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# Exploring the Psychological Type Profile of Rural Anglican Congregations Nurtured in the Catholic Tradition: A Pilot Study in Wales

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## ABSTRACT

The present study draws on data provided by 75 adult churchgoers attending five rural Anglican congregations in Wales, nurtured in the Catholic tradition, who completed the Francis Psychological Type Scales. Their profile was then set alongside the profile of 3,302 Anglican churchgoers reported in an earlier study. While there were no differences between the two groups in terms of the two orientations, the two judging functions, or the two attitudes toward the outer world, there was a significantly greater proportion of intuitive types among the congregations nurtured in the Catholic tradition (32% compared with 20%). This finding is consistent with the view that the Anglo-Catholic tradition appeals to and sustains intuitive types. It also demonstrates that a Church capable of embracing both the Catholic and the Reformed tradition is better placed to be inclusive of diverse psychological types.

## KEYWORDS

Congregation studies;  
psychological type;  
Anglicanism; Anglo-Catholic;  
rural

## Introduction

The Church of England emerged from the Reformation as a Church with twin roots both in the Catholic tradition and in the Reformed tradition. These twin roots re-asserted themselves with clarity in the nineteenth century through the efforts of the Oxford Movement consolidating the Catholic heritage (Pereiro, 2017) and the Evangelical Movement consolidating the Reformed heritage (Atherstone, 2017). Both movements propagated their distinctive perspective through theological colleges and patronage societies. The effect of both movements remained visible throughout the twentieth century, but with changing fortunes. By the time of the 1988 Lambeth Conference the general impression was that in England the Catholic wing was indeed in crisis (Penhale, 1986) and the Evangelical wing was on the way to ascendancy (Saward, 1987).

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The population survey of Church in Wales clergy initiated in 2006 and reported by Payne (2012) allowed the comparative strength of the Catholic influence and Evangelical influence among clergy in Wales to be assessed at that time. From a response rate of 54%, Payne calculated that 40% of clergy aligned themselves with the Catholic wing, compared with 16% who saw themselves aligned with the Evangelical wing. The remaining 44% occupied middle territory.

Against this background, the aim of the present study is to explore whether rural Anglican congregations in Wales nurtured by priests shaped in the Catholic tradition may draw participants with a distinctive psychological type profile compared with other Anglican congregations.

### *Psychological Type Theory*

Psychological type theory has played a part in the developing science of congregation studies from the 1980s with relatively small studies reported in the USA by Gerhardt (1983) and Rehak (1998) and in Canada by Delis-Bulhoes (1990) and Ross (1993, 1995). Psychological type theory has its origins in the work of Carl Jung (1971) and was further operationalised and developed through a series of instruments, including the Keirsey Temperament Sorter (Keirsey & Bates, 1978), the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (Myers & McCaulley, 1985), and the Francis Psychological Type Scales (Francis, 2005; Francis et al., 2017). When applied within the science of congregation studies, psychological type theory generates insight into four core areas of church life.

First, psychological type theory distinguishes between two orientations, styled introversion (I) and extraversion (E). The orientations are concerned with the ways in which individuals are energised. Introverts tend to be energised by the inner world of ideas, reflection and solitude. Extraverts tend to be energised by the outer world of activity, engagement and company. The difference between introverted and extraverted congregations may be reflected in the openness and welcome to newcomers.

Second, psychological type theory distinguishes between the ways of perceiving, styled sensing (S) and intuition (N). The perceiving process is concerned with the ways in which individuals perceive the world around them, take in information and build up a picture of how things are. Sensing types tend to be concerned with facts and data. They are rooted in the reality of the present. Intuitive types tend to be concerned with ideas and possibilities. They are rooted in shaping things for the future. The difference between sensing type and intuitive type congregations may be reflected in the openness to change and development.

Third, psychological type theory distinguishes between two ways of judging, feeling (F) and thinking (T). The judging process is concerned with the ways in which individuals evaluate situations and make rational decisions on how to behave. Feeling types tend to place the weight of their decision on issues to do with personal values and interpersonal relationships. They are people oriented. Thinking types tend to place the weight of their decisions on issues to do with objective logical analysis. They are systems oriented. Feeling types may be attracted to the God of mercy and long for a gospel that is open and forgiving. Thinking types may be attracted to the God of justice and long for a gospel that is more clearly focused on right teaching and right behaviour. The difference between

feeling type and thinking type congregations may be reflected in different standards of inclusivity and exclusivity.

Fourth, psychological type theory distinguishes between two attitudes toward the outer world, judging (J) and perceiving (P). The attitude toward the outer world is concerned with the ways in which individuals relate to the outer world, either with their preferred judging function (thinking or feeling) or with their preferred perceiving function (sensing or intuition). Judging types tend to prefer their outer world to be well organised and regulated. Perceiving types tend to prefer their outer world to be open and flexible. The difference between judging type and perceiving type congregations may be reflected in the kind of structures surrounding local church life.

Psychological type theory was introduced to the study of Anglican congregations in England and Wales in the early 2000s by three studies: Craig et al. (2003) drawing on a sample of 101 churchgoers, Francis et al. (2004) drawing on a sample of 327 churchgoers, and Francis et al. (2007) drawing on a sample of 185 churchgoers. These initial three studies provided encouragement for Francis et al. (2011) to gather data from a more substantial sample of 3,302 churchgoers drawn from 140 Anglican congregations. While Francis et al. (2011) reported their data for male and female churchgoers separately, Francis et al. (2016) drew the two profiles of men and women together to provide the profile for the whole congregation. On the whole sample of 3,302 churchgoers, they reported preferences for introversion (54%), for sensing (80%), for feeling (60%), and for judging (86%). The two predominant types were ISFJ (22%) and ISTJ (18%). Francis et al. (2016) then employed the aggregated profile as the benchmark against which to test whether the 43 participants at the 8.00am service and the 110 participants at the 10.00am service in one specific church fitted the ‘typical Anglican profile’. There were no statistically significant differences among the three sets of data.

The foregoing studies did not, however, consider the potential differences between Anglican congregations nurtured in the Catholic tradition and in the Evangelical tradition. The suggestion that these two traditions may draw participants with a distinctive psychological type profile was raised by Village et al. (2009). Earlier theoretical work by Ross (1992, 2012) had argued that the perceiving process (distinguishing between the sensing function and the intuitive function) was core to individual differences in religious and spiritual preference, and this view had been supported by empirical data (Francis & Ross, 1997). Drawing on these earlier studies, Village et al. (2009) argued that:

There are many ways in which these distinctions between sensing and intuition map onto the distinctive and distinguishing features of the Evangelical Anglican and the Anglo-Catholic movements. Evangelical Anglicanism seems to place more value than Anglo-Catholicism on a sensing expression of faith, while Anglo-Catholicism seems to place more value than Evangelical Anglicanism on an intuitive experience of faith. (p. 97)

Village et al. (2009) tested this thesis on data provided by 290 churchgoers: 199 attending two Evangelical Anglican churches and 91 attending four Anglo-Catholic churches in central England. Comparing these two sets of data, they found no significant differences in the orientations (extraversion and introversion), in the judging process (thinking and feeling), or in the attitudes (judging and perceiving). However, there was a significant difference ( $p < .01$ ) in the perceiving process. While 17% of the Evangelical congregations preferred intuition, the proportion rose to 31% of the Catholic congregations.

## **Research Hypothesis**

Against this background the present analyses were designed to test the specific hypothesis that the psychological type profile of five rural Anglican congregations in Wales nurtured by two priests in the Catholic tradition will record a significantly higher proportion of intuitive types, compared with the ‘typical Anglican profile’ published by Francis et al. (2016), and that there will be no significant differences in terms of the two orientations, the two judging functions, and the two attitudes toward the outer world.

## **Method**

### **Procedure**

All adults who attended the services held in five rural Anglican churches in Wales were invited to complete a short survey at the end of the service. They were informed regarding the purpose of the study, assured of confidentiality, anonymity, and the voluntary nature of participation. A total of 75 participants returned fully completed surveys. Three of these churches were within the first author’s ministry area, and the other two in churches led by a priest who was also strongly influenced by the Catholic approach to parish life, as evidenced liturgically and in various other aspects of ministerial practice and behaviour.

### **Measure**

Psychological type was assessed by the Francis Psychological Type Scales (Francis, 2005). This is a 40-item instrument comprising four sets of 10 forced-choice items related to each of the four components of psychological type theory: orientation (extraversion or introversion), perceiving process (sensing or intuition), judging process (thinking or feeling), and attitude toward the outer world (judging or perceiving). Recent studies have demonstrated that this instrument functions well in church-related contexts. For example, Francis et al. (2017) confirmed the factor structure among a sample of 722 Anglican clergy. Among another sample of 364 Anglican clergy, Francis et al. (2018) reported alpha coefficients of .83 for the Extraversion and Introversion Scales, .79 for the Sensing and Intuition Scales, .76 for the Thinking and Feeling Scales, and .83 for the Judging and Perceiving Scales.

### **Participants**

Of the 75 participants, 21 were male, 53 were female, and 1 preferred not to say; 3 were in their twenties, 1 in their thirties, 2 in their forties, 8 in their fifties, 22 in their sixties, 25 in their seventies, and 14 were aged 80 or over.

### **Data Analysis**

The research literature concerning empirical studies in psychological type has developed a distinctive method for displaying statistical data in the form of type tables. This convention has been applied in the present paper in order to integrate these new data within the established literature and to provide all the detail necessary for secondary

commentary and further interpretation within the rich theoretical framework afforded by psychological type theory. Type tables have been designed to provide information about the 16 complete psychological types, about the four dichotomous preferences, about the six sets of pairs and temperaments, about the dominant types, and about the introverted and extraverted Jungian types. Commentary on this table, however, will be restricted to those aspects of the data most relevant to addressing the research questions posed by the

**Table 1.** Type distribution for rural Anglican churchgoers nurtured in the Catholic tradition, compared with Anglican churchgoers as reported by Francis et al. (2016).

The sixteen complete types				Dichotomous preferences							
ISTJ <i>n</i> = 14 (18.7%) <i>l</i> = 1.03 +++++	ISFJ <i>n</i> = 14 (18.7%) <i>l</i> = 0.85 +++++	INFJ <i>n</i> = 10 (13.3%) <i>l</i> = 4.08*** +++++	INTJ <i>n</i> = 1 (1.3%) <i>l</i> = 0.34 +	E <i>n</i> = 28 (37.3%) <i>l</i> = 0.81	I <i>n</i> = 47 (62.7%) <i>l</i> = 1.17	S <i>n</i> = 51 (68.0%) <i>l</i> = 0.85**	N <i>n</i> = 24 (32.0%) <i>l</i> = 1.60**				
ISTP <i>n</i> = 0 (0.0%) <i>l</i> = 0.00	ISFP <i>n</i> = 4 (5.3%) <i>l</i> = 2.00 ++++	INFP <i>n</i> = 2 (2.7%) <i>l</i> = 1.44 +++	INTP <i>n</i> = 2 (2.7%) <i>l</i> = 3.26 +++	J <i>n</i> = 62 (82.7%) <i>l</i> = 0.96	P <i>n</i> = 13 (17.3%) <i>l</i> = 1.21	<b>Pairs and temperaments</b>					
ESTP <i>n</i> = 0 (0.0%) <i>l</i> = 0.00	ESFP <i>n</i> = 2 (2.7%) <i>l</i> = 0.76 +++	ENFP <i>n</i> = 2 (2.7%) <i>l</i> = 0.99 +++	ENTP <i>n</i> = 1 (1.33%) <i>l</i> = 1.33 +	IJ <i>n</i> = 39 (52.0%) <i>l</i> = 1.10	IP <i>n</i> = 8 (10.7%) <i>l</i> = 1.66	EP <i>n</i> = 5 (6.7%) <i>l</i> = 0.85	EJ <i>n</i> = 23 (30.7%) <i>l</i> = 0.80				
ESTJ <i>n</i> = 8 (10.7%) <i>l</i> = 0.90 +++++	ESFJ <i>n</i> = 9 (12.0%) <i>l</i> = 0.60 +++++	ENFJ <i>n</i> = 4 (5.3%) <i>l</i> = 1.35 +++++	ENTJ <i>n</i> = 2 (2.7%) <i>l</i> = 1.04 +++	ST <i>n</i> = 22 (29.3%) <i>l</i> = 0.93	SF <i>n</i> = 29 (38.7%) <i>l</i> = 0.80	NF <i>n</i> = 18 (24.0%) <i>l</i> = 2.04***	NT <i>n</i> = 6 (8.0%) <i>l</i> = 0.97				
+	++			NT <i>n</i> = 6 (8.0%) <i>l</i> = 0.97	SJ <i>n</i> = 45 (60.0%) <i>l</i> = 0.83*	SP <i>n</i> = 6 (8.0%) <i>l</i> = 1.01	NP <i>n</i> = 7 (9.3%) <i>l</i> = 1.47				
				NJ <i>n</i> = 17 (22.7%) <i>l</i> = 1.66*	TP <i>n</i> = 3 (4.0%) <i>l</i> = 1.12	FP <i>n</i> = 10 (13.3%) <i>l</i> = 1.24	FJ <i>n</i> = 37 (49.3%) <i>l</i> = 1.00				
				IN <i>n</i> = 15 (20.0%) <i>l</i> = 2.04**	EN <i>n</i> = 9 (12.0%) <i>l</i> = 1.18	IS <i>n</i> = 32 (42.7%) <i>l</i> = 0.97	ES <i>n</i> = 19 (25.3%) <i>l</i> = 0.70				
				ET <i>n</i> = 11 (14.7%) <i>l</i> = 0.91	EF <i>n</i> = 17 (22.7%) <i>l</i> = 0.75	IF <i>n</i> = 30 (40.0%) <i>l</i> = 1.34	IT <i>n</i> = 17 (22.7%) <i>l</i> = 0.95				
Jungian types (E)			Jungian types (I)			Dominant types					
<i>n</i>	%	<i>Index</i>	<i>n</i>	%	<i>Index</i>	<i>n</i>	%	<i>Index</i>			
E-TJ	10	13.3	0.93	I-TP	2	2.7	1.4	Dt.T	12	16.0	0.98
E-FJ	13	17.3	0.72	I-FP	6	8.0	1.77	Dt.F	19	25.3	0.89
ES-P	2	2.7	0.64	IS-J	28	37.3	0.93	Dt.S	30	40.0	0.90
EN-P	3	4.0	1.08	IN-J	11	14.7	2.05*	Dt.N	14	18.7	1.72*

Note: *N* = 75 (NB: + = 1% of *N*).  
\**p* < .05, \*\**p* < .01, \*\*\**p* < .001.

present study. In the context of type tables the statistical significance of the differences between two groups is established by means of the selection ratio index ( $I$ ), an extension of chi-square (McCaulley, 1985). In Table 1 the data displayed for the 75 rural Anglican churchgoers are compared with the data on Anglican churchgoers as originally collected by Francis et al. (2011) and presented for males and females combined by Francis et al. (2016).

## Results

The first step in data analysis tested the internal consistency reliability of the four pairs of scales proposed by the Francis Psychological Type Scales. The following alpha coefficients (Cronbach, 1951) were recorded: extraversion and introversion,  $\alpha = .77$ ; sensing and intuition,  $\alpha = .69$ ; thinking and feeling,  $\alpha = .68$ ; judging and perceiving,  $\alpha = .78$ .

Table 1 employs the conventional type table to present the psychological type profile of the 75 rural Anglican churchgoers who participated in the survey. In terms of dichotomous type preferences, these data record preferences for introversion (63%) over extraversion (37%), for sensing (68%) over intuition (32%), for feeling (63%) over thinking (37%), and for judging (83%) over perceiving (17%). The key finding from this table is that there was a significantly greater number of intuitive types among the rural Anglican churchgoers nurtured in the Catholic tradition (32%) compared with the normative data (20%) published by Francis et al. (2016). On the other hand, there were no significant differences reported in terms of the orientations (extraversion and introversion), the judging functions (thinking and feeling), and the attitudes toward the outer world (judging and perceiving).

In terms of the 16 complete types, the greater proportion of intuitive types was reflected in a significantly larger number of INFJs (13% compared with 3%). In terms of the four dominant types, the greater proportion of intuitive types reflected in a significantly larger number of dominant intuitives (19% compared with 11%).

## Conclusion

The present study, concerned with exploring the psychological type profile of rural Anglican congregations nurtured in the Catholic tradition, inspired by the theoretical insights advanced by Ross (1992, 2012) and by the previous empirical evidence presented by Village et al. (2009), tested the specific hypothesis that the psychological type profile of five rural Anglican congregations in Wales nurtured by two priests in the Catholic tradition would record a significantly higher proportion of intuitive types, compared with the 'typical Anglican profile' published by Francis et al. (2016), and that there would be no significant differences in terms of the two orientations, the two judging functions, and the two attitudes toward the outer world. The data generated by the responses of 75 adult participants within these five congregations were totally consistent with this hypothesis. Two practical implications follow from these findings.

First, a Church increasingly concerned with inclusivity may need to accept the wisdom of taking less visible aspects of difference more fully into account. While many of the components of individual differences recognised by sociology may be comparatively

visible (including age, sex, ethnicity, and even social class), components of individual differences recognised by psychology (like psychological type) may remain invisible and consequently be overlooked. Surveys like the present study are able to bring psychological differences into visibility.

Second, a Church increasingly concerned to plant ‘fresh expressions of church’ may need to accept the wisdom of taking the hidden resources within the diversity of the inherited church more fully into account. From the present data it appears that the Anglo-Catholic tradition still retains the capacity to reach some psychological types less easily reached and accommodated by other strands within the Anglican Church. This potential is worth further and closer investigation.

There are two clear weaknesses with the present study, one concerning the number of participants and the other concerning the research design. Based on 75 participants from five congregations the present study does not provide the basis for wide generalisation. It does, however, provide a good case for further replication among other clusters of congregations nurtured in the Catholic tradition. In terms of research design, expediency necessitated comparison with an existing profile of 140 Anglican congregations. This profile is now over a decade old and failed to collect data on the churchmanship of the participating congregations. It remains, nonetheless, the best resource currently available for benchmarking the psychological type profile of Anglicanism in England and Wales.

The present work was established as a pilot study. The results have demonstrated that this pilot study is worth developing further.

### Disclosure Statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

### Ethical Approval

This study received ethical approval from the School of Humanities Research Ethics Committee, York St John University (HUM-RS-AV-08-21-01)

### Notes on Contributors

*Richard Vroom* is currently at Radboud University, Nijmegen, researching how psychological type is apparent in reported religious and spiritual experience within the Alister Hardy Archive.

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