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Who is inspired to follow Bishop Barron?

Applying psychological type and psychological temperament theory among lay
Catholic participants at an event sponsored in London by the Word on Fire Institute

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Abstract

The present study draws on psychological type theory and psychological temperament theory to test the extent to which Bishop Barron's ministry shaped by the Word on Fire Institute is reaching people less effectively reached by Catholic congregations. Data provided by 168 male and 292 female participants attending Bishop Barron's day conference in central London during February 2023, who completed the Francis Psychological Type Scales, demonstrated that this event attracted significantly higher proportions of intuitive types and of thinking types, compared with Catholic churchgoers. However, like Catholic congregations, extraverts and perceiving types remained under-represented among the followers of Bishop Barron. The implications of these findings are discussed for the ongoing nurture of those attracted to Bishop Barron alongside inherited congregations.

Keywords: psychological type, congregation studies, fresh expressions of church, church-leaving, empirical theology, Catholic churchgoers

Introduction

Various initiatives within the Catholic Church, as within other Churches, are attempting to reach groups of people less easily reached by and retained by established congregations. One such initiative was launched by Bishop Barron in 2000, namely Word on Fire Catholic Ministries, a significant and distinctive evangelistic outreach programme that ‘proclaims Christ in the culture’ and ‘harnesses beauty, goodness and truth to draw people into or back into the Catholic faith’. On Saturday 11 February 2023 Bishop Barron animated a one-day conference convened in central London. The present study was designed within the context of the science of congregation studies (see Francis & Lankshear, 2021) to test the extent which Bishop Barron was reaching a different constituency from that reached by Catholic congregations. In order to contextualise this study attention will be given to three main themes: the distinctive characteristics of Bishop Barron and Word on Fire Catholic Ministries, the science of congregation studies, and the place of psychological type theory and temperament theory within congregation studies.

Introducing Bishop Barron

Born in 1959 Bishop Robert Barron is Diocesan Bishop of Winona-Rochester in Southern Minnesota, USA. Educated at the Catholic University of Paris, the Catholic University of America and Mundelein Seminary he was, from 2015-2022, Auxiliary Bishop of Los Angeles. He has held faculty and visiting faculty positions at University of Notre Dame, Indiana, the University of Our Lady of the Lake, and the Angelicum in Rome.

Locating Barron’s work comparatively defies simple categorisation: Over and above his pastoral duties in Los Angeles and now in Winona-Rochester as an Assistant and subsequently Diocesan Bishop, Barron has founded and grown the *Word on Fire* Institute (www.institute.wordonfire.org). Its reach is notable: 358,000 people own a copy of the *Word on Fire* Bible. Through online courses the Institute brings together a global community of

20,000 evangelists and provides catechetical learning resources to families and individuals. Around 30,000 people a month use the Institute's 'Word of Hours' material to underpin their communal prayer. The Institute is exploring the possibility of clergy being ordained to serve *Word on Fire's* apostolates and has initiatives in disability inclusion and education driven by lay employees. It is exploring the possibility of its own university while its publishing house is thriving. In these regards the Institute's development has the hallmarks of a putative Religious Order with a life beyond its founder.

However, both supported by this Institute, and in many ways beyond it, is Barron's own personal reach. He has more than 3.6 million followers on social media, second only to the Pope among Catholics. Around 500,000 people receive or download his daily gospel reflection, and 140 million people have watched his YouTube videos. He speaks alongside elite policymakers, thought leaders, and local church leaders across the world in both French and English and has addressed the million plus attendee World Youth Day organised by the Holy see. The combined impact of *Word on Fire* and this wider ministry is at least on a par with Holy Trinity Brompton's Alpha Course even while dwarfed by global Catholic movements such as Italian founded *Focolare* (www.focolare.org) and Philippines headquartered *Couples for Christ* (www.couplesforchristglobal.org). Studying Barron's pastoral outreach is important, then, since at one level such study offers the potential of learning more about the impact of a 'celebrity Christian'. Additionally, the institutionalisation of this outreach seems to mirror the behaviours of founders of Religious Orders, although Bishop Barron may not make that claim for himself (see further, Bendyna, 2006; Bassenecker, 2006). New studies may provide important insights into the early growth phases of a global Christian movement or of a Roman Catholic Order while its founder is still living, something that might serve as useful benchmarks for its later progress.

Bishop Barron's visit to London was arranged by Catholic Voices (www.catholicvoices.org.uk), a small lay led organisation headquartered in Oxfordshire. It was founded in the run up to Pope Benedict's visit to the UK in 2010 when it was judged that the Catholic Church in England and Wales would not be able to field enough people to handle the expected influx of global media that would accompany the Pope's arrival. In response it trained many young volunteer media advocates. Catholic Voices has subsequently trained cohorts of younger Catholics in how to speak for the Church on mainstream TV and has had considerable success in placing them across a wide variety of news and feature programmes, with an emphasis on defending 'orthodox' positions (Ivereigh, 2011).

Catholic Voices agreed to host Bishop Barron in the UK in an extension of its activities at that time. Over and above the one-day conference surveyed in this paper Bishop Barron met UK parliamentarians, business leaders, ecumenical figures and those from the arts, all co-organised by Catholic Voices UK.

Science of congregation studies

The science of congregation studies is concerned both with churchgoing and church-leaving. Research on the motivation for leaving church has identified as a key factor the feeling of 'not fitting in' and therefore of 'getting out' (Francis & Richter, 2007, Richter & Francis, 1998). There can be a number of clearly visible reasons for some people not fitting in. Some young people stopped attending church because there was a visible lack of other people in their age group. Some men stopped attending church because they felt out of place in a community largely shaped by women. Sociological theories suggested other forms of less visible discontinuity shaped by social class, culture, or ethnicity. Psychological theories suggested the partially invisible discontinuity shaped by personality differences. The present study is framed within this context of personality differences.

Within the broad field of the psychology of personality and individual differences (see for example Chamorro-Premuzic, 2007) there are a number of competing models that may prove to be especially useful in different contexts, including the Sixteen Personality Factor model proposed by Cattell, Eber, and Tatsuoka (1970), the Major Three Dimensions model proposed by Eysenck and Eysenck (1975, 1991), the Big Five Factor model proposed by Costa and McCrae (1985), and the Psychological Type model proposed by Jung (1971) and operationalised variously by Keirsey and Bates (1978), Myers and McCaulley (1985), and Francis (2005). Of these competing models, the one that has gained most traction in the fields of congregation studies and church-leaving studies is the Jungian model of psychological type theory and its derivative temperament theory. These two theories need brief introduction.

Psychological type theory

The core of psychological type theory distinguishes between two psychological processes, styled the perceiving process and the judging process. Jung referred to the perceiving process as irrational since it is concerned with gathering information and not with evaluating information. Jung referred to the judging process as rational since it is concerned with evaluating information. Both processes are expressed through two opposite functions. While individuals require and can access all four functions, they tend to prefer one perceiving function over the other and one judging function over the other. It is these preferences that shape an individual's personality and can give personality to institutions like churches.

The two opposing functions of the perceiving process are styled as sensing (S) and as intuition (N). Sensing types have their eyes on the present. They deal with facts and current realities. They are practical people who have their feet on the ground. They tend to be comfortable with what they know and avoid change and experimentation. Intuitive types have their eyes on the future. They deal with theories and future possibilities. They are imaginative

people who have their heads in the clouds. They tend to get bored with what they know and to yearn for change and experimentation. It is not hard to conceptualise how sensing types and intuitive types may build very different congregations.

The two opposing functions of the judging process are styled as thinking (T) and as feeling (F). Thinking types make their decisions based on objective impersonal logic. They prize truthfulness and fairness. Their eyes are on the God of justice. Their actions are rooted in the head. For them efficient systems may be more important than good relationships. Feeling types make their decisions based on subjective personal and relational values. They prize tactfulness and harmony. Their eyes are on the God of mercy. Their actions are rooted in the heart. For them good relationships may be more important than efficient systems. It is not hard to conceptualise how thinking types and feeling types may build very different congregations.

In psychological type theory these two fundamental psychological processes (perceiving and judging) are contextualised within two opposing orientations and two opposing attitudes. The orientations are concerned with the source of psychological energy and distinguish between extraversion (E) and introversion (I). Extraverts are oriented toward the outer world. They are energised by the people and events around them. They are external processors and need to talk their ideas through with others. They are comfortable in a crowd. Introverts are oriented toward the inner world. They are energised by their inner ideas and concepts. They are internal processors and need to think things through by themselves. They are comfortable with solitude, silence, and contemplation. It is not hard to conceptualise how extraverts and introverts may build very different congregations.

The attitudes are concerned with how people relate to the external world and distinguish between judging (J) and perceiving (P). Judging types employ their preferred judging function (thinking or feeling) in the external world. They seek to order, structure, and

rationalise their external world. They prefer to plan things well in advance and then to keep to those plans. They want to reach decisions quickly and then to stick to them. Perceiving types employ their preferred perceiving function (sensing or intuition) in the external world. They do not seek to impose order on the external world, but remain perceptive and open. They have a flexible, open-ended approach to life. They enjoy change and spontaneity, and resist closure for as long as possible. It is not hard to conceptualise how judging types and perceiving types may build very different congregations.

The four components of psychological type theory (the two orientations, the two perceiving functions, the two judging functions, and the two attitudes toward the outer world) can be employed in three main ways, by discussing the four sets of binary pairs, by identifying the individuals' strongest and most reliable function (known as the dominant function), and by considering the sixteen complete types.

Temperament theory

Working with the building blocks of psychological type theory, Keirsey and Bates (1978) proposed distinguishing among four temperaments. These temperaments prioritised the perceiving process, distinguishing between sensing (S) and intuition (N) and then identified two different ways in which each of these perceiving functions is expressed. Keirsey and Bates (1978) paired sensing with the orientation in which it was expressed, distinguishing between SJ types and SP types. They paired intuition with the preferred judging function with which it was coupled, distinguishing between NT types and NF types. Oswald and Kroeger (1988) built on Keirsey and Bates' (1978) characterisation of the four temperaments to create profiles of how these four temperaments may shape four very different styles of religious leadership. Then Francis, Wright, and Robbins (2016) built on Oswald and Kroeger's (1988) work to create profiles of how these four temperaments may shape four very different styles of churchgoers.

SJ types comprised the Epimethean Temperament. Francis, Wright, and Robbins (2016) suggested that the Epimethean Temperament would tend to shape the most traditional of all churchgoers, the people who long for stability and continuity in the life of their church. They are attracted by a simple and straightforward faith, and they are committed to down-to-earth rules for the Christian life. They want to protect and conserve for future generations the traditions that they have inherited from previous generations.

SP types comprised the Dionysian Temperament. Francis, Wright, and Robbins (2016) suggested that the Dionysian Temperament would tend to shape the most action-oriented and fun-loving of all churchgoers, the people who long for the church to engage them in activities. They have little interest in the abstract, theoretical and non-practical aspects of theology and church life. They are flexible and spontaneous people who welcome unplanned and unpredictable aspects of church life.

NT types comprised the Promethean Temperament. Francis, Wright, and Robbins (2016) suggested that the Promethean Temperament would tend to shape the most academically curious and intellectually grounded of all churchgoers, people who are motivated by their search for truth and for possibilities opened up by their faith. They tend to be visionaries who expect their local church to look for new ways of doing things and to apply rigorous testing of strategies and teaching. They enjoy the academic study and analysis of the faith. They may have an appetite for theological study.

NF types comprised the Apollonian Temperament. Francis, Wright, and Robbins (2016) suggested that the Apollonian Temperament would tend to shape the most idealistic of all churchgoers, people concerned with making life better for others. They want to meet the needs of others and to find personal affirmation in the process. They can be articulate people, with good empathetic capacity and interpersonal skills. As members of the congregation they

want to be engaged in a visionary and pastorally effective community, and may take on an unobtrusive pastoral role in that community.

Congregational profiles

Psychological type theory was introduced to congregation studies during the 1980s and has now been employed in a series of studies in North America (Bramer & Ross, 2012; Delis-Bulhoes, 1990; Gerhardt, 1983; Rehak, 1998; Ross, 1993, 1995; Royle, Norton, & Larkin, 2021), in England and Wales (Craig, Francis, Bailey, & Robbins, 2003; Francis, 2013; Francis, Butler, Jones, & Craig, 2007; Francis, Duncan, Craig, & Luffman, 2004; Francis, Robbins, & Craig, 2011; Francis, Robbins, Williams, & Williams, 2007; Francis, Wright, & Robbins, 2016; Lewis, Francis, & Geary, 2021; Lewis, Varvatsoulis, & Williams, 2012; Village, Baker, & Howat, 2012; Village, Francis, & Craig, 2009), and in Australia (Robbins & Francis, 2011, 2012).

The largest and most authoritative study of the psychological type profile of congregations in England was provided by Francis, Robbins, and Craig (2011), on data provided by 3,304 participants attending 140 Anglican congregations. This study reported on the type profiles of male and female churchgoers separately and compared these profiles with the population norms provided by Kendall (1998). Such comparisons made it clear just how much Anglican congregations in England appeal to some types more than to other types. This is seen clearly from the preference endorsed on the four comparisons between extraversion and introversion, between sensing and intuition, between thinking and feeling, and between judging and perceiving. Women churchgoers are more introverted than women in the general population (49% compared with 43%), and more inclined to prefer judging (85% compared with 62%). On the other hand, there are no significant differences in preferences for sensing by women churchgoers (81%) and women in the general population (79%), or in preferences for feeling by women churchgoers (70%) and women in the general population (70%). Men

churchgoers are more introverted than men in the general population (62% compared with 53%), more inclined to prefer sensing (78% compared with 73%), more inclined to prefer feeling (42% compared with 35%), and more inclined to prefer judging (86% compared with 55%).

Reviewing the data presented on Anglican congregations in England by Francis, Robbins, and Craig (2011) through the lens of temperament theory draws stark attention to these congregations as communities shaped by the Epimethean Temperament (SJ). Among men 71% reported preference for the Epimethean Temperament, compared with 44% of men in the general population. Among women 73% reported preference for the Epimethean Temperament, compared with 54% of women in the general population. The inevitable consequence is that the other three temperaments account for relatively small proportions of Anglican congregations in England. The Apollonian Temperament (NF) accounts for 13% of women and 10% of men in Anglican congregations. The Promethean Temperament (NT) accounts for 6% of women and 13% of men in Anglican congregations. The Dionysian Temperament (SP) accounts for 9% of the women and 7% of the men in Anglican congregations.

While there has been no comparable study reported in England of Catholic congregations, Robbins and Francis (2012) reported on the psychological type profile of Catholic congregations in Australia, drawing on data provided by 593 male Catholic churchgoers and 881 female Catholic churchgoers. The data from this survey of Catholic churchgoers in Australia were remarkably similar to the data reported by Francis, Robbins, and Craig (2011) among Anglican churchgoers in England. This can be illustrated by comparing the temperament profiles of the two groups. Among female churchgoers in Australia: 76% reported Epimethean Temperament (SJ) and so did 73% in England; 11% reported Apollonian Temperament (NF) and so did 13% in England; 8% reported Dionysian

Temperament (SP) and so did 9% in England; 5% reported Promethean Temperament (NT) and so did 6% in England. Among male Catholic churchgoers in Australia: 77% reported Epimethean Temperament (SJ) and so did 71% in England; 10% reported Promethean Temperament (NT) and so did 13% in England; 7% reported Dionysian Temperament (SP) and so did 7% in England; 6% reported Apollonian Temperament (NF) and so did 10% in England.

Assessing the psychographic reach of other expressions of Church

A series of recent studies has employed psychological type theory and temperament theory to test the extent to which other expressions of Church may be reaching the psychological profile of people who may not feel that they are fitting into inherited congregations. One set of studies explored the impact of initiatives stimulated by the Church of England's (2004) report *Mission-shaped Church* and often referred to as Fresh Expressions of Church. In the first of these studies Francis, Clymo and Robbins (2014) drew on data provided by 123 participants in Fresh Expressions. Their data found that, while 73% of women in conventional congregations reported Epimethean Temperament (SJ), the proportion fell to 62% among women in Fresh Expressions; and while 71% of men in conventional congregations reported Epimethean Temperament (SJ), the proportion fell to 33% among men in Fresh Expressions.

In the second of these studies, Village (2015) drew on data provided by 4,485 readers of the *Church Times*. Among these participants 8% of men and 11% of women were regular attenders at Fresh Expressions of Church. While Village did not employ temperament analysis, his analyses confirmed lower proportions of sensing types and lower proportions of judging types among those attending Fresh Expressions. Thus, intuitive types were more likely than sensing types to attend Fresh Expressions (12% versus 6% for men, and 15%

versus 8% for women); and perceiving types were more likely than judging types to attend Fresh Expressions (15% versus 7% for men, and 17% versus 10% for women).

In the third of these studies Francis, Wright, and Robbins (2016) drew on data provided by 43 participants in an informal evening congregation meeting around coffee tables. In view of the relatively small number of participants this study did not attempt to report results for male and females separately. These data found a significantly lower proportion of Epimethean Temperament (SJ) in this congregation: 47% compared with 74% reported overall among men and women considered together in Anglican congregations by Francis, Robbins, and Craig (2011).

A second set of studies, reported by Walker (2012), Francis, Edwards, and ap Siôn (2021), and Francis, Jones, and McKenna (2020, 2021), explored the psychological type profile of people who attended Christmas carol services in cathedrals. Taken together these four studies drew on data provided by 1,978 participants. The findings from the four studies converged to demonstrate that cathedral carol services were particularly good at attracting a higher proportion of thinking types. There are good reasons why thinking types may experience not fitting into inherited church. A preference for thinking is much more common among men than among women. According to the UK norms published by Kendall (1998) 65% of men prefer thinking, compared with 30% of women. Generally church congregations comprise two women for every one man (see for example Francis & Lankshear, 2021). The men who join church congregations and stay are much more likely to prefer feeling than men in the general population (see Francis, Robbins, & Craig, 2011). A form of church that attracts more thinking types among both men and women is, therefore, significant.

Research question

Against this background, the aim of the present study was to employ psychological type theory and psychological temperament theory as a lens through which to view the potential

distinctiveness of the appeal of Bishop Barron in connection with the one-day conference convened at the QEII Centre in central London on Saturday 11 February 2023, hosted by *Catholic Voices*, the Guild of Our Lady of Ransom, and the Word on Fire Institute.

Method

Procedure

Participants attending the one-day conference with Bishop Robert Barron on ‘Sharing the Church’s Story’, convened at the QEII Centre in Central London on Saturday 11 February 2023, were invited to complete a survey. Of the anticipated 1,300 participants 560 aged 18 years and over accepted that invitation. Participants were guaranteed confidentiality and anonymity, and by submitting the survey they gave consent for their information to be used as research data and for research publications.

Instrument

Psychological type was assessed by the Francis Psychological Type Scales (FPTS: Francis, 2005; Francis, Laycock, & Brewster, 2017). 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). Studies have demonstrated that this instrument functions well in church-related contexts. For example, Francis, Craig, and Hall (2008) reported alpha coefficients of .83 for the EI scale, .76 for the SN scale, .73 for the TF scale, and .79 for the JP scale. Participants were asked for each pair of characteristics to check the ‘box next to that characteristic which is closer to the real you, even if you feel both characteristics apply to you. Tick the characteristics that reflect the real you, even if other people see you differently’.

Participants

The present analyses were based on the 460 participants (168 men and 292 women) who identified as lay Catholics and who thoroughly completed the Francis Psychological Type Scales. In terms of age, 8 were under the age of twenty, 74 were in their twenties, 71 in their thirties, 64 in their forties, 93 in their fifties, 100 in their sixties, 42 in their seventies, 7 were aged eighty or above, and just one failed to provide information about age. In terms of marital status, 39% were single, 47% married, 6% widowed, 5% divorced, 1% separated, 1% living with a partner, and 2% failed to provide information about marital status. In terms of ethnicity, 48% reported as white British, 7% as white Irish, and 18% as white other; 7% reported as Black African, 1% as Black Caribbean, and 1% Black other; 11% reported as Asian, 2% as Chinese, 4% as mixed ethnicity, and 2% as other. In terms of employment status, 48% reported as in full-time work, 14% in part-time work, 22% as retired, 5% as housemaker or carer, 2% as unemployed, 8% as students, and 1% failed to provide data about employment status. In terms of education, 38% held bachelor degrees, 37% master degrees, and 9% doctorates. In terms of mass attendance, 46% reported attending at least once a week and 53% as attending several times a week. The majority (95%) lived in England.

Analysis

The research literature concerning the empirical investigation of psychological type has developed a highly distinctive method for analysing, handling, and displaying statistical data in the form of 'type tables'. This convention has been adopted in the following presentation in order to integrate these new data within the established literature and to provide all the detail necessary for secondary analysis and further interpretation within the rich theoretical framework afforded by psychological type. Type tables have been designed to provide information about the sixteen discrete 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 these tables will,

however, be restricted to those aspects of the data strictly relevant to the research question. In the context of type tables, the statistical significance of the difference between two groups is established by means of the selection ratio index (I), an extension of chi-square (McCaulley, 1985).

Results and discussion

- insert table 1 about here -

Table 1 presents the psychological type profile for the 292 female lay Catholic participants compared with the profile of 881 female Catholic churchgoers reported by Robbins and Francis (2012). In terms of the four dichotomous preferences these data show clear preferences for judging (86%) over perceiving (14%) and for sensing (65%) over intuition (35%), and slight preferences for feeling (55%) over thinking (45%) and for introversion (52%) over extraversion (48%). Compared with Catholic churchgoers, there were no significant differences in terms of the orientations (52% of the participants preferred introversion and so did 54% of the churchgoers) or in terms of the attitudes (86% of the participants preferred judging and so did 87% of the churchgoers). There were, however, significant differences in terms of the perceiving process and in terms of the judging process. While just 16% of the churchgoers preferred intuition, the proportion increased to 35% among the participants. While 35% of the churchgoers preferred thinking, the proportion increased to 45% among the participants.

In terms of dominant type preferences these data show that 34% of the female participants were dominant sensing types, 27% dominant feeling types, 21% dominant intuitive types, and 18% dominant thinking types. Compared with Catholic churchgoers, there were no significant differences in dominant feeling types (27% of participants and 29% of churchgoers) or in dominant thinking types (18% of participants and 14% of churchgoers). There were, however, significant differences in terms of dominant sensing types and

dominant intuitive types. While just 9% of churchgoers were dominant intuitive types, the proportion rose to 21% among the participants. While 49% of churchgoers were dominant sensing types, the proportion dropped to 34% among the participants.

In terms of the sixteen complete types, these data show that among the female participants the four most prevalent psychological types, those accounting for at least 10% of the participants, were ISTJ (19%), ESFJ (16%), ISFJ (13%), and ESTJ (12%). Compared with Catholic churchgoers, the two most important differences in profiles were these: among the participants there were fewer ISFJs (13% compared with 25%) and more INTJs (6% compared with 2%).

In terms of the four temperaments, these data show that 61% of the female participants were Epimethean Temperament (SJ), 22% Apollonian Temperament (NF), 13% Promethean Temperament (NT), and 4% Dionysian Temperament (SP). Compared with Catholic churchgoers, the Epimethean Temperament was lower among the participants (61% compared with 76%), while the Apollonian Temperament (22% compared with 11%), and the Promethean Temperament (13% compared with 5%) were higher among the participants.

- insert table 2 about here -

Table 2 presents the psychological type profile of the 168 male lay Catholic participants compared with the profile of 593 male Catholic churchgoers reported by Robbins and Francis (2012). In terms of the four dichotomous preferences these data show clear preferences for judging (81%) over perceiving (19%), for thinking (71%) over feeling (29%), for introversion (61%) over extraversion (39%), and for sensing (58%) over intuition (42%). Compared with Catholic churchgoers, there were no significant differences in terms of the orientations (61% of the participants preferred introversion, and so did 60% of the churchgoers). There were, however, significant differences in terms of the perceiving process, the judging process, and the attitudes. While 16% of churchgoers preferred intuition,

the proportion increased to 42% among the participants. While 60% of churchgoers preferred thinking, the proportion increased to 71% among the participants. While only 11% of churchgoers preferred perceiving, the proportion increased to 19% among the participants.

In terms of the sixteen complete types, the data show that among the male participants, the three most prevalent psychological types, those accounting for at least 10% of the participants, were ISTJ (27%), INTJ (16%), and ESTJ (13%). Compared with Catholic churchgoers the two most important differences in profiles were these: among the participants there were fewer ISFJs (5% compared with 16%) and more INTJs (16% compared with 5%).

In terms of dominant type preferences these data show that 34% of the participants were dominant sensing types, 27% dominant intuitive types, 23% dominant thinking types, and 16% dominant feeling types. Compared with Catholic churchgoers, there were no significant differences in dominant feeling types (16% of participants and 18% of churchgoers) or in dominant thinking types (23% of participants and 23% of churchgoers). There were, however, significant differences in terms of dominant sensing types and dominant intuitive types. While just 9% of churchgoers were dominant intuitive types, the proportion increased to 27% among the participants. While 50% of churchgoers were dominant sensing types, the proportion dropped to 34% among the participants.

In terms of the four temperaments, these data show that 52% of the participants were Epimethean Temperament (SJ), 29% Promethean Temperament (NT), 13% Apollonian Temperament (NF), and 7% Dionysian Temperament (SP). Compared with Catholic churchgoers, the Epimethean Temperament was lower among the participants (52% compared with 77%), while the Promethean Temperament (29% compared with 10%) and the Apollonian Temperament (13% compared with 6%) were higher among the participants.

Conclusion

The present study advanced the thesis that a core reason for people leaving church (or perhaps for never joining church in the first place) was the feeling of ‘not fitting in’, and that this feeling of not fitting in may be attributed not only to demographic features (like age and sex) and sociologically defined features (like social class, culture, and ethnicity), but also to less visible psychologically defined features (like personality). This thesis suggests that it may be important for churches to explore ways of engaging people who may not be fitting into the style of inherited church. Against this theoretical perspective, the aim of the present study was specifically to employ psychological type theory and psychological temperament theory as a lens through which to view the potential distinctiveness of the appeal of Bishop Barron in connection with the one-day conference convened at the QEII Centre in central London on Saturday 11 February 2023. Five main conclusions can be drawn from the data analysed in this study.

First, the demographic profile of the participants is of interest. Nearly half of the participants (47%) were under the age of fifty, which may suggest the appeal of Bishop Barron to younger Catholics as well as to older Catholics. However, the ratio between male and female participants in favour of women with almost the ratio of one man (37%) to every two women (64%), which may suggest the appeal of Bishop Barron to be stronger among women. Half the participants were either single (39%), widowed, divorced or separated (11%), which may suggest the appeal of Bishop Barron to be strong among the unattached.

Second, consideration of the four sets of binary pairs proposed by the psychological type profile of the participants demonstrates that the appeal of Bishop Barron embraced key groups who are less well accessed by inherited church. Among the participants there are significantly more intuitive types (35% compared with 16%) and significantly more thinking types (45% compared with 35%). Intuitive types have the capacity to bring to the Church visions for the future, together with a tendency to question and to unsettle the *status quo*.

Thinking types have the capacity to bring to the Church strategic thinking and a tendency to unsettle complacency and to disrupt satisfaction with a *laissez faire* approach.

However, consideration of the full set of four binary pairs also demonstrates that, while the appeal of Bishop Barron widens the reach of the Catholic Church in terms of the two fundamental psychological processes, it does so within the established orientations and attitudes familiar within the inherited expressions of church. The appeal of Bishop Barron is failing to engage more extraverts among both men and women and failing to engage more perceiving types among women. The appeal works best among introverts (those inclined to value the inner life, internal processing, and solitude) and best among judging types (those inclined to value an ordered and structured engagement with the external world).

Third, consideration of the dominant psychological type functions of the participants demonstrates that the main difference between church congregations and those attracted by Bishop Barron resides in the perceiving process. There are significantly fewer dominant sensing types (34% compared with 49%) and significantly more dominant intuitive types (21% compared with 9%). Dominant sensing types are characterised as practical people. They are concerned with details and with practical activities. Dominant intuitive types are characterised as imaginative people. They are concerned with ideas and with grasping the bigger picture. The Church being nurtured by Bishop Barron is a Church that may shape a vision for the future, but will need to ensure that this vision is grounded in an appreciation of the realities with which it needs to work.

Fourth, consideration of the sixteen complete types draws attention to two key features regarding the community of people gathering around Bishop Barron, compared with the community of people characterising Catholic congregations. In church congregations ISFJs are generally a prevalent group who make an important contribution to shaping the ethos. Overall, considering men and women together ISFJ account for 22% of Anglican

churchgoers (Francis, Robbins, & Craig, 2011) and 21% of Catholic churchgoers (Robbins & Francis, 2012). Within the community gathering around Bishop Barron, the proportion of ISFJs among women drops significantly from 25% to 13%, and among men from 16% to 5%. By way of contrast, in church congregations, INTJs are generally too small a minority to make much impact, comprising 4% of Anglican churchgoers (Francis, Robbins, & Craig, 2011) and 3% of Catholic churchgoers (Robbins & Francis, 2012). Within the community gathering around Bishop Barron, the proportion of INTJs among women increases significantly from 2% to 6%, and among men from 5% to 16%. In their discussion of the sixteen complete types, Ross and Francis (2020, pp. 115-126) characterise the ISFJ as ‘the practical helper’. Here are individuals who tend to be quiet, friendly, and conscientious, who tend to meet their obligations and bring stability, who are loyal and careful, and who are concerned with how other people feel. They may fail to deal with difficult and challenging issues that may cause conflict. Ross and Francis (2020, pp. 79-91) characterise the INTJ as ‘the conceptual planner’. Here are individuals who tend to trust their own inspirations and ideas. They have their eyes on the long game and a great drive and commitment to achieve their vision. They appear to be independent, critical, sceptical, and display high standards of competence and achievement. They may fail to understand why others do not see things as they see them. It is perhaps not difficult to conceptualise how ISFJs and INTJs may build very different kinds of churches.

Fifth, consideration of the four temperaments draws attention to a core difference between the community of people gathering around Bishop Barron and the community of people characterising Catholic congregations. The primary temperament shaping both Anglicans and Catholic congregations is the Epimethean Temperament (SJ) that, considering men and women together, accounts for 72% of Anglican churchgoers (Francis, Robbins, & Craig, 2011) and 76% of Catholic churchgoers (Robbins & Francis, 2012). Within the

community gathering around Bishop Barron the proportion of SJs among women drops from 76% to 61%, and among men from 77% to 52%. In their discussion of the Epimethean Temperament, Muskett and Village (2015, p. 641) describe these individuals as the ‘guardians’ of the church, as people who ‘have a strong desire to maintain tradition and heritage’. The group of people gathering around Bishop Barron may have the capacity to dilute the overwhelming influence of the Epimethean Temperament on congregational life.

Brought into dialogue with research on church-leaving (Richter & Francis, 1998; Francis & Richter, 2007), these data raise an interesting and important question about the future trajectory of these individuals who have been attracted to (and potentially influenced by) Bishop Barron’s ministry. Where do they go back to, and what do they do next? Do they now really fit into inherited congregations and fresh expressions of church? Such questions cannot be addressed by a snapshot survey conducted on the day of a gathered conference, but they could be addressed by a carefully designed panel study that would allow the experiences of individual participants to be documented over time.

Limitations

There are clear limitations with the present study. First, although the organisers of the conference made every effort to encourage participation in the survey, it fell far short of a one hundred percent participation rate. Although the participation rate was comparatively good, lessons may be learned regarding how an even better participation rate could be encouraged on a future occasion. Second, although quantitative studies constructed in this tradition are able to address well defined research questions, there could be added merit in a mixed method approach that includes, alongside quantitative data, appropriate qualitative data generated by interviews or by focus groups. Third, the conclusions are based on the comparison with Catholic congregations in Australia. This was inevitable because currently comparable data on Catholic congregations in England does not exist. Further research is

needed to fill this gap in the literature. Fourth, although the analysis demonstrates significant differences between Catholic congregations and participants attending Bishop Barron's event in London, what is not clear is the extent to which similar differences may be found among Catholics travelling to attend other events in the capital city. Further research is needed to fill this gap in the literature.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

Ethical approval

This study received approval from the St Mary's Centre Ethics Committee (SCM22ECC0011).

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Table 1

Type distribution for female participants compared with Catholic congregations reported by Robbins and Francis (2012)

The Sixteen Complete Types				Dichotomous Preferences		
ISTJ <i>n</i> = 56 (19.2%) <i>I</i> = 1.04 +++++	ISFJ <i>n</i> = 37 (12.7%) <i>I</i> = 0.50*** +++++	INFJ <i>n</i> = 26 (8.9%) <i>I</i> = 2.45** +++++	INTJ <i>n</i> = 18 (6.2%) <i>I</i> = 3.19*** +++++	E <i>n</i> = 139 (47.6%) <i>I</i> = 1.03	I <i>n</i> = 153 (52.4%) <i>I</i> = 0.97	
				S <i>n</i> = 189 (64.7%) <i>I</i> = 0.77***	N <i>n</i> = 103 (35.3%) <i>I</i> = 2.20***	
				T <i>n</i> = 132 (45.2%) <i>I</i> = 1.26**	F <i>n</i> = 160 (54.8%) <i>I</i> = 0.85**	
				J <i>n</i> = 252 (86.3%) <i>I</i> = 0.99	P <i>n</i> = 40 (13.7%) <i>I</i> = 1.09	
ISTP <i>n</i> = 0 (0.0%) <i>I</i> = 0.00	ISFP <i>n</i> = 5 (1.7%) <i>I</i> = 0.72 ++	INFP <i>n</i> = 6 (2.1%) <i>I</i> = 2.59 ++	INTP <i>n</i> = 5 (1.7%) <i>I</i> = 3.02 ++	Pairs and Temperaments		
				IJ <i>n</i> = 137 (46.9%) <i>I</i> = 0.95	IP <i>n</i> = 16 (5.5%) <i>I</i> = 1.21	EP <i>n</i> = 24 (8.2%) <i>I</i> = 1.02
				EJ <i>n</i> = 115 (39.4%) <i>I</i> = 1.03	ST <i>n</i> = 94 (32.2%) <i>I</i> = 1.05	SF <i>n</i> = 95 (32.5%) <i>I</i> = 0.61***
				NF <i>n</i> = 65 (22.3%) <i>I</i> = 2.02***	NT <i>n</i> = 38 (13.0%) <i>I</i> = 2.61***	SJ <i>n</i> = 177 (60.6%) <i>I</i> = 0.80***
ESTP <i>n</i> = 2 (0.7%) <i>I</i> = 0.55 +	ESFP <i>n</i> = 5 (1.7%) <i>I</i> = 0.47 ++	ENFP <i>n</i> = 12 (4.1%) <i>I</i> = 1.39 +++++	ENTP <i>n</i> = 5 (1.7%) <i>I</i> = 7.54** ++	SP <i>n</i> = 12 (4.1%) <i>I</i> = 0.51*	NP <i>n</i> = 28 (9.6%) <i>I</i> = 2.11***	NJ <i>n</i> = 75 (25.7%) <i>I</i> = 2.24***
				TJ <i>n</i> = 120 (41.1%) <i>I</i> = 1.25**	TP <i>n</i> = 12 (4.1%) <i>I</i> = 1.45	FP <i>n</i> = 28 (9.6%) <i>I</i> = 0.98
				FJ <i>n</i> = 132 (45.2%) <i>I</i> = 0.83**	IN <i>n</i> = 55 (18.8%) <i>I</i> = 2.72***	EN <i>n</i> = 48 (16.4%) <i>I</i> = 1.81***
ESTJ <i>n</i> = 36 (12.3%) <i>I</i> = 1.19 +++++	ESFJ <i>n</i> = 48 (16.4%) <i>I</i> = 0.75* +++++	ENFJ <i>n</i> = 21 (7.2%) <i>I</i> = 1.98** +++++	ENTJ <i>n</i> = 10 (3.4%) <i>I</i> = 1.31 +++	IS <i>n</i> = 98 (33.6%) <i>I</i> = 0.72***	ES <i>n</i> = 91 (31.2%) <i>I</i> = 0.84	ET <i>n</i> = 53 (18.2%) <i>I</i> = 1.29
				EF <i>n</i> = 86 (29.5%) <i>I</i> = 0.92	IF <i>n</i> = 74 (25.3%) <i>I</i> = 0.79*	IT <i>n</i> = 79 (27.1%) <i>I</i> = 1.25

	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	46	15.8	1.25	I-TP	5	1.7	1.26	Dt.T	51	17.5	1.25
E-FJ	69	23.6	0.93	I-FP	11	3.8	1.19	Dt.F	80	27.4	0.95
ES-P	7	2.4	0.49	IS-J	93	31.8	0.73***	Dt.S	100	34.2	0.70***
EN-P	17	5.8	1.83*	IN-J	44	15.1	2.71***	Dt.N	61	20.9	2.39***

Note: *N* = 292 (NB: + = 1% of *N*)
 p* < .05, *p* < .01, ****p* < .001

Table 2

Type distribution for male participants compared with Catholic congregations reported by Robbins and Francis (2012)

The Sixteen Complete Types				Dichotomous Preferences			
ISTJ <i>n</i> = 46 (27.4%) <i>I</i> = 0.90 +++++	ISFJ <i>n</i> = 8 (4.8%) <i>I</i> = 0.30*** +++++	INFJ <i>n</i> = 5 (3.0%) <i>I</i> = 1.04 +++	INTJ <i>n</i> = 27 (16.1%) <i>I</i> = 3.29*** +++++	E <i>n</i> = 66 (39.3%) <i>I</i> = 0.96	I <i>n</i> = 102 (60.7%) <i>I</i> = 1.03	S <i>n</i> = 98 (58.3%) <i>I</i> = 0.69**	N <i>n</i> = 70 (41.7%) <i>I</i> = 2.63***
ISTP <i>n</i> = 2 (1.2%) <i>I</i> = 0.54 +	ISFP <i>n</i> = 6 (3.6%) <i>I</i> = 3.53* ++++	INFP <i>n</i> = 5 (3.0%) <i>I</i> = 3.53* +++	INTP <i>n</i> = 3 (1.8%) <i>I</i> = 1.51 ++	T <i>n</i> = 120 (71.4%) <i>I</i> = 1.18**	F <i>n</i> = 48 (28.6%) <i>I</i> = 0.72**	Pairs and Temperaments	
ESTP <i>n</i> = 2 (1.2%) <i>I</i> = 0.88 +	ESFP <i>n</i> = 1 (0.6%) <i>I</i> = 0.22 +	ENFP <i>n</i> = 7 (4.2%) <i>I</i> = 12.35*** ++++	ENTP <i>n</i> = 6 (3.6%) <i>I</i> = 4.24** ++++	J <i>n</i> = 136 (81.0%) <i>I</i> = 0.90**	P <i>n</i> = 32 (19.0%) <i>I</i> = 1.82**	IJ <i>n</i> = 86 (51.2%) <i>I</i> = 0.95	IP <i>n</i> = 16 (9.5%) <i>I</i> = 1.82*
ESTJ <i>n</i> = 22 (13.1%) <i>I</i> = 0.78 +++++	ESFJ <i>n</i> = 11 (6.5%) <i>I</i> = 0.46** +++++	ENFJ <i>n</i> = 5 (3.0%) <i>I</i> = 1.47 +++	ENTJ <i>n</i> = 12 (7.1%) <i>I</i> = 2.45** +++++	ST <i>n</i> = 72 (42.9%) <i>I</i> = 0.85	SF <i>n</i> = 26 (15.5%) <i>I</i> = 0.46***	EP <i>n</i> = 16 (9.5%) <i>I</i> = 1.82*	EJ <i>n</i> = 50 (29.8%) <i>I</i> = 0.83
				NF <i>n</i> = 22 (13.1%) <i>I</i> = 2.16**	NT <i>n</i> = 48 (28.6%) <i>I</i> = 2.92***	SJ <i>n</i> = 87 (51.8%) <i>I</i> = 0.67***	SP <i>n</i> = 11 (6.5%) <i>I</i> = 0.90
				NP <i>n</i> = 21 (12.5%) <i>I</i> = 3.90***	NJ <i>n</i> = 49 (29.2%) <i>I</i> = 2.31***	NP <i>n</i> = 21 (12.5%) <i>I</i> = 3.90***	NJ <i>n</i> = 49 (29.2%) <i>I</i> = 2.31***
				TJ <i>n</i> = 107 (63.7%) <i>I</i> = 1.16*	TP <i>n</i> = 13 (7.7%) <i>I</i> = 1.39	FP <i>n</i> = 19 (11.3%) <i>I</i> = 2.31**	FJ <i>n</i> = 29 (17.3%) <i>I</i> = 0.50***
				IN <i>n</i> = 40 (23.8%) <i>I</i> = 2.43***	EN <i>n</i> = 30 (17.9%) <i>I</i> = 2.94***	ES <i>n</i> = 36 (21.4%) <i>I</i> = 0.61***	ET <i>n</i> = 42 (25.0%) <i>I</i> = 1.15
				IF <i>n</i> = 24 (14.3%) <i>I</i> = 0.70	IT <i>n</i> = 78 (46.4%) <i>I</i> = 1.20		

	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	34	20.2	1.03	I-TP	5	3.0	0.88	Dt.T	39	23.2	1.01
E-FJ	16	9.5	0.59*	I-FP	11	6.5	3.53***	Dt.F	27	16.1	0.89
ES-P	3	1.8	0.44	IS-J	54	32.1	0.70***	Dt.S	57	33.9	0.68***
EN-P	13	7.7	6.56***	IN-J	32	19.0	2.46***	Dt.N	45	26.8	3.00***

Note: *N* = 168 (NB: + = 1% of *N*)
 p* < .05, *p* < .01, ****p* < .001