Abstract
Already famous and infamous for his stand against conscription during WWI and the instigation of “Mannixism”, by the time Daniel Mannix left Australia for a speaking tour of the US in 1920 he was simultaneously, loved and loathed, feted and feared, hero and hated in his adopted country, Australia.

In the US, accompanied by de Valera, Mannix transformed himself into an Irish nationalist icon. In New York he boarded RMS Baltic bound for Queenstown, where beacons were prepared to welcome him and proposals were made to rename that port in his honour. The British cabinet determined that in the light of the developing troubles his landing could not be permitted, and a destroyer was sent to arrest him on the high seas (“The greatest victory the Royal Navy has had since Jutland,” Mannix quipped). Now, documents are available that enable a view of Mannix’s progress towards Ireland from several perspectives, including those of the Australian authorities, the British cabinet, other Australian bishops and the Vatican, all of whom viewed Mannix with alarm.

The paper examines the unique nature of Mannix’s Irish nationalism, which went well beyond what was permissible for a churchman. Its relation to the context of Melbourne Catholicism, Australian Catholic identity and sectarianism is considered, along with its connection to Mannix’s political agenda for Australia. The parallels between that agenda and the one actually implemented in Ireland by de Valera are inquired into, along such dimensions as opposition to capitalism and to contraception. The work of Mannix’s protégés, Arthur Calwell and B A Santamaria, in achieving parts of that vision is described, with particular reference to the policy that was in the end most successfully realised, that of non-British immigration.

The presentation will be based on work carried out in preparation for a book of documents relating to Mannix, to be published by Connor Court.

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