

# Sustainable eventization of religious heritage: practical considerations and learning from case studies

Lindisfarne Gospels Durham: one amazing book, one incredible journey



Rev Ruth Dowson  
Researcher & Author  
Leeds Beckett University, UK.  
[ruthdowson97@gmail.com](mailto:ruthdowson97@gmail.com)  
[linkedin.com/in/rev-ruth-dowson-8b196112](https://www.linkedin.com/in/rev-ruth-dowson-8b196112)

## My perspective:

Events practitioner, academic researcher, priest

- 25 years as a professional events manager, including 10 years in venue operations management
- 14 years University teacher, UK Centre for Event Management
- Theological studies
- Events and church culture – research
- Purpose of my research: solving the problems of the use of church buildings for events
- Eventization of faith
- Vatican, Jerusalem



SCHOOL OF EVENTS, TOURISM & HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT



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## Venuefication

- Everywhere is a venue...which means that it is possible for any building, space or site to become a venue for an event (Dowson & Lamond, 2017)
- For spaces and buildings with a different primary purpose (not events or not the same type of events), the primary purpose impacts on these uses
- Hybrid events venues – used for different event purposes – the primary purpose is dominant
- For sacred spaces (e.g. churches), theological perspectives impact on those uses



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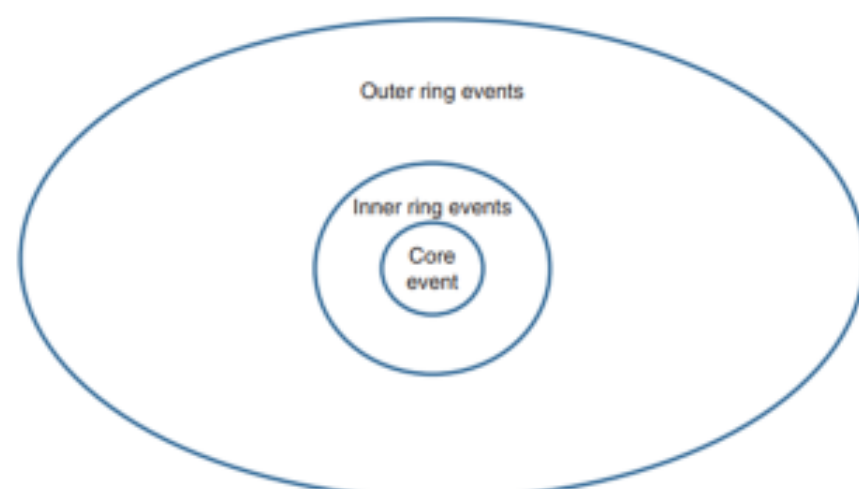
## Eventization of faith

- Trend towards the eventization of faith (Dowson 2015; 2017; 2018; 2020a; 2020b)
- Influenced by growth of the experience economy
- Consumers moving from amassing possessions to acquiring experiences (Wood, 2009)
- Venuefication of churches and associated buildings



## Lindisfarne Gospels

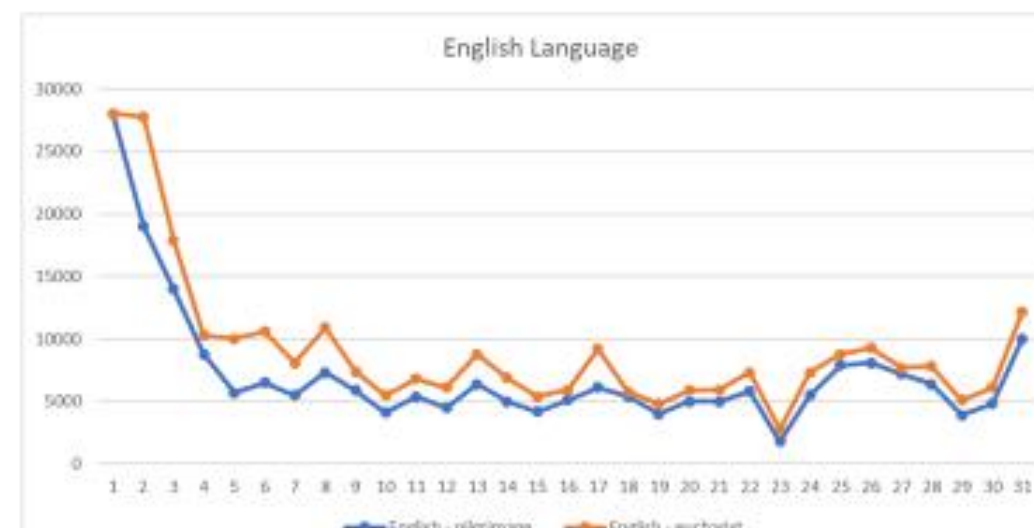
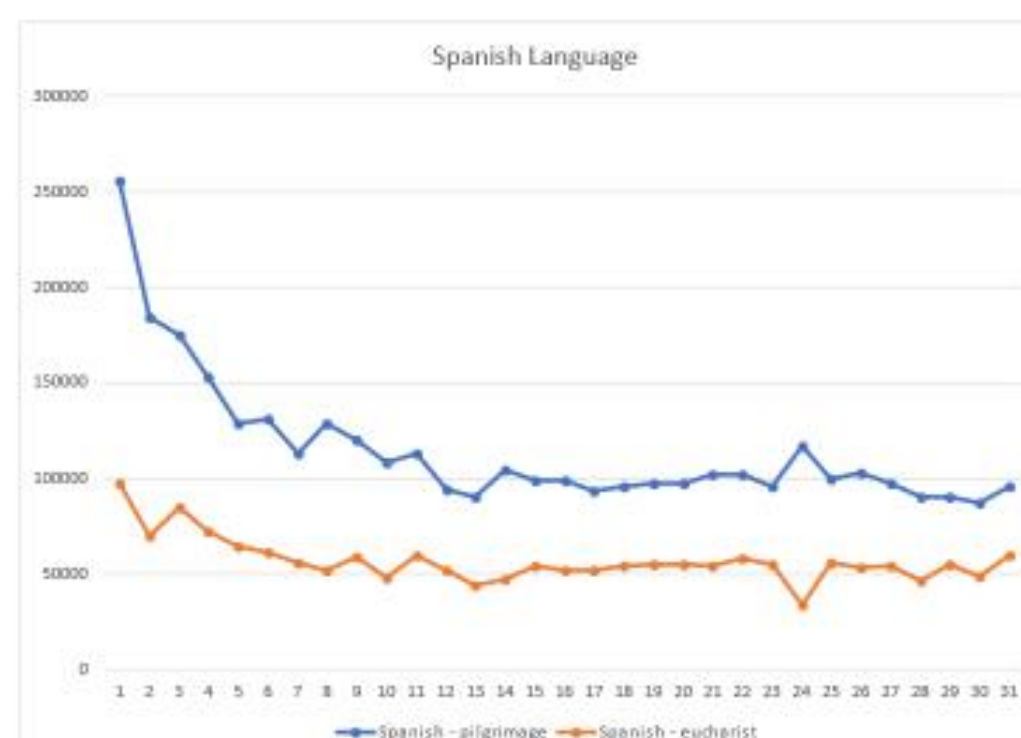
- Almost 100,000 visitors to the main exhibition
- Outreach programme: 20,000 children took part in learning sessions and workshops
- Visitors from every area of the UK
- Significant international visitors from across Europe, the USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South America and Africa.
- Almost 1,000 associated individual events held in churches, museums, attractions, galleries and community venues.
- Events held from the Isle of Canna in Scotland to North West England (Preston).



## Virtual pilgrimages – Magdala Experience

2019: ¼ million visitors  
2020: only local guests allowed to stay.  
2020 October: YouTube: over 5million views  
2021 Lent: YouTube over 10 million views

<https://youtube.com/c/ExperienceMagdala>



TYPES  
of events

PURPOSES  
of events

MODES  
of event  
delivery

*Theological perspectives*

PEOPLE  
who produce /  
participate in  
events

SPACES  
in which events  
take place

PLACES  
OBJECTS  
MOVEMENT

## Practical Design and Operations Considerations

### Financial

- Market Size and Conditions
- Cost
- Return on Investment
- Efficiency

### Use and Usability

- Who will use the venue
- Flexibility
- Safety Standards/ Building Codes
- Integrated Design Approach

### Location

- Access to and around venue
- Impact on local area

### Design

- Visual Impact on Environment
- Sustainability and wider environmental impact

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