anthem “Zadok the Priest” by Handel is sung, and the anointing itself takes place, the king sitting on King Edward’s Chair and having removed the robes of state. This has been done with the sovereign seated since Charles I, rather than kneeling as before.<sup>105</sup> In 2023, it is not under a canopy borne by four knights of the Garter, but behind a three-sided screen, “arranged around the Coronation Chair”<sup>106</sup> by guardsmen. The idea that sacredness equals, if not secrecy then privacy, is really a new one. The BBC commentary on the 1953 coronation described the use of the canopy “so that the sacred moment of anointing normally never seen is shielded from all eyes [...]”<sup>107</sup>. It is not, however, true that the moment was thus shielded. John Betjeman wrote, describing his experience of the service:

The third, and to me the most touching, part of the service is here, when the Coronation proper begins with the Anointing. The Queen was divested of all her jewellery, and she stood in a plain white robe, looking little more than a child, on whom all the weight of the world was to be thrust. Edgar, the first King of all England, was anointed in 973; Queen Elizabeth the Second was anointed today. The Dean of Westminster, a

<sup>103</sup> KERSHAW, Coronation. [↗](#)

<sup>104</sup> BCP 1662, 298.

<sup>105</sup> Cf. BRADSHAW, Coronations, 31.

<sup>106</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, Commentary, 17. [↗](#)

<sup>107</sup> On the video as at BBC TV Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II: Westminster Abbey 1953 (William McKie). [↗](#)

tall, monkish, medieval-looking man, came forward with the golden Ampulla in the form of an eagle which contains the oil. I saw him dip a spoon into which the Archbishop dipped his thumb. Few people can have seen this, because a golden canopy was held over the Queen's head, as she sat in King Edward's Chair, by four Knights of the Garter in their dark, blue-black robes.<sup>108</sup>

The use of a canopy for royalty was not restricted to Britain: the kings of Spain used one, the *palio*, the use of which was adopted by General Franco. King Juan Carlos and Queen Sofia walked under one on 27 November 1975 at beginning and end of the Mass of the Holy Spirit in the Hieronymite church in Madrid held to inaugurate his reign.<sup>109</sup> Many of the earlier surviving coronation orders include the directions for how the king's shirt was to be made, able to be opened and closed with loops, to facilitate the anointing on the breast. In no other mainstream Christian rite is the act of anointing intentionally unseen, whether it can actually be easily seen by all participants or not. I suggest that the reason for framing the anointing in this way is first because such public loosening of clothing is unusual; secondly, because the presence of television cameras makes a decision about whether or not to show it unavoidable; and thirdly that, especially at the anointing of Elizabeth II, the idea of displaying a young woman performing this action in front of an archbishop was not thought a suitable subject for broadcast. It is perhaps not dissimilar to what is often reported as a "taboo" in relation to the coronation of the kings of Tonga, namely that, as the BBC described it, a "retired Australian minister performed the crowning as it is taboo for Tongans to touch their king's head"<sup>110</sup>. In the even greater privacy afforded to the king in 2023, with the use of a screen, do we see an instance of a Western taboo, rather than of a rite which of its nature must be hidden from public view? Méliès's cinematic recreation of the coronation of Edward VII shows the anointing (albeit only of the head and hands) without any attempt to pass over it either by means of a title card or an

<sup>108</sup> John BETJEMAN, What it's like to have a prime seat at a Royal Coronation by John Betjeman, who reported for Country Life in 1953, in: Country Life (28 April 2023). [↗](#)

<sup>109</sup> See Exaltación de SM don Juan Carlos I. [↗](#)

<sup>110</sup> BBC NEWS, Tonga King Tupou VI formally crowned (4 July 2015). [↗](#)

interpolation of any kind, whereas he simply ends the film before the communion service. The cameras showed, briefly, the disrobing of the King, leaving him in a white shift and trousers, before taking in wider shots of the abbey, choir, and the details of the west-facing aspect of the screen with its embroidery, designed by Aidan Hart.<sup>111</sup>

The formula of anointing and the subsequent blessing of anointing are unchanged, except that the king is addressed as “you” rather than “thou”.<sup>112</sup> The role of the Dean of Westminster in pouring oil into the spoon also remains, as does the kneeling of the sovereign for this prayer. The text of the blessing of anointing is the first prayer to be unchanged in the 2023 service (although the Recognition and Oath are also the same). The Archbishop is to say the words “sotto voce” according to the Church of England order of service, although why this is specifically directed in a book with otherwise few rubrics is unclear. It is difficult to judge from the sound quality of previous recordings, but in 1953, Fisher seems to have spoken these words at the same volume as others, rather than noticeably more quietly, and in 1937, Lang seems to have done the same. Unsurprisingly, the commentary describes the purpose of the anointing in terms of service: “The King’s anointing sets him apart to fulfil a vocation and begin a new life as Sovereign, dedicated to the service of all.”<sup>113</sup> The use of the screen is described as facilitating the “King’s only moment of privacy during the Service, as he contemplates how he is called by God”<sup>114</sup>. After the anointing itself, the screen was removed, revealing the king kneeling surrounded by four bishops, as the “oil of gladness” prayer was said. Neither the words of the anointing nor the prayer could be heard.

The symbolic language needs attention here. We might make the following distinctions: seeing the rite taking place, i. e. the King being anointed without canopy or screen, in view of the congregation and cameras. This would not in fact really happen, since the archbishop would be close to the king for this, and it would only be seen, if at all, in profile view. This would be how an anointing would happen at a confirmation or ordination.

<sup>111</sup> Cf. Aidan HART, *The Design of the Anointing Screen for the Coronation of King Charles III*, in: *Orthodox Arts Journal* (4 May 2023). [↗](#)

<sup>112</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, *The Authorised Liturgy*, 13. [↗](#)

<sup>113</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, *Commentary*, 16. [↗](#)

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.* [↗](#)

Seeing the rite taking place, but the rite itself is under the canopy. This makes it clear that something important, sacred even, is happening, and that there is a kind of bond between the anointer and the one being anointed. There would be attention also on those holding the canopy: why them, in particular? Then the third option, the one taken in 2023: the anointing happens, but the participants are entirely hidden. Does this accentuate the importance of the anointing, or make it perhaps almost medical, screened as a hospital bed is by curtains? This arguably detracts from the symbolic importance of the rite, in view of those assembled to participate in the coronation service as a whole, both in the abbey and as viewers in other media. This naturally brings to the fore the question of whom the rite is for: is it between the king and the archbishop, hence the “*sotto voce*” delivery of the words? But since the point of the coronation has increasingly become that it is seen, that the physical doors of the abbey are no longer a barrier to seeing or participation in the broader sense, is *any* aspect of the coronation private? And if the anointing, why not the reception of holy communion, also not shown in 1953 or broadcast on the radio in 1937? This is one of the kind of questions about coronation rites which, in the past, was resolvable only by conjecture or fragmentary reports: how did this or that element come across? In what way was this done: hastily, slowly, clumsily, smoothly? The particular questions of the anointing in 2023 will be more easily discernible through what is permitted to be mediated by the cameras, but they remind us of the difficulties and challenges inherent in studying this rare and highly contextual liturgy.

#### 4.7 *Vesting and Presentation of the Regalia*

The *colobium sindonis*, *supertunica*, and girdle are now put on. This was fully visible to the cameras, though not to the congregation behind since the chair of King Edward was directly behind him. These are all from previous reigns, “in the interests of sustainability and efficiency”<sup>115</sup>. The *regalia* presentation includes the detail that “[t]he regalia presented by peers from non-Christian faith traditions have been chosen because they do not

<sup>115</sup> ROYAL.UK, Historic Coronation Vestments from the Royal Collection will be re-used by His Majesty The King for the Coronation Service at Westminster Abbey (1 May 2023). [↗](#)



bear explicit Christian motifs. Each contribution affirms our mutual interdependence as neighbours of whatever faith tradition or belief, and that His Majesty is invested with these ‘instruments of state’ by all people, not just the Christian Church.”<sup>116</sup> At the presentation of the spurs, a form of words is introduced, which begins “Receive”, as do the others which follow. After the presentation, the spurs are placed back on the altar. In the *Liber Regalis*, the collected regalia are blessed together before being delivered, as they were for Charles I.<sup>117</sup> There is no separate form of words for the spurs, and hence when the commentary refers to “the revised wording” which “retains the significance of courage” as well as “advocacy for those in need” and “practical service”,<sup>118</sup> is unclear what they are being framed as a revision of. Next come the swords, during which a Greek setting of Ps 71, “Give the king your judgements, O God” is sung. The singing of a psalm here is new, and is a specific reminder of “His Majesty’s [Greek] paternal heritage”<sup>119</sup>. The further words accompanying the presentation of the regalia have all been amended.

Sword 2023 <sup>120</sup>	Sword 1953 <sup>121</sup>
<p>Hear our prayers, O Lord, we beseech thee, and so direct and support thy servant King Charles, that he may not bear the Sword in vain; but may use it as the minister of God to resist evil and defend the good, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.</p>	<p>Hear our prayers, O Lord, we beseech thee, and so direct and support thy servant Queen Elizabeth, that she may not bear the Sword in vain; but may use it as the minister of God [for the terror and punishment of evildoers, and for the protection and encouragement of those that do well,] through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.</p>

<sup>116</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, Commentary, 18. [↗](#)

<sup>117</sup> Cf. L. LEGG, Coronation Records, 94. 259.

<sup>118</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, Commentary, 18. [↗](#)

<sup>119</sup> Ibid., 19. [↗](#)

<sup>120</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, The Authorised Liturgy, 16. [↗](#)

<sup>121</sup> KERSHAW, Coronation. [↗](#)

Receive this kingly Sword. May it be to you, and to all who witness these things, a sign and symbol not of judgement, but of justice; not of might, but of mercy. Trust always in the word of God, which is the sword of the Spirit, and so faithfully serve our Lord Jesus Christ in this life, that you may reign for ever with him in the life which is to come. Amen.

With this sword do justice, stop the growth of iniquity, protect the holy Church of God and all people of goodwill, help and defend widows and orphans, restore the things that are gone to decay, maintain the things that are restored, punish and reform what is amiss, and confirm what is in good order: that doing these things you may be glorious in all virtue;

and so faithfully serve our Lord Jesus Christ in this life, that you may reign for ever with him in the life which is to come. Amen.

Receive this kingly Sword, [brought now from the Altar of God, and delivered to you by the hands of us the Bishops and servants of God, though unworthy.]

With this sword do justice, stop the growth of iniquity, protect the holy Church of God, help and defend widows and orphans, restore the things that are gone to decay, maintain the things that are restored, punish and reform what is amiss, and confirm what is in good order: that doing these things you may be glorious in all virtue;

and so faithfully serve our Lord Jesus Christ in this life, that you may reign for ever with him in the life which is to come. Amen.

At the presentation of the sword, the longer phrase about the “terror and punishment of evildoers” is reduced to “resist evil and defend the good”. The reference to the sword’s having been brought from the altar is removed. As it is now presented by the Lord President of the Council, rather than the Archbishop together with the Archbishop of York and other bishops, the reference to the “hands of us Bishops” is also removed. The prayer is extended to include a reference to the word of God as “sword of the Spirit”. A subsequent reference to “all people of goodwill” is added to those whom the King is to protect along with the “holy Church of God”.

Armilli 2023 <sup>122</sup>	Armilli 1953 <sup>123</sup>	Armilli: Anne – George IV <sup>124</sup>
<p>Receive the Bracelets of sincerity and wisdom, tokens of God’s protection embracing you on every side.</p>	<p>Receive the Bracelets of sincerity and wisdom, [both for] tokens of the Lord’s protection embracing you on every side; [and also for symbols and pledges of that bond which unites you with your Peoples: to the end that you may be strengthened in all your works and defended against your enemies both bodily and ghostly, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.]</p>	<p>Receive this Armill as a Token of the Divine Mercy embracing You on every side.</p>

The formula for presenting the armills is greatly shortened, and the removal of the reference to the “bond which unites you with your people” is curious in light of the repeated reference to service, and also given that the phrase appears in the official commentary.<sup>125</sup> The order of service indicates that the armills are not to be worn, but to be returned to the altar, which may account for the removal of the second half of the prayer, since the symbolism of binding would be difficult to discern if the King were not in fact bound. The “Amen” at the end is also deleted. There was no wording at the presentation of the armills in 1689, but there was in 1702 for Queen Anne until George IV, the use of words at the presentation being omitted from William IV until George VI.

<sup>122</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, *The Authorised Liturgy*, 17. [↗](#)

<sup>123</sup> KERSHAW, *Coronation*. [↗](#)

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.* [↗](#)

<sup>125</sup> “They are a bond, uniting the Sovereign to the People.” THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, *Commentary*, 21. [↗](#). STRONG, *Coronation*, 444, notes that the armills of 1953 were “paid for by the Commonwealth”, which is not mentioned in the 2023 commentary. This detail was mentioned in the 1953 by FISHER. See: Transcription of the official text of the Coronation Service of Queen Elizabeth II, 41.

The Robe and Stole Royal 2023 <sup>126</sup>	Robe 1953 <sup>127</sup>
Receive this Robe. May the Lord clothe you with the robe of righteousness, and with the garments of salvation.	Receive this [Imperial] Robe, [and the Lord your God endue you with knowledge and wisdom, with majesty and with power from on high:] the Lord clothe you with the robe of righteousness, and with the garments of salvation. Amen.

The word “Imperial” has been deleted, in light of political and cultural changes in the United Kingdom: the territories over which Charles III is king are fewer in number than those inherited by his mother, in turn fewer than those she inherited from her father. Among those words also removed are “majesty” and “power”. The “Amen” at the end is also gone. The commentary is explicit in linking the sovereign’s vesture with that of clergy: “At this point the ceremony returns to the sense of ordination of a Christian minister. The Robe, or Mantle, and Stole Royal represent what The King, as Sovereign, has been given by God.”<sup>128</sup> As Strong notes, though, the royal vestments have been subject to change in form, as well as in use and disuse, in a way that is “difficult to trace with any exactitude”<sup>129</sup>. Victoria’s looked, as has been frequently noted, like a ballgown, and she wore both the *colobium sindonis* and *supertunica* on arrival at the abbey, rather than being vested with them during the service.<sup>130</sup> Though the vestments are almost all being re-used in 2023 instead of newly made (the stole is new), it is safer to say that they may symbolise something of the “sense of ordination”, but they may or may not actually resemble anything approaching clerical vestments. Indeed, for most of the post-Reformation history of the coronation, it has been uncommon, as well as very probably illegal, for Anglican clergy to wear as vestments in church those garments of which the sovereign’s are taken to be variants.

<sup>126</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, The Authorised Liturgy, 17. [↗](#)

<sup>127</sup> KERSHAW, Coronation. [↗](#)

<sup>128</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, Commentary, 22. [↗](#)

<sup>129</sup> Cf. STRONG, Coronation, 382.

<sup>130</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 382.

Orb 2023 <sup>131</sup>	Orb 1953 <sup>132</sup>
Receive this Orb, set under the Cross, and remember <u>always the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ.</u>	Receive this Orb set under the Cross, and remember [that the whole] world [is subject to the Power and Empire of Christ our Redeemer.]

For Elizabeth II, the presentation of Robe and Orb were separated, with the previous prayer divided into two. This is retained for 2023.

Ring 2023 <sup>133</sup>	Ring 1953 <sup>134</sup>
Receive this Ring, a symbol of kingly dignity, and a sign of the covenant sworn this day between God and King, King and people.	Receive the Ring of kingly dignity, and the [seal of Catholic Faith: and as you are this day consecrated to be our Head and Prince, so may you continue stedfastly as the Defender of Christ's Religion; that being rich in faith and blessed in all good works, you may reign with him who is the King of Kings, to whom be the glory for ever and ever. Amen.]

The symbolism of bond between King and People is transferred from the armills to the ring. The reference to the “seal of the Catholic Faith”, which was added in 1953, having previously been there in 1689, as well as the sovereign’s role as “Defender of Christ’s Religion” are removed. The prayer here has been the subject of frequent alteration: the 1953 prayer is closer to 1689 than anything in between, although that is largely dropped in 2023. Curiously, having noted that a possible reason for the lack of covenant imagery with the armills may be bound up with their being returned to the altar, the ring is also returned to the altar, rather than being worn. The “cov-

<sup>131</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, The Authorised Liturgy, 18. [↗](#)

<sup>132</sup> KERSHAW, Coronation. [↗](#)

<sup>133</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, The Authorised Liturgy, 18. [↗](#)

<sup>134</sup> KERSHAW, Coronation. [↗](#)

enant” reference is explained by the commentary as follows: the ring “is comparable to that of rings exchanged in marriage, or papal, archiepiscopal or episcopal rings: they are all a symbol of promise and commitment. They signify covenant and agreement, an unbroken bond, without end. It ‘marries’ The King to God in duty, and to the People in loving service. In turn, it acts to assure His Majesty of God’s unfailing love.”<sup>135</sup> It is all the more confusing, then, that the ring is not in fact worn during the service. On the other hand, the ring is not usually worn after the coronation, being kept in the Tower of London with the rest of the Crown Jewels, so the ring would not otherwise function like a wedding or episcopal ring, in the sense that these are normally worn consistently after the marriage or ordination.

#### Glove<sup>136</sup>

Receive this glove. May you hold authority with gentleness and grace, trusting not in your own power but in the mercy of God who has chosen you.

The prayer accompanying the Glove is a new composition.

#### Sceptre and Rod 2023<sup>137</sup>

Receive the Royal Sceptre, the ensign of kingly power and justice; and the Rod of equity and mercy, a symbol of covenant and peace. May the Spirit of the Lord which anointed Jesus at his baptism, so anoint you this day, that you might exercise authority with wisdom, and direct your counsels with grace;

#### Sceptre and Rod 1953<sup>138</sup>

Receive the Royal Sceptre, the ensign of kingly power and justice. [Receive] the Rod of equity and mercy. Be so merciful that you be not too remiss; so execute justice that you forget not mercy.

<sup>135</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, Commentary, 23. [↗](#)

<sup>136</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, The Authorised Liturgy, 18. [↗](#)

<sup>137</sup> Ibid., 19. [↗](#)

<sup>138</sup> KERSHAW, Coronation. [↗](#)

<p>that by your service and ministry to all your people, justice and mercy may be seen in all the earth: through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.</p>	<p>Punish the wicked, protect and cherish the just, and lead your people in the way wherein they should go.</p>
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The prayer accompanying the sceptre and rod has a further reference to “covenant”, as well as “anointing”, and another underlining of the understanding of “service and ministry” to the people which the King is to exercise. “Power”, excised earlier, is retained here.

Crown 2023 <sup>139</sup>	Crown 1953 <sup>140</sup>
<p>King of kings and Lord of lords, bless, we beseech thee, this Crown, and so sanctify thy servant Charles upon whose head this day thou dost place it for a sign of royal majesty, that he may be crowned with thy gracious favour and filled with abundant grace and all princely virtues; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who with thee and the Holy Spirit liveth and reigneth, supreme over all things, one God, world without end. Amen.</p>	<p>[O God the Crown of the faithful:] Bless we beseech thee this Crown, and so sanctify thy servant Elizabeth upon whose head this day thou dost place it for a sign of royal majesty, that she may be filled by thine abundant grace with all princely virtues: through [the King Eternal] Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.</p> <p>[God crown you with a crown of glory and righteousness, that having a right faith and manifold fruit of good works, you may obtain the crown of an everlasting kingdom by the gift of him whose kingdom endureth for ever. Amen.]</p>

<sup>139</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, The Authorised Liturgy, 18. [↗](#)

<sup>140</sup> KERSHAW, Coronation. [↗](#)

The prayer over the crown became shorter over time, from 1689 until 1953. The Crown was blessed in the *Liber Regalis*,<sup>141</sup> and after the Reformation for James I<sup>142</sup> and Charles I.<sup>143</sup> It was not blessed for James II,<sup>144</sup> but a prayer of blessing was used in 1953, as a result of Ratcliff's work.<sup>145</sup> It is therefore not quite correct of the commentary to assert that "this prayer of blessing was used at the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953"<sup>146</sup>. The prayer has the longer ending, with the interpolation "supreme over all things", reminiscent of Colossians 1:18 ("that in everything he might be pre-eminent") replacing "King Eternal". "God save the King" is now shouted, and this was followed by a prayer, which took various forms until 1953 and which is now omitted. Previously, the fanfare accompanying "God save the King" was followed by an anthem, latterly setting "Be strong and of a good courage" (Joshua 1:9). In 2023 there was a fanfare by Richard Strauss (the "Wiener Philharmoniker" fanfare), which is almost certainly the first piece by a non-British (including dominions and naturalised) composer within the body of the coronation since the Jommelli Sanctus of 1838.<sup>147</sup>

Until Elizabeth II, the presentation of the Bible followed the crowning. Then comes the Benediction, which has long been formed of multiple petitions: in 2023 these are shared among various Christian leaders.

<sup>141</sup> Cf. L. LEGG, Coronation Records, 96.

<sup>142</sup> Cf. John W. LEGG, The Coronation Order of King James I, 30.

<sup>143</sup> Cf. L. LEGG, Coronation Records, 261.

<sup>144</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 303. See EVERETT, English Coronation Rite, 14, on Sancroft's political theology as expressed in his recasting of this particular prayer.

<sup>145</sup> See BRADSHAW, Coronations 29 f.

<sup>146</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, Commentary, 25. [↗](#)

<sup>147</sup> Other orchestral music by foreign composers including Wagner has been played in the past. RANGE, Music and Ceremonial 282–286 notes that in 1911 the *Veni Creator* was described as "sung to the Ancient Plain-song attributed to Palestrina": in 1902 and from 1937 it was accompanied plainsong, and the intention of the attribution to Palestrina is unclear. Before that, it was sung to Anglican chant.



2023 <sup>148</sup>	1953 <sup>149</sup>
<p><i>Archbishop of Canterbury:</i></p> <p>The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you. The Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon you, and give you his peace.</p>	<p>The Lord bless you and keep you.</p>
<p><i>Greek Orthodox Archbishop of Thyateira &amp; Great Britain:</i></p> <p>The Lord protect you in all your ways and prosper all your work in his name.</p>	<p>The Lord protect you in all your ways and prosper all your handy-work. Amen.</p>
<p><i>Moderator of The Free Churches:</i></p> <p>The Lord give you hope and happiness, that you may inspire all your people in the imitation of his unchanging love.</p>	<p>The Lord give you faithful Parliaments and quiet Realms; sure defence against all enemies; fruitful lands and a prosperous industry; wise counsellors and upright magistrates; leaders of integrity in learning and labour; a devout, learned and useful clergy; honest peaceable and dutiful citizens. Amen.</p>
<p><i>Secretary General of Churches Together in England:</i></p> <p>The Lord grant that wisdom and knowledge will be the stability of your times, and the fear of the Lord your treasure.</p>	<p>May Wisdom and Knowledge be the Stability of your Times, and the fear of the Lord your Treasure. Amen.</p>

<sup>148</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, *The Authorised Liturgy*, 20. [↗](#)

<sup>149</sup> KERSHAW, *Coronation*. [↗](#)

*Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster:*

May God pour upon you the riches of his grace, keep you in his holy fear, prepare you for a happy eternity, and receive you at the last into immortal glory,

The Lord who hath made you Queen over these Peoples give you increase of grace, honour, and happiness in this world, and make you partaker of his eternal felicity in the world to come. Amen.

*Archbishop of Canterbury:*

... and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be with you and remain with you always. Amen.

The first part of the blessing was shortened for Edward VII and retained thus until Elizabeth II, having previously included the full “Aaronic blessing” (Numbers 6:24–26). The beginning is spoken by the Archbishop of York, and the conclusion by the Archbishop of Canterbury, the two Anglicans among the group. The blessing is now cast as one single prayer, uninterrupted by Amens, even though shared amongst the attendant clergy. The state of the nation reflected by the rather characteristically 1950s reference to “leaders of integrity in learning and labour”, and the 1953 deletion of the phrase “victorious fleets and armies” has to a large extent been left out entirely, and replaced by a reference to the “imitation of [the Lord’s] unchanging love”. The reference to death, and reigning in heaven, present both in the earlier collect and earlier ring-prayer, and removed from those places, is now here at the expanded portion of the prayer given to the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster. The anthem “O Lord grant the King a long life” by Thomas Weelkes (1576–1623), whose four hundredth anniversary of death is, like Byrd’s, in 2023, is sung.

### 4.8 *Enthroning and Homage*

The thrones in 2023 were not raised on a number of steps, fewer for the consort than the sovereign, as had been the case on previous occasions. The king’s throne was on one step, the queen’s on ground-level, all on a golden carpet.

Enthroning 2023 <sup>150</sup>	Enthroning 1953 <sup>151</sup>
<p>Stand firm, and hold fast from henceforth this seat of royal dignity, which is yours by the authority of Almighty God. May that same God, whose throne endures for ever, establish your throne in righteousness, that it may stand fast for evermore.</p>	<p>Stand firm, and hold fast from henceforth the seat and state of royal [and imperial dignity, which is [this day delivered unto you, in the Name and] by the Authority of Almighty God, [and by the hands of us the Bishops and servants of God, though unworthy.] And the Lord God Almighty, [whose ministers we are, and the stewards of his mysteries,] establish your Throne in righteousness, that it may stand fast for evermore. Amen.</p>

The prayer is significantly shorter, notably in the removal of the idea that it is through the bishops that the king is able to take his place on the throne. In removing the reference to the bishops, there is also removed the reference to their unworthiness. Previous rubrics directed that the enthroning, the “lifting up” of the sovereign, be carried out by the archbishops, bishops, and other peers.

The role of the Church is retained, however, inasmuch as the Archbishop is the first to pledge fealty to the crowned and enthroned king, followed by the Prince of Wales, and then the people. The homage of the peers, even in truncated form, is removed entirely. Because there were a number of people to pay homage, in previous years this was the location for various anthems, with several being programmed to be sung one after another.

<sup>150</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, *The Authorised Liturgy*, 21. [↗](#)

<sup>151</sup> KERSHAW, *Coronation*. [↗](#)

er, according to the required duration. Now there is one: Walford-Davies's *Confortare* which, despite its title, is in English.

The Homage of The People follows: The wording of the Archbishop's invitation to the "homage of the people" was changed between the publication of the first order of service and the day itself:

2023 <sup>152</sup>	Previous version <sup>153</sup>
I now invite those who wish to offer their support to do so, with a moment of private reflection, by joining in saying "God save King Charles" at the end, or, for those with the words before them, to recite them in full.	I call upon all persons of goodwill in The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and of the other Realms and the Territories to make their homage, in heart and voice, to their undoubted King, defender of all.

To this, "all who so desire, in the Abbey and elsewhere" reply: "I swear that I will pay true allegiance to Your Majesty, and to your heirs and successors according to law. So help me God."<sup>154</sup>

The commentary describes it thus:

The homage of peers alone has been replaced by the Homage of the People. The Archbishop will invite those who wish, from the United Kingdom and the other Realms both within the Abbey, and those watching and listening at home, to make their homage by sharing in the same words – a chorus of millions of voices enabled for the first time in history to participate in this solemn and joyful moment. This is a new and significant moment in the tradition of the Coronation. Never before in our history have the general public been offered such an opportunity to join with national figures in declaring their allegiance to a new Sovereign.<sup>155</sup>

<sup>152</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, *The Authorised Liturgy*, 22. [↗](#)

<sup>153</sup> Adam DURBIN, *Oath of allegiance wording changed for Coronation*, in: BBC News (5 May 2023). [↗](#)

<sup>154</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, *The Authorised Liturgy*, 22. [↗](#)

<sup>155</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, *Commentary*, 28. [↗](#)

The term “national figures” is an interesting one, especially as it places the “general public” in relation to such people. The idea is that, as those who are “national figures” to the extent that they have been invited to the coronation itself, despite the radically-reduced numbers of guests, make their homage, so others can do so at home, or wherever they happen to be watching. It might not be quite correct to suggest that never before in “our” history has something like this happened. Recounting the report given in James Balfour’s *Annals of the Scottish coronation of Charles I*, an article in the *Scottish Review* says that:

The Earl Marischal next went to the four corners of the platform, and there read to the Lord Lyon from a form in his hand, what is styled the ‘obligatory oath of the people.’ The form was this: ‘We swear, and by the holding up of our hands do promise, all subjection and loyalty to King Charles, our dread Sovereign; and as we wish God to be merciful unto us, shall be to His Majesty true and faithful, and be ever ready to bestow our lives, lands, and what else God hath given us, for the defence of his sacred Person and Crown.’ These words the Lyon King, at the dictation of the Earl Marischal, loudly repeated to the people, and those present held up their right hands and replied ‘Amen.’<sup>156</sup>

The commentary might have made mention of this Scottish custom, but it was either unknown or passed over in silence.

<sup>156</sup> The Coronation of Charles I at Holyrood in: *Scottish Review* 10 (1887) 266–322, here: 313.

### 4.9 Coronation of the Queen Consort

For the first time since 1937, the Coronation of the Queen takes place.

2023 <sup>157</sup>	1937 <sup>158</sup>
<p><b>Anointing</b></p> <p>Be your head anointed with holy oil.</p> <p>Almighty God, the fountain of all goodness; hear our prayer this day for thy servant Camilla, whom in thy name, and with all devotion, we consecrate our Queen. Make her strong in faith and love, defend her on every side, and guide her in truth and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.</p>	<p>Almighty God, the fountain of all goodness: Give ear, we beseech thee, to our prayers, [and multiply thy blessings upon this thy] servant Elizabeth, whom in thy Name, with all [humble] devotion, we consecrate our Queen; Defend her evermore [from all dangers, ghostly and bodily; Make her a great example of virtue and piety, and a blessing to the kingdom;] through Jesus Christ our Lord, [who liveth and reigneth with thee, O Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, world without end. Amen.]</p> <p><b>Anointing</b></p> <p>[In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Let the anointing with this Oil increase your honour, and the grace of God's Holy Spirit establish you, for ever and ever. Amen.]</p> <p>[O Most merciful God, pour out abundantly thy grace and blessing upon this thy Servant Queen ADELAIDE, so being sanctified by thy Holy Spirit, she may continue thy faithful and devout Servant unto her life's end, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.]</p>

<sup>157</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, The Authorised Liturgy, 22–24. [↗](#)

<sup>158</sup> KERSHAW, Coronation. [↗](#)

**Ring**

Receive this Ring, a symbol of royal dignity, and a sign of the covenant sworn this day. May thy servant Camilla, who wears this crown, be filled by thine abundant grace and with all princely virtues; reign in her heart, O King of love, that, being certain of thy protection, she may be crowned with thy gracious favour; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Crown**

May thy servant Camilla, who wears this crown, be filled by thine abundant grace and with all princely virtues; reign in her heart, O King of love, that, being certain of thy protection, she may be crowned with thy gracious favour; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Sceptre and Rod**

Receive the Royal Sceptre and the Rod of equity and mercy. May the Spirit guide you in wisdom and grace, that by your service and ministry, justice and mercy may be seen in all the earth.

**Ring**

Receive this Ring, the seal of a sincere Faith; and God, to whom belongeth all power and dignity, prosper you in this your honour, and grant you therein long to continue, fearing him always, and always doing such things as shall please him, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Crown**

Receive the Crown of glory, honour, and joy: And God, the Crown of the faithful, who by our Episcopal hands (though unworthy) doth this day set a Crown of pure Gold upon your Head, enrich your Royal Heart with his abundant grace, and crown you with all princely virtues in this life, and with everlasting gladness in the life that is to come, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Sceptre and Rod**

O Lord, the giver of all perfection: Grant unto this thy servant Elizabeth our Queen, that by the powerful and mild influence of her piety and virtue, she may adorn the high dignity which she hath obtained, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The rite has been re-arranged and prayers shortened. The anointing now takes place at the very beginning, and the language around privacy and sacredness which attended the commentary on the king's anointing are absent here in the service book. Instead, we read: "this anointing will happen without a screen or canopy to demonstrate the different nature of anointing a consort compared to a reigning sovereign, as this anointing is

at the permission of the Sovereign”<sup>159</sup>. In previous coronations of queens consort, four peeresses were to hold a canopy as the peers had done for the king. The differentiation which the commentary wishes to bring out is one which has been differently viewed in the past. Queen Caroline (George II) and Queen Charlotte (George III) were anointed on head and breast, directions being given to the “chief Lady Assistant” to open the queen’s dress for this purpose. Mary II as joint-sovereign was also anointed on the hands. From Queen Adelaide (William IV), queens consort have been anointed on the head alone. In 2023, the anointing happened while “Confortare” was sung, the words not being amplified, and the cameras showing only the end of the anointing, as the archbishop wiped his hands. The ring is again returned to the altar, rather than being worn, which is a further oddity when the wording of the commentary is considered: “bears the same symbolism of a ring exchanged in marriage, it is a symbol of promise, of commitment. It signifies covenant and agreement, an unbroken bond, without end. It ‘marries’ Consort to King, and them both to God in duty and to the People in loving service, and in turn acts as an assurance of God’s unfailing love.”<sup>160</sup> The prayer for the receiving of the crown has been shortened by the removal of episcopal references as with the king’s crown. It is interesting to note that the queen’s crown is not to be blessed, given the retention of the blessing of the crown from 1953. There was then no queen consort to be crowned, and so no crown to bless (or not to bless). This seems like an oversight. Finally, as the queen was enthroned, the anthem “Make a joyful noise unto the Lord” by Andrew Lloyd Webber was sung. The coronation of the queen by the Archbishop of Canterbury is another example of the increased prominence of that role: it has usually been performed by the archbishop of York or another bishop.

<sup>159</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, Commentary, 29. [↗](#)

<sup>160</sup> Ibid. [↗](#)



#### 4.10 *Liturgy of the Eucharist*

An offertory hymn is sung, “Christ is made the sure foundation”, the first of two hymns (an advance on the one used in 1953).<sup>161</sup> Bread and wine were brought to the king as he made his way behind the altar, through the Chapel of St Edward, removing the regalia, before returning to the chair of estate. The king touched the bread and flagon of wine before continuing on procession. The offertory prayer is retained in the same form as in earlier coronations, here entitled the “Prayer over the Gifts”.

Bless, O Lord, we beseech thee, these thy gifts, and sanctify them unto this holy use, that by them we may be made partakers of the Body and Blood of thine only-begotten Son Jesus Christ, and fed unto everlasting life of soul and body: And that thy servant King Charles may be enabled to the discharge of his weighty office, whereunto of thy great goodness thou hast called and appointed him. Grant this, O Lord, for Jesus Christ's sake, our only Mediator and Advocate. Amen.<sup>162</sup>

This is a curious survival from the *Liber Regalis* into the Reformation period and onwards. There is no offertory prayer/*super oblata* in the BCP tradition. However, the *Liber Regalis* had three prayers at this point, accompanying the offerings of bread and wine, and of gold, “Omnipotens Deus”, “Benedic, Domine”, and “Munera” (the present prayer).<sup>163</sup> These were retained for James I. For Charles I, they were reordered, with “Munera” coming first, followed by “Omnipotens Deus”, and then “Benedic, Domine”.<sup>164</sup> They were absent for James II because there was no communion, and in 1689 were reduced to two. Meanwhile, neither 1662 nor 1928 knows anything of offertory prayers, though CW permits the use of “Prayers at the Preparation of the Table”<sup>165</sup>. The commentary notes the prayer's provenance, from “one of the oldest and most important sources for the English Coronation service” and its use in 1953,<sup>166</sup> though oddly enough not its enduring presence on previous occasions. Though the prayer is undoubt-

<sup>161</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, *The Authorised Liturgy*, 25. [↗](#)

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*, 26. [↗](#)

<sup>163</sup> L. LEGG, *Coronation Records*, 104.

<sup>164</sup> Full texts and translations are in L. LEGG, *Coronation Records*, 104. 125. 269.

<sup>165</sup> CW, 215.

<sup>166</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, *Commentary*, 32. [↗](#)

edly a *super oblata* in origin, we should understand its persistence not as a unique survival of this genre of prayer, preserved until the late-twentieth century Church of England was once again able to adopt this form in its rites, but rather as sitting among the other blessings and prayer for the king, for things done by him or for him. True, it is interesting that the blessing of the oil in 1689 was very rapidly recast as a blessing of persons through the act of anointing, while this remained an overt blessing of objects. It is a question as to whether it was seen as a proleptic anticipation of what would take place in the eucharistic prayer, or a preparatory blessing making the bread and wine fit for “this holy use” in particular, namely the communion of the sovereign as well as the eucharistic action.<sup>167</sup> This prayer was however used in a modified form precisely as a *super oblata*, indeed the only one, in the 1954 South African BCP: “Bless, O Lord, we beseech thee, these thy gifts and sanctify them unto this holy use, that by them we may be fed unto everlasting life of soul and body; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.”<sup>168</sup> But ultimately, in the English Anglican, and specifically the coronation context, this is a “prayer over the offerings”, not a “prayer over the offerings”. Unlike in 1953, however, the prayer was not heard by anyone except the Archbishop: it was said quietly during the singing of the offertory hymn.

The Eucharistic Prayer is CW Prayer C.<sup>169</sup> Notable is the omission of the (optional) peace and hitherto of any public act of acknowledgement of sinfulness. The preface is proper, as has hitherto been the case (except for Victoria and Edward VII). It has been subject to various revisions.

<sup>167</sup> Ratcliff’s commentary makes no mention of this prayer at all.

<sup>168</sup> BCP-SA 1954, 233.

<sup>169</sup> CW, 220 f.

2023 <sup>170</sup>	1953 <sup>171</sup>
<p>Who hast at this time consecrated thy servant Charles to be our King, that, by the anointing of thy grace, he may be the Defender of thy Faith and the Protector of thy people; that, with him, we may learn the ways of service, compassion, and love, and that the good work which thou hast begun in him this day may be brought to completion in the day of Jesus Christ.</p>	<p>Who hast at this time consecrated thy servant Elizabeth to be our Queen, that by the anointing of thy grace she may be the Defender of thy Faith and the Protector of thy Church and People. [...]</p>

The preface lengthens that used in 1953, with further mention of service, and a conclusion taken from Philippians 1:6. This language of the good work begun, to be brought to completion, is used at the ordination of priests in the BCP 1549, 1552, 1662, in the form “that he may accomplish his work which he hath begun in you”<sup>172</sup>. Previous coronation prayers, used at the end of the Litany, included the desire that the sovereign should “persevere in good works”, but the language of the new proper preface, while in the first instance biblical, does strengthen the parallel between coronation and ordination.

After the preface, the Sanctus alone is sung, as directed in BCP 1662 directs.<sup>173</sup> In 2023 the text was a mixture of Latin and English “Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus; holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts, heaven and earth are full of thy glory. Glory be to thee, O Lord most high.” CW allows the Benedictus to be added here as an option<sup>174</sup> but this has not been taken. There

<sup>170</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, *The Authorised Liturgy*, 26. [↗](#)

<sup>171</sup> KERSHAW, *Coronation*. [↗](#)

<sup>172</sup> Frank E. BRIGHTMAN, *The English Rite*, vol. 2, London 1915, 988 f. This text is also used at Roman Catholic ordinations after the promises of obedience, in the form “May God who has begun the good work in you bring it to fulfillment.” *The Rites of the Catholic Church as Revised by the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council*, Vol. 2, New York 1980, 65.

<sup>173</sup> Cf. BCP 1662, 255. BCP 1928, 375 allows the Benedictus to follow here, as “an anthem”.

<sup>174</sup> CW, 219.

are also optional acclamations in CW, which have not been used. The congregation was directed to stand: in 1953 they had knelt. The *Lord's Prayer* follows, introduced "Each in our own preferred language, let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us." For this, all were directed to "kneel or sit". The *Agnus Dei* was then sung. The *Agnus Dei* is not in BCP 1662: the coronation order of James I does not mention it; it has not been otherwise sung in those for which the orders are extant since the Reformation. CW allows its use "as the bread is broken"<sup>175</sup>, the place it takes here. The communion of the archbishop, the two assistant bishops was shown on television, and that of the king and queen could be seen in the distance with the cameras showing the choir in the foreground, and the king and queen by the altar in the background. In 1953 and 1937, the cameras had definitively cut away at this point, a similar view of the reception of holy communion being taken as of the anointing. The king and queen received holy communion while the *Agnus Dei* was sung, meaning that musically-speaking it takes the place of Vaughan Williams's "O Taste and See". That also occupied the position of a communion antiphon, which is not filled here. None of the invitations to communion in CW is used: previous coronations had the anomaly that the words "Draw near with faith, and take this holy Sacrament to your comfort" were used, with no one except the king and queen and some of the attendant bishops being actually permitted to do so. After communion, CW allows a proper prayer, or other options to be used: the *Prayer after Communion* follows.

O Almighty Lord, and everlasting God, vouchsafe, we beseech thee, to direct, sanctify and govern both our hearts and bodies, in the ways of thy laws, and in the works of thy commandments; that through thy most mighty protection, both here and ever, we may be preserved in body and soul; through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.<sup>176</sup>

The commentary describes this as "a Collect from the Service of Holy Communion in the Book of Common Prayer"<sup>177</sup>. In BCP 1662 it is not in fact from the communion service, but rather one of those to be used at

<sup>175</sup> CW, 223.

<sup>176</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, *The Authorised Liturgy*, 30. [↗](#)

<sup>177</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, *Commentary*, 38. [↗](#)

antecommunion, i. e. when holy communion does not take place.<sup>178</sup> However, it is also used at the end of the BCP 1662 Confirmation rite, before the concluding blessing.<sup>179</sup> Textually, this prayer links the coronation with the BCP confirmation rite, arguably more strongly than the link drawn by the preface with the ordination rite, since the language there of the “good work begun” is biblical before it is liturgical. There is, though, a further royal link in that this collect, “O Almighty Lord” is one of the BCP communion service texts for King Charles I on 30 January. The 2023 coronation service offers textual links with the rites of ordination and confirmation. In the broader liturgical tradition, the act of anointing does the same, as well as including baptism and other acts of blessing. A detailed discussion of the view of kingship as quasi-sacramental, even quasi-priestly is beyond the scope of this essay, but the 2023 rites seem to have come down on the side of the view expressed by Angenendt, that it is not the anointing of ordination or consecration, but baptismal anointing, which forms the closest parallel, conceptually and liturgically, for the ritual shaping of the anointing of kings.<sup>180</sup> Hence the repeated stressing of the liturgical text, and of the commentary, that the coronation is to do with service.

The *Final Blessing* is introduced with versicles and responses: “Our help is in the Name of the Lord / Who hath made heaven and earth. Blessed be the Name of the Lord / Now and henceforth, world without end.”<sup>181</sup> This, and the *Preface Dialogue*, are one of the few texts for the congregation to say. The text of the blessing itself is found in various Anglican resources, including appearing as J89 (for Ascension) in *New Patterns for Worship*.<sup>182</sup> Here, the words “rest upon you, and all whom you serve, this day, and all your days” are added. The blessing is concluded with the “Amen” by Orlando Gibbons, and there follows the hymn, “Praise, my soul, the King of heaven”. The service has not yet concluded: there is no dismissal. A further anthem is sung, “The King shall rejoice in thy strength” by

<sup>178</sup> Cf. BCP 1662, 260.

<sup>179</sup> Cf. BCP 1662, 300.

<sup>180</sup> Cf. ANGENENDT, *Rex et Sacerdos*, 118: “Nicht die Weihesalbungen, sondern die Taufsalbungen bildeten in gedanklicher wie in liturgischer Hinsicht die nächste Parallele, um die Königssalbung rituell auszugestalten.”

<sup>181</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, *The Authorised Liturgy*, 38. [↗](#)

<sup>182</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, *New Patterns of Worship*. J Conclusion: J89. [↗](#)

William Boyce, followed by the *Te Deum* (William Walton) during which the final vesting takes place.<sup>183</sup> In 1953, the sovereign returned to the throne after communion, but in 2023 after communion there was only the change in vesture followed by the recession. In 2023, while the anthem and *Te Deum* were sung, they functioned as something of a musical interlude, the clergy emerging to form up for the procession towards the end it, and the king and queen remaining in the St Edward chapel behind the altar-screen, while an organ improvisation was played, leading up to a fanfare and the National Anthem. The king wore the crown and purple surcoat, carrying the orb and sceptre, followed by the queen in crown and robe. Finally, the National Anthem was sung, while the King and Queen processed out, followed musically by Elgar's *Pomp and Circumstance number 4*. Going to the west door, he greeted "Faith Leaders & Representatives and The Governors-General" assembled inside. The communities represented (Jewish, Hindu, Sikh, Muslim, Buddhist) deliver in unison a greeting: "Your Majesty, as neighbours in faith, we acknowledge the value of public service. We unite with people of all faiths and beliefs in thanksgiving, and in service with you for the common good."<sup>184</sup> These words were covered on television by the recessional music and could not be heard. From the beginning of "I was glad" at to the king's departure from the West door, the coronation lasted just over two hours.

## 5 *Reviewing 2023 in Light of Past Proposals for Change*

Bradshaw,<sup>185</sup> Buchanan,<sup>186</sup> and Strong<sup>187</sup> each suggested areas for revision of the coronation service which can be measured against what appeared in 2023. It will be convenient to group them under the five headings put forward by Bradshaw.

<sup>183</sup> Cf. THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, *The Authorised Liturgy*, 38–40. [↗](#)

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.*, 41. [↗](#)

<sup>185</sup> Cf. BRADSHAW, *Coronations*, 30 f.

<sup>186</sup> Cf. BUCHANAN, *The Next Coronation*, 34–44.

<sup>187</sup> Cf. STRONG, *Coronation*, 498–501.

### 5.1 *Ecumenical and Interfaith Participation*

Bradshaw writes: "In today's climate, this issue cannot, and should not, be avoided."<sup>188</sup> Buchanan suggests that "it would certainly be possible for leaders of other denominations to read the scriptures, to present one or two of the regalia, to lead intercessions, to assist with the distribution of communion, and even, if we are allowed to dream, to preach."<sup>189</sup> As we have seen, some of these steps have been taken, and not only applied to leaders of other denominations. The service remains Anglican and eucharistic, but there have been three specific steps taken, and attention drawn to these steps, to further ecumenical and interfaith participation. The first is in the presentation of the *regalia* which do not incorporate specifically Christian symbols: these regalia have been in a sense secularized, politicized. The second is the participation of other Christian leaders in the blessing. The third is the greeting of the "faith leaders and representatives" at the end of the service. A fourth element is the reading of the epistle by the Prime Minister, who happens to be a Hindu, but although this has interfaith implications, it is really a matter of political and social conventions developing in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. One of Strong's suggestions which has been taken up, although not quite as he proposed it, is the concluding meeting with interfaith leaders. Strong suggests that this could happen in Westminster Hall, as a "solution to many of the problems thrown up by what is now a multi-faith and multicultural society"<sup>190</sup>, the presumption being, I take it, that such figures would not wish, or would find it otherwise inappropriate, to attend an Anglican eucharist. Such difficulties had evidently been overcome, at least to the extent that it happened at the West Door of the Abbey.

### 5.2 *The Coronation Oath and its relation to the claims made for the Church of England*

The content of the oath is not really a matter for liturgical studies, and it, and the accession oath, remain unchanged. However, the introduction to

<sup>188</sup> BRADSHAW, Coronations, 30.

<sup>189</sup> BUCHANAN, The Next Coronation, 41.

<sup>190</sup> STRONG, Coronation, 499.

it, expanding the former question “is Your Majesty willing to take the oath”, makes reference to those of “all faiths and beliefs”, a distinction between faith and belief which arguable includes non-belief. A way has been found, as Bradshaw suggested, for the oath to “affirm a positive role for the Church of England within the nation, without sounding so exclusive of other churches and faiths”, without changing the oath itself. Buchanan is chiefly concerned with questions surrounding disestablishment of the Church of England, but does note the overall “quasi-sacramental” character of the anointing as marking a distinction between the “monarchical task” as a whole, and the role of Supreme Governor of the Church of England as a discrete part of that. Since both the oath and anointing are present, but disestablishment has not taken place, this question will be one for future discussion.

### 5.3 *The Eucharistic context*

Bradshaw, Buchanan, and Strong all argued for an expansion of the liturgy of the word, and the return of the sermon. The first of these has not happened, and the changing of the traditional Gospel without explanation is an indication that the contents of this portion of the liturgy was certainly able to be revised. We must therefore assume that a decision was taken not to expand it. Buchanan also notes that the previous readings “look more like texts for Christians living under an alien monarchy than for super-royalist ones”<sup>191</sup>. That in itself did not make them inappropriate, indeed the enduring presence of those texts suggests a fascinating tension between the rite and its implications, and perhaps functioned as a further example of the coronation as effected, organised, and performed by the clergy rather than by the monarch. The sermon is restored, though. Bradshaw and Strong also suggest that the homage could be moved out of the rite altogether, in a reverse of what happened with the Mandatum, or foot-washing ceremony in the Roman Rite for Maundy Thursday, when instead of being conceived of as a separate occasion (not simply as separate from the Eucharistic liturgy but as to be carried out in another place) it was moved—albeit as an option—into the Mass itself.<sup>192</sup> For Bradshaw,

<sup>191</sup> BUCHANAN, *The Next Coronation*, 40.

<sup>192</sup> Cf. MRom 1944, 170; MRom <sup>3</sup>2002, 300 f.



this is a possibility related to shortening proceedings if necessary; for Strong, it would have been a way to accommodate the homage of the many life peers (which they are not making), and to provide for an opportunity to take up Clement Attlee's idea of the Speaker of the House of Commons rendering homage as the "common man".<sup>193</sup> In any case, this has not happened, although the "homage of the common man" is in fact happening, recast as it is as the "homage of the people." Moreover, Strong suggests that "the fruits of technological advance" could lead to "the *recognitio* and other parts of the service" being "actions in which people gathered in the public squares of the great urban centres of the country could take part"<sup>194</sup>. That such public acts did not take place is partly down, it seems, to the very late publication of the order of service, and the consequent realisation that (unless news of this element had already been communicated to the relevant authorities and bodies in good time) there was a week to plan something which might, without great enthusiasm, have been something of an anticlimax.

One further suggestion which has been taken up is Buchanan's on the placing of the "special ceremonies" after the liturgy of the word, although since in 1953 only the recognition, oath, and presentation of the bible happened before the readings, which, with the re-ordering of these elements, remains the case in 2023, this may be better described as a suggestion to keep something rather than to change something. Buchanan then raises the question of "the place of intercessions", of which there are none in 2023 unless the blessing involving the Christian leaders is counted as such. Though Bradshaw refers to cultural and liturgical changes,<sup>195</sup> Buchanan explores specifically the possibility of using "a modern eucharistic liturgy"<sup>196</sup>. The assumptions he quite reasonably makes, given the provision which *Common Worship* would come to offer, involve the sharing of the peace, which he acknowledges is unlikely (indeed, it is not happening) but also have to do with the language itself. Buchanan appears to assume that a "modern liturgy" must involve "modern language", whereas CW pro-

<sup>193</sup> STRONG, Coronation, 499.

<sup>194</sup> Ibid., 500.

<sup>195</sup> Cf. BRADSHAW, Coronations, 30.

<sup>196</sup> Cf. BUCHANAN, The Next Coronation, 40.

vides for both contemporary and traditional language, and it is the latter which has been chosen. The “offertory prayer” is a subject of concern for both Bradshaw and Buchanan: it is reckoned by Bradshaw to be “out of line with current trends in eucharistic revision”,<sup>197</sup> and Buchanan asserts that it “would have to go”,<sup>198</sup> a view which has not been borne out by the provision made in CW: the prayer is retained, although, as above, it is a matter of discussion about how far it is to be understood as an offertory prayer in the normal liturgical sense, and how far it is a further recognition of a particular action in the coronation service itself. The concluding suggestion which all three make, that the restriction on the reception of holy communion, being “unusual in modern eucharistic practice”, should be removed, has similarly not been taken up. Indeed, Buchanan suggests that an “‘open’ communion rite which, having invited all, then discovers that the ‘great and the good’ of the land are not all Christian communicants’ would be preferable to a ‘protected privileged communion of certain interested parties’”.<sup>199</sup> This possibility has been definitively rejected in 2023.

#### 5.4 *Congregational participation*

The 1953 service “had the appearance of a rite performed by the clergy at which the congregation were mere spectators”<sup>200</sup>, a familiar criticism of older liturgical forms in the West. This would be alleviated by more congregational singing and congregational prayer for the sovereign. There is indeed a second hymn, plus the National Anthem, but the absence of any congregational texts for prayer apart from the Lord’s Prayer is very striking. This is especially true in view of the fact that earlier, prayer book services, did have those texts for congregational speaking, even if much else was sung by the choir or spoken by the clergy. Bradshaw points out that of all choices, the litany would be the appropriate vehicle for this, though its past movement around the service has not helped to cement this idea,<sup>201</sup>

<sup>197</sup> BRADSHAW, *Coronations*, 30.

<sup>198</sup> BUCHANAN, *The Next Coronation*, 40.

<sup>199</sup> *Ibid.*, 42.

<sup>200</sup> BRADSHAW, *Coronations*, 30.

<sup>201</sup> *Ibid.*

but in 2023 it was absent altogether. The other congregational text is the “homage of the people”, but this is intended for “All who so desire, in the Abbey, and elsewhere” to “say together”:<sup>202</sup> participation is invited, but not assumed. The preface dialogue and introduction to the blessing provide some further opportunities for congregational participation, but none of the collective texts in the Book of Common Prayer, such as the Prayer of Humble Access became in the twentieth century, has been used, and neither has the option been taken to use the acclamations available in *Common Worship* in the course of the Eucharistic Prayer. Possibilities for congregational participation, as for the expansion of the liturgy of the word, were therefore available for consideration, and have been decided against.

### 5.5 *The Anointing*

Bradshaw argues for a return to the “most ancient – and Old Testament – practice of anointing the head alone”,<sup>203</sup> and to the keeling position adopted before Charles I. Neither of these suggestions has been adopted. He also recommends a re-writing of the anointing prayer itself, noting the removal of “most of the rich language of the earlier version” which happened in 1689.<sup>204</sup> Though the prayer has been rewritten, there is little evidence of a reach to previous sources for inspiration. Finally, Bradshaw suggest that the rewriting will “involve making a decision as to whether the oil is to be consecrated beforehand or during this prayer, or whether the sovereign alone and not the material element is to be blessed”<sup>205</sup>. In fact, there is the apparent anomaly that the oil, consecrated beforehand, was blessed again; moreover, both “blessing” and “sanctification” are directed to the oil, and not the king.

The series of proposals examined above have not, as a whole, been adopted. Indeed, those which have been are the ones related primarily to interfaith/ecumenical and general popular participation in the state-focused acts of the presentation of regalia and the homage. From the perspective of liturgical studies, though, the meaning and content of liturgical

<sup>202</sup> THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, *The Authorised Liturgy*, 22. [↗](#)

<sup>203</sup> BRADSHAW, *Coronations*, 31.

<sup>204</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>205</sup> *Ibid.*

participation is, and has long been, a subject of discussion, and the idea that the congregation should participate more in Anglican Eucharistic liturgy by speaking is not a recent one. Looking for example at the General Confession, we see that BCP 1662 and earlier indicate that this is to be made “in the name of all those that are minded to receive the holy Communion, by one of the Ministers”<sup>206</sup>. However, there did exist a degree of disagreement about whether it was satisfactory to have a text introduced with the words “make your humble confession to Almighty God, meekly kneeling upon your knees” which were followed by a minister speaking alone on behalf of those who had just been invited to make their confession. As the Durham Book shows, prior to 1662 both John Cosin individually and the Bishops’ Reply to the Presbyterians suggested that the people could “say ye words of yt Confession after ye Minister.”<sup>207</sup> In the event, these proposals were not adopted, but the sentiment did not disappear: the 1927 book presented to Convocation permitted an alternative form of confession, not on Sundays, and “at the discretion of the priest”, to be said by “the Minister and people together”<sup>208</sup>. BCP 1928 opened the way for those on whose behalf the confession was being made to join in: “Then shall this general Confession be begun, in the name of all those that are minded to receive the Holy Communion, by the Priest or one of the Ministers.”<sup>209</sup> The use of “be begun” instead of “be made” is the operative distinction, and the rubric concludes “both he and all the people kneeling humbly upon their knees, and saying.” The recordings of the coronations of George VI and Elizabeth II clearly indicate that the confession was said by more than just the Archbishop alone.<sup>210</sup> It would have been liturgically incoherent to have a prayer of preparation for holy communion spoken by those who were definitely not going to receive it, but other traditional-lan-

<sup>206</sup> BRIGHTMAN, *The English Rite*, vol. 2, 681. 696.

<sup>207</sup> Geoffrey J. CUMING (ed.), *The Durham Book being the First Draft of Revision of the Book of Common Prayer in 1661*, London 1961 [Reprint: 1975], 161.

<sup>208</sup> *The Book of Common Prayer: The Book of 1662 with permissive additions and deviations approved in 1927*, Oxford 1927, 241.

<sup>209</sup> BCP 1928, 365.

<sup>210</sup> It is difficult accurately to discern from the recordings, but it appears to have been said by more people than those who would actually receive holy communion, i. e. the archbishop and assistant bishops, and the royal couple.

guage texts in CW, in particular those offered in relation to the acknowledgement of sin at the beginning of Order One, could have been retained. The congregation were, however, given the opportunity to make the responses at the readings, preface, and blessing, as well as to sing hymns, but it is nevertheless noteworthy that the variety of elements which the use of Common Worship could have employed were not used.

In 1953 and earlier, texts which could have been sung or spoken by the congregation were sung by the choir, although Range suggests that the Creed had historically been fairly often spoken as well as sung.<sup>211</sup> It is true that speaking is not the only form of participation: the following paragraphs will go on to address how liturgists understand what it means to take into account participants' different backgrounds and formation. But the voices to be heard in the abbey in speech were overwhelmingly the clergy (principally the archbishop of Canterbury), to a much lesser extent the king (and not the queen, who did not have anything of her own to say), and a few others (the Prime Minister, the presenters of the regalia). It is consistent to suggest that this might be down to the idea of the coronation not as something to be seen throughout the country and across the world – participating by viewing from home – rather than as something intended primarily to involve those physically present in the liturgical space, with viewers then only a secondary consideration. In a sense, this is a very contemporary (post-Covid 19 even) adaptation of the liturgy, and in another it is the logical conclusion of broadcast liturgy. There is furthermore something to explore in the idea that singing hymns carries the same liturgical, theological, participatory weight and significance as the prayers which were formerly the aural hallmark of the Anglican Eucharist.

## 6 *How and Why Rites Change: A Comparative View*

From what perspective, then, might we consider the adaptations that have been made? As unique as the coronation rite is in its own way, on another view it is another example of a "ritual Mass", which we can define as "one that performs the celebration of a sacrament (baptism, confirmation, ordination, anointing of the sick, marriage), the blessing of an abbot or ab-

<sup>211</sup> Cf. RANGE, *Music and Ceremonial*, 282.

bess, the consecration of a virgin, a religious profession, the consecration of chrism and the blessing of the oils”<sup>212</sup>. Of this list, within contemporary Roman Catholic liturgical theology, some of those rites can be performed outside Mass (e. g. baptism). A “ritual Mass” is not strictly speaking part of the Anglican liturgical vocabulary, but it can be clearly seen how liturgical development from the twentieth century onwards allows forms such as the Roman Rite’s “Order of Celebrating Matrimony within Mass” to be compared straightforwardly with Common Worship’s “Marriage Service within a Celebration of Holy Communion”. Ritual Masses, in the Roman Catholic context, can and do require adaptations to and alterations of the usual way in which Mass is celebrated day by day. The first of these has to do with what the liturgical books themselves demand, and the ways in which the rites being celebrated within the Mass are understood to relate to the Mass. For example, in a postconciliar nuptial Mass, the penitential rite is omitted at the beginning.<sup>213</sup> This is not the only occasion on which this may happen, but it is an observable difference from the norm. On this point, the historical texts of the English coronation rites tend to fit the pattern that, whatever other elements are included or left out, the celebration of the Eucharist has been left largely untouched, both as regards the smaller field of coronation services, and also in relation to the BCP 1662 form of the communion service as printed for wider use. What we have seen in 2023 is that, while the liturgical form of the Eucharist is, obviously, different from what came before, it also differs from what CW provides for everyone else to use. This brings us to the second kind of adaptation inherent in a ritual Mass, which has to do with the fact that these are always concrete, individual occasions, involving different people with different backgrounds who have come together for a particular purpose; moreover, those diverse individuals may well have different understandings of the meaning or even the value of what is taking place, as the illustration of a nuptial Mass might suggest. Anscar Chupungco, writing in a very different context, observed of the difference between Sunday masses and ritual masses that

<sup>212</sup> Days of the Lord. The Liturgical Year, vol. 3: Easter Triduum/Easter Season [trans. by Greg LANAVE – Donald MOLLOY], Collegeville/MN 1993, 307.

<sup>213</sup> Cf. The Order of Celebrating Matrimony. English Translation according to the Second Typical Edition, London 2013, 22 (no. 53).

parish liturgists often become frustrated by the assembly's reduced participation in ritual masses, especially marriage. The situation calls for methodological analysis. The theological content of every mass is, of course, the same. However, ritual masses are not Sunday masses. The former concentrates on the persons who receive the sacrament or sacramental in the ambit of the eucharist, the latter on the parish community gathered together on Sunday to encounter the risen Lord in word and sacrament. Hence, the mode of participating in one differs from the other. Moreover, the Sunday assembly is normally homogeneous, whereas the assembly at ritual masses is often an heterogeneous group of people invited by the interested party for the occasion. To expect the assembly at ritual masses to participate as if it were a normal Sunday assembly of parishioners is indeed to court frustration. Some degree of participation at all liturgical celebrations is certainly required. However, it is not necessary every time we celebrate ritual and funeral masses to aim at that full, active, and intelligent participation which we normally expect from a Sunday assembly.<sup>214</sup>

Chupungco has been quoted at length here for two reasons. First, because there are aspects of previous coronations which have raised concerns for liturgists of the present day, most notably the mode of receiving holy communion (restricted to the celebrant and assistants, and the king and queen), and the role of the congregation. This passage hints at a rationale for, if not a resolution, then at least a framework of understanding how this might or might not be appropriate. Secondly, because here and elsewhere in his writing, Chupungco foregrounds the importance of liturgical adaptation, which he calls a "theological imperative arising from the event of the incarnation"<sup>215</sup>. The timeless Gospel is experienced in a particular context: a culture cannot be transformed if it is ignored. The liturgical form is conceived of here as a beginning, not an end. Theological and liturgical discernment are required: how these are appropriately exercised according to the norms of the ecclesial community in question differs according to the traditions of those communities. Those present at a coronation are certainly a "heterogeneous group of people invited by the interested party for the occasion", and the context in which a coronation takes place, per-

<sup>214</sup> Anscar CHUPUNGCO, *Liturgies of the Future*, Eugene/OR 1982 [Reprint: 2006], 39.

<sup>215</sup> ID., *Cultural Adaptation of the Liturgy*, Eugene/OR 1982 [Reprint: 2006], 87.

haps especially when broadcast, extends that group of people to the entire nation and beyond. Those who put together the liturgy for the coronation of 2023 had many precedents with which to engage. As we have seen, in many cases the gestures were retained, where the texts were not. In the liturgical form of the Eucharist, moreover, it was decided that, unlike on previous occasions, the liturgical structures provided for regular use by the Church of England ought to be adapted for this occasion. Liturgical development in the West, from the twentieth century onwards, has increased liturgical flexibility: the sacraments and other rites, in both the Roman Catholic and Anglican traditions, interweave with the elements of the eucharistic rite in ways which do not simply involve, for example, adding the stages of a marriage service to a eucharist. Instead, a third thing results: a celebration of the marriage within the context of the Eucharist is a discrete entity. In that sense, then, the omission of parts of the liturgy which might, on other occasions, have been said by (or in the name of) the people is far from unprecedented, or unexpected. And the recasting of so many of the texts, not to mention the new choice of scriptural readings in 2023, is, along with that, an example of the kind of adaptation which Chupungco describes. However, noting the changes and retentions still leaves open the question of why those decisions were taken.

Historical examples show that, when writing about a coronation at the time it occurs, information is so rarely available about the decisions taken. Many elements are pieced together much later, from detailed research into letters, diaries, other papers, which may be under embargo, or unreleased, or otherwise unavailable to researchers. Many assumptions can be made, and it may well be that opportunity is taken to clarify some of the questions raised in this study with those involved at some point in the future. There is, however, one recent analogous situation with which to compare this process: although the Popes are no longer crowned, there remains a mass of inauguration at the beginning of the pontificate. The texts and rites for this fall into three categories: those unique to this particular celebration; those for the day or season; those common to other celebrations of this kind. In arranging the order of what takes place, a pope may make formal changes which, of course, would not have a retroactive effect but would at least in theory guide, if not bind, his successor. Pope Paul VI had himself been crowned in 1963, and in his Apostolic Con-



stitution *Romani Pontifici eligendo* of 1975 laid down that his successor would be too: “Pontifex demum per Cardinalem Protodiaconum coronatur.”<sup>216</sup> Paul VI made no mention of the changes to the liturgy over which he had presided as pope, and his successor, John Paul I, immediately abandoned the form and idea of coronation altogether. His successor John Paul II referred simply to the “solemn ceremony of the inauguration of the Pontificate”<sup>217</sup>, the term which has remained in use. Added to the wishes of previous popes and their expression in law, there would also be input from the masters of ceremonies and musicians, as well as, we presume, areas in which the newly-elected pope would have a view. The basis is the *Ordo Rituum pro Ministerii Petrini Initio Romae Episcopi*.<sup>218</sup> This, as noted, is subject to alteration, as can be seen from the differences in the table below between the inaugural Masses of Benedict XVI and Francis.

Benedict XVI	Francis
<b>Station at the Trophaeum</b>	<b>Station at the Trophaeum</b>
Laudes Regiae	Tu es Petrus Laudes Regiae  Imposition of the Pallium Imposition of the Ring Homage  Introit <i>Justus ut palma</i> (for St Joseph)*
<b>Introductory Rites</b>	<b>Introductory Rites</b>
Gloria (de Angelis)	Gloria (de Angelis)
Collect	Collect

<sup>216</sup> PAUL VI, *Constitutio apostolica Romani Pontifici eligendo* (1 October 1975), in: AAS 67 (1975) 609–645, here: 645 (no. 92).

<sup>217</sup> JOHN PAUL II, *Constitutio apostolica Universi Dominici grecis* (22 February 1996), in: AAS 88 (1996) 305–343, here: 342 (no. 92).

<sup>218</sup> Cf. OFFICIUM DE LITURGICIS CELEBRATIONIBUS SUMMI PONTIFICI, *Ordo Rituum pro Ministerii Petrini Initio Romae Episcopi*, Vatican City 2005.

**Liturgy of the Word**

Reading (Acts 4:8–12)

Psalm (117, Latin)

Reading (1 Peter 5:1-5,10–11)

Gospel acclamation (Alleluia, John 21:3 and 21:6)

Gospel (John 21:15–19, Latin and Greek)

Imposition of the Pallium

Imposition of the Ring

Homage

Tu es Petrus

Homily

Creed (Credo III)

Prayer of the Faithful

**Liturgy of the Eucharist**

Offertory Chant (1 Cor 13:1–8,13)

Sanctus (de Angelis)

Eucharistic Prayer I (Latin) (Acclamation: *Salvator mundi*)

Lord's Prayer

Peace

Agnus Dei (de Angelis)

Communion chant (Psalm 33:2–11, R John 21:12; Psalm 22, R Mt 16:16)

**Concluding Rites**

Solemn Blessing (Dominus virtutum)

Dismissal

**Liturgy of the Word**

Reading (2 Samuel 7:4-5,12-14,16), English

Psalm 88 (Italian, Latin Response)

Reading (Romans 4:14,16-18,22, Spanish)

Gospel Acclamation (*Laus tibi Christe*, Ps 83:5, Latin)

Gospel (Matthew 1:16,18–21,24a, Greek only)

Homily

Creed (Credo III)

Prayer of the Faithful

**Liturgy of the Eucharist**

Offertory Chant (Matthew 16:19 – *Tu es pastor ovium*)

Sanctus (de Angelis)

Eucharistic Prayer I (Latin) (Acclamation: *Mortem tuam*)

Lord's Prayer

Peace

Agnus Dei (de Angelis)

Communion chant (Mt 1:20)

Ave verum corpus (chant)

**Concluding Rites**

Solemn Blessing (*Sit nomen Domini*)

Dismissal

Salve Regina\*

Te Deum\*

Among the notable differences are the texts for the readings: unlike the coronation, this Mass can be tied to the liturgy of the day and of the season, in the case of Pope Francis the Solemnity of St Joseph taking place during Lent, hence the readings and Gospel acclamation. Some of the rites were moved: the imposition of the pallium and ring moved to before the beginning of the Mass; other elements were added: the *Salve Regina* and *Te Deum* happened at the conclusion. Some of these alterations were made shortly before Benedict XVI's resignation took effect. The motivation behind this was explained by the then master of ceremonies, Guido Marini:

in 2005 the Holy Father had a first hand experience of the celebrations for the beginning of the Pontificate. That experience, together with the ensuing reflection, probably suggested some intervention that aspired to improving the text, in the logic of its harmonious development. Secondly, with this act he intends to pursue the line of certain modifications to papal liturgies made in recent years; in other words, to distinguish more clearly between the celebration of Holy Mass and other rites that are not strictly speaking part of it. I am referring, for example, to the rite of canonization, to the rite of the resurrexit on Easter Sunday, and to the imposition of the pallium upon new metropolitan archbishops.<sup>219</sup>

Here is a publicly explained rationale for alterations made in one of the few rites comparable to the coronation. The most important difference is that it is most unlikely, although it would be well-nigh impossible to know whether such reflections had been engaged in, that a British monarch would attempt to regulate the coronation of his or her successor. The Earl Marshal, the archbishop of Canterbury, and others, have the task of preparing the service and time enough in which to do so. However, especially on those occasions in which the personnel remain the same, but also for more general planning, there are both practical and theological considerations at work here. There is the "logic of harmonious development", which has probably as much to do with logistics as with liturgy, and also the proper place of certain rites, here those which are peculiar to the papacy,

<sup>219</sup> OFFICE FOR THE LITURGICAL CELEBRATIONS OF THE SUPREME PONTIFF, *Modifications made to rites for the beginning of the pontificate* (22 February 2013). [↗](#)

in relation to the theology of the liturgy, specifically of the Eucharist. The nature of the Roman Catholic Mass is such that there exist other options within the framework of those chosen: other Eucharistic Prayers, as an obvious example, but also other choices for the antiphons and chants, and for the ordinary of the Mass. At both inaugural masses, *Missa de Angelis* was sung together with Credo III, but other music, congregational or choral, is available. Other elements could be omitted in future: the singing of the *Laudes Regiae* is not essential to the rite, and neither are the *Salve Regina* and *Te Deum*; one of the readings before the Gospel could in theory be omitted, as could the dual singing of the Gospel in Latin and Greek (for Pope Francis, only Greek was used). It is possible, though vanishingly improbable, that there could be no Mass at all. But the uniqueness of the specifically papal elements are tied to the universality of the Roman Catholic rite of Mass: whatever choices were made, the Mass would, despite the pope's authority in liturgical and canonical matters, be essentially that celebrated in the Roman Rite across the world.

## 7 *Seeing and Participating in Coronations*

Chupungco noted that those present at a ritual Mass constitute a "heterogeneous group of people invited by the interested party for the occasion", and in his later writing he addressed the logical outcome of this arising from the use of mass media in broadcasting the liturgy.<sup>220</sup> On this matter, he opined that "while transmission should be aesthetic, engaging, and enhanced by special effects, it is focused on the word and the sacrament"<sup>221</sup>. He also went on to argue that "[a]s much as possible the word of God should be broadcast in its entirety and the important moments of the sacramental rite should be faithfully recorded"<sup>222</sup>. What can we make of this in light of the 2023 coronation? Throughout the history of coronations, the representation of the event to those who were not physically present has been of great importance. Various commentators throughout history have noted the private nature of the coronation service, in the sense that partic-

<sup>220</sup> See Anscar CHUPUNGO, *What, then, is Liturgy? Musings and Memoir*, Collegeville/MN 2010, 228–231.

<sup>221</sup> *Ibid.*, 231.

<sup>222</sup> *Ibid.*

ipation or presence in the Abbey is by invitation, and even the Court of Claims, which continues to assess the claims of particular individuals or bodies to exercise certain roles in the coronation, would be subject in the end to the monarch's decision (Caroline of Brunswick, consort of George IV, found all possible points of entry to Westminster Abbey barred to her).<sup>223</sup> As well as private it was exclusive, privileged, undemocratic, aristocratic. As it happens, this was precisely the manner in which Oliver Cromwell inaugurated the Protectorate.<sup>224</sup> But Processional routes and other festivities offered the wider population a chance to see the new monarch, at least in London, and other occasions related to coronations throughout the country offered opportunities to join in the celebrations, often by benefiting from municipal largesse.<sup>225</sup> But to hear and see the rites of coronation themselves was restricted to those in the Abbey, and indeed to those

<sup>223</sup> Whether Caroline was in fact queen was a matter of debate: the Pains and Penalties Bill 1820, intended to dissolve the royal marriage and strip the Queen of her title, had been passed by the House of Lord but not by the Commons. See Jane ROBINS, *Rebel Queen. How the Trial of Caroline brought England to the brink of Revolution*, London 2006, 132–143. 308–311.

<sup>224</sup> Cromwell's Inauguration is noteworthy because of the elements it keeps from the Westminster Hall elements of earlier coronations, and the use of headgear and regalia, here the Privy Purse and seals, and the sword. "[H]is Excellency, and Attendants, came to Westminster Hall, where was a Chair, placed in the High Court of Chancery; where being come, the Lords Commissioners of the Great Seal of England stood next to the chair, the one on the one side, the other on the other side, and next to the Lord Commissioner Lisle who stood on the left hand of the chair, stood his Excellency (all being bare-headed), and his Excellency also) [...] The Rules for this new Government were then read, [...] [a]fter which, the Lord Commissioner Lisle read a parchment in the nature of an oath, to engage his Excellency to perform on his part, according to the Government before mentioned; During which time his Excellency held up his hand, and having heard it read, accepted thereof, and subscribed thereto in the face of the Court. Then the Lords Commissioners of the Great Seal, and the Judges, etc, invited him to take possession of the Chair, as Lord Protector of England, Scotland, and Ireland, which he did and sat down with his head covered, the Court continuing all bare. The Lords Commissioners delivered up to His Highness the Purse and Seals, and the Lord Mayor of London his Sword, which were presently delivered to them back again by his Highness; and then after a salute, the Court rose." Machell STACE, *Cromwelliana. A chronological detail of events in which Oliver Cromwell was engaged, from the year 1642 to his death 1658*, London 1810, 130 f.

<sup>225</sup> See Daniel LLOYD, *A Tradition of Invention. Rites and rituals surrounding the death and funeral of Queen Elizabeth II* in: *ExF 1 (2022)* 191–237, here: 195.

within the Coronation Theatre itself, which is bounded by the quire screen and the altar. Those in the nave of the abbey see the entrance and exit, and although on previous occasions there were large banks of seating erected (absent in 2023), as well as a greater number of participants crammed into the theatre itself than in 2023, the number of those who could actually see what was going on in the liturgical setting itself was always small. Accounts of coronations were written, in diaries and letter, by ambassadors and socialites, and some were published, of which Sibyl M. Jack gives an account in relation to the coronation of James I.<sup>226</sup> Financial records also allow historians the opportunity to gain an understanding of who was involved, not only in the ceremonies themselves, but also in the preparations, from seamstresses to apothecaries.<sup>227</sup> The first souvenir publication was made following the coronation of James II by Francis Sandford.<sup>228</sup> Full of detail and lavish engravings, it was a commercial failure, as Sarah Abbot notes: “by the time his book was printed in 1687 the mood of the country was turning against James II and sales of the book barely covered the cost of production. He was blighted by financial difficulties throughout his career and died in 1694 in a debtor’s prison”<sup>229</sup>. It was not until the twentieth century that members of the general public could see and hear the coronation itself. Although the 1911 coronation of George V had external film broadcast in newsreel form by Pathé, that of George VI was the first broadcast on radio and with film available from inside the Abbey. A curiosity, though, is that it was not the first contemporary depiction on film of a coronation: that was made by the pioneering French filmmaker Georges Méliès in 1902. He created a compressed enactment of the coronation rites lasting a few minutes, including, significantly, the anointing as well as the coronation, and it was shown sandwiched between footage of the real royal coach arriving and departing

<sup>226</sup> Cf. Sybil M. JACK, “A Pattern for a King’s Inauguration”. The Coronation of James I in England, in: *Parergon* 21/4 (2004) 67–91, here: 81 f.

<sup>227</sup> Cf. L. LEGG, *English Coronation Records*, gives a number of such lists of accounts.

<sup>228</sup> Cf. Francis SANDFORD, *The History of the Coronation of the Most High, Most Mighty, and Most Excellent Monarch, James II*, London 1687.

<sup>229</sup> Sarah ABBOTT, *The Coronation of James II*, in: *The National Archives* (21 April 2023). [↗](#)

from Westminster, of which Elizabeth Ezra notes that “the proximity of the newsreel footage to the reenactment confers a metonymic effect of realism on the latter”<sup>230</sup>. The speedy premiere could take place because of the postponement of the actual coronation from June to August. In a complete contrast with Chupungco’s view, Archbishop Davidson would write, in 1911, that he thought it “essential that there should be no photography at the moment of the most solemn parts of the Service”, which Strong interprets as the “anointing, the crowning and the reception of communion”<sup>231</sup>. In light of such claims not only about the anointing but about the filming of the coronation in general, it is interesting to note that Méliès and his colleague Charles Urban, asserted that the reason for their reenactment was “since the lighting inside the Abbey does not permit moving pictures to be made, and in order to give audiences the opportunity to have an idea of what this imposing ceremony was like”<sup>232</sup>. Méliès’s decision to reenact the anointing was not of course subject to such concerns, but it is noteworthy that he not only felt it worth taking up precious minutes of his very short film, but also that there seems to have been no reason for him not to show it. Holy communion, by comparison, is not shown, along with much else of the ceremony.

Filming at the coronations of George VI and of Elizabeth II was tightly controlled, with much discussion about what could and could not be shown, as well as the placing of the cameras. In comparison with 1911, the crowning was allowed to be shown, but Strong repeats the idea of Davidson that the anointing and reception of communion belong to the “most solemn parts of the service” even if the crowning no longer did.<sup>233</sup> 1937 could be heard at home but seen only in the cinema: following 1953,

<sup>230</sup> Elizabeth EZRA, *Georges Méliès. The birth of the auteur*, Manchester 2000, 66. For a film-still in good quality, as well as a more detailed account of the production, see Tom GUNNING, *Reproducing Royalty. Filming the Coronation of Edward VII*, in: Morna O’NEILL – Michael HATT (eds.), *The Edwardian Sense. Art, Design, and Performance in Britain, 1901–1910* (Studies in British Art 20), London 2010, 15–21.

<sup>231</sup> STRONG, *Coronation*, 433.

<sup>232</sup> Quoted in Jerry KUEHL, *Lies About Real People*, in: Alan ROSENTHAL (ed.), *Why Docudrama? Fact-Fiction on Film and TV*, Carbondale 1999, 119–124, here: 120.

<sup>233</sup> STRONG, *Coronation*, 433 f.

2023 is the second coronation to be televised live. The impact of the decisions taken surrounding the visibility of the rite of anointing and of the reception of holy communion has been discussed above, but if, by 1937, the crowning was no longer so “solemn” that it simply could not be shown, then in 2023, the anointing must be reckoned to have further increased in solemnity, while the reception of holy communion has joined the crowning in being allowed to be broadcast.

Those involved in organising the coronation have taken an interest in the broadcast media since the beginning. Whatever artists or writers choose to portray, there can be no broadcasting of the event if the relevant authorities decline to permit it, and Davidson and his successors have well understood the extent to which control could be exercised over image and sound. But Chupungco’s concern about fidelity in liturgical presentation are not the only ones in play: Strong records the discussions about broadcasting the 1953 coronation, including concerns raised about “the strain on the Queen” but also the fact that “any mistakes, unintentional incidents or undignified behaviour by spectators would be seen by millions of people”<sup>234</sup>. In any event, someone has to decide what is shown, and what is not; what eye-catching moments should be seized upon, and what unexpected events should be cut away from. In the liturgical event which is the coronation as experienced, then, the broadcast media are the unseen players in the drama. Mediating the experience to the viewer, sometimes with commentators and sometimes without, the cameras are there not as though the viewer were looking through a window in the Abbey, or from one of the transept seats, but with full and privileged access. Those things, actions, or places which the viewer is not shown are not kept or guarded from us; rather, the camera has decided on our behalf that we do not need (or want?) to see them.<sup>235</sup> As such, the coronation of 2023 is either the culmination or more likely merely the latest stage in something which began to change at the very beginning of the twentieth century. That being the case, it would be understandable in terms of adaptation if liturgical actions were also considered in light of how they would be

<sup>234</sup> Ibid.

<sup>235</sup> For recent discussions on liturgy and media, see IKaZ 51 (2022) in which the first half is given over to discussions of “Digitalisierung und Kirche”.



seen beyond the confines of the abbey. If a robe can be made with an ability to undo it easily for the anointing expressly in mind,<sup>236</sup> why not involve other considerations in how the anointing is carried out? And if the use of the anointing-screen might find at least a partial explanation from this standpoint, it only increases the importance of understanding the relationship between liturgy and new ways of seeing.

## 8 Conclusions

The Coronation of Charles III in 2023 was a unique liturgical event. This has been the case with all coronations, but the difference between 2023 and preceding events is great. The rewriting of the majority of the prayers in such a fashion last occurred in the seventeenth century, and the other textual changes, including the alteration of the readings, are remarkable not only because of the great antiquity of what had come before (the reading from St Matthew's Gospel is attested in every English coronation source which records what was read), but also because the official commentary which accompanied the coronation (itself a new idea) declines to engage with the reasoning behind such changes. For some of the changes, the source or reasoning was relatively clear, if not conclusive. The idea of a possible public homage was made clear by Strong, and the suggestion of the involvement of a broader range of faith-leader and others has been a common theme among suggestions for changes. Anglicans sing hymns, and so the inclusion of hymns is understandable. It is understood that senior political figures have roles at such occasions: if the Lord Chancellor, formerly head of the judiciary and keeper of the Great Seal, once had a role in the homage, so the Prime Minister nowadays reads a lesson. That the Eucharistic liturgy should have been modernized or updated was probably inevitable: the retention of the 1662 forms would have been, arguably, as much of a statement if not more so than the use of *Common Worship* texts. And the adaptation of the *Common Worship* Eucharist is, from the perspective of a ritual Mass, entirely foreseeable: liturgical scholars from Ratcliff to Bradshaw and Buchanan had anticipated this, as well as wider trends in liturgical revision. Three questions, however, illustrate the gap

<sup>236</sup> Cf. SCHRAMM, *History of the English Coronation*, 135.

between the liturgy as performed and experience, and the questions which scholars of liturgical studies might ask: why were the readings chosen? Why was the Creed not used? Why was the anointing screened? The use of Canon B4 to authorize the material means that it is taken to be, in "both words and order" "reverent and seemly and are neither contrary to, nor indicative of any departure from, the doctrine of the Church of England in any essential matter."<sup>237</sup> It falls in the realm of adaptation and context, rather than of theological principle, and therefore at this time, given the material available, we can only speculate, and scholarship on previous coronations shows us that it is rare for the reasoning behind changes in the rite to be available for scrutiny at the time of the event itself.

Behind at least part of the thinking behind many changes in 2023 must have lain the recognition that this ceremony was one which would be participated in, or, better said, was one which had to be adapted for, not just a heterogeneous group, but the millions who would certainly tune in across the country, and indeed across the world. To expect the viewers to watch other people participating in a liturgy in which the viewers themselves were the mutest of mute spectators is, perhaps, less pastorally apt that recognising that, if the vast majority of those who are in some sense participating cannot do so collectively as the assembly, it may be better that nobody should do so. The idea that the coronation service as a whole not only could be heard and might be seen, but in fact must be seen, has become cemented as fact in 2023. There is therefore, from a liturgical studies perspective, the fascinating development that this rite has gone from being one observed by few people in person, to being observed by few people in person but broadcast, to one which is now primarily aimed at being broadcast. The question of filming seems to have affected the rite such that the idea is no longer how best to place the cameras so as to show what is happening, but how best to arrange what is happening so as to make the best show for the cameras. In the twenty-first century, the "coherent ceremonial language" is visual, and it is aimed not at the groups of peers and gentry and assorted hangers-on in Westminster Abbey, but at the British people, and at the world. The doors, once closed, are now open.

<sup>237</sup> CANONS OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, Canon B4. [↗](#)

Liturgical scholarship on coronations has also very often been a vehicle for the scholars' own convictions about what should have happened, or what should happen next time. This has been a consistent thread from Maskell, through the Leggs, and Ratcliff, to the present day. It is not the purpose of this essay to join in suggesting what might be; rather, it has sought to point out what was different, and to argue that, since choices were made, until the reasoning behind those choices ought to be available for discussion, various possibilities suggest themselves. In relation to previous coronations, there was in 2023 a heightening of the idea of solemnity and sacrality in certain parts of the rite: the anointing, in particular, but also the use of historical artifacts such as the Gospel Book of St Augustine. The coronation is already replete with historical objects which are used once in a reign, and which, in this context, have not been seen in use by anyone since 1953: the Stone of Scone, or of Destiny is one such example, but the coronation vestments are another. To return to the anointing, it has been shown that, in 1911, it was understood to belong with the crowning and the reception of holy communion as the "most solemn" of all the moments of the service. Because of this, it could not be exposed to the gaze of the camera and the glare of its accompanying lights. But over time, the coronation came to be seen; and in 2023, so did holy communion. In the coronation, this was always an act which, though visible to those in the theatre (not those elsewhere in the abbey) was restricted to a very few participants. In 2023, it remained restricted, but that restriction was for the first time visible. The cameras did not take the viewers directly to it (except for the assistant bishops), but it was evidently not decided that there should be some devotional or prayerful alternative, and the King and Queen could be seen receiving communion in the background. Next, the role of the Archbishop of Canterbury, not only in the liturgy itself but in the planning of it, was greatly magnified in comparison to the majority of previous occasions. It is perhaps surprising, therefore, that the order of service was released so late: though the gap between the death of Elizabeth II and the coronation was much less than between previous royal deaths and subsequent coronations, a decade has passed since the present Archbishop was appointed, and the approach of the coronation could only have become more likely, and so an earlier release date of a long-agreed text might have been expected.

What can a study of the 2023 coronation say to the discipline of Liturgical Studies? To return to Chupungco: “To expect the assembly at ritual masses to participate as if it were a normal Sunday assembly of parishioners is indeed to court frustration. Some degree of participation at all liturgical celebrations is certainly required.”<sup>238</sup> It is undeniable that the liturgical context in which Chupungco wrote and by which he was informed is not the same as that of the Coronation. Different ecclesial and doctrinal considerations, disciplines, and traditions apply. The papal inauguration rites are the kind of explicable and explained adaptation to which Roman Catholics are accustomed. But there is an extent to which the coronation, in its re-interpretation of previous forms, its willingness to jettison texts which do not express the theology and other content which it wishes to articulate, in favour of newly-composed ones, and its attention to the real participants in the liturgy – the king, the archbishop, the television viewers – does embrace some of the key aspects of Chupungco’s liturgical thought more broadly, even if it comes at them from a different angle. Anglicanism in its liturgical texts has, since Cranmer, formulated rather than translated, and, as with the funeral of Elizabeth II, it can be instructive to note those particularly theological elements which would once have been problematic for some members of previous generations within the breadth of Anglicanism (prayer for the dead, for example)<sup>239</sup> now no longer appear to be so. In the coronation, that might include the use of Latin as well as the female clergy or the showing of the reception of holy communion, but also the reduction in the verbal participation of the congregation. The coronation also shows liturgy as spectacle in a profoundly different way from the regular Roman Catholic experience. The mega-liturgies of World Youth Day may have hundreds of thousands of participants, but they are all in one place; Masses may be livestreamed or otherwise watched at home, but even those which are regularly televised for the housebound normally have some people present in the building. The coronation is in one sense the liturgy of the pandemic writ large, a continuation, as such, of the funeral of the Duke of Edinburgh in 2021, with those mourners actually in the chapel forming a much smaller number than would have been there nor-

<sup>238</sup> CHUPUNGCO, *Liturgies of the Future*, 9.

<sup>239</sup> See LLOYD, *A Tradition of Invention*, 234–237.

mally, music and spoken words a key part of the occasion, and an emphasis on the viewers perhaps as much as on those who were really there. That funeral need not have been televised at all. The coronation liturgy, on the other hand: would it really have happened if it had not been on television?

## Abbreviations

AAS	Acta Apostolicae Sedis
BCP	Book of Common Prayer
CW	Common Worship
ExF	Ex Fonte – Journal of Ecumenical Studies in Liturgy
HBS	Henry Bradshaw Society
IKaZ	Internationale Katholische Zeitschrift <i>Communio</i>
JEH	The Journal of Ecclesiastical History
JLS	Joint Liturgical Studies
JThS	Journal of Theological Studies

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