Tui Motu

InterIslands

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front cover photograph
of a New Zealand dotterel at
dusk, Awarua Bay, Southland
by **Paul Sorrell**

the fragility of creation

Paul Sorrell's front cover photograph of a New Zealand dotterel roosting on one leg in the late afternoon sun evokes for me the fragility of creation. It made me think of that first photo, taken from outer space, of our blue-green planet lonely against the utter blackness beyond. We use and pray often in the liturgy of the Church these lines:

> *Christ is the image of the unseen God*
> *the first born of all creation,*
> *for in him were created all things in heaven and earth ...*
> (Col 1:15-16)

We are the first generation that has the know-how to act responsibly for the preservation of the biodiversity of the planet, and the first to put that in jeopardy. This is not just a practical issue of survival. It is an important theological question.

Frank Hoffman, in a letter to the Editor in this current issue, makes a bold suggestion. Why not develop a new liturgical season of Creation? It is an idea that merits further thought.

We celebrate the paschal mystery around the seasons of Lent and Easter. So too we might celebrate the mystery of God's continuing creation in Christ, and be inspired to see, honour and work within the world we inhabit in a new way, worthy of the praise of God. The paschal mystery and God's creative power are so closely interconnected.

Saint Mary of the Cross McKillop's genius was to see a need and ask what is the "new thing" that God wants us to be about? Lord, that we may see.

Parihaka remembered

Gauche children often have little idea of the significance of the places where they play. Somehow they are not told the history. Perhaps these important stories have been forgotten, or more likely were never known to their parents in the first place.

As a boy, I used to spend much time with friends around the Anderson's Bay inlet here in Dunedin. It was our playground. The cliff walls on the Sunshine side of the inlet contain caves. We used to rush in, struggling to close the cave's rusty iron doors – to imprison one another. It was an obligatory part of our simple games of cowboys and indians.

Today these caves remain much as I knew them, derelict and dilapidated. However, now I know that they are a remnant of a much more complex and sad event – the place of imprisonment of many of the Maori men who

were seized by the colonial army at Parihaka in 1881 and brought south. The prisoners excavated these caves. How long they lived in them I do not know, but long enough to build the causeway with its bridge that now spans the bay from Waverley to Sunshine.

More recently a small park has been established close by where this shameful episode of unjust imprisonment is remembered. It enfolds a large square stone memorial cairn given the evocative name of Rongo. Listen! My playing place of 50 years ago is a sacred space – a peaceful place to evoke a wider peace.

Te Whiti and Tohu had drunk long and deeply from the well of the gospel message, and their creative methods of peaceful resistance to the colonial troops are a reminder of Maori skill for strategy and tactics. They turned this part of their tradition on its head, giving it an inventive and powerful twist.

Generations before Mahatma Gandhi resisted the salt tax and gave the world his transcendent lesson in peace-making, these two men had preached to their people and lived an evangelical non-violent resistance to the unjust invasion of land and life.

As David Mahutonga reminds us, the last of the South Island prisoners returned home in 1898, almost 40 years after the land wars began. Cushla Low mentions "just action and right relationship" as two of the perennial values which now face our country in dealing anew with the questions of land and title in Aotearoa New Zealand. Tom Lawn's short tale is a kind of parable: any change is difficult. How long will personal and communal change around questions of Maori land and living take us?

Filled with the two prophets' holy insight, may we listen generously and be equal to that task politically and spiritually.

Te Whiti o Rongomai, this man of 'good news', is commemorated in the Anglican Church calendar on 6 November each year.

Text and context

While their articles may seem to be poles apart, Catherine Jones and Edmund Little have much in common. They ask us to take up the ever difficult task of interpreting the gospel for our time, and within our context. What do we have to do differently in our time, as Mary McKillop did in hers?

Generations before Mahatma Gandhi resisted the salt tax and gave the world his transcendent lesson in peace-making, these two men had preached to their people and lived an evangelical non-violent resistance to the unjust invasion of land and life.

One of my seminary biblical lecturers used to repeat this mantra, "Every text should be seen within a context". It has relevance to many more contexts than just the Bible.

Sister Catherine is reminding us that we Christians are not an isolated group set apart but very much inter-woven into the global patterns of our day: the media, ease of travel and emigration have seen to that. One part of weaving that new tapestry is to search delicately for what unifies us amongst all religions and to live that unity freely and without fear. It's the call of charity and human dignity.

Father Edmund takes a wry look at science and religion, and is clearly not impressed by the way in which some oppose them. Recently, I got from the public library 'The Language of God' by Francis S Collins. This deceptively simple book is the best argument I know of how science can support faith. Collins, one of the world's leading geneticists, was head of the *Human Genome Project* and is now director of the National Institute of Health in Washington DC, one of the world's foremost research institutes. I highly recommend it, if you want to read a scientific argument for the existence of God.

Retirement

Francie Skelton has signalled for some time that she wishes to retire. She was honoured along with Father Michael at the special farewell celebrated on May 1. She has decided that she will finish work with the December issue. I will personally miss her sense of humour and story telling, as well as her editorial and layout expertise, and her energy. Thanks for all these. Go well, Francie. ■

Tui Motu
InterIslands

Tui Motu-InterIslands is an independent, Catholic, monthly magazine. It invites its readers to question, challenge and contribute to its discussion of spiritual and social issues in the light of gospel values, and in the interests of a more just and peaceful society. Inter-church and inter-faith dialogue is welcomed.

The name *Tui Motu* was given by Pa Henare Tate. It literally means "stitching the islands together...", bringing the different races and peoples and faiths together to create one Pacific people of God. Divergence of opinion is expected and will normally be published, although that does not necessarily imply editorial commitment to the viewpoint expressed.

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letters to the editor

We welcome comment, discussion, argument, debate. But please keep letters under 200 words. The editor reserves the right to abridge, while not changing the meaning. Response articles (up to a page) are welcome – but please, by negotiation.

women at the top

A national Radio programme, fronted by Jim Mora, recently contacted Lindsay Freer from the Auckland Diocese to comment briefly on some Catholic matter discussed by a panel including Dr Brian Edwards – who confessed to very much admiring Lindsay Freer. Dr Edwards is never loathe to air his 'non-belief' views and it occurred to me that had a male from the church come on air to express a Catholic viewpoint a more conflicting exchange would have resulted; instead there was humour and banter.

I'd like to see a Lindsay Freer in every diocese south of the Bombay Hills in order to inject a more human dimension into parish affair.

I wonder why the Church hierarchy seldom trusts a role to the women to act as prophets in the top levels of the church. Within each diocese we have women often excelling in education, many of whom could contribute to and stimulate their parishes.

Alice Clayton, *Christchurch* [abridged]

the season of creation

The Tablet (London) has published an extensive review of Benedict XVI as our green Pope. The editor, Catherine Pepinster, leaves no doubt that Benedict advocates a duty to embrace the earth and all life in our quest for justice. We hope that Rome will open its calendar of holy seasons to include a season of Creation, as Lent and Advent were added long ago.

The beautiful words of our pope are evidence of his genuine commitment to the needs of troubled Earth. His eloquent appeal validates what science has been urging for years. Words address the intellect, while, according to theologian Lukas Vischer, it is worship rather than the Church's teaching that most influences the consciousness of believers. Yet while basing the Church's festivals on the creed, belief in God the Creator has been ignored, with exclusive emphasis on incarnation, salvation, the Holy Spirit and the rest.

Meanwhile this void has been filled by unofficial annual observances of Creation Day and the Season of Creation (1 Sept – 4 Oct). This is the work of the European Christian Environmental Network (ECNE) and Norman Habel in Australia. Here it is left to individual faith communities like our St. Mary's and others who struggle for lack of official support. Our own theologians agree with the 2nd European Ecumenical Assembly that commitment to preserving creation is not a side issue, but an essential dimension of all Church work.

On behalf of St Mary's Earth Care Group,

Frank Hoffmann, *Papakura*

the universal right to water

I wish to clarify the reasons for New Zealand's abstention on the resolution for the Human Right to Safe Drinking Water and Sanitation (Kathleen Rushton rsm, Tui Motu, Sept). The reasons, also given by Australia, Canada, UK and USA, were that the resolution pre-empted the imminent Report of the UN Human Rights Council on this subject, did not contain any mechanisms for implementation, nor was it legally binding on governments.

The Report of the Council, by independent expert, Catarina de Albuquerque, released on 6 October, has legal force on the Human Right to Water etc, and is worth reading in its entirety on this complex subject. See:

www.ohchr.org/EN/Pages/Welcomepage.aspx

We also need to exercise vigilance. See particularly this website and its report (85 pages, in pdf):

www.landandwater.org.nz/

This wide-ranging report is only the beginning of a long process, but needs acceptance and implementation by Government if it is to fulfil its potential to enable a fair, just and sustainable use of water in New Zealand. We have a responsibility to be informed to participate fully in the debate on water rights in this country.

Patricia A. Kane, *Wellington*

palestine and lebanon – a response

The interview with Constantine Dabbagh, executive-secretary of the Near Eastern Council of Churches' Committee for Refugees (*Tui Motu,* Sept) describes difficulties and discriminations suffered by the Palestinians living in Gaza. I read in the English *Guardian Weekly* (August 27) that Palestinian refugees in Lebanon see little hope in a new law.

The new law aims to correct discrimination against refugees in Lebanon. The present laws prohibit Palestinians from owning land and entering a number of key professions (law, medicine, engineering).

I quote from the Guardian's Beirut correspondent:

"The debate over rights for Palestinian refugees has divided law makers here for years. Lebanon's Christian parties constitute the largest opposition to the new law – and indeed any law that aims to give Palestinians in the country more rights – based on a fear that any such move would constitute the first steps towards naturalisation or tawteen. Tawteen is a major concern for Lebanon's diminishing Christian community who fear Palestinian integration would dramatically alter the demographics in favour of an already larger Muslim majority. Palestinians deny they seek citizenship in Lebanon, and hold the right to return to the land of their ancestors as a sacred right."

This situation poses a question like the 'ends, means and morals' of the Waihopai debate. Thanks to *Tui Motu* for continuing to inform us on the extent to which 'our' Church is being ruled by the 'dictatorship' of Rome.

A I Bray, *Havelock North*

a legal earthquake in canterbury?

A dunedin barrister, David More, critiques The Canterbury Earthquake and Recovery Act.

On a theoretically unlimited scale, but with a realistic maximum of 10, the Christchurch earthquake of 4 September 2010 achieved 7.1. What score out of 10 should we give both the Government and Parliament for their response to the legal issues that flow from the earthquake?

There was extensive damage to buildings, roads, water and drainage. All the necessary remedial work is governed by Acts and Regulations, and consents from local authorities will be required before any demolition or repairs can start. In a situation such as this, the usual procedures and time frames for obtaining necessary consents simply cannot operate. Emergency action was demanded.

The Government's response was to introduce the Canterbury Earthquake Response and Recovery Act, and an acquiescent Parliament approved its passage, unopposed, in one day. Parliament's standing orders were suspended to do so. I would give 10 out of 10 for the recognition of the need for urgency, and the speed of the response. However, not for all the contents of the Act.

The Act authorises the Governor-General (which means the Government), by Order in Council, to "make any provision reasonably necessary or expedient for the purpose of the Act". The purpose is to "facilitate the response to the Canterbury earthquake". Any Order in Council made by the Governor-General may grant exemption from, or modify, the provisions of 22 named Acts of Parliament. The Governor-General makes any Order in Council on the recommendation of a Minister of the Crown. The recommendation of any Minister may not be challenged in any court. Persons acting under the authority of an Order in Council are exempt from any liability, and no person may claim compensation through being harmed by the operation of any Order in Council.

The Land Transport Act is one of the 22 Acts. In theory, the Governor-General could authorise the mayor of Christchurch to drive drunk through the streets of Christchurch and nothing could be done about it. Another Act is the Social Security Act, and an Order in Council could, for example, cancel the benefits of all persons in Christchurch in receipt of unemployment benefits, unless they assisted with the clean up.

The earthquake sent actual shockwaves through Canterbury. It also sent figurative shockwaves through the legal profession, and the wide powers given to the Government under the Act have come in for criticism. A group of 27 legal scholars from New Zealand and overseas has written an open letter to the New Zealand people and Parliament. In the letter they say: "However, while we are united in wishing to help Canterbury recover, there is a risk that the desire to do "everything we can" in the short term will blind us to the long term harms of our actions. In particular, abandoning established constitutional values and principles in order to remove any inconvenient legal roadblock is a dangerous and misguided step." A similar criticism has been made by the New Zealand Law Society.

Whilst it may be said the powers given to Ministers will not be misused, that cannot be guaranteed. A recommendation made in good faith by a Minister may have unintended consequences which cause loss to an individual. That individual is not entitled to compensation, and has no recourse to the courts for justice. This is directly contrary to section 27 of The New Zealand Bill of Rights Act which provides that every person whose rights or interests are affected by determination of a tribunal or other public authority has the right to apply for judicial review of that determination.

Abandoning established constitutional values and principles in order to remove any inconvenient legal roadblock is a dangerous and misguided step.

There is no need to extinguish the right to challenge the recommendation of a Minister to make an Order in Council, nor to deny the right to apply for compensation to a person who has suffered loss as the result of a Minister's recommendation. The Act will operate perfectly well with the usual constitutional safeguards retained.

There is precedent for the need to be concerned. The Economic Stabilisation Act 1947 gave similar powers to make Orders in Council, which could have the effect of suspending the operation of Acts of Parliament. The Act was regularly used over the years of its existence to vary petrol prices, change rates of sales and other secondary taxes, and other similar matters. In 1977 the Muldoon Government used the Act to enact the now infamous rent, price, and wage freeze regulations. Overnight all rents, prices, and wages were frozen, with no ability of Parliament to vote on the decisions, nor for the decisions to be challenged in any court. The Act was repealed in 1987, and there is little doubt that its misuse by the Muldoon Government was a factor in its demise.

The Canterbury Earthquake Response and Recovery Act must expire no later than 1 April 2012. It is obviously intended as a short term measure. Notwithstanding that, I would give the Government very few marks out of 10 for proposing the removal of the constitutional safeguards, and Parliament even less for not challenging their removal. ■

parihaka
alive today

David Mahutonga tells the story of Parihaka and how the descendants of Te Whiti and Tohu are guided in keeping the gifts and mana of Te Whiti and Tohu alive.

Parihaka *Papakainga* is a small Maori community of meeting houses and homes of around a dozen families, nestled amongst the small hills and farmlands between the Tasman Sea and Mount Taranaki. It was established in the 1860s by the Prophets Tohu Kakahi and Te Whiti o Rongomai and lies within the tribal boundaries of the Iwi of Taranaki on lands belonging to the *hapu* of Ngati Moeahu and Ngati Haupoto.

Tohu and Te Whiti were initially living at Warea where they had established large gardens. This was a thriving business for them. They grew various crops including potatoes and wheat, they had built a flour mill and they sold their products to the towns like New Plymouth and as far afield as Sydney.

But when the Land Wars broke out in Waitara in 1860, Warea was shortly afterward bombarded by a warship (the *Niger*) that was stationed off the coast. Forces were then sent to Warea to raze it to the ground. The prophets, having found themselves involved in the war, headed to Te Atiawa to the skirmishes.

They later found their way back to Taranaki to a garden area known as Parihaka where they chose to rebuild their community. It was further inland from the threat of the warships and located half way between the Taranaki borders to the north by Ngati Tama, and to the south by Nga Rauru Kitahi. The village soon grew and many people were drawn to Parihaka to hear the message of Tohu and Te Whiti.

These two men had seen the futility of taking up weapons against the government and its military, but both were passionately committed to the retention of their *Tino Rangatiratanga* and their ancestral lands. And so Tohu and Te Whiti conceived another strategy based on their knowledge of Christianity and the bible, where they used peaceful, non-violent means to exercise their authority. This philosophy they imparted to their burgeoning followers when they spoke with them during the early days after the community was established.

Parihaka and its people, it should be said, were of one mind: very united under Tohu and Te Whiti during this period, and their faith was very specifically placed in God. As followers, the people were asked to go and plough the land where they would peacefully confront the government, military, and settlers, then suffer the wrath of those groups, being subjected to imprisonment, beatings and undergoing separation from their families for long periods of time. How they weathered those times of trauma and anxiety could only be through their faith in God.

The length of time that the people of Parihaka were subjected to this treatment is also notable, as many would think that the Land Wars began in 1860 and

hostilities were completed in 1863. Taranaki engaged in war with the government during that period, but the time of the *Pahua* when Bryce and his militia invaded Parihaka and the prophets and the prisoners were taken away to the South Island, occurred in November 1881.

The militia occupied Parihaka for a period after the invasion establishing Fort Rolleston on the Pa site to maintain a presence there. And the last of the prisoners who returned from the South Island did so in 1898. It could be said that Taranaki suffered the effects of war for 38 years.

After the turn of the century, Tohu Kakahi died on 4 February 1907 and Te Whiti, his nephew, died on 18 November the same year. They were both said to be in their nineties. The legacy that they left for their people was to live peacefully, be committed to retaining possession of the land and having faith in *Te Atua*, thoughts that are probably best described in the popular biblical saying:

Kororia ki te Atua i runga rawa
Maungarongo ki runga i te whenua
He Whakaaro pai ki nga tangata katoa

Glory to God on high
Peace on Earth
And goodwill to all people

Parihaka today is still a small Maori community as it was back in 1881, even though there are fewer than a hundred residents now living on the *papakainga*. One can feel the *wairua* that flows and ebbs around the site when one takes a leisurely stroll around, viewing the landmarks, lanes and lawns that surround the various buildings. The presence of those *tupuna* who have passed on mingles with the sense of warmth that welcomes those who come to Parihaka.

The people of Parihaka today go about their lives working around the district, or in and around the *papakainga*. They are the descendants of the followers of Tohu and Te Whiti and to this day they observe many of the same customs. Te Whiti, on the 18th of each month would host the day where the people would meet together, dine together and discuss issues that they saw as relevant. Tohu did the same on the 19th of each month, and these days are still observed by the people of Parihaka over 120 years later.

The legacy that they left for their people was to live peacefully, be committed to retaining possession of the land and having faith in Te Atua.

On 7 November each year, Parihaka commemorates the *Pahua,* when the community was invaded by the constabulary in 1881, by putting on a large *hakari*. The people believed that on that day the presence of God saved them from the brink of death and the feast is to thank *Te Atua* for his protection.

Some of us who reside and help out at Parihaka are fourth generation followers of the prophets Tohu and Te Whiti. All of the teachings we have experienced have come from our *kaumatua* and from the *hui* that we have at the Pa where *korero* is the solitary means for learning the ways of our *tupuna*. The sharing at these times can be very rewarding and even uplifting and one can gain a sense of purpose and connection too, especially to those gone before.

Our prophets are the example by which we live and their intimate knowledge of God, and the special communion with God that our *tupuna* experienced in November 1881 is what guides us in our journey through life. ■

David Mahutonga is treasurer of the Toranui Marae Committee, Parihaka, and a fourth-generation descendant of the original Parihaka people

Glossary

Papakainga	home village
hapu	subtribes
Tino Rangatiratanga	sovereignty
Pahua	invasion
Te Atua	God
wairua	spirit
tupuna	ancestors
hakari	feast
kaumatua	elders
hui	meetings
korero	telling the story

Aroha's Wish

E tu tama wahine, te wa o te kore

Rise up women in times of absence
and presence as if the same door
swings on men and women equally.
As the moon bows to the sun
a greeting, sharing the sky
with stone and atomic light.

Elizabeth Smither

journey with parihaka

The descendant of an Irish settler, **Cushla Low**, reflects on the justice and injustice of the situation concerning Maori land at the time of the Parihaka Invasion and now.

Life is a series of hikoi,

a series of small journeyings within the broader context of the larger journey we make through the particular space in history that our living occupies. Some of these hikoi are physical and significant, they involve movement from one place to the next, the crossing of boundaries, points of definable entry and exit. Some hikoi are memorable for the joy of encounter while others carry the ache of goodbye. Some hikoi are carried on a quieter current, barely palpable shifts from one way of knowing to newer understandings, the seeping to the surface of memory informing experience, the barely definable but gradually persistent turning over of the heart.

For me the journey to Parihaka is all of the above. When I was a child at school we learnt the history of settlement in this country from the perspective of the dominant culture, the pakeha culture. The *Treaty of Waitangi* was spoken of in terms of misunderstandings rather than broken promises, nothing had been dishonoured; rather, words had been misinterpreted, land was transferred to pakeha ownership through acquisition rather than illegal confiscation and Parihaka, well, Parihaka was a 'Crown intervention' rather than the invasion and plundering of an undefended Pa. This was how I first understood the history of my Irish ancestors in this country. I now understand differently.

When I was a child at school the Treaty of Waitangi was spoken of in terms of misunderstandings rather than broken promises.

My Irish great-grandfather emigrated to this country in the late 1890's. He came as part of the great armada of Irish dispossessed. Poor people rendered landless and classless in their own country. He came with hope that he could create a better life for himself here. My Irish great-grandfather understood very well the pain of being nothing more than hired labour on land that was your own.

The fact that my great-grandfather arrived in New Zealand many years after the invasion and sacking of Parihaka and therefore was not part of that 'government intervention' gives me no cause for comfort. The fact of the matter is that when my great-grandfather arrived here he acquired land he had no right to acquire.

It did not matter that the financial transactions were legitimate from a pakeha perspective, or that he worked hard to earn the means to buy land. The truth of the matter is that my great-grandfather, like many other immigrants, gained prosperity through the acquisition of Maori land, illegally confiscated land, stolen land, land they had no right to. So the dispossessed came and dispossessed others, the oppressed came and oppressed others. My great-grandfather and his descendants flourished while others diminished.

In carving out a life for himself, in realising his dream of creating a better life for himself and his family my great-grandfather collaborated with structures of injustice, fed by settler greed and the blithe sense of entitlement that the notion of cultural superiority imparts. Unwittingly or not, my Irish great-grandfather came to this country and made his fortune on the back of Maori suffering. For me, the story of Parihaka will forever be framed within the sin and the suffering of my own people. And I do not know how to reconcile that.

Te Whiti and Tohu

On the last morning of his life
Te Whiti fed corn to his pigeons.
Tohu was buried on top of his coffin
smashed in a dozen pieces.

Tohu had his left hand middle finger
shot away by a bullet. Te Whiti's
right hand middle finger was torn off
by a millstone. They married sisters.

At Tohu's death a canoe-shaped cloud
with a figure lingered for three days.
Te Whiti spoke of ko manawanui: forbearance
the canoe by which we are to be saved.

Elizabeth Smither

A Ghost and a Spider

After our deaths this pa will become the house of a ghost and a spider
– Te Whiti and Tohu

Ghosts walk and spiders weave.
Ghosts walk so soft on grass
the webs remain bedecked with dew.

The slow work of spiders and ghosts
breeds completion. Some call it hope.
Like mist the spiders' night webs glow.

Out of the mist the unfulfilled ghosts
set dreams again. Buildings restored,
meetings are called and lawns mowed.

Elizabeth Smither

By kind permission of author.

The road to Parihaka is the road to Calvary. Landmarks and road names witness to conquest. The earth cradles a memory. The sound of booted feet marching, the smell of burning homes. The soil is redolent with grief.

Parihaka is both memory and dream. The outline of the pa etched against the mountain is a memorial to a narrative of injustice that has informed Maori/Pakeha relationships in this country for the last 170 years. The open gate that welcomes the pilgrim onto the marae is a dream for a new narrative struggling to be realized. The question is: where do we as Catholic community stand? Where do we who claim discipleship as people of the Gospel narrative stand?

We cannot go back and undo the events of our history, but we can choose how we shape events in our own time. As we as a people gather on the cusp of what has aptly been called the greatest land grab that this country has ever seen – the *Foreshore and Seabed* legislation, as we as a community witness Tuhoe denied their ancestral land in the Ureweras, where will we stand? Will we, like our immigrant ancestors, remain silent, will we be complicit in another event in a long litany of injustice because it benefits us to do so, or will we lend our voices to the gospel imperative for just action and right relationship?
My *mokopuna* traces her bloodline back to a poor young Irish immigrant who came dispossessed to this country to dream a new dream. She also traces her ancestry through Ngai Tuhoe and Te Ati Awa, back to Parihaka. Perhaps for her the narrative will be a new one. Perhaps in her the broken-hearted of the Irish dispossessed and the broken-hearted of the Maori dispossessed will realize a new dream. ■

Cushla Low is a mother and a St Joseph's New Plymouth parishioner with an interest in liturgy.

beginning to understand parihaka

Tom Lawn

A priest, born in Taranaki, reflects on the journey of faith he took to begin to understand what had happened at Parihaka.

I grew up in Okato. St Patrick's Church was at the other end of St Martin's Parish, Pungarehu. My first 17 years were spent there in home, district high school and parish. My home was very open to Maori; my schooling never revealed Land Wars; my parish life was not focused on the kingdom we are called to build here. I was there, Parihaka was there, and we never met.

My first meeting was through Dick Scott's book *Ask that mountain*. I do not really remember what year that was but I can remember being amazed that this history was hidden so close to my home life.

My second meeting was through the De La Salle brothers, probably about 20 years ago. They were gathering, and part of their programme was a visit to Parihaka. They invited me to go with them. It was one of those out-of-the blue moments that happen. Te Ru Wharehoka spoke to us, his sadness and pain were so very powerful that all of us were touched, his desire for justice and his hope were challenges that made me and most, if not all of those Brothers, sad that we were participants in this ignorance of history.

Over the years I have had many other meetings, mostly associated with tangi. One opportunity came through the Network of Religious and Priests for Justice. All of those occasions helped me to become even more convinced of the significance of Parihaka to our Aotearoa/New Zealand story.

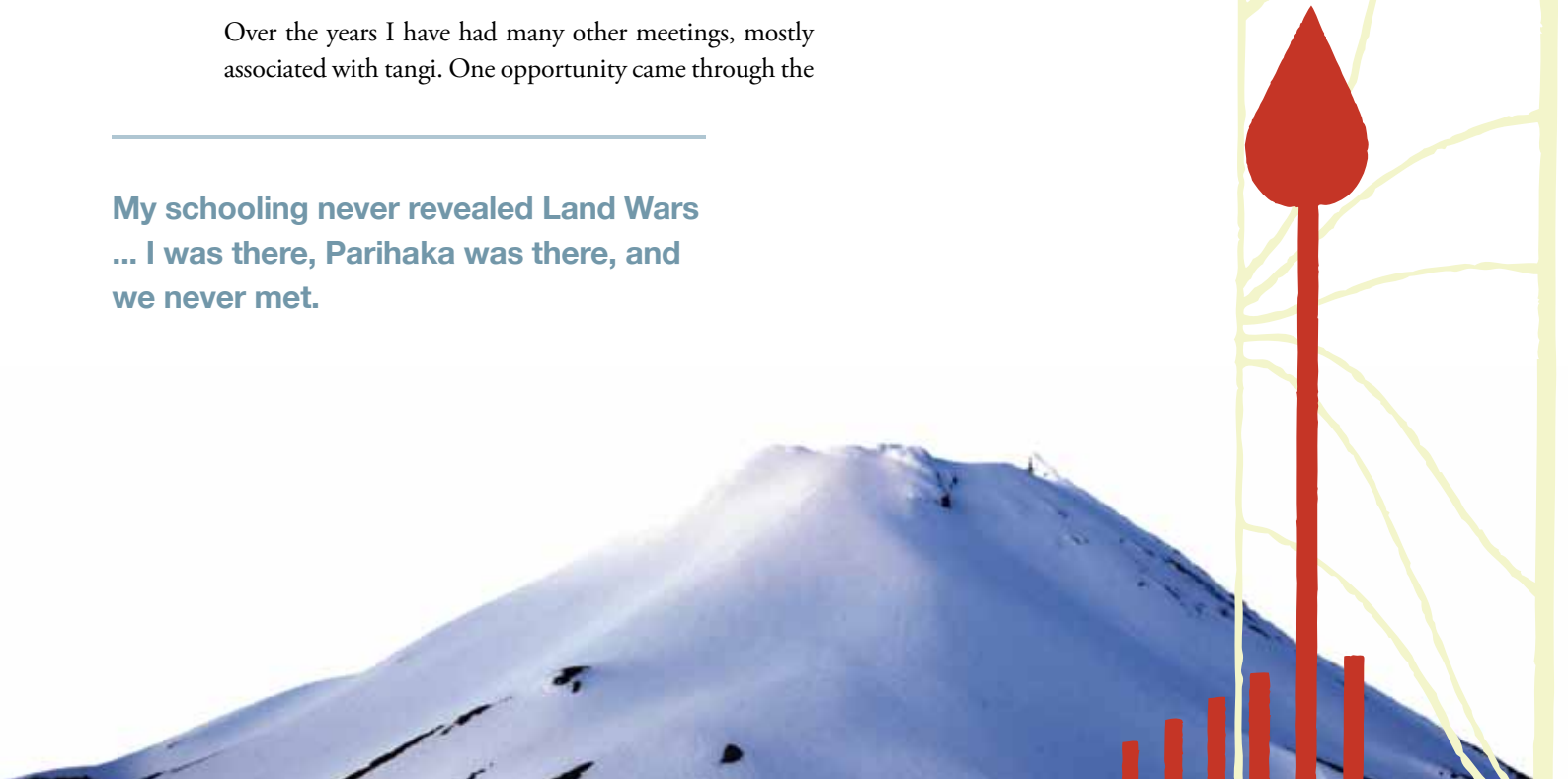
Down the years God has always found a way to challenge and test my convictions. The test came when a parishioner of St Joseph's, New Plymouth, brought a proposal to the Liturgy Committee to remember Parihaka on the Sunday closest to the 5 November at our Sunday Masses. We deliberated and decided to accept the proposal.

The decision was not universally popular. It took God 17 years to get me ready to support the Liturgy Committee to undertake this prophetic witness, a witness that continues today. I was and am proud of the parishioners as they grapple with the history that was hidden from them too.

All those occasions, those opportunities, have been a blessing. I have heard a voice that was silent to most of us pakeha. The privilege carries responsibility. ■

Father Tom Lawn is the parish priest of Waitara/Inglewood, and the vicar forane of the North Taranaki Pastoral Area.

My schooling never revealed Land Wars ... I was there, Parihaka was there, and we never met.



the young: a people in need of folk heroes

A religious educator, **Bobby Acworth**, takes a counter-cultural stance on the image of a servant leader, and applies it to the Waihopai three.

For a young person to be a Catholic Christian today is to take a profoundly counter-cultural stance. The prevailing culture of materialism and personal power is linked to their 'generation Z' characteristics of impatience and instant mindedness. This Net generation appears to many to be introverted and aloof, more comfortable forming and sustaining relationships through Facebook, chat rooms and cyber-space than face to face. Statistics tell us it has never been less attractive to be a young Catholic. If ever a generation was in need of genuine folk heroes, this is it.

It was with some dismay that I read Bishop Cullinane's response to the case of the 'Waihopai Three'. His restatement of traditional Catholic moral theology appears, on the one hand, to be logical and reasoned. On the other, it can be viewed as political correctness where the Church allies itself to those in power and protects the status quo, whether in Wellington or Washington.

What is it that draws young people to faith in Jesus the Christ? Why follow this first century man when it leaves you open to ridicule and rejection? It is because faith in him inspires the very action that the Bishop decries. It is because he is the ultimate folk hero. Folk heroes may be identified as those people whose stance for what they believe in finds a place in popular public consciousness. If we consider Rob Roy, Robin Hood or even Bishop Cullinane's example of David against Goliath we see that people are inspired by individuals of integrity; by those who hold onto their deeply held beliefs, often at great personal cost.

This is what young are searching for in their families and within public institutions. They innately recognise when people are treated fairly or unfairly.

The 'euphoric claims of victory and righteousness' that followed the release of Adrian Leason, Peter Murnane, and Sam Land did not stem from anarchist delight in the destruction of property. They were celebrations of recognition; that the jury recognised that those three individuals had openly and honestly taken a course of action based on their belief that Law must be based on respect and reverence for people and that the spy base was allying itself with the antithesis of that.

This is what young are searching for in their families and within public institutions. They innately recognise when people are treated fairly or unfairly. Kiwi youth are ripe for those who take a stand for justice given New Zealand's historical stance against the world on the issue of nuclear weapons.

Young people's natural empathy with the underdog finds its echoes in both New and Old Testament stories of liberation. The tale of the Israelites escaping from the bondage of Egypt is hugely popular. Moses' heroic stance against the odds finds an easy place in the hearts of primary school children. Not for them the careful balance of proportionality and proximate connection. Moses is simply right in standing up against the vagaries of Pharaoh's power. And God is at his side; God siding with the slaves, the underdogs, the oppressed. For young people that is the only God worth following.

Turning to the New Testament we see, and teach, Jesus as the definitive folk hero. Born in poverty, born under the yolk of Roman oppression, born when the letter of Jewish Law was celebrated over and above the spirit and purpose of the Law; the command to Love. Jesus rejected personal and temporal power in his forty days in the desert. Throughout his life he took a stand for love and was prepared to die for it. Jesus actualised love for generations to follow.

That is what draws young people to follow him; the simple fact that Jesus stood alongside the weak, the oppressed, the beggars at the gate and was prepared to face the consequences.Young people, particularly males in mid-adolescence, are drawn to Jesus' stance as the gentle warrior. At the very time they are choosing life-long habits we can hold up to them the image of a man who single handedly drove the money lenders out of the temple.

Jesus received the adulation of the crowds like any contemporary sports or music icon but also embraced the beggars and the lepers like a latter day Mother Teresa or Princess Diana. This is an image young people can take as their own – the image of the servant leader who is personally powerful but who uses that power for the good of other people.

Those who damaged property at Waihopai acted in the light of Jesus' example in the Temple in Jerusalem and his subsequent stance upon the cross of Calvary. They divined the signs of the times, took their action and waited for the consequences, just as Jesus waited in the garden of Gethsemane. Their example is one that religious educators should highlight and celebrate with young people, for they give us a light that shines in our moral darkness... and the darkness will not overcome it. ■

dialogue with others

Tui Motu interviewed **Sister Catherine Jones**, the recently appointed chair of the Catholic Bishops Committee for Interfaith Relations.

TM: Catherine, you have been appointed chair of the Catholic Bishops' Committee for Interfaith relations. Can you tell us how you got involved in interfaith work?

Catherine: When I made profession in the Missionary Sisters of the Society of Mary in 1970, I was appointed to Fiji. One of the things that attracted me to Fiji was the cultural and religious diversity of the country.

During my years as a student at the University of the South Pacific, I rubbed shoulders with students and lecturers from several religious backgrounds. One of our favourite geography lecturers was a Hindu, and when he died suddenly, that was my first experience of a Hindu funeral. Shamima Ali, who graduated in the same class as me, has gone on to establish the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre and is active in human rights issues. I also taught for a short time at Yat Sen Memorial school, and met Chinese elders who still lived by the values of their traditional religions.

Celebration at Buddhist temple, Flat Bush, Auckland 2008.

But my real initiation was at the Pacific Regional Seminary in the 1980s, when I somewhat blithely volunteered to teach the World Religions Course, as the usual lecturer was sick. It was a fieldwork-based course, followed by pastoral reflection. Suva provides ample opportunity for all that: Hindu temples, Sikh gurdwara, several Muslim communities, and Baha'i. We learned together from the wisdom of others.

The military coups of 1987 shocked us into facing the deep seated prejudices we had about peoples of other faiths. For the first time in my life, I struggled with the question of religiously- motivated violence against persons and property.

TM: You have also had opportunities for further study ?

Catherine: From Fiji, I was appointed to Algeria, but stayed only a year. Because of the deteriorating political situation, we were asked to leave. However, our sisters have been there since the 1950s and are engaged in various forms of what we call the 'dialogue of life', and collaboration for human development.

This dialogue is focused and simple, and is accessible to us all. It is an awareness of our neighbour, of welcome and hospitality, of being interested in their lives and families. It happens in the local corner dairy, on the sports field or sideline; it is sharing the ordinary events, and ups and downs of everyday life. Profound theological discussion hardly ever enters into the conversation! We can all do it, and many of us are doing it all the time!

Leaving Algeria opened the way for a year of Islamic Studies at the Pontifical Institute for Arabic and Islamic Studies (PISAI) in Rome. It was a wonderful opportunity to take the experiences of the previous few years, and widen the theological and pastoral understanding of them. From there I went to the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, where our sisters have a community involved in primary health care and community development. I was privileged to be asked by a friend of the sisters to help in up-skilling women who had set up a series of kindergartens in and around the town. It took me back to my own kindy days and the fun of learning through play - a dialogue of life and work!

When I left Mauritania, I spent nearly five years in Saint-Priest, an immigrant city on the outskirts of Lyon, France. I was able to take part in several formation programmes

and courses run by the Archdiocese of Lyon for those involved in interfaith dialogue, especially with Muslims. At the same time, wonderfully, the local Muslim youth taught me to compose rap! From here, I returned to New Zealand.

TM: What led the Catholic Bishops to set up a committee for Interfaith Relations last October?

Catherine: Our country has changed a lot in the past 30 years in terms of cultural and religious diversity. Peoples of many faiths were present in New Zealand from the earliest days of European and Asian settlement: Jews, Buddhists (many of them Chinese gold miners in Central Otago, where as a child I first saw Buddhist prayer flags at the Skippers cemetery), and Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims – from the Indian sub-continent long before the partition of India.

The picture is much more diverse now. And it is against this background that the Bishops endorsed the Statement on Religious Diversity in New Zealand (2007) and its revised edition in 2009. As well, some Catholics have been involved in informal ways in interfaith contacts, especially through local interfaith councils in Auckland, Hamilton, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin.

But even more basic is the response to leadership of the Church, in changes in approaches to other world religions – a revolutionary one – that came with the Second Vatican Council, and subsequent teachings.

TM: What have the bishops asked you to do ?

Catherine: The key to that lies in the title of the committee: "interfaith relations". Our first task is to enter into positive relationships with other religious groups, by attending major festivals, invitations to life-events, shared responsibility in civic life, the interfaith planting day in Wellington recently. We also stand together in solidarity when a faith group is discriminated against, such as happened recently to the Sikh community in Auckland, where people wearing turbans were arbitrarily banned from entering a cosmopolitan club.

This year, we have also sent messages of friendship to each of the major religious communities on key festivals, to Buddhists for Vesak, to Muslims at the end of Ramadan, and forwarded them the Eid message from the Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue in Rome.

The Bishops have also asked us to focus on education within the Catholic community, so we are in the process of preparing a workshop on interfaith relations for Catholics in parishes, schools, pastoral areas or chaplaincies. This can be further extended with a focused look at any particular faith group in New Zealand, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Buddhism.

These are a few of the things we are focusing on right now. Our committee's future is full of good possibilities. ■

My favourite dialogue story this year comes from the NZ Jewish community: following the tsunami that tore through homes and families in Samoa in September last year, the Jewish community recognised that part of the healing for Christian families was having family prayer around the family Bible. So they arranged for several shipments of the Samoan Bible, both Old and New Testament, to be sent to Samoa for families who had lost that most precious taonga in the tsunami.

Sister Catherine Jones smsm lives in Wellington and is chair of the Bishops Committee for Interfaith Relations. Her email address is: **c.jones@wn.catholic.org.nz**

Left: Catherine at a graduation day, Rosso, Republic of Mauritius, 1996. **Right**: Catherine speaking at Buddhist temple, Flat Bush, Auckland 2008.

atheists in wonderland

Edmund Little takes a an ironic look at the arguments for and against the compatability of science and religion.

Alice said: "One can't believe impossible things."
"I daresay you haven't had much practice," said the Queen.
"Why, sometimes I've believed as many as six impossible things before breakfast."

-Lewis Carroll

Richard Dawkins asserts that a person who rejects evolution is probably a victim of ignorance, and of other undesirable character traits. Science and religious faith, he insists, are incompatible. Darwinism has made it possible for him to be an intellectually fulfilled atheist.

Odd, therefore, that many great scientists had religious faith, including the "father of modern genetics", Gregor Mendel (1822-84), who was a priest and an abbot. Einstein reckoned that science without religion is lame, religion without science is blind. No theories in science are eternal, he opined, not even his own. Every theory has its triumph, after which it may experience a rapid decline. Thomas Kuhn points out that defenders of outmoded scientific "truths" will often react angrily to those who refute the old truths with new ideas and evidence.

The ranting tone of modern evolutionary atheists suggests that they might possibly be the die-hard defenders of a declining theory. They insist that a living cell emerged from a lifeless prebiotic soup as the ancestor of all living forms. Natural selection acted upon purely random genetic mutations to produce everything from reptiles to university professors. Human beings, like everything else, are mere accidents.

The whole process was blind, without design or designer. In non-scientific terms, life, the universe and everything just happened. The very intelligence scientists use to figure out an intelligible universe arose, they think, from non-intelligence. To suggest otherwise provokes cries of 'creationism' and of 'religion masquerading as science'.

In this we detect echoes of those 18th century scientists who dismissed as religious superstition the notion that rocks fall from the sky and so delayed the study of meteorites.

Reputable scientists queried Darwinism from the beginning. Prominent was Alfred Russel Wallace (1823-1913) who asserted that natural selection could not explain everything. The human brain and mind, he thought, pointed to a designer behind the evolutionary process, possibly dwelling in a spirit realm. This was bad news for atheism, because Wallace co-founded with Darwin the theory of evolution by natural selection.

Science, we learned at school, is the enemy of dogma. Science allegedly searches for truth following a trail of evidence without preconceived notions. Not so, nowadays. Scientific atheists begin their investigations by excluding any solution that lies outside nature. A supernatural cause is forbidden from the outset.

To block dogmatically an avenue of enquiry without even exploring it seems a curiously unscientific procedure. It is at least possible that what we label "supernatural" is simply an aspect of the natural world we have not yet examined or properly understood, like those rocks falling from the sky.

Something originating from nothing presents yet another impossible thing to believe before breakfast, a secular miracle proposed by people who dismiss miracles in religion.

The universe, it is generally admitted, has the appearance of being planned and fine-tuned for the emergence of life and consciousness, a highly improbable outcome for blind, random forces. Not at all, say the atheists.

To quote Dawkins again: "Biology is the study of complicated things that give the appearance of having been designed for a purpose." The appearance is an illusion. There are, he assures us, many universes, and at least one of them by sheer chance will be fitted up for conscious organic life. Nobody has observed these many universes. Their existence cannot be observed, tested, verified, falsified or experienced. It's a strain to believe them before or even after breakfast. Nevertheless, atheists, with no sense of irony, condemn theology for its "speculations".

And where did all those universes originate? Once upon a time the scientific answer was plain: the universe was always there, without beginning, without end, and without creator. Then Science changed its mind. It discovered the Big Bang which gave birth to the universe, and to space and to time. Atheism fretted. If the universe actually had a beginning in a Big Bang (or a small pop, as some suggest), people might start asking who or what fired the shot that caused it. And the scientific/atheistic answer to that? Well, "nothing".

Until the 19th century it was held that life generated spontaneously from lifeless matter. One 16th - 17th century scientist reckoned that a piece of basil placed between two bricks left in the sun would generate a scorpion. Stephen Hawking (born 1942) of Cambridge University has given this old theory an original twist. The universe, he thinks, self-generated from nothing, by the laws of physics. Presumably those laws self-generated too. Something originating from nothing presents yet another impossible thing to believe before breakfast, a secular miracle proposed by people who dismiss miracles in religion. Chesterton wrote: "When people stop believing in God, they don't believe in nothing – they believe in anything." Hawking and other scientists have proved him wrong. They do believe in nothing, and endow it with wonderfully creative force.

We turn to James Watson (born 1928) for a possible explanation of this weirdness. A co-discoverer of DNA, he takes a dim view of his fellow scientists: "... success in Cambridge conversation frequently came from saying something preposterous, hoping that someone would take you seriously". This might apply to Hawking, but Dawkins is not a Cambridge scientist. He is a professor at Oxford. However, that university has a rich and evolving tradition of fantasy. It produced Lewis Carroll and Wonderland. ■

Father Edmund Little is a priest of the Archdiocese of Wellington with a specific interest in matters historical and scientific.

viewing creation through a different lens

Tui Motu's regular film reviewer, **Paul Sorrell**, tells how wildlife photography has changed his outlook on the world

Over the last few years, I've spent more time crawling around on my belly than I did as a baby. It's the only way to get really close to a shy subject like a wild bird and, for a wildlife photographer, meeting your subject eye to eye is essential to creating a sense of intimacy.

Lying on the ground is not the only way for a photographer to establish contact with the earth. In seeking out your subject, you find yourself peeling back the layers in which we humans have cocooned ourselves in the name of 'culture' or 'civilization'. You reforge connections with the ancient rhythms of winds, tides, times and seasons. You learn that wading birds feed at low tide and roost at high tide, that you are most likely to catch a Northern Royal albatross planing across the cliffs at Taiaroa Head during a nor'easterly, and that the golden light that falls just before dusk transforms everything.

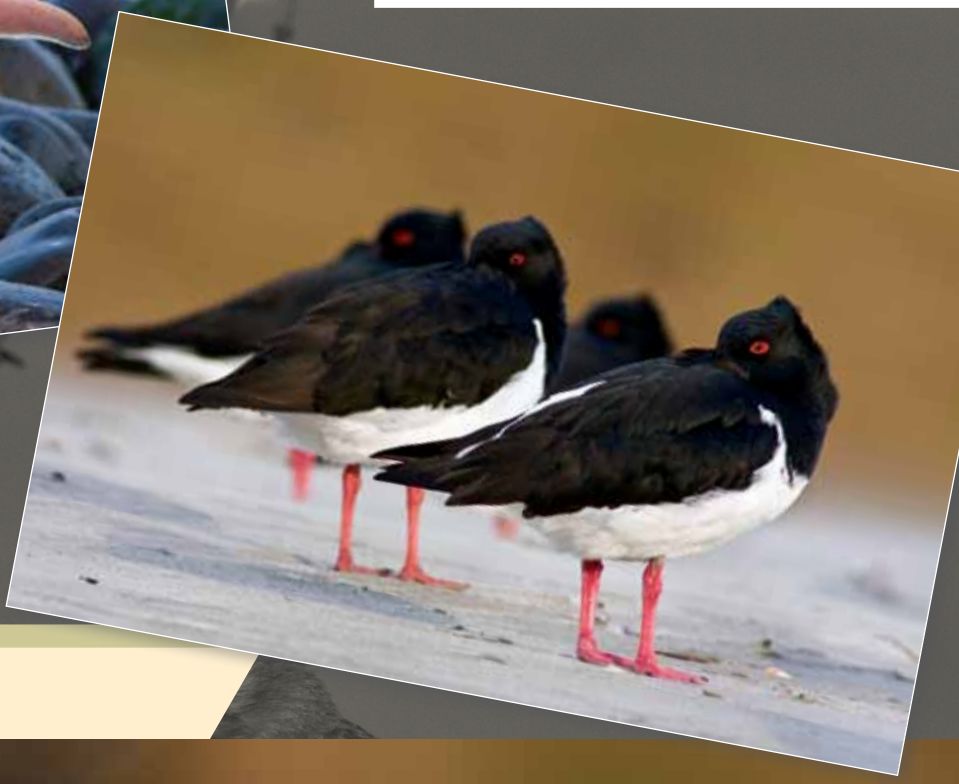
By observing and recording an animal's activity – whether feeding, resting, mating, incubating, or tending and gathering food for its young – the wildlife photographer or artist enters a privileged space. You begin to understand how the creatures all around us, which we normally overlook, are living lives parallel to our own.

I will never forget the time I found myself right in amongst a group of banded dotterels, roosting quietly at high tide in the shelter of clumps of seaweed and driftwood at Warrington Beach near Dunedin. Having spotted this group of diminutive waders through binoculars, I first approached them on foot, then shuffling on my knees, finally crawling the last 30 yards – pausing for a few minutes every so often to assure them of my friendly intentions.

By observing and recording an animal's activity – whether feeding, resting, mating, incubating, or tending and gathering food for its young – the wildlife photographer or artist enters a privileged space.

In the end, I spent a wonderful half hour in the company of these beautiful and confiding birds, each totally relaxed and perching confidently on one leg. They even began to preen. I felt privileged to have been admitted to their company. After taking my shots, I backed away as quietly as I'd come.

Being a wildlife photographer has allowed me to explore what it means to be one creature among others. In the process, I have learned a great deal not only about photography, but about the world around me and about myself. Every trip I make into the field – even if it's only into the back garden – enables me to fine-tune not only my technical skills, but a new way of seeing. ■



Opposite:

Redpoll feeding on grass seed, Dunedin Botanic Gardens

This page, from top:

Fantail, Dunedin Botanic Garden

Yellow-eyed penguins after coming ashore, Boulder Beach, Otago Peninsula

Pied oystercatchers, Warrington Beach, Otago

White-fronted tern and chick, St Kilda Beach, Dunedin

a moment of grace

John Vitek (left) reflects personally on a moment of change in his life when he moved from pain and grief to opening his heart again to the dance of life.

During August of this year I had the privilege to participate in a wonderful local charity event – *Dancing with the Winona Stars*. Fourteen local community members were matched with a dance instructor from the sponsoring dance studio (*Gotta Dance* of Winona) and given 12 weeks to learn a two-minute dance routine and raise money for a local charity of our choice. It was a fabulous evening of entertainment and community-giving.

There are the usual and obligatory comments all of us participants have made following the event, such as "this was a great experience," "learning to dance was one of the most challenging things I've ever done," "everyone did a great job," and all of these statements are true. And, while my pride and competitiveness compelled me to give 100 percent effort to the cause, becoming a serious student of the dance and an aggressive fund-raiser, I stumbled upon a moment of grace that was most unexpected.

On January 15, 2006, our daughter, Brianna Grace Vitek, died in a single-car accident while on her way to work. My wife and I found her car some 70 feet off the road, crumpled in the trees, her body lifeless in the ditch 30 feet away. One of the most common questions friends and strangers alike have asked since that day is, "how do you recover from this kind of grief? How do you heal?" I remember several months after the accident my wife asking me, "Do you think I'll ever be able to laugh again, to feel joy again?"

I had no idea how to answer friends and my wife four years ago; moreover, in fact, at the time, I suspect I believed that I would never heal, that my wife and I would never laugh again, never know joy again. What I didn't know then, but know now is that healing comes in doses, it comes when it will, it can't be forced. There is something called 'grace' and it arrives at unexpected times and slowly we begin to realize that healing is happening along the way.

Tuesday afternoon, three days after our wonderful Winona version of *Dancing with the Stars*, grace happened upon me once again. I received a hand-written note in the mail from a woman in our town who had attended the event. The note reads, "John, you proved last night that with perseverance, determination, and faith, there can be restoration of human existence after tragedy… I felt your daughter's presence telling her new friends, 'That's MY dad!' Respectfully, BB".

And, so, grace arrives once again. How would I have known that saying "yes" to this event would set my feet on one more stepping-stone on the path of healing, one more step in learning how to allow my heart to dance again, one more chance to allow laughter to return? Grief is a dark and desperate place, and healing is a gruelling process, but it is possible because grace and love, and kindness and goodness, and compassion and friendship have a power over grief and they arrive like uninvited, but welcomed, guests when we most need them.

On Brianna's grave we placed a very simple bronze plaque with a poem by the Japanese poet Saigyo, it reads:

Grace.
What it is I do not know,
but with gratitude my tears flow.

Many tears have flowed these last four years. Some tears of pain and sorrow; others, tears of joy and laughter. All have been healing in their own way, I suppose.

I don't know why I've always been attracted to dance, watching it, observing it, admiring it, but I discovered something in doing it, especially in the last week of our practices that has become a part of my healing. Something my instructor said to me in one of our early practices – it was more of a scolding, actually – took me by surprise, but I listened and thought about it. She said "don't make that stupid face, you do that when you think it's embarrassing to move this way" or something to that effect.

I thought about that comment and I discovered that she was right and that

I was afraid to just enter the dance, to just allow myself to enter the joy the dance was inviting. Some time in that last week of practice I began to allow myself to just be in the dance and it became freeing.

After pain, one can tend to be afraid to open up again, one can tend to try to guard against being hurt again; vulnerability – opening to and entering the dance of life – runs the risk of more pain, but it is also the pathway to new life, to healing, to joy unbridled.

After our dress rehearsal for the show on Saturday morning I was an absolute wreck of nerves. I went home and I found the box of photos of our sweet Brianna Grace. Flipping through them, I just let her beauty and her presence and her smile bathe me, and it was another time of grace. I placed one of the photos of her in the pocket of the jacket I wore on stage, and I let the memory of her love and beauty and joy of life be close to my heart as I danced.

I did not know that when I looked back on the next two minutes I would have learned something more about healing and grace. In those two minutes I discovered that it was not important whether I danced (literally) well that night, but that I could allow my heart to dance again, to laugh once more, and to welcome unbridled joy.

There is still much about healing and life that I don't know, but I do know this: there is grace and there is love, and there is hope and there is joy, and if we are blessed enough, as I have been, we discover that all of that can offset the pain and the suffering that comes with life too.

Only my instructor, family and a few friends knew that the photo of Brianna Grace was in my pocket. Then, along comes this note from a 'stranger' and once again "with gratitude, my tears flow."

Life and love is a mysterious thing at times, and grace happens in the most unexpected moments. Who knew that this would have been one of those moments that helped me continue on the path of healing, of embracing once again the joy that life can offer … when we can open our hearts to the dance! I will remain forever grateful for this gift. ■

John Vitek visited New Zealand as CEO and President of St Mary's Press, which is owned by the Salesian Brothers. It publishes material specifically for Catholic youth, although a number of their publications are keenly sought by adults. He is an established author and former Catholic youth worker.

St Mary's Press, USA, are the publishers of two Catholic bibles, ***BreakThrough!*** (used extensively now in primary schools) and the Catholic Youth Bible (college and tertiary). Both are outstanding in their field. The mission of the Press is to enliven the minds and hearts of young people to the person of Jesus Christ. He was in New Zealand to promote St Mary's Press and to give seminars in the diocese of Palmerston North.

Nicky Chapman reports on the first Howard Patterson Memorial Lecture given at First Church by Jim Wallis.

Photo: Alan Dove

theology of hope

In the dangerous days of South African apartheid, Jim Wallis was 'smuggled' into that country to be with Archbishop Desmond Tutu and those who could still protest against the regime. The government had cancelled a protest march, so Tutu had called for a church service in the tiny cathedral of St George's in Cape Town. There were three times as many security police outside the church as there were worshippers/protestors inside it. Wallis said his terror intensified as the police moved in and lined the church while Tutu was preaching.

"Their presence was saying 'We own this country. We own this church. We own you. We own your God.' Archbishop Tutu stopped preaching, and he was quiet, and bowed his head in prayer ... finally he looked up and right at them and he said 'You. You are very powerful. But you are not gods. You are not gods and I serve God who will not be mocked.' Then he began to smile – his famous beaming smile – and said 'Simple. Since you've already lost, why don't you join the winning side?'

"Then Tutu leapt up in that chanting stomping dancing thing they do there and they danced us outside and the police pulled back and we danced for South Africa."

Ten years later Wallis was celebrating with Archbishop Tutu at Nelson Mandela's inauguration as President. Tutu's faith had helped to bring about the birth of a new nation, through his 'theology of hope'.

This inspiring story was one of many Jim Wallis told in Dunedin at the first Howard Paterson Memorial Lecture, at a conference on *Faith, Ethics and Public Life* held by the University of Otago's Centre for Theology and Public Issues. To have a speaker of Jim Wallis' renown is a great sign for this Centre (and a tribute to its director, Professor Andrew Bradstock).

Jim has spent the last 40 years of his life living out Christ's *Nazareth Manifesto* in showing love for the poor, the outcast, and the neglected, and has been highly influential in speaking out on their behalf. He is the author of more than ten books, serves on the White House Advisory Council on Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships (and has known Obama since he was a "skinny kid from Illinois") and his *Sojourner* magazine has readers all over the world. What he could tell us with authority, based on his own experiences, and his knowledge of the 'Great awakenings' or Christian-inspired social movements of the last three centuries, is that he has seen "too much to not believe that faith can move mountains".

The writer of the *Letter to the Hebrews* speaks of faith as "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen".

Wallis dwelt on *Hebrew*'s words to show how faith, through those in the great tradition of Christian activism, has shown him that "hope means believing in spite of the evidence, then watching the evidence change". As he also

Hope is not a feeling, or a personality type, or a mood ... it is a decision that you make.

put it: "Hope is not a feeling, or a personality type, or a mood; it is a decision that you make."

But, as Wallis said about Mandela's inauguration, "although it is great to be at the party, we are needed at St George's where you can't even see the party except through the eyes of faith". He reminded us of the many St George's situations. There is his own hometown of Detroit, where half the working population are looking for jobs, while those on Wall St who caused the economic crisis are making more money than ever. There are the bitter fear-based and polarised politics of his country, "an ideological food fight", promoted in the degraded media. There is the failure to see the Gulf of Mexico oil spill as an indictment and call to change. There are 30,000 of this world's children dying every day of preventable diseases, and more people now enslaved than there were in the time of the great abolitionist William Wilberforce. And war is still being promoted as the way to end conflict, when all evidence is to the contrary.

In all these situations Jim Wallis told us again of the ever-new and eternal song of hope. We 'people of faith' are needed in St George's not to become more terrorised victims, but to lift our heads, look at our oppressors, tell them a different story, and begin to dance.

Wallis sees great hope in the young of all faiths, saying that at least half of the many thousands who attend his talks are under 30 years old. In them he sees a new kind of activism, where people are coming together to serve the common good, and who see that, for example, environmental issues are also moral ones. He told the story of a church in Tennessee that welcomed the members of the Muslim community, and how their generosity inspired others in Pakistan to care for the tiny Christian church in their midst. He praised the tradition of Catholic social teaching (and asked all Catholics to remember to live it); and spoke of the many leaders who have inspired him, especially Dr Martin Luther King, William Wilberforce, and Archbishop Tutu.

For those of us concerned about the lack of political vision and leadership, Wallis gave us heartening reminders that great social movements change politicians' attitudes and our laws, not vice versa. Living in Washington DC, he said he tells newcomers to his city that "the politicians are the ones who are walking around with a finger in the air, licking it, to see which way the wind is blowing". We need to keep the winds of change blowing.

One of the ways the Spirit that brings us hope was evidenced was by those attending this conference. Wallis has written of how he was "raised a preacher" by the vibrant black churches of his country, so perhaps the Dunedin audience members were a little quieter than he is accustomed to. But the ecumenical spirit was evident in those in the city's beautiful First Church, founded by Presbyterians and in which familiar Catholic words were spoken.

In the response to Wallis' address, the Right Reverend Dr Graham Redding, Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa/New Zealand, reminded us of our joining around the communion table, where we feed one another. The Right Reverend Victoria Matthews, Bishop of Christchurch, then quoted St Augustine's words on the sacrament: *behold what you are, become what you see, the body of Christ.* ■

It is great social movements that change politicians' attitudes and our laws, not vice versa.

Where there is love, there is the will to change injustice.

This is Wallis' young son Luke's evolution of prayer, when he learned of the 30,000 children who die unnecessarily each day:

"Dear God, I pray those children don't have to die again tomorrow.

"Dear God, if they have to die, I pray they have the best last day ever. But that's stupid.

"Dear God, help us to stop them from dying."

Newman and Rosmini

The former editor, **Father Michael Hill**, reflects on the complementary qualities of two theological giants of the 19th century.

In September, Pope Benedict visited Britain. The climax of his visit was the beatification of John Henry Cardinal Newman, in the city of Birmingham where Newman spent much of his Catholic life. It was an occasion of rejoicing not only for British Catholics but for many Anglicans, who also hold Newman in the highest regard.

Three years ago, in Novara in the north of Italy, the Italian priest and philosopher, Antonio Rosmini, was also beatified. Rosmini was born in 1797; Newman in 1801. The two were contemporaries, and although they never met, they corresponded and knew each other's work. They were two of the greatest luminaries in the church of the 19th Century. Yet the reputation and influence of both was in shadow in the Catholic Church until the Second Vatican Council. Why was this? Partly, it was because after Pius IX (whose pontificate stretched from 1846 to 1877), the Catholic Church was dominated by Roman triumphalism: *whatever Rome says goes, and woe betide anyone who dares teach otherwise*.

Both Newman and Rosmini were highly original and innovative thinkers. Rosmini was regarded, at least politically, as 'liberal'. Newman was a supreme advocate of consulting the laity – an educated laity. Yet during the 100 years following Pius IX 'liberalism' was a dirty word in the Catholic Church – and in some circles it still is. The church was dominated by clericalism, and many influential clerics saw the role of the laity simply to "pray, pay and obey".

If I may quote my own experience: in my seminary training in England and in Rome, I can never once recall Newman being quoted in lectures. Rosmini was mentioned – but as a heretic whose ideas were to be avoided! So, for us as seminarians, Rosmini and Newman were for private consumption only.

Happily, the Vatican Council changed all that. Both Rosmini and Newman were often quoted, and their influence can be traced in many of the key documents. They have been rehabilitated, and not before time.

Rosmini's posthumous condemnation under Leo XIII in 1878 was reversed in 2002, and the path was cleared for his beatification. After the Council, many new biographical works and editions of Newman's writings were circulated in the English-speaking world.

Newman has been one of Pope Benedict's favourite authors for most of his life. John Cornwell recently revealed in the London *Tablet* the possible origin of this connection.

During the Second World War, German clerical students were conscripted into Hitler's armies and quite a few spent years as prisoners of war. They were held together in one camp. At that time Mgr Francis Davies, a Newman scholar, was vice-rector of the seminary at Oscott, near Birmingham. Most weekends, he would cycle over 100 miles to the camp and lecture to the German seminarians. After the war 80 of these became priests and four became bishops. So it is not surprising that Newman's teaching became better known and celebrated in Germany than in his native (and more conservative) Britain.

what Newman and Rosmini have in common

Both Rosmini and Newman seem to have received what we might term 'mystical', life-changing spiritual experiences at a very early age. As a consequence of this early call, we find that for both their spiritual and intellectual development were closely integrated. You could say they felt the call of God, and it illuminated everything they said and did.

Both tended to gather round them other young men who were profoundly influenced by them and became disciples. Many of Newman's friends followed him into the Catholic Church. Some of Rosmini's associates followed him into the religious life.

Both became leaders in the church. Newman attracted a whole generation of

Oxford students to his weekly sermons in the university church. The so-called Oxford movement, which transformed Anglicanism, received huge impetus from his spirituality and teaching.

Rosmini's influence was much more through the pen. All the Popes up to Pius IX had encouraged him to write to counter the effects of the Enlightenment. Rosmini immersed himself in the works of the English Empiricists and the more contemporary German philosophers, Kant and Hegel. He produced a detailed and fundamental critique of their teachings; his output was astonishing, and he published more than 100 volumes of philosophy and theology.

Both men became heavily involved in Christian education, and their educational writings are still used. Newman founded the Oratory school near Birmingham, and himself, taught there. The Rosminians became educators of both girls and boys, as well as becoming involved in remedial education.

In some respects their paths were different. Rosmini the philosopher has had particular influence on politics, the relations between church and state – and, at the Council, the emphasis on human rights and equality. Newman the theologian has been especially pointed the way to a renewed theology of the Holy Spirit – the indwelling Spirit, which is his characteristic phrase. His prayers and hymns are widely used and sung.

figures of controversy

In spite of their eminence in the service of the church, both men became figures of controversy. In 1845 Newman left the Anglican Church and became a Catholic. The Catholic Church in England and in Ireland did not know what to make of him. He was asked to fill various responsible positions, yet these endeavours always seemed to end in failure or in frustration. He was viewed with suspicion by many of the bishops.

Providentially, this all changed when in response to the insulting attack on the Catholic priesthood by the prominent author, Charles Kingsley, Newman wrote his famous *Apologia*, which ranks with the *Confessions* of St Augustine among the great spiritual autobiographies. It finally sealed his reputation. In 1878 Pope Leo made him a Cardinal.

Rosmini's fate was much harsher. During the 1840s anonymous attacks were made in Italy on his philosophical teachings. Rosmini defended himself resolutely. Eventually the Pope, Gregory XVI, intervened and silenced both sides.

However, worse was to come when Rosmini was asked by the Piedmontese government in 1848 to become its official envoy to Rome. 1848 was the 'year of revolutions'. Throughout Europe, Nationalist and constitutional movements were confronting the existing political establishment. Rosmini strongly favoured the political unification of Italy and the establishment of constitutional government after the British model.

At first he was welcomed to Rome by Pope Pius IX, but when revolution broke out in Rome and the Pope was forced to flee to Naples, Rosmini found himself not merely repudiated, but personally attacked by factions within the Papal government. Two of his more political works were put on the Index. The move to condemn his religious works broke out again. He retired back to the north of Italy in disgrace.

Pius IX had Rosmini's works examined for their religious orthodoxy and they were cleared. For the rest of his own life Pius refused to tolerate any further attacks on him. Rosmini died in 1855; Pius lived on until 1877. After Pius's death, however, the vultures returned to their work. Forty propositions were taken out of Rosmini's works and condemned. His writings were effectively proscribed in the Catholic Church for the next 100 years.

what is to be learned from these scandals?

That the official Church should treat two such wise and saintly figures in such a negligent – if not vicious – manner reflects woefully on the moral integrity of the Catholic Church. Why should this be?

If we search for historical parallels, we must note that this form of sidelining or persecution of eminent figures seems to be the way of all autocratic regimes. There is an *orthodoxy*, and woe betide those who dare to stray outside it. Bolshevik Russia treated its critics that way – and Communist China does the same today. McCarthyism in the United States after World War 2 persecuted even such eminent figures as Albert Einstein as if they were enemies of the state.

The Catholic Church is a rigidly hierarchical structure. It may no longer have its Inquisition, but *odium theologicum* is still alive and well today. Theological factions can be grossly intolerant of views different from what they judge to be orthodox. Divergent views are reported and censured.

Rosmini and Newman have happily been reinstated, and the official recognition of their sanctity has removed them from threat of further attack. But unless the structures of the central government of the Church are reformed, such injustices will surely recur.

Cases of unjust condemnation – without possibility of defence or even debate – continue to happen. Where are the courts of appeal in the Catholic Church? A thorough examination and total reform of the innermost structures of the Roman system is long overdue. Popes, bishops and religious superiors should be held accountable to those they rule – in the same way as Presidents and Prime Ministers are accountable. Such a programme of fundamental reform provides the urgent agenda for Vatican III. ■

Iris O'Connell

1909-2010

Iris O'Connell died on 14 September 2010, just a couple of months short of her 102nd birthday. Iris was the doyenne of *Tui Motu* as one of its first subscribers and having encouraged and promoted the magazine vigorously, especially in its early years. Until a few days before her death, she was still reading the local newspapers and was interested in what was going on around her, even the lead up to the just completed local body elections. She had been a member of the Queenstown Town Council, and was happy to know that a new elderly citizens' building had recently been completed. She was part of its planning consultation group. Queenstown's progress was always a source of great happiness to her.

Indeed, interest in Queenstown was at the heart of her life. As the driving force behind creating *O'Connell's Hotel* from 1937–1974, she was open to new trends in the tourism industry, often spearheading innovative paths. She planted the seeds of the Queenstown *Jazz Festival* and began the tradition of *Dine and Dance* within the hotel. Her care for her staff, live-in and live-out, was prodigious. At the same time she maintained the highest standards of management and team work with her husband, Jim, and other members of the family. Little escaped her watchful eye.

Iris' eminent practicality flowered into help for many, especially for religious sisters and brothers at times when they had little. Throughout her life, money was used to benefit others. One of her legacies to her family was a constant spiritual seeking and openness to exploring ideas. This was the origin of her continuing love of *Tui Motu*.

Her family were to be given the best education, and, like her, opened to a wider view of the good of religion. Her curiousness about all things spurred her on to travel the world. However, it was her deep prayer life that sustained her, and helped her to accept the many ups and downs that life threw at her. The family rosary is well remembered. It was never to be omitted.

And later in life she enjoyed taking friends with her to *Teschemakers Retreat Centre* for prayer days and retreats. She was also an active member of the charismatic movement. Often this involved journeys to Invercargill and back in the same evening. Prayer was the source both of her ability to accept the process of growing older, and of doing it with a graciousness and good humour.

As Iris grew older, and retirement gave time, her interest in the next generations of her family grew (she had nine great-great-grandchildren and 33 great-grandchildren). Each generation was welcomed and listened to. They had an ability to be real with her, because she was real with them. There was little chit-chat. Iris was too interested in finding out how they were coping with life.

Her final years at Sacred Heart Home, Brockville, were the culmination of what was a full and complete life.

May she rest in peace. ■

Pope Benedict on Cardinal Newman

What better goal could teachers of religion set themselves than Blessed John Henry's famous appeal for an educated, well instructed laity?

> "I want a laity, not arrogant, not rash in speech, not disputatious but men who know their religion, who enter into it, who know just where they stand, who know what they hold and what they do not, who know their creed so well that they can give an account of it, who know so much of history that they can defend it."

Christ the King (Luke 23:35-43)

Kathleen Rushton

According to *Luke*, at the beginning of his public ministry Jesus came to his home town of Nazareth, went into the synagogue and read from the prophet *Isaiah*: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has appointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free." (*4:18*).
Jesus' mission is summarised as preaching the good news of the kingdom of God (*4:43*). It is defined in *4:18* as "good news to the poor." The poor are impoverished economically and also represent those who are marginalised in God's people (*4:18; 7:22; 14:13; 21; 16:20-22*).

If *Luke* is read from beginning to end, the reader discovers "kingdom (*basileia*) of God" is there about 38 times. Even more, in most sentences the reality it points to is found in Jesus' proclamation of the Kingdom of God as the unlimited, boundless love and mercy of God especially toward the despised and disenfranchised of Israel – the poor, women, sinners, Samaritans.

"Jesus, remember me…"

At his death, Jesus was between two criminals. The people stood by watching. The leaders scoffed, the soldiers mocked and one of the criminals derided him, thereby debasing the word "save" in their threefold mockery. Then one of the most despised requests: "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." The use here of the personal name "Jesus," meaning "God saves," is remarkable as in *Luke* only demoniacs or others seeking healing use it (*4:34; 8:28; 17:13; 18:38*).

Jesus responds: "Today, you will be with me in Paradise" (*23:43*). We hear again the great Lukan "today," a special moment of discovery or salvation (*2:11; 4:21; 5:26; 13:32-33; 19:9; 22:34, 61*). Salvation is not in the remote future or even tomorrow but is transferred in the present: "today" on the basis of a renewed relationship with God.

Salvation is to be "with Jesus," on his journey, his exodus (*9:31*) to God. This man's faith and conversion of heart prepares him for the journey. The kingdom of God is "among you" and "in your midst." All who read this gospel are invited to insert themselves into the story and make the same journey.

god's love and mercy today

A recent insertion for me into the love and mercy of God, especially toward the despised and disenfranchised, was the sharing of experiences, comments and vision for a fair social welfare system at a recent public meeting convened by the Alternative Welfare Working Group. This group of respected academics and community leaders were commissioned by *Caritas*, the Anglican Social Justice Commission and the Beneficiary Advocacy Federation to promote public debate about possible welfare changes being proposed by the government-appointed Welfare Working Group.

Our country's tradition of collective responsibility for the vulnerable is often reframed as 'dependency' and by the politics of us/them. In last month's *Tui Motu*, Kevin Clements, writing on peace and non-violence, advocates reviving the principles of welfare, justice and equity which lay behind the institutional embodiment of compassion which is the Welfare State. He notes most of the states in the top 20 nations that are the most peaceful are welfare states.

In *Luke*'s terms, the Alternative Welfare Working Group offered a "today" for grassroots people, those who advocate for them and concerned citizens to seek a system that is just and fair, which cares for the vulnerable, treats people with dignity, meets need where it exists and allows people to flourish and reach their full potential. The last person portrayed in *Luke*'s Gospel as living in hope of seeing the kingdom of God is one with considerable influence – the good, righteous man and member of the council, Joseph of Arimathea.

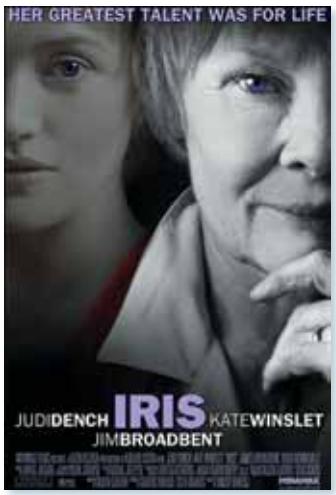
Christians, too, in hope may discover anew the feast of Christ the King through reflection on the kingdom (*basileia*) of God in order to touch those within their reach and to use their influence to seek "today" the unlimited, boundless love and mercy of God especially toward the despised and disenfranchised. ■

Kathleen Rushton is a Sister of Mercy, scripture scholar and spiritual director, living in Christchurch.

a tender portrait of a devoted couple

Iris

DVD review: **Paul Sorrell**



While there is no shortage of interesting movies at the cinemas, I'm trying something a little different this month. While flicking through the H-Js in the DVD section at the public library, my eye fell on this biopic about the relationship between English philosopher and novelist Dame Iris Murdoch and her husband, the English literature scholar and critic John Bayley. It turned out to be an excellent choice. The relationship at the heart of this film was by turns fragile, turbulent and painful, but always – especially as the years wore on and Iris's illness advanced – deeply tender and loving.

As a philospher and writer, she is keenly aware of the relationship between language and thought; as words and their meanings slip away from her grasp, Iris's world disintegrates.

Iris Murdoch, who died in 1999, was the best-known novelist of her generation and used her fiction to explore the subjects that also fascinated her as a philosopher – the nature of love and goodness, freedom, virtue and morality. These are large, humane concerns and Iris lived a full and vibrant life. As a student at Oxford in the 1950s, she is depicted as playful and free-spirited, full of intellectual curiosity and not afraid to explore her sexuality. John, on the other hand, is presented as a painfully shy and gauche young man, almost intimidated by Iris's openness to life and love.

Although the student couple (played by Kate Winslet and Hugh Bonneville) are given a generous latitude to establish the background to the partnership, the focus increasing falls on the elderly Iris and John (Dame Judy Dench and Jim Broadbent). The film traces the impact of Alzheimer's disease on a woman for whom language, both spoken and written, is as vital an element as the air she breathes. As a philospher and writer, she is keenly aware of the relationship between language and thought; as words and their meanings slip away from her grasp, Iris's world disintegrates.

What saves her is love – the unconditional love offered by her husband of many years. It is not an easy road for John, who is by turns bewildered and disturbed by Iris's increasingly erratic behaviour. At times he is tempted to despair. He has always struggled to keep up with her, and draws strength from the words she offered him in their student days: "Keep tight hold of me and everything will be all right".

Although she professed not to believe in God, Dame Iris asserted that humans need something of the divine to sustain us. Through the self-giving, painful love she shared with her husband, we surely see something of that divinity at work. ■

Gift of Dormancy

Beauty reaches in and draws out glory
on this cold spring morning.

Tips on Pine draw out the divine,
rising like Cathedral in spring time glory.
Pure gift of dormancy.

She gives thanks for this dormant place.
Multiple million dividing of cells,
while we perceive
she is sleeping.

Her silent music now revealed,
pure evidence of contemplative space.
Inviting expression of joy within
breaking her silence
in song.

Bridie Southall

theological highlights of vatican II

Theological Highlights of Vatican II

Joseph Ratzinger, now Pope Benedict XV
With an introduction by Thomas Rausch SJ
New York: Paulist Press, first published 1966; reprinted 2010
Price: US$16.95

review: **Vincent Hunt**

This volume is a theological commentary on the proceedings of the Second Vatican Council by a young German theologian who was an adviser to the German bishops. The theologian was Professor Joseph Ratzinger, our present Pope. Published in its final form in 1966, it is as a work of that time that it must be judged.

While the author is evidently in favour of virtually all the major developments usually associated with the Council, these are not quite his main focus here. He is especially concerned to place the topics considered in historical perspective and the story of the Council itself within the story of the church. He outlines the great achievements of the Council, but also the work that had to be left unfinished. For those reasons the work will be valued by those seeking a better understanding of the Council. The author succeeds in producing an interesting and insightful account while striving to do justice to all significant sides of a question. And he writes with a refreshing frankness.

One of the outcomes of the Council was a new spirit of frankness in the whole functioning of the church. A point strongly made is that as the Council progressed the vast and diverse gathering of bishops developed a stronger sense of being a college, and found their individual voices and their communal voice. Likewise, the presence of observers did much to ensure that the Council members were kept honest about the Catholic Church in the past, and did justice to the non-Catholic world in the present. The fresh air that Pope John XXIII hoped would blow through the church was having its effect.

The church must always return to the sources, the Scriptures and the life and writings of the early church. For Vatican II this meant looking beyond the Scholastic Philosophy and theology of the Middle Ages. These had lost their vitality and could not do justice to the contemporary world. The Council set out to present the faith in a positive vein to the people of its time; consequently it wanted to affirm all that was worthy of the human person in modern culture.

Without pretending to offer any serious comparison between the theologian of Vatican II and the present pope, one can I think, detect some straws in the wind in the commentary. The theologian distanced himself from the view that scientific progress marked the path to salvation. He faulted an early draft of *Gaudium et Spes* for its failure to take adequate account of the place of the Cross in our lives. And he is resigned to the fact that some developments in the church need a lengthy period of incubation.

At this stage Vatican II is in danger of fading into the mists of time; the present volume will help to keep its spirit alive. This is of crucial importance. One may hope, for instance, that the openness and frankness that marked the Council will become ever more evident in the life of the church. Again, a principle of *Gaudium et Spes* is stated simply as "personal values instead of social utility."

If that had been taken to heart, both church and world would have been spared the child-abuse scandal. For our society has 'discovered' the human person as such. Of course, the church has held all along to the dignity of the person. Yet it has taken the moral indignation of our contemporaries to remind us of some of its key implications. There is a lesson for us here. ■

Fr Vince Hunt was formerly Rector of Holy Cross Seminary, Mosgiel, and is living in retirement in Ponsonby, Auckland

an exploration of spirit possession

Spirit Possession: Theology, and Identity, A Pacific Exploration

Ed. Elaine Wainwright
ATF Theology, Hindmarsh, 2010

review: **Trish McBride**

This is an important book from many angles – it is an invitation to all those who work in the areas of spiritual and mental health care, teaching and inter-racial understanding to reflect on the reality for many, especially Maori and Pacifica people, of possession by spirits.

It was part of the colonising Christian world view to discount these experiences. But they still happen. So in a newer, more respectful climate the School of Theology at Auckland University has undertaken this study at the request of the *George Sainsbury Foundation*. This Foundation was established in 1989 'for the research into and treatment of spirit possession as it relates to mental illness for the benefit of those persons suffering from such sickness.'

The credentials of the contributors are impressive: Pa Henare Tate's chapter appears first; Winston Halapua has recently been appointed Anglican Bishop of Polynesia; Mary Caygill and Philip Culbertson are ordained clergy; Alice Sinnot, Helen Bergin, Susan Smith are Catholic sisters and theology teachers, as is Professor Elaine Wainwright, the General Editor. And a number of other well-known names figure too. The intersection of spirituality and mental health is a crucial area for study, particularly in developing culturally appropriate mental health services. Ann Nolan's chapter outlines a succinct history of thinking about and treatments for possession in relation to mental health.

I found familiar echoes in Laurie Guy's chapter "Spirit Possession and Deliverance Ministry in the Auckland Assembly of God 1970 – 1983". Some of the practices he describes were alive and well in Catholic and other charismatic prayer groups during that time. And back then I heard and watched with bemusement as Derek Prince encouraged the hundreds in the Wellington Town Hall to praise God beautifully in tongues, then to have their demons howl, shout and be cast out. And I've been aware of the huge damage inflicted on the victims as 'spirits' of homosexuality, lust, pride etc were diagnosed/discerned and attempts made to cast them out.

Then, as Susan Smith and Helen Bergin point out, the Holy Spirit of Christian teaching is an alive and active 'possessor', not just a concept. But this engagement is characterised by freedom, empowering, and making whole.

The writing is clear and accessible, a considerable accomplishment for such a complex topic. Rethinking what is actually happening to people in psychological and spiritual terms when they have these experiences, and learning to consult with traditional healers, not simply medicate and restrain, is a growth area for those dealing with spiritual and mental health.

This book is both a stimulus and a contribution to that growth in understanding – a must for spiritual directors, clergy, mental health workers and any others interested in spiritual and mental well-being! ■

a calling to comfort god's people

A Place of Springs: Working as a Hospital Chaplain

Bernadette Rodgers
Dunmore Publishing

review: **Maureen Smith**

In *A Place of Springs* Sister Bernadette Rodgers, a member of the Sisters of Mercy, shares many memories of the 15 years she spent as a Catholic Chaplain in a large public hospital. The introduction sets out a short history of hospital chaplaincy in New Zealand, and Bernadette comments that for her the essence of chaplaincy is the need to "mirror [Jesus'] compassion in my own behavour."

Her ministry began in 1988 with a one-day 'mini-orientation', then she was plunged into visiting patients the following day. Bernadette writes of lessons learnt in those early weeks: that one is part of a team; the patient sets the agenda; the need to listen from your heart; chaplaincy is about being a loving companion, there to listen rather than preach; and that it is important to possess an inner peace and be able to accept whatever a patient shares with you. As Bernadette sat with patients and their families during this time, her conviction in the power of prayer deepened as she witnessed the calming, peaceful effect prayer has at critical times of people's lives.

After four months on the wards, Bernadette undertook *Clinical Pastoral Education* (CPE) training, which is the mandatory qualification for people working as chaplains in New Zealand hospitals. This is a 10-week course and she found it challenging and exhausting, demanding openness and honesty as she learnt how to accompany people in crisis, joy and sorrow.

But she found it most worthwhile as it equipped her with many necessary insights and skills. The following goal inspired her future chaplaincy:

"I will place Jesus Christ at the centre of my ministry and, with such a model, have a reverence for the individuality and unique life experiences of each person I minister to."

In a later chapter Bernadette sets out another tier of ministry, that of volunteer chaplaincy assistants, their training and what is expected of them. Both these accounts of training are clear, and will be helpful for those considering hospital ministry and wanting to know what is involved, both practically and spiritually.

Throughout the book the reader journeys with Bernadette through many and varied encounters with patients – the first death (being with an elderly man and his family as he approached the end of his life); a 'horror sight' of an accident victim and then meeting him a year later, healed and happy; her first baptism of an at-risk baby in the neo-natal unit and how she felt a special share in this child; officiating at her first funeral; holding a prayer service on 9/11.

Her gift as a gentle, caring, compassionate person walking alongside people in their time of need shines throughout, and I found this book very helpful for my own chaplaincy work as it gave me many new insights. It was also affirming, and at times I found myself thinking, Oh yes! I have experienced a similar situation. It is well set out, with each chapter devoted to a particular topic. It is interspersed with stories which are sometimes sad, often inspiring, and others that had a happy ending. Poems by Bernadette are sprinkled throughout which add another dimension, for it is often through poetry, music and art that we touch a deeper reality.

I would highly recommend this book to people who, like me, are already in hospital chaplaincy, as well as those considering whether to take up this ministry. *A Place of Springs* is easy to read and will interest many who would like to know of the work of a woman of faith who followed her calling to 'comfort God's people.' ■

Crosscurrents

Jim Elliston

building consensus

Further to Nicky Chapman's October item on water, the recent release of the Land and Water Forum's report underlines the need for a collaborative approach among the widely diverging interest groups. The report itself is an example of that approach, with 58 stakeholders from opposing camps talking to one another and arriving at a set of practical guidelines for seeking solutions to the myriad issues involved. These would be implemented within one of three possible broad policy approaches proffered for the government to consider.

Minister Nick Smith is to be commended for his initiative which avoids the adversarial situation engendered by the NZ political culture. It is not only a practical outcome but good politics, and is a template for future explorations of major infrastructural matters.

auckland 'super-city'

After all the anxiety and dissatisfaction engendered by the politically-inspired changes to the Royal Commission's plans, there has been a resounding response from the citizens. The election of Len Brown, known for his consensual, inclusive style, was helped (as well as by Rodney Hide) by the Maori and Pacific Island-descended constituents, not known for their participation at the local body level.

Brown has appointed as Deputy Mayor a woman whom colleagues describe as highly principled, 'judging cases on their merits, committed to consulting communities, a strategic thinker with an ability to understand complex issues.'

collateral repairs

Prime Minister Zapatero has asked to meet with Pope Benedict XVI during his strictly pastoral visit to Spain in November in what is regarded there as an olive branch from a government that has been in prolonged conflict with the Catholic bishops.

Spanish diplomatic sources say the Spanish Government observed Benedict's recent visit to Britain very closely, and particularly the extent to which leaders of all political parties warmed to what the Pope had to say about the need for modern society to be underpinned by ethical values. Benedict highlighted various aspects of British culture that are in harmony with Catholic teaching. He continued his practice of 'affirmative orthodoxy' that is, emphasising the positive aspects of the Faith and eschewing condemnations. He obviously took heed of advice which enabled him to avoid gaffes that on previous occasions had provided hooks on which journalists could hang controversial headlines, obscuring his positive message.

A leading article in what is considered Catalan's most serious newspaper, La Vanguardia, pointed out that his visit to the UK helped dispel the caricature of Benedict XV1 as an uncaring and fundamentalist Pope. The article contrasted the Pope's sympathetic image with the irreverent treatment of him in a popular Catalan TV comedy series, where he is portrayed as a hysteric with nothing to say of any value or interest.

leadership v clericalism

Hitherto the reason for Mary MacKillop's excommunication was portrayed mainly as the result of 'insubordination' – clashes with bishops who wanted to direct her work within their own territory, and even a suggestion that parish priests should have direct control of individual convents. Instead of responding to the lead of the pioneering sisters by helping them, they sought to impose clerical 'authority'.

More background recently came to light. It appears a Fr Charles Horan was angered that a priest friend was reported by some members of Mary's Order for the sexual abuse of children and subsequently disciplined. Horan used his influence with bishop Shiel to impose the censure out of revenge. Those men exhibited the sense of entitlement that goes to the heart of clericalism.

wine is bottled poetry

– R L Stevenson

The Mary MacKillop Foundation and the Sisters of Saint Joseph have appointed Sevenhill Cellars (established by the Jesuits in 1851) to produce a Shiraz and a Sauvignon Blanc, with proceeds supporting the Foundation.

During her period of excommunication, Mary and her Sisters found caring support and encouragement within the Jesuit community.

UK political reorientation

At the recent Labour Party conference, new leader Ed. Miliband denounced the Iraq War, saying the Britain's entry led to "a catastrophic loss of trust in Labour." This denunciation effectively questioned the so-called 'special relationship' that has permitted Britain to punch above its weight in the international ring long after it ceased to be a major independent power. It also led to Tony Blair being called 'George Bush's poodle'.

The word 'fairness' dominated PM David Cameron's speech at the Conservative Party Conference, in contrast to Labour's 'equality'. He also outlined the notion of 'big society', as distinct from 'big government', and from the Thatcherite over-emphasis on the individual. Responsibility for re-building the nation is to be shared by all.

comment unnecessary

From a letter to the Tablet: 'My parents said back in the 1960s, after the first meeting of the local Council of Churches: "It was quite funny. Whenever a question was raised, the vicar looked to his people, whereas the Catholics looked to their priest."'

I was in prison...

One of my favourite photos is of my father entering the Addington jail on his regular Sunday morning *St Vincent de Paul* visit to prisoners. It was published on the cover of the Dunedin Catholic magazine, *The Tablet*. The fact that my father's back is to the camera is highly symbolic. He was a humble man who sought no recognition for his service to his fellow human beings. On Sunday afternoons he went to Sunnyside psychiatric hospital to visit the patients and lead the rosary.

My father, a carpenter, had an unreserved commitment to the Catholic Church. He knew Jesus was a carpenter. Religious, priests and sisters, would call on his skills at any hour. He worked at the Railway Workshops and in his spare time he supervised the building of a classroom block and a school bus garage at Addington Convent. My brothers and I accompanied him to Mount Magdala and St John of God in Halswell where he repaired buildings as required.

At home we had an extensive market garden and sold vegetables at the gate to generate income to pay the school fees. He often gave the produce away. "Most people are worse off than us," he would explain.

Like many Catholics of his generation he had a very simple and totally secure faith. He uncritically obeyed and supported the Church, totally unaware that it was dominated by the evil of clericalism. He followed the teachings of Jesus and loved his neighbour regardless of culture, gender or religion. After the Rosary Crusade in 1954 – *the family that prays together stays together* – we said the family rosary every night.

As he grew older, he visited elderly men who were living alone – and destitute. He would often take them a hot mid-day meal prepared by my mother. When they died there would be a Mass at the Church and my father and I would join the undertaker, gravedigger and a p riest for a burial service.

Although my father had little he gave everything away. All spare money in our house went to the Church and neighbours in a variety of ways. He lived and breathed the Sermon on the Mount. He died as he had lived leaving almost nothing. He had often said to all of us – "you can't take it with you".

I wonder what he would think of the Church today.

The paedophilia he would not understand at all. The lack of accountability, the abuse of authority of some of the hierarchy would cause him unbearable pain. The squandering of the wealth of the Church, which generations of people like my father built up to spread the gospel of Jesus, would cause him great sadness.

However, I'm sure he would continue with unshakable faith to support priests and bishops of integrity and the emerging leadership of the people of God. His primary focus would continue to follow the teachings of Jesus – live simply, feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit prisoners and the mentally ill and pray!

Postscript: In the mid-1950s, my eldest, now deceased brother Mike, applied to become a psychiatric nurse at Sunnyside hospital. "Are you any relation to that bloke who says the rosary here on Sunday afternoons?" asked the manager.

"He's my father." said Mike

"You can start work on Monday." ■

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a Mother's Journal

by Kaaren Mathias

Perks and the parenting job description. Yup – there definitely are some. Maybe they're less overt than those advertised on a corporate HR website, but they are everywhere when I look.

For a start, there is the exuberant, large and hilarious world of children's literature we are obliged to access. I know I wouldn't read a tenth of it without four children's reading needs to cater for. When I come home with picture books for toddler Jalori, the older children all grab a book and read with gusto too. Margaret Mahy's *Jam!* remains my all-time favourite – the huge surfeit of plum jam and its diverse uses is so ridiculous and so true of a compelled jam maker. Tomie de Paulo's *The Clown of God* is a story of juggling, love and self-giving till it hurts. We have gone back to it over and over and talk through the beauty and sadness and have cried too. If I can just indulge in one more favourite, Isabel Allende's *Journey to River Sea* is a rich and imaginative young people's adventure story alive with magical realism.

The end-of-day perks are a favourite of mine. Read-aloud stories before bed are such a great way to get a massage, become still and reflective and are a way to share a story as a family over a few weeks. Likewise family movies on a Friday night: *Madagascar*, *Mr Bean* and *Johnny English* I may well have hoightily dismissed without my parenting job.

Another boon to the job description is *Compulsory Frequent Breaks* throughout the day. Breaks for morning tea, afternoon tea, (some days they even happen twice each). It would be churlish not to join in the happy sharing of strips of Vegemite toast, bananas or spicy snacks with my cup of tea.

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This frequent-break work culture spills over to most activities: dallying to pat each dog on the way to school, games with cascading waterfalls as we splash through a monsoon shower and the acutely fascinating detail of an insect or a moth which demands the walking group halts for many minutes to observe. I would miss all these wonders without the company of my band of junior naturalists.

Children have vastly improved my social life. Kids are a bonus for making friends anywhere. In a new town we can just wander past kids playing cricket with a tennis ball and very shortly all the cricket-able family members are embroiled in an earnest test match. On a more utilitarian front, on public transport children are the key to getting a seat.

What about the perks of my live-in spiritual guides? Our children often act as signposts to God. They have a simple faith. Honest prayers. Practical speedy graces. Unfettered pre-conceptions. Deity gender pronoun police. This week on reading a section of *Judges* my 11-year-old burst out "This is ridiculous! These Israelis all act as if God only loves them. They think God is male. Who would worship a God who takes sides in a stupid thing like war?" Fair enough, I thought. We decided to leave Judges and go back to the Gospels for a bit.

So I don't get a company car, paid holidays, IT support or fancy catering – but I'm pretty happy with being a parent. The perks are pretty good. ■

Kaaren and Jeph live in North India with their four children, where they work in health and community development.